

Greetings to you in the name of Christ,

Saint Andrew's parish is equal parts cradle Episcopalians and those from other churches. Our mission statement, "WE ARE A CHRISTIAN WORSHIP COMMUNITY COMMITTED TO PRAY, STUDY, AND WORK," is taken from the *Rule of Saint Benedict*. The "Anglican Way" is, in fact, Benedictine. We believe that the ancient wisdom of Saint Benedict (his monasteries survived the dissolution of the Roman Empire and saved our civilization) is an excellent model for Christians facing the turmoil of hostile secularism in postmodern America. Following is a brief explanation of who we are:

We are intentionally *Christian* in the traditional sense of the term. We try to be Jesus-centered. We embrace the creeds and traditional morality and disciplines of the Christian life. Our faith in Jesus includes a belief in His healing love at work among us today.

We are a *worship community*. Parishes were once geographic, but cars and personal choices have changed all that. Our parishioners live thirty miles in every direction. People come here because they want to be here. Sunday worship together is the center of our life.

We are *committed to pray*. We pray the daily office Monday through Friday. We celebrate Eucharist on Wednesday and Thursday. Our three weekend Eucharists include a Saturday healing service. There are prayer groups of various kinds. We have many retreats and times of prayer together. We desire spiritual growth. We are cultivating our prayer lives.

We are *committed to study*. With Adult Education on Sunday morning, we begin a full week of growth in knowledge of the Faith. Two lay-led Bible studies and three clergy-led Bible studies provide ample opportunity to find a day and time for learning Scripture. We approach the Bible as authoritative, but we are not Fundamentalists. We believe God inspired human authors, so we attempt to understand both dimensions of God's Word.

We are *committed to work*. Saint Benedict called corporate prayer the work of God, and we do that, but we also see the work of Christians to be discipleship and fellowship (inreach) and apostleship (evangelizing in word and deed). We have targeted 50% of our budget for outreach. We think God prefers it that way. In addition, we have numerous relationships with area agencies for hands-on experience. Jesus reaches the poor and needy today through us.

I understand the Christian vocation to be a journey in faith. I do not think we have arrived, but I believe we have started. There will be pain and challenge, joy and celebration. Everyone thinks their parish is different and special. I certainly think ours is. In the end, the Christian vocation is about trusting God in loving obedience, glorifying Him in our life as a people. I hope you will join us!



The Rev. Jeffery W. Marx
Rector