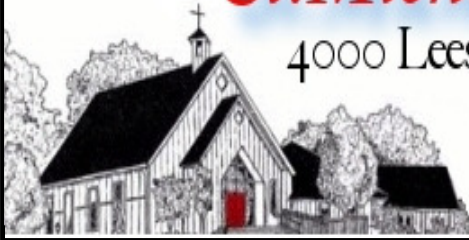


St. Michael's Episcopal Church

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Vicar's Reflection

Is it time to worry yet? Jesus says, "NO"

Many of you are feeling anxious about the economy, about your jobs, about retirement, about gas prices (which are improving), and about how to pay all the bills. So perhaps you figure that it is time to start worrying about all these issues; but worry won't change anything. Instead, Jesus invites us to think of these unsettled times in a different way.

When the disciples started to worry about all sorts of things such as money, mission, and what they were supposed to do if Jesus left them, Jesus told them to look around them. Jesus said, "Do not worry."

In Luke's gospel, Jesus is talking to someone about money. The man is worried that he might not get all his inheritance and Jesus tells him that he should be more concerned about his soul. Then Jesus turns to the disciples and says, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! *And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?* If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, *why do you worry* about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much

more will he clothe you—you of little faith! And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and *do not keep worrying*—for it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well."

Now, I am not asking you to sell everything and give it to the church, and I am not suggesting that you ignore your bills. As Christians we are to make wise decisions about our debt and our expenses. However, I am telling you that worry does not change things. Instead, Jesus would invite us to act responsibly and to pray about our needs and concerns; but Jesus does not want us to worry. Perhaps you are wondering what the difference is between concern and worry. Well, worry is something which interrupts our day and plagues us at night. Worry is intrusive and disruptive. Worry focuses us on what is wrong and fails to consider what is good and right. Worry is not productive and it actually makes things worse because we often don't make good decisions when we are consumed by worry.

Instead, Jesus tells us to recognize that God is with us. Even in the worst of times, God is present to us. Pray about your problems. Make responsible decisions and consult with those you trust, to help you through the tough times. **Pray and then act.** Here are some practical financial steps to take rather than engaging in worrying:

- First, make a budget—list what you pay every month including things like your rent or mortgage, eating out, gifts to others, movies, etc.
- Second, determine if those items are essential or discretionary. If they are essential, can you reduce what you spend by small changes in your daily pattern? For example, you can cut your winter energy bill significantly if you purchase

- and install a computerized thermostat for about \$40. This thermostat lets you program your heat to a lower temperature when you are at work and it will come back up to a warmer temperature prior to your arrival home. You can insulate your home to save energy. You can also cut down on discretionary spending by eating at home rather than eating at restaurants or you can fix coffee at home rather than having that expensive cup of coffee from a fast food place. Did you know that if you cut back expenditures by just three dollars a day, you will have an extra thousand dollars a year for things you really need. Prioritize what is important to you and then decide how you spend your time and money.
- Lastly, you can enlist others to help you make changes which will reduce your debt and your worry. Talk to people that you trust and let them help you with those things that cause you to worry. Do not make risky choices—do not get title loans or payday loans at exorbitantly high interest rates. Do not keep balances on high interest rate credit cards, pay those off first. If you need emergency funds for essential items, please let one of the clergy know of your need and the community will try to assist you with an interest-free loan.

Worry only causes more worry. Jesus offers us another way. Pray for God’s wisdom and then act responsibly to live a simpler life. Jesus says that worry does not add an hour to our lives and modern medicine has shown that worry actually shortens our lives. So practice spiritual disciplines which free you from worry and practical actions which will free you from debt and despair. If you need to talk to someone for spiritual direction and to help control your worry, please contact the clergy for an appointment.

God wants us to enjoy the abundance of life. Show the world the power of God’s Spirit within you by living a life focused on the abundance of God’s grace and love.

Mother Pat+

From the Deacon

Jim Wallis, who is the editor of Sojourners Magazine, wrote an article for the October 2 issue of Sojo Mail, which is the Sojourners e-mail magazine. The article was a call for repentance for those in the financial sector responsible for the recent banking credit disaster. He made reference to the Jewish holiday of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, which begins a 10-day period of self-reflection and repentance. During this time they seek to mend relations with those they may have wronged during the year. The 10-day period ends with Yom Kippur, where one repents of sins against God. Jim writes, “Judaism believes that while God forgives sins against God, each person must repent and seek forgiveness from other people against whom they have sinned.” Seeking forgiveness is very important, and is what we practice every time we come together for Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, or Holy Eucharist. We confess our sins against God and our neighbor before we gather around the altar to receive communion. Jim goes on to write that repentance means a “turning around.” — a change from going the wrong way, to going the right way. Jim listed a number of things Congress might repent of, but I found his list of what we, as citizens, might repent of even more interesting. And in thinking of these, it should give each of us a chance to see where our own priorities lie. Here is his list of sins of which we may need to repent:

1. For being seduced into lifestyles beyond our means and contrary to our religious traditions of simplicity and stewardship.
2. For our living on far too much credit, rather than living within our limits.
3. For sometimes putting economic values ahead of family values.
4. For our letting the relentless assault of advertising and a culture of consumption to seed in us the sin of covetousness.
5. For valuing our lives too much by the cultural values of worth, instead of by the values of the kingdom of God.

Jesus commanded us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind and soul, and our neighbor as ourselves. If this commandment were followed, people would behave more humanely towards each other. There would be increased consideration of others

by our being honest and truthful in our dealings with each other. It is much more difficult to be selfish and greedy if one is thinking of the best interest of others. Loving our neighbors and caring for them as we care for ourselves is a good thing for us to practice.

The mortgage crisis resulted for the most part when mortgage companies encouraged folks of limited means to buy a larger home, which they could not afford. All it took was a missed paycheck or some other financial miscue and the homeowner was in trouble. The usual guideline that what one pays for housing should not exceed 25 percent of one's earnings was ignored, and the obstacle of making a down payment equaling between 5 and 10 percent of the amount being borrowed was bypassed. There is enough blame to go around, and we hope everyone can learn from this financial meltdown and make better life choices. Let's put God and others first.

Let me list a couple of sensible financial and life rules for each of us to follow:

- If you can't afford it, don't buy it.
- If you can't control a credit card, don't have one.
- Make it a practice to give a portion of your time, talent, and resources to God's work.

We make it a practice of giving and sharing God's love to the world at St. Michael's as we give out food to the hungry and give various other items to the poor at the Necessity Pantry. If you're unable to help with those ministries to the poor, then perhaps you could help out as an Altar Guild member or as a member of the choir. We have several acres here at St. Michael's that need tending from time to time, including a rain garden. We could also use help delivering bread to those who visit us for the first time at Sunday morning worship. If you are not involved, ask yourself, "**Why not?**" What is getting in the way of your being involved in God's work.

God's Peace, Deacon Larry

This newsletter is a publication of St. Michael's Episcopal Church, 4000 Lee's Summit Road, Independence, MO 64055. The telephone number is 816-373-5333. The newsletter is sent to all members of St. Michael's Church and to friends of the church. If you would like to be included in our mailing list, please contact the church office. Mail all news items to the church office at the address above or email to Shirley Nelson by the 15th of the month at shrl12nelson@sbcglobal.net Or drop off at the church office.

The Cross I Wear—a Cross to Share or a Cross to Bear ...

A few months ago my doctor was admiring the cross that I wear and asked me about it. I replied that I belong to a lay order for women named The Daughters of the King and I went on to explain the significance of the cross. She responded, "Oh, I just love that. It's such a beautiful description and it's just so perfect. After all, when you are a Christian, it's so important to be reminded that we are ALL sons/daughters of the King." That was a "goose bump" moment for me. It was the first time I truly understood why I wear my cross. It was a pivotal point in my spiritual journey and another lesson to help me grow into my vows.

For, you see, a Daughter of the King makes a life-long vow of prayer, service, and evangelism. Part of the vow is a promise to wear the cross of the order daily and always. To be truthful, I didn't want to wear it. I didn't want the responsibility I was sure it would bring. I knew in my heart of hearts that this little cross was going to cause me big trouble. I knew people were going to expect things of me. By wearing it (where everyone can see it), I would be forced to stand up and be the person that I proclaim to be—a Christian, a daughter of the King—in every situation I encounter. However, to my great surprise and joy, I've also learned that, in addition to the responsibility, the cross I wear is a constant reminder of who I am and, most importantly, to whom I belong.

I know there are many times I have failed and there will be many more times when I fail miserably in my task to be a shining example of God's love. Sometimes it is very difficult to succeed, especially when I find myself in a trying situation. Those are the moments the cross becomes very heavy. And those are the same moments I cling to it with a tight grasp. Because, when I feel the cross in my hand, I am gently reminded that, through God's lavish grace, I am loved in spite of those failures.. I know too that, with God's help, I can be all that He desires me to be—after all, I belong to Him and that means I'm a daughter of the King.

Contributed by Peggy Chmelicek

FOCUS ON MINISTRY

The Altar Guild is the backbone or framework for our artistic liturgy. Members of the Altar Guild are the ones who not only maintain the holy vessels and linens, but they also are the ones who set up the altar worship space and the flowers. The Altar Guild works diligently each week changing the banners, altar frontal and various hangings to make sure that the correct liturgical color is used for each Sunday and Major Feast Day. Sometimes that means coming to the church for four or five different services in one week. The Altar Guild works in teams so each person can do their individual work at a time which best meets their own needs. Most of us don't even know who works on the Altar Guild because they do their work behind the scenes, but we would certainly notice if they were not there. Those who serve on the Altar Guild usually like the work because it allows them time to work in the silence of God's house where they can prayerfully engage in serving God through the work of their hands to prepare God's house for worship. So they fill the oil candles, trim and/or replace the wax candles, polish silver and brass, wash and iron linens, wash and prepare chalices and patens for Eucharist, arrange flowers, hang banners, and many other activities which enhance our visual worship of God and care for God's house. The Altar Guild, like all of our ministries, is an integral part of St. Michael's. To paraphrase the words of St. Paul, we are all members of one body and yet each of us has different talents and gifts which we offer to God's work in this place. Together, using our various skills, we form the Body of Christ to serve the world through worship and service. The current members of the Altar Guild are Genie Kuske, Ann Prettejohn, Aneta Ireland, Patti Griffith, and Mary Beth Allen. Ann Prettejohn says, for her, the pleasure she takes from serving on the Altar Guild is "being part of a tradition for women over many years. It is a constant in a world that changes all the time. It gives me a sense of belonging, of permanence, and closeness to God." Genie Kuske says, "The blessings are many: lasting friendships, spending quiet time in God's House, and preparing His space for worship. What could be more rewarding?"

WHAT'S HAPPENING

November 1 (Saturday)
6:30 pm Feast of All Saints

November 6-9
Cursillo Weekend
Savior Pastoral Center, Kansas City, Kansas

November 23
6:30 p.m.
Stone Church Community-Wide Thanksgiving Event

November 29
5:00 p.m.
Wilds and Linares Wedding

Gifts for Life

Did you know that the Episcopal Church offers a great way for you to give gifts that keep on giving. Episcopal Relief and Development takes your gift donation and uses 100% to help a needy family. Perhaps you have someone on your gift list who would love to have a goat, but doesn't want to live with it. You can buy them a goat for \$80 and it will be gifted to a family who will not only have the goat for milk and cheese but will share the goat's offspring with their village or town. Are goats not your idea of a gift? Then perhaps you want to give drought resistant seeds or fruit trees. Thinking even bigger—what about a smokeless stove for \$165 so that people are not exposed to dangerous smoke by-products when cooking and staying warm. Want to make a difference in someone's health? \$15-\$35 gives both mother and child basic medical care or that same amount will provide two hot meals per day for a school child. The way to help is to go online at www.er-d.org/giftsforlife or call 1-800-334-7626. For a catalog of gifts, see Mother Pat.



Sarah Crawford 11/12

Christine Fogarty 11/13



Joe & Peggy Chmelicek 11/7

David & Sandra Dougherty 11/26



Teri Adams 11/24

Joshua & Kelly Kilpatrick 11/24

Let then our first act every morning be to make the following resolve for the day:
 I shall not fear anyone on earth.
 I shall fear only God.
 I shall not bear ill will toward anyone.
 I shall not submit to injustice from anyone.
 I shall conquer untruth by truth.
 And in resisting untruth I shall put up with all suffering.
 Mahatma Gandhi

The first of all the commandments is this: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

And the second is: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

KJV Mark 12:29

JESUS LOVES ME

Jesus loves me, this I know,
 Though my hair is white as snow,
 Though my sight is growing dim,
 Still He bids me trust in Him.
YES, JESUS LOVES ME. YES, JESUS LOVES ME, FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO.
 Though my steps are oh so slow,
 With my hand in His I'll go.
 On through life, let come what may,
 He'll be there to lead the way
YES, JESUS LOVES ME. YES, JESUS LOVES ME, FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO.
 When the nights are dark and long,
 In my heart He puts a song.
 Telling me in words so clear,
 'Have no fear, for I am near.'
YES, JESUS LOVES ME. YES, JESUS LOVES ME, FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO.
 When my work on earth is done,
 And life's victories have been won.
 He will take me home above,
 Then I'll understand His love.
YES, JESUS LOVES ME. YES, JESUS LOVES ME, FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO.
 I love Jesus, does He know?
 Have I ever told Him so?
 Jesus loves to hear me say,
 That I love Him every day.
YES, JESUS LOVES ME. YES, JESUS LOVES ME, FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO.
 Contributed by Barb Wright

HOW TO GET THE MOST NUTRITIONAL BANG FOR YOUR BUCK

SHOPPING BY THE NUMBERS

“With 45,000 products in an average supermarket, confusion lurks in every aisle. How do you pick, say, the most nutritious fruits or snacks or canned soup? This month, thousands of stores will post numbers by many items as a cheat sheet. Developed by Yale University’s Griffin Prevention Research Center, the Overall Nutritional Quality Index scores foods from 1 to 100 based on nutrients, vitamins, sugar, and salt as well as impact on blood pressure and other health concerns. More stores plan to adopt the rankings in 2009—A.R. Williams

Here’s a sampling of ratings, some from the high end and the low end.. More scores are at onqi.org.

Broccoli	100	NY Strip Steak	44
Blueberries	100	Vanilla Yogurt	43
Orange	100	Skinless Chicken Breasts	39
Pineapple	99	Enriched White Bread	29
Radish	99	Raisins	26
Summer Squash	98	Hamburger (lean)	25
Apple	96	Bagel	23
Green Cabbage	96	Condensed Tomato Soup	23
Tomato	96	Peanut Butter	23
Watermelon	94	Salted, Dry-Roasted Peanuts	21
Nonfat Milk	91	Fried Egg	18
Fresh Figs	91	Swiss Cheese	17
Grapes	91	Center-Cut Bacon	13
Banana	91	Regular-Cut Bacon	2
Avocado	89	White Bread	9
Oatmeal	88	Salami	7
Blackberries	83	Hot Dog	5
Sockeye Salmon	82	Cheese Puffs	4
Raw Almonds	82	Milk Chocolate	3
Raw Pecans	82	Saltine Crackers	2

HUNGER

Not only is hunger a world problem, it is increasingly a national and local problem. St. Michael’s has a food pantry to provide food to those in need. When you’re shopping for your family, remember to pick up a few items for our food pantry. If you need suggestions about the type of items to purchase, talk to Mother Pat or the Deacon. Don’t let a child go to bed hungry!