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FEBRUARY 2022



Lead Pastor Richard Crooks | Youth/Children's Ministry Interim Luke Chavanne | Fremont, NE

February 2022

...Continued from January
"And have mercy on those who doubt; save others by snatching them out of the fire;" --Jude 22-23a



Remember the 'nones'..the growing group in the U.S. whom we are tasked with reaching for Christ? I want to continue discussing the 12/14/21 Associated Press article with contributing writer Mariam Fam from the internet describing current polls about spirituality in the U.S. My comments will again be in boldface, and article quotes in italics. Let's begin with three individuals:

Among the former Protestants is Shianda Simmons, 36...who began identifying as an atheist in 2013. She grew up as a Baptist and attended church regularly; she says she left mainly because of the church's unequal treatment of women...

The second is Ashley Taylor: *Her faith gave her strength when she had cancer at 11, she said, but she also feels that growing up Catholic negatively affected her...Eventually, Taylor discovered Sunday Assembly, which provided her with a congregation-like community but in a secular way, offering activities such as singing, book clubs and trivia nights...."They're not trying to tell you what's true," said Taylor. "There's always a spirit of curiosity and questioning and openness."*

Last, meet 70-year-old Zayne Marson: *...he "drifted away" from Christian beliefs and in his 30s began a serious, long-lasting journey into spirituality while in rehab to curb his alcoholism... "We're looking for our own answers, beyond the programming we received growing up.... My higher power is the universe... It's always there for me if I can get out of my ego's way."*

These are not unusual stories. Some people leave the church because it is out of step with the times, not in a healthy way, but in a way that reveals hypocrisy, illustrated by Shianda's concern about the treatment of women. Others feel faith is forced upon them and questioning is not allowed, while others simply drift away through lack of participation or growing involvement in other things. What do their comments teach us? I don't think the women Jesus met felt they were treated poorly; just the opposite, and so when churches don't reflect the way Jesus lived his life, people notice. That is true not only in the treatment of women, but in areas such as the vast wealth of televangelists, the lack of concern for the downtrodden, and sometimes harsh attitudes that sound more warlike, judgmental and hateful than words that would come from a Prince of Peace, a God who is forgiving, or someone who is trying to love their neighbor as themselves.

Notice also that the individuals want the freedom to be able to discover, to explore, to find faith themselves, rather than be "programmed" by being told what is true. As a result, however, they may be throwing "the baby out with the bath" because their search for truth decays into a search of what *"I believe is true"* or *"what my truth is"*. The notion that there is an objective truth out there is lost; yet Jesus either was God, or he was not, he rose from the dead or he did not. It isn't a matter of what I decide is



true...it is a matter of actual truth. We don't apply the "my truth" principle in other areas. In mathematics, $2 + 2 = 4$ is true, no matter what your opinion is about it. In football, the ball passed through the goalposts, or it didn't...your perspective isn't relevant. But in faith, these searching folks sense the need to be able to learn and experience for themselves rather than just accept...and that is hard for some Christians to handle. Our question becomes how to walk with these folks in their journey for truth in a manner that helps them discover the way, instead of dragging them down the road we have predetermined.

We also see in them a desire to have some sense of spirituality, albeit with no accompanying obligations. Mr. Marson's higher power is "the universe", which conveniently, makes no moral demands on him, presents no definition of right or wrong, and has no reference to Jesus or any personal God. A spiritual life on MY terms, not a spiritual life prescribed by a living God who created me to whom I am accountable for my life choices. If anything, God is accountable to ME in this mindset.

Yet there remains a hunger for meaning in life and a desire for fellowship and belonging to something bigger than oneself, even a desire to make a difference in the world. But always on my own terms, in the way *I think* best. The article says about the poll:

It found that 30% of nones meditate and 26% pray privately at least a few times a month, while smaller numbers consult periodically with a religious or spiritual leader.

There are people who...(are) not interested in either membership in those communities formally or in identifying as someone from that religion.

No matter what we think about the point of view of these "nones", we are the Christians alive at this time to whom God has entrusted the mission of bearing witness to salvation in Christ Jesus. It is a challenging task. Their criticisms of the church contain significant lessons for us and can help us strip away the non-essentials and errors so as to present a more genuine Christian and more Christlike experience for their consideration. *Spiritual hunger IS OUT THERE!* It is our Christian duty to take the Bread of Life to the spiritually starving in a way that will enable them to discover His truth. Much like Paul in Athens, we live in an age of great ignorance and searching, and must speak out:

"So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you." —Acts 17:22-23 ESV

Please pray for our outreach in 2022, for *your* outreach. Please look for opportunities to share your faith. Please recognize that these people whose beliefs may seem so odd, are searching for the meaning that can only be found in a genuine relationship with Jesus Christ. It is imperative that we nurture that relationship ourselves, so that we have something genuine to share. Who will you let God reach through YOU this year?



"Trust in the Lord with all your Heart"



Guideposts, 2002 by Fred Bauer Used with permission.

"'Stewardship,' a farmer friend once told me, 'is leaving my place in a little better shape than I found it.' Put another way, that means giving back more than one receives.

Not long ago, I heard about a rural Midwestern church that was having trouble meeting its obligations. In fact, the deficit was so serious that some members recommended closing the church's doors. The treasurer agreed, saying the situation was hopeless, and resigned. ♡

Then a man named Thomas, the owner of the town's grain elevator and longtime member, stepped forward. He would agree to handle the church's finances for one year, with one proviso: No accounting would be made until the end of the year. Though quarterly reports had been the custom, the church trusted Mr. Thomas, and he was given the job.

The church focused on its ministry instead of on finances, and there was more harmony than old-timers ever remembered. At the end of the year, Mt. Thomas issued his financial report. All obligations had been met, including mission commitments at home and abroad, and the church bank account showed a balance of more than ten thousand dollars.

'How in the world did you do it?' the moderator asked.

Mr. Thomas at first seemed reluctant to reveal his secret, but then he spoke. "When you brought your wheat and corn to the elevator, I paid you what you were due, less ten percent, which I gave to the church in your name. I did it to show that you wouldn't miss your unknown tithe. But if you want your money back, I'm prepared to repay you right now." At first, there was some mumbling among the members, then laughter, then applause.

Mr. Thomas's object lesson had proven an old spiritual law that is timeless and immutable: Try as you may, you can never outgive the Lord.

**Remind me, Lord, when my purse I hold tight,
That I've never come close to the widow's mite.**



FBC ANNUAL MEETING: January 23, 2022



KNOW | LOVE | GROW | SERVE

Following the first service, a congregational meeting was called at 10:30 by Pastor Crooks.

Alan Holzerland opened the meeting by thanking the people involved in putting the next year budget together. Congregation was informed the budget was based on past giving and additional gift funding being received. A copy of the 2022 budget report and frequently asked questions regarding the budget were made available. 

Jim Peterson made a suggestion to look into increasing employees pay or offering some type of additional incentive at mid-year since additional gift funds were available. This will be taken into consideration. 

Deb Peterson made motion to accept the budget as presented and Wayne Muff second. Motion was passed. Marcia Hill presented the 2022 Vision Team and Elected Officials. An amendment was made to add Joan Sorensen to the roster under Caring Ministry. Dean Pearson was added to the Property Team as a non-voting member. A motion to accept officers with the above amendment was made by Deb Peterson and seconded by Paul Foreman. Motion passed.

All committee reports can be seen in the Annual Report. As there were other form of business, meeting was adjourned.

Budget team consisted of Alan Holzerland, Joel Foreman and Mike Raasch. Nominating committee was Marica Hill, John Mitchell and Shelly Bowen

Respectfully submitted,
Shelly Bowen, acting clerk for Dorothy Charleston



February Bible Puzzle:

Since we just referred to the list of gifts, how about we continue with lists? How many of the ten plagues Moses proclaimed to Pharaoh and the Egyptians can you name without looking? Can you get them in order?

February Peoples Puzzle:

This church member, who was certified as an EMT, has travelled to all 48 contiguous states and likes to collect coins, was named in Who's Who in American Junior Colleges two years in a row!

(Answers provided next month)

January Answers



Bible Puzzle

The New Testament lists of God's gifts to the church are found in the 4s and the 12s-- Ephesians 4 and 1 Peter 4, Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12. Specifically, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 4:9-10 (not much of a list), Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:8-10.

Peoples Puzzle

Deb Barden is the one who went to beautician school, only to have the records all lost due to staff malfeasance.

A Knots Prayer

Dear God,

Please untie the knots in my mind, my heart and my life. Remove the have nots, the can nots, and do nots that I have in my mind. Erase the will nots, may nots that may find a home in my heart. Release me from the could nots, would nots and should nots that obstruct my life. And most of all, Dear God, I ask that you remove from my mind and heart and my life of all the "am nots" that I have allowed to hold me back, especially the thought that I am not enough.

Amen





KIDS CLUB AND FBY



This month we began as a youth group focusing on what we desired in our New Year's resolution for Jesus. We focused on a passage out of Isaiah chapter 40 where the prophet addresses the nation of Israel about their complaints regarding the hardships of life. Isaiah details in verse 31 that hardships are not absent when we walk with the Lord, but the difference is the Lord is right there with us to "renew" our strength allowing us to find our joy when we rely on Him. Thank you for your support in our youth ministry as we continue to grow in our walks with Christ. -Luke



You are the most definitely the hands and feet of Christ. I was at my wits end and thank God, there you were providing what we needed most. Please let each person, who was responsible for the meals, know how thankful we are. Thank you for caring and showing Christ's love. You will always be an angel unaware to me. Our love and gratitude. The Strengers.

Dear FBC Family,
Thanks for the cards and greetings, for my 90th Birthday! What a Surprise! Love you Marilyn Hillrichs

A "SPECIAL" Thanks for your generosity for my Staff Love Gift.
God Bless You
Mary Weldon

FBC, Thank You for your SUPPORT. Kodiak Baptist Mission so NEEDS you.
Johnny Walker—Director



True Love

BIBLE READING CHALLENGE



- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Mark 12:28-34 | 17. Galatians 5:1-6 |
| 2. Romans 5:1-8 | 18. Galatians 5:22-26 |
| 3. Romans 8:31-39 | 19. 1 Peter 4:1-8 |
| 4. Matthew 22:34-40 | 20. I Peter 3:8-12 |
| 5. Psalm 42:8-11 | 21. Ephesians 4:10-16 |
| 6. 1 John 4:7-13 | 22. Philippians 2:1-11 |
| 7. 1 John 4:14-20 | 23. Colossians 3:8-15 |
| 8. Zephaniah 3:17-20 | 24. John 14:21-27 |
| 9. John 13:34&35 | 25. John 15:9-13 |
| 10. Psalm 136:1-13 | 26. John 15:14-21 |
| 11. Psalm 136:14-26 | 27. 1 John 3:1-5 |
| 12. Deut. 10:12-15 | 28. 1 Cor. 13:1-7 |
| 13. Psalm 5:7-12 | Bonus Days; |
| 14. Psalm 25:1-10 | 29. 1 Cor. 13:8-13 |
| 15. 1 Peter 1:3-8 | 30. Romans 12:9-18 |
| 16. Ephesians 3:14-21 | 31. Psalm 136:1-13 |

It's always a good idea to verify times and places, Thanks!

February 2022

Van Driver

Bob Marsh

Cookies & Coffee

6- ABM
13- Hannah Circle
20- Esther Circle
27- Sign up Sunday

Prayer Emphasis

Bring Our Nation Together

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 7pm AA Meeting	2 6:15 Kids Club 7pm Bible Study	3 1:30 ABWM	4	5 7am ABM Bible Study 8am ABM Breakfast 9:30 Property Team Meeting
6 Communion 9:30 Traditional 11:00 Casual	7 7pm Woodcarvers	8 1:30 Hannah Circle @ BK 7pm AA Meeting	9 6:15 Kids Club 7pm Bible Study	10	11 10am Nye Square Bible Study 11am Make Cookie dough @ Church	12 8:50 Personnel Team 9:15 Vision Team 10am Bake Cookies @ Church
13 9:30 Traditional 11:00 Casual 5pm Brown Bag Fellowship and Movie Night 	14 Valentine's Day 11:30 Esther Circle @ VI 	15 7pm AA Meeting	16 6:15 Kids Club 7pm Bible Study	17	18	19
20 9:30 Traditional 11:00 Casual	21 7pm Woodcarvers	22 7pm AA Meeting	23 6:15 Kids Club 7pm Bible Study	24 12:30 Naomi Circle in Parlor	25 10am Nye Square Bible Study	26 9am ABWM Bible Study
27 9:30 Traditional 11:00 Casual 5pm Brown Bag Fellowship and Movie 	28	<div data-bbox="1185 1328 2601 1528" data-label="Text"> <p>Love is patient and kind, love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant</p> <p>-1 Corinthians 13:4</p>  </div>				