



The Messenger

St. John's Episcopal Church

Springfield, Missouri

August 2024, Issue 140, No. 8



Sundae Sunday

August 24 & 25

The Outreach Ministry Group is most grateful to our parishioners for their wonderful generosity in supporting Outreach projects. In thanks for all your help, Outreach is sponsoring the August 24th (after 4:00 p.m. Mass) ice cream treats and the August 25th coffee hour with ice cream sundaes, assorted toppings and floats. We hope you will all stay to help celebrate the good work that has been accomplished.

The Outreach Ministry Group is most grateful for the generosity of our parish family!

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Outreach Efforts Continue with "Sundae Sunday & Socks Too"

Our parish is now focusing on our annual Ice Cream Social, August 25 (with treats also on Saturday). New socks are especially welcome for those unsheltered. If you can furnish a pair (or several!) they will be very much appreciated. New packages of various sizes of underwear are much needed as well! Come enjoy our social and make a valued contribution.

St. John's Episcopal Church

Bishop Provisional

The Right Reverend Diane M. Jardine Bruce

Rector

The Reverend David Kendrick

Director of Music

Kevin Grice

Senior Warden

Victor Matthews

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It's not easy being green.

To support pollinators during the dry weather at the end of summer, provide a shallow dish of water with a few rocks or gravel to provide perching places when they come to drink. Refresh the water daily.



Half Empty or Half Full?

So goes the question that attempts to discern how you look at your life and at the world. Do you see your life as lacking essential elements that you need to have in order to feel safe, secure, and self-actualized? Or do you see the resources in your life as being a good start to something more?

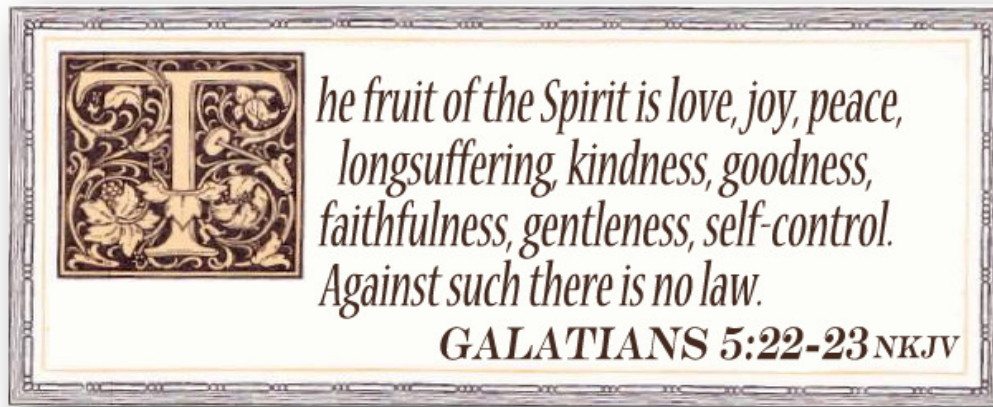
In the past decade, social scientists have been investigating the effects of scarcity – the lack of essential resources for living. It has long been observed that individuals and families who are having a hard time financially often make bad decisions – take on a payday loan or purchase meals from a restaurant rather than cook at home. So, the question was asked: “Are they making bad decisions for their future and those decisions cause them to have fewer resources? Or does the reality that they already have had some setbacks cause them to make poor decisions?” If the former, then the solution is to help them learn more productive behaviors. If the latter, then all the financial education they would receive would not change the outcome.

And, in fact, the second is true. When we are in a situation where we feel our resources are scarce, we make bad decisions about how to use those resources. This has been tested in various ways in multiple published studies, and the results seem to be consistent. Even when we are not facing a life-sustaining or life-threatening situation, even when the resource that is in short supply is only the number of bonus points we might receive in a game, our brains switch to a more primitive functioning and we only can see short-sighted solutions to our dilemma. This has been dubbed a “scarcity mindset.”

If you took economics in high school or college (I didn’t!), one of the first principles you probably learned was the law of supply and demand. When the supply of a resource decreases and the demand stays the same, the price will increase. The marketing industry has seized on this principle and developed a technique called “scarcity marketing.” When scarcity marketing is employed, there isn’t really any scarcity – there is only a suggestion that there might be scarcity - to cause the price the consumer is willing to pay to increase. We see “Limited Offer;” “Only a few left;” “Don’t Miss Out!” and our brains switch to that more primitive mode and we make a bad decision to purchase something we didn’t need.

Social media has amplified our sense of scarcity. Suddenly, we see that we aren’t thin enough, aren’t smart enough, aren’t healthy enough, aren’t successful enough, don’t have enough friends or followers, and all it will take is (fill in the blank) – a new car, a new outfit, a different home – and we will feel better about ourselves. We swim in a soup of scarcity surrounded by messages that we just aren’t enough, and the fear engendered by that scarcity closes off our minds to creative approaches to life.

Think about the ways that you might be getting drawn into a scarcity mentality as you go through your life these next few weeks. In September, we will explore how we, especially we as Christians, are able to recognize and leave behind that narrow view of our lives, our church, and our world. Because, actually, your cup is neither half empty nor half full: your cup runneth over.



FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Carol Matthews, DNP

Several months ago, I had the opportunity to study St. Paul’s writings about the fruit of the Spirit as found in Galatians 5:22-23. After addressing “works of the flesh” (Galatians 5:19-21), Paul continues (5:22-23), “By contrast, the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.” There is so much more to those nine “fruits of the Spirit” than just listing the words for study. In this article and in the months to come, I would like to share with you some of my reflections on St. Paul’s “Fruits of the Spirit.” What does it mean to lead a “fruitful life”? Let’s take the first three fruits (**love, joy, and peace**) and see how they can apply to our everyday lives as Christians.

The **love** Paul was referring to is not romantic love: it is the love, the big picture of love, of which God speaks. St. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 13, addresses this grand definition of love. Chapter 13:1 gives us an introduction: “If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.” The following verses of Chapter 13 shine more bright light on God’s love. It requires sacrifice, vulnerability, and humility. True love never fails. If all of this sounds impossible, remember we have God and his strength with us always.

The **joy** Paul talks about is not the emotion that we would feel if we won the lottery! God’s joy is a joy we have access to no matter what the circumstances in which we find ourselves. It is the presence of joy that the Holy Spirit empowers us with – that allows us to rejoice even amid trials. James 1:2-3 reminds us “My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance.” Joy is the heart of gratitude (keeping a gratitude journal is an amazing goal). Joy is what we naturally experience as we encounter the presence of God at times in our worship.

The **peace** that Jesus speaks of is not just any peace. In John 14:27, Jesus says, “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” Peace can be looked at as an invitation to be joined with God—to be whole and present with our God. One key to the success of achieving this kind of peace is to remember that it is not a one-time event. It is a daily choice. This kind of peace is also meant for us to share with others. What a wonderful thought that we can consider ourselves “carriers of God’s peace wherever we go” (*Illustrated Faith*, 2024).

Prayer: “Lord, as we think about walking in a season of fruitfulness, we are reminded of the beautiful qualities that Your Spirit produces within us—**love, joy, peace**, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. We cannot walk this journey alone. We need You, Holy Spirit, to guide us. Help us to surrender our own desires, agendas, and ideas of what this time will look like. Give us a heart receptive to Your leading. May we approach each fruit of the spirit with humility and openness, seeking Your wisdom and guidance in applying them to our everyday lives. Amen.” (Shanna Noel, *Illustrated Faith*, 2024)

Green Team

PESTICIDES AND POLLINATORS DON'T MIX

Looking into pesticide use in local and community gardening, much less on an agricultural scale, is downright depressing. Decades of research decry the effects of pesticides, which include insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides and herbicides, on pollinators, the eco-system, our pets and us. Independent scientists annually conduct population counts and have shown the correlation between declining pollinator numbers and declining songbird populations. They are in the air, the water, our food and our blood.

Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* woke us up to the dangers of DDT, but corporations supplying farmers and home gardeners quickly came up with replacement chemicals that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has either turned a blind eye to or given a blanket qualification of "not exceeding the standards" with no evidence of their safety and in spite of evidence to the contrary, unless faced with effective litigation. Big box stores shelve them by the gallon, along with sprayers and other applicators. It's hard to trust purchasers to follow directions in a "more is better" world.

As a gardener, I am all too aware of the amount of money and physical effort that goes into growing fruits, vegetables and flowers, as well as the gamble we take with nature giving us a helping hand or working against us. It is so tempting to take the quick way and purchase chemical warfare in the hopes that we get our prizes to the kitchen before the dreaded tomato hornworm, cabbage white, or Japanese beetles descend. And yet, that potent arsenal picks off beneficial insects just as quickly as the pests. Worse, baby birds are either starving without fat juicy caterpillars to eat, or parent birds don't have enough resources themselves to hatch and raise young, or they are being poisoned by ingesting caterpillars laced with pesticides. It is the main lesson I drive home at the Botanical Gardens' Rosten Native Butterfly House in Springfield. Reaching 45,000 people a year with the message gets me over the depressing facts.

Instead, we could be using long-term planting techniques, such as crop rotation, companion plantings and learning to recognize beneficial insects that prey on the pests. Or, if not restricted by space, we could simply grow enough to satisfy the pollinators and birds as well as ourselves. French intensive gardening is good for weed control and requires less need for watering. Use of vertical space with hydroponics and trellis plantings allow for versatility. That would make it a lot easier for birds to pick off the caterpillars, as well.

Just how much of those chemicals are really being washed off when we put the produce in the kitchen sink, anyway? We might need to equate many current illnesses people have to deal with to the pesticide residue we imbibe, whether we grow it ourselves or buy from the local market. At least growing organically has finally taken off in the mainstream. I remember when it was only hippies that embraced the lifestyle, which, let's face it, must be a lifestyle choice in our factory farm economy. Now grocery store chains offer organic options. We can hope it's honest.

Let's give a big cheer for farm-to-table efforts at local sourcing of our food. Let's keep the songbirds happy in our yards. Let's enjoy the butterflies, moths and skippers. Let's taste test the bounty for flavor utilizing nourishing methods of growing our food and then also use it in our landscapes. After all, those trees and shrubs are providing housing for the birds and bees as well as protecting and beautifying our homes and communities. Pesticides? Just don't.



Who Gives the Most?

I would like to pose three scenarios. The first one is this: In today's offering, you place a check for \$50.00. Second: a 9th grader sitting close to you tosses in a dollar. Third: the person right in front of you puts in a check for \$300.00. The question is this: "Who gave the most?"

Now let us go back in time and observe a Pharisee who walks through the inner court of the temple and tosses into the temple treasury a bag of gold. Then shift your focus to a widow who slips in almost unnoticed and places two small copper coins into the same temple treasury. Who gave the most?

The answer is found in Jesus' words: "Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on" (Luke 21:3-4).

You see, God does not measure our gifts by the size of the gifts, but according to the condition of our hearts. God knows when giving is given out of faith, love, and gratitude for God's countless blessings that he gives to us. Not only does God know the priorities of our hearts, but God also knows the giving capabilities that we have. When we give our offerings, God knows what we are keeping for ourselves, and he knows if we are giving sacrificially of what we have. Only as our relationship with Jesus grows will we be able to give greater proportions of what we receive.

Proportionate giving is fair to the rich and the poor. A person who earns \$10,000 and gives \$1,000 is giving the same proportion as a person who earns \$100,000 and gives \$10,000.

Going back to our original scenarios, wouldn't we agree that the person who gave \$300.00 gave the most? Certainly \$300 is greater than the dollar given by the 9th grader. However, from God's perspective, the 9th grader with the one dollar may have given a more meaningful gift than the person who gave \$300. If the dollar is given from a loving and grateful heart and if it represents a generous proportion of the youngster's income, the gift will please God. A gift of \$300 could sadden the Lord if it is given without faith and if it represents only a token amount of one's income. Jesus said, "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded (Luke 12:48).

May God grant us the same faith as he did the widow so we, too, can give proportionately, generously, and perhaps even sacrificially.

Treasurer's Thoughts

As we have now reached the halfway mark of the year, the treasurers thank all of you for keeping your pledges up to date. It helps us to continue paying the bills during the summer months. This is a time of year when people are on vacation, but the bills aren't. It also gives us a chance to remind you of the different ways you can make your contributions. The offering plate comes around each Sunday. We are set up if you prefer PayPal. If you would like to set up a bank authorization to send a check weekly or monthly, let me know and I will provide you with the information that you need. For those of you who are retired, if you contribute from your IRA, it is tax free. Speak with your financial advisor for more information.

We here at St. John's are lucky to have several ministries we can give to. In the fall and spring, we have the beautiful sounds of the choral scholars. Each Sunday the altar has flowers on it. The endowment fund is a way to ensure that those who follow us here at St. John's have a way to have the things we have today. The parish discretionary fund helps those who are in need. Speaking of those in need, we have a tremendous outreach ministry that shares the love of St. John's with many who are having a hard time making ends meet. In closing, many thanks for all your contributions made to St. John's.

David Westervelt, Treasurer

St. John's Episcopal Church
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Return Service Requested

The Messenger
a Newsletter of
St. John's Church

Remembering Special Dates & People

Birthdays

August 2 Douglas Patton
August 3 Shirley Rogers
August 4 Mary Jane Robertson
August 5 Richard Cadanau
August 6 Candace Iott
August 7 Charles Bowers
August 10 Kathy Devore
Patricia Schultz
August 11 Clara Bradley
August 12 Jakob Osborn
August 13 Thomas Heydt
August 14 Jasmine Gamel
Marybeth Lyon
Frank Merica
Lexie Roop
Joyce Schmidt
August 16 Patricia Lathrom
August 17 Richard Ollis
August 18 Tracy Fay
Gordon Patterson
August 22 Allison Olson
August 24 Samuel Chaffin
August 24 Jessica Ratcliff
August 25 Steve Bendon
Courtney Hill
August 26 Angela Bendon
Joseph D. Ollis
Blake Roop
August 27 Patricia Schreiner
August 30 Liesl Aldridge

Anniversaries

August 6 Russell & Rhonda Axtell
August 9 Philip & Elizabeth Mothersead
August 18 Lee & Joyce Schmidt
August 28 Jon & Jennifer Stammers
August 30 David & Mary Jane Robertson

Faithful Departed

August 1 Charles S. Christianson
John Sellers
August 2 Ralph Compton
George B. Morris
Fannie Price
S. I. Smith
August 4 Arlene F. Schmidt
August 5 Lafayette Herd
August 6 Edna Coley
August 7 Donna Gamel
Terri Price
August 8 Myrna Berry
Frank Leathers
Julius Seifert
August 9 Wilbur Wickizer
Charles Winn
August 10 George Huntsman
Maude Osenbaugh
August 11 Lester R. Langsford
August 12 Nora M. Hoffman
August 13 Gordon Webb
August 15 Gil Morgan
Nancy Richardson
August 18 Earle Rice
August 19 Norman Jones
August 21 Lewis David Caudle
Nancy James
August 22 Jerry Dean Hancock
Clyde W. (Bill) Young
August 24 O. E. Golden
Robert Barr Smith
Cecil T. Stiles
Gladys Westervelt
August 25 Wayne Schweitzer
Charles D. Toombs
August 27 Marion L. Stephens
August 28 Mary Brown
Mary Elin Veigh
Lena Wilhoit
August 30 Irma Edwards
August 31 John L. Butler
Clarence Iott

