



Kansas Messenger

Christian Church in Kansas (Disciples of Christ)

www.kansasdisciples.org

Vol. 124, Ed. 5: May 2020

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JESUS AND ANXIETY

By Ron Cobb,

Pastor at Horton First Christian Church

The diagnostic criteria for generalized anxiety disorder is, “The presence of excessive anxiety or worry about a variety of events or activities for at least six months.” Anxiety is an overwhelming uneasiness, full of emotional turmoil.

Explaining the life of Jesus of Nazareth, the author of Hebrews 2:15 in the Message Bible says this anxiety can literally scare us to death. By embracing death, taking it into himself, he destroyed the Devil’s hold on death and freed all who cower through life, scared to death of death. Cowering through life,

living hunched over and worried, is an accurate description of anxiety... “scared to death of death.” Most of us do not experience a full-blown anxiety disorder but if you ever read the newspapers or listen to the television news you can’t help but feel a bit anxious from time to time in our volatile Twenty-First Century.

Hebrews 2:16-18 talks about the anxiety and inward pain we all have. Jesus didn’t go to all this trouble for angels. It was for people like us, children of Abraham. That’s why he had to enter into every detail of human life. Then, when he came before God as high priest to get rid of the people’s sins, he would have already experienced it all himself—all the pain, all the testing—and would be able to help where help was needed.

In the Aramaic language that Jesus spoke, the Passion translation of Jesus in Matthew 11:28-30 explains the way to freedom from anxiety. “Are you weary, carrying a heavy burden? Then come to me. I will refresh your life, for I am your oasis. Simply join your life with mine. Learn my ways and you’ll discover that I’m gentle, humble, and easy to please. You will find refreshment and rest in me. For all that I require of you will be pleasant and easy to bear.”

Men and women were created for this type of unconditional acceptance and inner healing from anxiety. Jesus will help us learn as he guides us with his gentle manner and the humble flow of his leadership. Through Jesus, you and I can be free from the anxiety of this digital, high-speed, quantum physics world to the energizing peace that God so intensely wants to freely give to each of us.



MESSENGER ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

We are glad to receive your news articles and photographs for publication. We reserve the right to edit all materials. Submit your items at <https://kansasdisciples.org/kansas-messenger-submissions/>. Article submission deadline for the June issue is **Monday, June 1**.

Check us out on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)

BEING THE 'SAMARITAN' IN OUR COMMUNITY

THOUGHTS FROM YOUR REGIONAL MINISTER



The story of the Good Samaritan is a story Jesus told when he was asked by a lawyer which was the greatest law. Jesus answered by summarizing the 10 commandments with, "You shall love the lord your God with all your heart, and all your soul and with all your might." And before the lawyer could respond, Jesus goes on to say, "And the second is like it, love your neighbor as you love yourself." The text in Luke then says the lawyer wanting to "justify himself" asks, "who is my neighbor?"

So many times, we want to limit who we extend our love, our care, and our compassion to. We hear the words Jesus says, and find ourselves reluctant to love and care for those who do not return that love, care, and compassion. Our sense of fairness holds us back. Or even our sense of justice makes it difficult to love those who have hurt us and who have hurt others. And yet, that is what this story confronts us with.

In Jesus' day, the Samaritan represented someone who was impure. They were descendants of interracial marriage

between Jews and non-Jews. They resisted worshipping in the Temple in Jerusalem. They were a danger to what Jews at the time thought had made them "great" in the past. Yet, in this story, Jesus casts the Samaritan as the one who showed love, care, and compassion. It was the Samaritan who was neighborly. And it is the Samaritan Jesus points to as the example we are to emulate when loving our neighbors.

In our own time, as we struggle to love others during this pandemic, it is important to remember this teaching. Loving our neighbors is about putting their needs ahead of our own desires. Loving our neighbors is about not putting others in danger by gathering in large social groups. It is about taking responsibility for how we interact with each other so that we don't unknowingly spread the virus to others.

We may not feel sick ourselves or never exhibit any symptoms, but there is a good chance any one of us could be a carrier of this virus. So, let us listen to the experts in infectious diseases. Let us practice good hygiene. Wear a mask when out in public spaces. Get creative in how you engage in work and commerce. And in the end, be ready to make sure your neighbor's needs are met whatever they may be.

PENTECOST SPECIAL OFFERING



In 2001, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) embraced a bold vision: to start 1,000 new churches in 1,000 different ways by the year 2020.

Today, we have welcomed more than 1,030 new places of worship into the Church. The Table around which we gather has grown in language, diversity, and life experience.

Courageous leaders have answered the call to grow the denomination through the new church movement. They have reached the underserved, welcomed new neighbors, and created communities of faith. And we, as Disciples, have committed to supporting them.

Support the 2020 Pentecost Offering received on May 31 & June 7. Half of your support stays in your region to support and sustain new churches and half helps leaders across the United States and Canada through New Church Ministry programs. Make an extra gift to the 2020 Pentecost Offering today.

THE SEARCH FOR A DISCIPLES MEN COORDINATOR CONTINUES

In the effort to emphasize Disciples Men's ministry, the region has been searching for someone who would serve as a part-time Disciples Men's coordinator.

A job description has been written. Compensation of \$6000 per year has been approved. And we have commitments or gifts from men's groups or individuals totaling nearly \$3,000.

So, we are looking for a man who has a passion for helping other men connect with God and help men grow in their faith. If interested, or if you want to recommend a possible candidate, please contact Ken Marston, 620-792-6490, or Steve Martin, 785-266-2914.

NEW AFFINITY GROUP PILOT PROGRAM

The Spiritual Priority Committee is launching a one-year pilot program to enhance dialogue and spiritual growth among people in our region.

Affinity Groups are made of people with common interests in certain topics. Online groups could form on topics such as: Unpacking Prayer, Developing a Rule of Life, Spiritual Discernment, A Deeper Relationship with God, a book study, a Bible study, the Spirituality of Service, or many others.

Each group needs a facilitator. These volunteer facilitators will get training on using Zoom, plus some basics on how to work with groups on-line. Each group will form a covenant to guide their conduct and interactions.

Each participating member will receive the Zoom meeting information only after signing and returning the group's covenant. Group meeting times will be set by the group and coordinated through the regional office.

The regional office will keep the list of working Affinity Groups in case you want to join one for discussions and spiritual growth.

The pilot program will last for one year at which time, revisions could lead to expansion into many other topics beyond spiritual formation. Call the regional office, 785-266-2914, Regional Minister, Ken Marston, 620-792-6490, or Pastor Danny Ginn, 620-455-3659, with group ideas or to volunteer as a facilitator.



MINDFULNESS NURTURING YOUR SPIRIT

*By Debbie Griffith,
Goodland First Christian Church*

We all have the power to 'create'. Some create with a paint brush, with yarn, wood, or words. Housekeeping can be known as "creating neatness". How we view our creative & daily tasks affects how we go about them. "Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men" Colossians 3:23 says.

What if we would go about those things we do - work or recreation - with a degree of intention, not just getting them done & moving on? Mindfulness is paying attention to what's happening in the present moment, pleasant or unpleasant, without judgment. Quite the opposite of just going through the motions mindlessly or the mind-splitting multitasking. Being here, right now, to do this thing, to the glory of God, dwelling in a space between our coming and our going. Let this nourish your spirit and positively affect your task at hand.

UPDATE FROM THE REGIONAL VISION TEAM

On Saturday, April 25, the Christian Church in Kansas Regional Board adopted the Vision Team Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is a framework to help guide the visioning process for the region. The Board was very appreciative of the weeks, months, and years the team members spent researching, discussing, and designing this document.

The work as a Vision "DREAM" Team is complete! Others will join in the implementation phase of this process in the weeks and months to come.

As a result of many hours of discussions and the input provided, the Vision Team has identified three major strategic goals with accompanying objectives.

- ⇒ **Goal 1:** The Christian Church in Kansas DOES MISSION through the Disciples Center at Tawakoni.
- ⇒ **Goal 2:** The Christian Church in Kansas DOES MISSION through effectively implementing a Matrix of Communication.
- ⇒ **Goal 3:** The Christian Church in Kansas DOES MISSION through affinity groups and resource sharing.

The emphasis of providing examples of the thinking process behind the Goals/Objectives of the plan in the form of Areas of Focus is to help others involved in the implementation phase to better understand the thinking of the Vision Team.

In providing these examples, it is not our attempt to tell others what to do or what not to do; the examples are simply ideas the Vision Team Members wanted to share to assist future teams.

As we move forward, it has been suggested the Regional Board may want to consider forming goal teams based on the Three Strategic Plan Goals.

This plan is considered a living document meaning that it is entirely possible that future edits may be needed as teams move forward with this work.

For continuity, it is the consensus of the Vision Team that representatives from the Vision Survey Team be included on the Goal 2 Team as data have already been collected and are in the process of being analyzed.

Thanks be to God for all who have contributed to this process.

Di Watkins

REGIONAL BOARD APPROVES NEW CHURCH MINISTRY EXPERIMENT

Growing out of a conversation that Regional Ministers Steve Martin and Ken Marston had with the General Church New Ministries Director, Terrell McTyer, the Regional Board received and approved a proposal to prioritize New Church Ministries. This will be a three-year experiment that has three goals:

1. to hire a Regional Minister of New Church Ministries
2. to develop new and innovative ways to initiate new church ministries
3. to start at least two new church ministries by June of 2023.

We will pay for this by utilizing an account of funds that has been growing for the last decade but has not been used. This fund currently has \$683,600 in it. This money was given to start new church ministries in the region, and the regional board felt it was time we begin utilizing it for this purpose.

The first step in this experiment was to get the Regional Board approval for this idea. The second is to recruit a New Church Ministry Advisory Team who will do three things:

1. help write the job description for the Regional Minister of New Church Ministries
2. act as the search committee for this staff position
3. help dream and advise about new and innovative ways of establishing new church ministries.

A TIME FOR EVERYTHING

A letter to the women of Kansas



"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens. A time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing."

-Ecclesiastes 3:1, 5

We've heard a lot about time lately. In *time*, the virus will peak. In *time*, the curve will flatten. In *time*, things will reopen. In *time*, the virus will reoccur.

On Saturday, May 9 the Disciples Women Cabinet met to discuss business and plans for future events for the women of Kansas. One of those events, Women's Retreat, was discussed with the COVID-19 measures in mind.

After much prayer and discussion, the Cabinet decided the *time* had come to make a decision. Based on current facts about the virus and the expected reoccurrence, a decision was made to cancel the 2020 retreat scheduled for Sept 30-Oct 4. In talking with several women from across the region prior to Saturday's meeting, the consensus was unanimous for the need to cancel the event with the stipulation that something needed to be created to keep the women connected.

Your cabinet is working on several opportunities to do just that. A virtual book chat, prayer time, weekly devotionals, a card ministry, extra Newsbytes, projects to complete for 2021 Spirit Fest and more.

We know how much our retreaters look forward to fellowship, study, and worship at the annual retreat and we look forward with you, and are counting the days, to the 2021 retreat. We wait for the time when we can greet each other with joy, embrace one another, and raise the roof in the chapel with our songs of praise! Until then, remember to check on one another, be safe, and watch for updates on the KDW Facebook page, articles in the *Kansas Messenger*, and special emails.

This is the *time* for all of us to be the church outside of the building.

Blessings to each of you,
KDW Cabinet

A LETTER TO THE CHURCH ON BEING THE CHURCH IN THIS MOMENT

NOTE: This is a summary of a letter from the College of Regional Ministers (CRM) condensed to fit "The Messenger" format.

The full text of the letter is available at kansasdisciples.org/

Dear Disciples of Christ,

We are thankful to be your Regional Ministers. We know that you are wrestling with questions about how and when to resume in-person worship and church activities. We are asking the same questions and endeavor to walk with you as we discover answers together.

We miss being with you where we worship God together, witness the baptisms and share the bread and cup at the Lord's Table. However, with great conviction, we write to encourage you to be patient, and do not rush back into full in-person

activities before we are confident it is safe to do so.

We ask that you consider these deeper, theological questions:

- How have you found ways to share in ministry without gathering in person?
- If you hosted online worship, Bible study, or other ministries, what have you discovered that may be helpful for the times ahead?
- How have you been reminded of God's love, and the purpose and meaning of your life and ministry?
- Has your congregation realized gifts or strengths that you had before

the pandemic but did not realize?

- In what ways might the congregation be affected if, a member or visitor's illness from in-person activities resulted in death?

By God's grace and your support, we have the means to keep in touch, do the work you have come to expect from us, and pray with you.

With you, we desire to bless, glorify, and honor God in this moment and always.

Affectionately yours in Christ,
The College of Regional Ministers



In Northwestern Haiti, a fisherman rows his boat out to sea. But his small boat is unable to travel very far from shore. He can't move past the waves and out into the deep waters. Like the other fishermen in his community, he ends up harvesting smaller, younger fish near the shore. This interrupts the production cycle creating a shortage over time.

Sometimes a pressing need in the moment creates an even greater challenge in the long run. This is the case in many parts of the world, as challenges created by the pandemic press those struggling into even harder conditions.

But Week of Compassion partners around the world are working to solve problems now, while looking ahead to long-term solutions for the future. Together with CWS and Growing Hope

Globally, Week of Compassion is addressing one urgent need-- food security--in a variety of forward-looking ways in Northwest Haiti.

Another is how to prevent the spread of disease, especially in light of challenges with water supply, the availability of soap, and limited infrastructure for sharing information. While some work has been put on hold, priorities have shifted to address these critical needs.

One priority for our partners has been spreading awareness about handwashing and other preventative measures, while also distributing government-produced educational materials. They are also planning to distribute buckets and hand sanitizer, so that people can more effectively stop the spread of germs.

Health and nutrition are both at risk, as access to quality seeds becomes increasingly difficult during this time, and rain patterns are shifting, leading to recurrent periods of drought.

When people resort to eating their seed reserves, it causes more shortages in the long run.

A nursery was about to open for farmers to pick up seedlings when the need for social distancing arose. This might have brought the project to a halt, but our partners, and those whom they serve, found a way to carry on with the program by having people pick up their seedlings one at a time. The trees they are planting now are all fruit-bearing trees. Just as putting a motor on a boat means having fish tomorrow-- planting small seedlings today will provide fruit and livelihood, far into the future.

When you give to Week of Compassion, the gift that you share represents an act of hope -- transforming places of great need into stories of resilience. 100% of your designated gift will go to assist communities in need.

Check us out on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)

FISH FOR TODAY, HOPE FOR TOMORROW

NOTE: This is a summary of an article from Week of Compassion formatted to fit this publication. The entire article at

www.weekofcompassion.org/stories/fish-for-today-hope-for-tomorrow