



THE LIGHTHOUSE

JULY/AUGUST 2019

Dear St. Andrew's Community,

I'm now in my sixth month of serving as interim pastor of St. Andrew's, and I continue to be very grateful to have this opportunity. Everyone is very supportive, and I love the questions, thoughts and conversations following the Sunday services.



A key responsibility of mine in this time is to help guide the session and congregation through a process of assessment and discernment as it prepares to seek its next pastor. To provide some guidelines for that, I did a four-part preaching series in June based on Elizabeth Liebert's *The Way of Discernment: Spiritual Practices for Decision Making*. I found her material to be very insightful and practical for myself and all of us as we are facing important decisions in our personal life, as well as in our shared lives within a congregation. I've prepared a one-page summary of the series, which is included as a separate page in this newsletter.

I also benefitted from asking the elders on session what their thoughts are on this type of process. At the June meeting, I posed this question: "If someone came to you and asked what advice you have about making important decisions, what would you say?" Here's a list of responses:

1. Look not just at the short-term effects, but also at long-term effects.
2. The biggest decisions need to be made with a strong emotional clarity from within yourself.
3. Two things: a) take plenty of time, b) don't act out of fear.
4. Seek absolute honesty.
5. Think of the effect of your decision on others.
6. Remember that there are few decisions that can't be altered later.
7. Use a broad range of questions to explore the motivation beneath any decision.
8. What values are you using when you make this decision?
9. Don't do something simply to please someone else.
10. Make sure there's a good rational basis for your decision.
11. Don't be overly influenced by the opinion of others.
12. Put yourself in the future and imagine looking back on any possible decision...how will it strike you from that perspective?

As you can see, this list has many similarities with those of the book. It shows you the wisdom we need is in our midst. I plan to keep a copy of this list and the one from the book for my own personal and pastoral use.

Finally, the Mission Study Committee has carefully created a list of questions for everyone to consider as we go through this time of discernment. It is critical that we get as many responses as possible. We've included a copy of the questions in this newsletter for you to fill out and return to the church. You can also use this link to fill it out online: <https://tinyurl.com/StAndrewsQuestions>

Again, thank you for giving me this opportunity to serve you in this interim period, and to seek together God's leading into the future.

Steve

SESSION NEWS

News from Session Meetings on May 21 and June 18:

May 21

- Session heard a report from the Deacons about plans for assembly of Care Bags on Sunday, June 9 after worship.
- Heard a report from Interim Pastor Steve Jacobsen about his ministry tasks over the last month and participation in community and Presbytery activities.
- Received the financial report from the Finance Committee. Per capita for 2019 has been paid to Synod and General Assembly.
- Elected ruling elder Susan Arnold as Clerk of Session for a one-year term, July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020.
- Elected the officers of the Board of Trustees for July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020: President – Dana Monk, Vice President – Mona Wise, Secretary – Susan Arnold, Treasurer – Scott Eschbach.
- Session approved a Special Congregational Meeting to elect members to complete the membership of the Nominating Committee on Sunday, August 25 at 10:30AM, after worship in the Sanctuary.
- Heard a report from the CBT Team about the Memorial Garden and plans for memorial plaques, with location placement to be determined.
- Heard a report from the SAIL Team about a recent tour of three community Neighborhood Clinics. The disability accessible “Shower of Blessings” trailer, sponsored by SAIL funds, has been completed and delivered to the Red Cross.
- Reviewed the status of the transitional/PNC process. The book *The Way of Discernment: Spiritual Practices for Decisions Making*, by Elizabeth Liebert, will be used by Pastor Steve Jacobsen in upcoming sermons.
- Began planning for the Summer Leadership Training for current and incoming Session and Deacons members.
- Heard a report from the May 18 Presbytery Meeting which was held at Pismo Beach Community Presbyterian Church.
- Approved an Endowment Committee motion for \$2,250 from Endowment funds for a scholarship for church member and high school youth Emma Voigt to attend a summer environmental program at College of the Atlantic.
- Approved a request from the Hospitality and Outreach Committee (HOT) for a \$3 per person charge to cover costs for the July 7 Family Ice Cream Social.

June 18

- Session members recognized Sandy Thoits for her outstanding work as Clerk of Session over the past 15 years and expressed gratitude and appreciation as she concludes her term of service this month.
- Received a report from the Deacons that 100 Care Bags had been assembled on Sunday, June 9 after worship, with thanks to Twyla and Kirk Grier for coordinating this project.
- Heard a report from Interim Pastor Steve Jacobsen about his ministry tasks over the last month and participation in community and Presbytery activities.
- Received the financial report from the Finance Committee.
- Heard an update from the CBT Team about the placement of the memorial plaques and other signage for the Memorial Wall.

- Received an update on the Mission Study/Transitional Process and learned that the survey questions for the mission study are now available in both hard copy and electronic form.
- Discussed openings for Session members on the Nominating Committee.
- Continued planning for the Summer Leadership Training for current and incoming Session and Deacons members.
- Learned about St. Andrew's Ministry Share Contribution to Presbytery.

Sandy Thoits, Clerk of Session

Our Mission Statement

We worship Jesus Christ together consistent with Reformed/Presbyterian tradition, while:

- ❖ Learning God's Word and spreading the Gospel
- ❖ Supporting each member of our Church family
- ❖ Caring for others through mission and service throughout our community and the world
- ❖ Openly affirming all forms of diversity in leadership, worship and ministry

Our Vision Statement

As God calls us and equips us by the Holy Spirit, we strive to:

- ❖ Be a loving, connected family-in-faith of all ages
- ❖ Affirm Christ's teaching as the source of spiritual nourishment
- ❖ Grow in discipleship, leadership and service
- ❖ Share the joy of God's love with all

2019 Presbytery Meetings:

Saturday, September 21 - Summerland

Tuesday, November 12 - to be determined



NOTICE OF CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Special meeting of the Congregation will be on Sunday, August 25, 2019, at 10:30am in the Sanctuary for the purpose of electing members to complete the membership of the Nominating Committee.

MAY 4 CLEAN UP DAY A SUCCESS!!!

Big thank you to all who helped!



NOVEL BOOK GROUP FOR JULY/AUGUST

The next Book Club is Saturday, July 6, at 10:00AM in the Vos room.
The book will be: The Friend by Sigrid Nunez.

The August book will be Happiness by Aminatta Forna. We will meet Saturday, August 10, at 10:00AM. All are welcome!



BUILDINGS & GROUNDS UPDATE



DID YOU KNOW?

All the carpets in the sanctuary were recently cleaned. Besides normal stains, there were several large stains removed.

The carpet in Morgan Hall is cleaned every four months. The stains are usually coffee and food stains.

The inner campus is cared for by the gardener every two weeks. It is usually mow and blow.

The outer campus is mowed as needed. It has been difficult to find gardeners willing to mow the outer campus.

The blinds in Morgan Hall are now kept shut and controls placed out of reach because of damage to the blinds by someone misusing the controls and causing major damage to the blinds structure.

Lenz Pest Control is trapping and baiting gophers with some success in the lawn outside of Morgan Hall.

A big limb that fell from a eucalyptus tree onto the parking lot was removed by Martin.

Progress is being made by CBT on the Memorial Garden regarding installing plaques.

Plans are being made by CBT to pave the parking lot. The lot especially needs care at the far end.

CBT, led by Linda Gunther, replaced the 12 worn chairs in the library.

New pads for the wicker chairs in the window room are ordered and should be installed soon.

Our goal is to make needed repairs as soon as possible and to have the campus and buildings look as good as possible.

Attempts are made to complete work listed on the white board in the office promptly. Please use the board if you have suggestions. Thank you.

Merlyn Cummings for the Buildings and Grounds team

JULY BIRTHDAYS

06 – John Gonzalez
 07 – Kendall Shinn
 08 – Nancy McKenzie
 08 – Jeff Wootton
 10 – Enid England
 15 – Chris Davis
 17 – Jim Gilmour
 17 – Dana Monk
 18 – Katie Lefley
 20 – Ariel Bowers
 21 – Louise Carey
 23 – Laura Lee Henderson
 26 – Shelby Malengo



27 – Lindy Moore
 28 – Marie Sue Parsons
 29 – Scott Eschbach
 31 – Bob Parsons

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

01 – James Padden-Rubin
 03 – Brandon Gonzalez
 04 – Barbara Hughes
 07 – Josh Acuna
 08 – William Hughes
 14 – Kayla Malengo
 16 – Cheri Hoeckley
 18 – Bill Wise
 21 – Martha Hitchens
 22 - Bob Allbright
 25 – Beau Henderson
 25 – Andrew Lefley



26 – Helen Cummings
 28 – Bill Oakley

Meditation for JULY & AUGUST

I HAVE EVERYTHING I NEED

"Forgive me, Lord, for thinking that to do your will I need anything more than what you have given: my own hands to extend the love and kindness you want to give, my own feet to take me where you want to go, and my own story of redemption to explain your will for the world, Forgive me for waiting for better circumstances, more talent, more time, or a bigger budget. Forgive me for trying to manipulate circumstances to accomplish my will rather than yours. I am grateful that you are redeeming me from the foolish ways of the world, and I want my life to be evidence of your transforming power.

May I live every day in the awareness that I have everything I need to accomplish whatever you want me to do.

Lord, help me take advantage of every situation I'm in, to lift up the name of Jesus."

by Julie Ackerman Link – from: 100 PRAYERS INSPIRED BY THE PSALMS

VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH AUDIO & VISUALS

We are in need of volunteers to run the audio and visuals at the 9:30am Sunday service at St. Andrew's. Training will be provided. If you can help (for audio), please contact Dave Sommers at sommers@silcom.com or 805-708-7108 or Michael Padden-Rubin at michaelpadden@hotmail.com or 805-682-7891, or (for visuals): Sandy Thoits at sthoits@gmail.com

Thank you!

SAIL TEAM NEWS (Serving All in Love)

Steve Jacobsen and Linda Sorensen were invited to share in Eid at the new Muslim mosque in Goleta. Eid is a celebration of joy and festivity for the Islamic Society of SB, giving thanks for their many blessings. The morning was spent in prayers, exchanging gifts, and eating a lavish breakfast with our Muslim friends.



DEADLINE FOR 2019
September/October
NEWSLETTER

Please submit articles and
photos by Tuesday, Aug. 22

ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Sunday, July 7,

11:00AM

\$3



The Way of Discernment:

Summary of Key Themes at St. Andrew's

In June, I offered four sermons using *The Way of Discernment: Spiritual Practices for Decision Making* by Elizabeth Liebert. The small book contains a lot of useful material, and I chose ideas that I thought were most relevant to us. Here is my own summary:

- 1) **Prepare:** Gather as much information as you can. State the decision you are facing as clearly as possible, including possible options. Begin a practice of “awareness examen” in which you get in the habit of seeing how God is present in your everyday life, apart from the discernment process. (She lists two different ways to do this).
- 2) **Start with a Deep Breath**
 - a) Welcome “empty space” – accept the fact that an answer probably won’t come quickly.
 - b) Be generous with your time – don’t be in a hurry.
 - c) Seek spiritual freedom – discovering where God is leading you should be the ultimate goal.
- 3) **Memory:** Ask God to help you explore your memories, drawing out any which will be relevant to the decision you face. This could be memories of times you successfully went through change in your life, as well as painful times from which you can learn how to heal and endure.
- 4) **Intuition:** In the Bible, God often speaks to people through dreams, visions and moments of inspiration. Ask God to help you be open to such experiences that appear as gifts or surprises.
- 5) **Body Awareness:** In Mark 5, a woman touches Jesus’ cloak and she “felt in her body” that she had been healed while Jesus felt “power had gone forth” from him. Our bodies carry emotional memory and wisdom. Sometimes our body tells us that we should be cautious or trusting. Some people have the gift of healing hands, and we can sense warmth and positive energy being passed to us. Pay attention to what your body is sensing when you are considering an important decision.
- 6) **Imagination:** Imagination is the foundation of creativity, and a vital element of spiritual life. You can, for instance, think of one of the options you are considering. In a time of quiet attentiveness, ask God to help you imagine what it would be like to take that option...how would you feel, what would you do, etc. You can also imagine yourself in the future – a year or 10 years from now looking back at your decision. How does that decision look to you? Art, poetry and music can also help.
- 7) **Nature:** Spending time in nature can help us be more open to promptings of the Spirit. You can find a place that appeals to you, such as under an oak tree. Sit there and take time to calm your mind, and then prayerfully become open to any thoughts or feeling that God may want to offer you. An alternative is to find an object in nature, such as a leaf or stone, and hold and explore “getting inside it” – where has it been? What has it experienced? Does it have a message for you from God?
- 8) **Reason:** Reason is often what people rely on in making decisions, and it is an important element in any discernment. Remind yourself that finding God’s leading will always lead us into more clarity about what is true and important; as Jesus said, “The truth will make you free.” As you receive thoughts and feelings through other

“portals,” think about them rationally to see if your way becomes clear. You can create a list of “pros and cons” regarding any decision, but, as the author points out, some items you list might be “weightier” or more meaningful than others, so a simple tally of pros vs. cons may not be the only way to evaluate the list.

- 9) **Feelings/religious affections:** Scripture is full of people experiencing grief, confusion, anger, joy, hope and peace, and God can be present in all the emotions. Take time to contemplate your options and see what feelings arise and ask God to help you sense which ones may be significant. A good decision may be a difficult one, but ideally you will have a feeling of peace and clarity if you’ve done a thorough job of discerning God’s will.

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