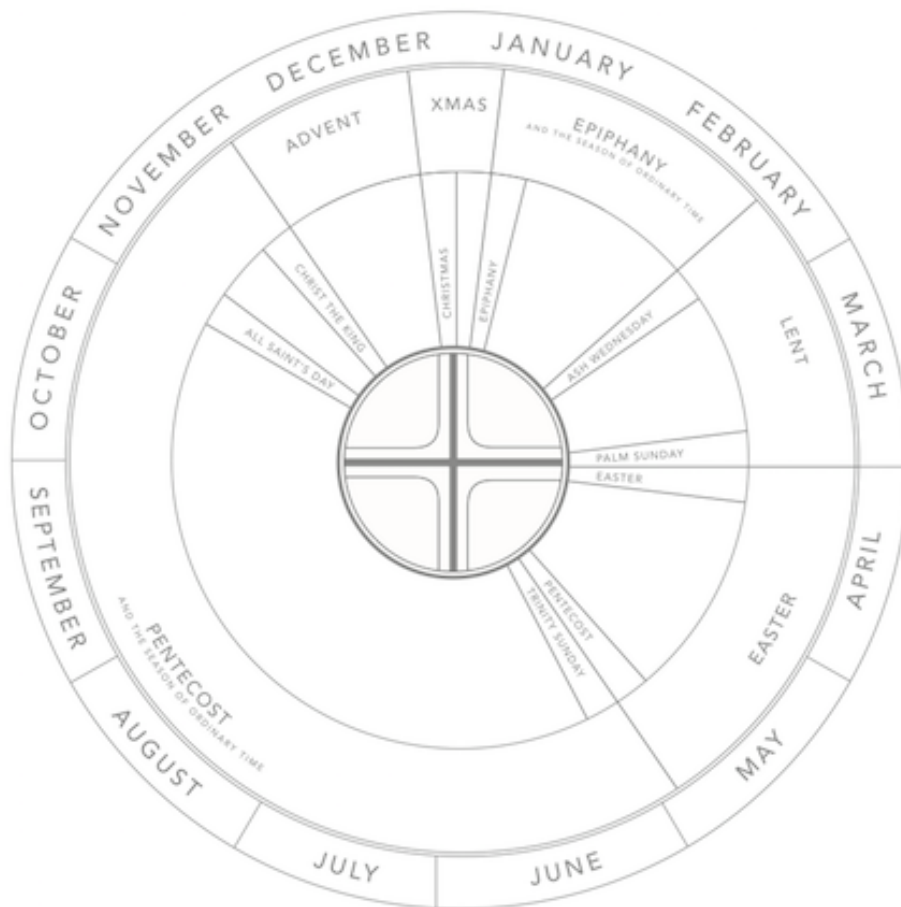


The Luminous Path

To be Anglican is to be episcopal (meaning, “of bishops”). The greater Anglican Communion grew out of the missionary expansion of the Church of England over the past 500+ years and now consists of more than 38 self-governing provinces around the world, in over 165 countries, with tens of millions of people. Here in the US, the primary expression of Anglicanism is the Episcopal Church, though there are now many various affiliations founded in the Anglican Tradition. Our parish has a slight Celtic sensibility but in our context of Middle Tennessee.

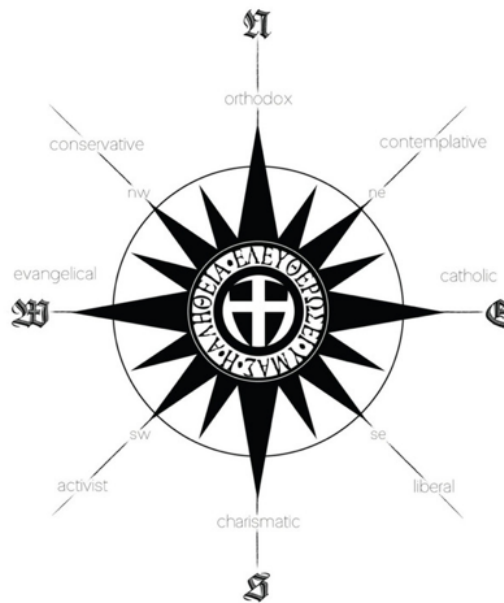


Sacred Rhythms

Perhaps you can recall asking the question “where are we?” when you have been lost (before GPS), but sometimes we should ask ourselves “when are we?” - for we need reminding our rhythm. We believe that our habits are formative and that repetition leads

to formation. When we practice healthy rhythms, this holistic approach to living enables sustainable spiritual growth and further maturing disciples of Christ.

We are immersed in rhythms. All around are repeated patterns, a consistent tempo metering out our existence. But they aren't just around us – they are within us. Our hearts beat and our lungs breathe. Our veins expand and contract as life flows through them. It is even by rhythms that we mark time. Hours, days, years, are all lived in the ebb and flow of work, sleep, and meals. We are created to be rhythmic beings.



The Compass Rose

The Anglican Way

Lectionary Calendar, Daily Office, & Book of Common Prayer

Yearly pattern of the seasons of the Church. Each season intentionally guides us through the importance of the first Advent of Christ all the way through a season of growth, blessing, and sending called Ordinary Time (or Season After Pentecost). The Daily Office is the Scripture reading / prayer guide on a three year cycle (Year A, B, & C). This culminates each Sunday as we worship together. What we find in the Book of Common Prayer as liturgy: (Latin: liturgy means *the work of the people*). It's not something we

watch as spectators. We are participants and have continuous nourishment with the Spirit. God has the capacity of communing with us in all aspects of life.

In the Anglican Communion, you will find a diverse network of churches, practices, and styles - Churches & parishes that practice in more progressive capacities as well as some who are more conservative and everywhere in between. You will find inclusive & affirming churches as well as exclusive & non-affirming spaces. To be Anglican is to acknowledge these tensions and find the local family that offers you belonging and a place at The Table.

We observe *Via Media* which is Latin for the "middle way" or the compromise between two extremes. Some churches lean toward catholic or evangelical, and some feel more contemplative, some more liberal or conservative.

Within the essentials of a creedal theology there is much room. Clarifying the boundaries actually allows this freedom. All the intersections meet at the center behind the shield at the very heart of our Middle Way. It is helpful to note that the *Via Media* isn't to be seen as a philosophy to elevate over any theological belief or practice. It is only meant to be a helpful framework, especially for the context of our cultural climate.

Holy Orders

Anglicans embrace the threefold order of ordained ministry that emerged early in the life of the Church.

Bishop: A bishop leads in serving and caring for the people of God and works with them in oversight of the Church. As a chief pastor, a bishop shares with fellow bishops a special responsibility to maintain and further the unity of the Church, to uphold its discipline, and to guard its faith. A bishop supports the Church's mission throughout the world. Archbishops are bishops who oversee provinces (bodies of dioceses & clergy).

Priest: A priest is called by God to work with the bishop and with fellow priests, as servant and shepherd among the people of God to proclaim the Word of the Lord. A priest presides at the celebration of Holy Communion. A priest leads people in prayer and worship, intercedes for them, teaches and encourages.

Deacon: A deacon serves the Church of God by working with its members in caring for the poor, the needy, the sick, and all who are in trouble. A deacon assists in leading the worship of the people, especially in the administration of the Holy Communion.

Anglican / Episcopal Governance

- There are some distinctive pieces of framework in the way churches like ours are lead.
Communion & Province: This is the largest body of *covering* in Anglicanism. A Province is whatever your country is. There is usually an Presiding Bishop who leads the Communion and an Archbishop who oversees a Province.
- Diocese: A diocese is the smaller group of clergy and churches. This is usually geographical or regional. Each diocese has a bishop who oversees those clergy and parishes.
- Parish / Church: The local church is its own ministry underneath the above. When and if needed, the diocesan bishop can be available for care, conflict, guidance, and celebration of ordination and confirmation. Each parish is led by a Vicar (or Rector), who is the lead priest.
- Vicar / Rector: This is who leads the local church on day to day ministry. According to how the church is funded or structure, there are usually more clergy and some staff who lead other specific ministries within the parish.
- Vestry: A vestry is governing “board of directors” who create a budget, manage the properties, and most larger decisions of the parish. Day to day ministry is again, at the lead of the vicar and the staff of each ministry. Vestry also helps to give voice of the parish for consensus.
- Congregation is the body of the local parish. The life of the church should be the embodiment of the work of the people (liturgia). A healthy parish ethos is revealed in humble action and presence as well as safe and growing opportunities of ministry and trust.

The Role of the Vestry

As its primary responsibility, the Vestry oversees the “business” of the parish. In partnership with the vicar, clergy and staff, it develops and approves the annual parish budget, leases, mortgages, property, and major transactions. The Vestry also serves as an advisory council to the vicar who by church law is the parish's chief liturgical and pastoral officer. As well as to work for unity in the face of adversity and transitions.

Canon Law

These are the beliefs to which clergy, churches, and the congregation attempts to understand abide within. *”Canon Law begins from that basic affirmation of equity which is the fact of membership in the Body of Christ - a status deeper and stronger than any civil contract or philosophical argument. And it seeks clarity about who is answerable to whom, because every Christian has to know how to work out their responsibilities with God within the context of the various relationships and obligations they are involved in.”*
-Former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams

The Anglican Communion as a whole, unlike the Roman Catholic Church, does not have a centralized canon law of its own. Each of the autonomous Member Churches, however, does have a canonical system. Canon is law are religious rules or frameworks and guidelines.

Parish Life

In parish life, we rest, work, and play holistically. Meaning, our ethos brings us together and sends us out into our neighborhoods, sports fields, marketplace, and schools to be light and life. Rather than fully insulating our lives from others at our church, we come to the parish for connection, rest, word, and sacrament so to be better equipped to be better humans who live into the Good News of Christ as we pass the peace we have to everyone we meet.

Luminous works toward a healthy anthropology. *The Gospel is not a competing idea. It's that by which we see all ideas in proper context. We believe as Christians that Jesus has given us the ideal eyes by which to see the real nature of reality. As St. John of the Cross insists, God refuses to be known except by love. In this light, we acknowledge that the cruciform life is the Way of Jesus.*

Our Values

Beauty

We believe beauty inspires us in accordance of our view of God - The ultimate source of creativity, beauty, artistry, and holiness. Our desire for and orientation towards beauty is in fact a desire and orientation towards God. We also believe that this orientation leads us to repentance and enables our spiritual formation. Beauty, the arts, and a sacramental theology are held in high regard with our parish.

Communion

Christianity is inevitably communal. We believe that Jesus didn't come to write a book, but to start a community that would bear witness to his presence and work in all of life. We value community as intrinsic to a life of faith and we believe justice is the name of what happens when "love your neighbor as yourself" becomes real. Community has potential to solidify from spiritual and relational equity. Everyone longs for a sense of belonging.

Peace

"Shalom" is the Hebrew word for "peace." It means something like everything in its place, flourishing as God intends. We find God in all things and all things in God. It is imperative for our souls to have space to calibrate our posture towards the Divine. Out of

this posture comes compassion, holiness, and worship. Blessed are the peacemakers. - Jesus. To be peacemakers, we need to be people of peace, both inwardly and outwardly. Our living The Way is the shalom that is proper for God's future world to be revealed here and now.

Inclusion

Luminous is centered around the reconciling table of Jesus. Since Jesus excludes no one, neither do we. So, regardless of your ethnicity, marital status, gender, or sexual orientation, all people of good will are invited to participate fully in our life of faith and service.

Furthermore, we also believe women can and should lead in every aspect as men, including deacons, priests, and bishops. There are numerous women leading Luminous, from leadership, vestry, liturgy, homilies, and Sacrament. In technical terms, we are egalitarian.

Safe Church

In our world the vulnerable continue to be exploited, the Church must create action in safeguarding the physical, emotional and spiritual health of every person in its care. We require background checks for anyone volunteering with KiDS or Students. We intend for everyone to have a safe spiritual space to be who they are without prejudice. To help equip clergy, staff, & volunteers, we require safety and prevention training. The wellbeing of our children & teenager's physical, emotional, and spiritual health and safety is paramount in our parish life.

Vestments

On Sunday mornings our clergy (deacons, priests, & bishops put on different clothes. When "in office", we usually wear a collar, which is to represent our office of Holy Orders (our ministry job). On top of that, we wear a white robe and / or black cassock that is meant to hide our individuality and remind us of being clothed in Christ. We wear a rope for a belt that is meant to remind us of our tethering to Christ. We also wear a stole (a kind of scarf) that both indicates our deacon, priest, or bishop authority and recalls in us the yoke of Jesus. Sometimes, some of us wear a chasuble (a kind of poncho) to remind us that we are citizens of a different kingdom.

Baptism

Baptism marks the point in a person's life when they both publicly declare their commitment to Christ and the church declares their commitment to supporting them in their discipleship. There really is no more beautiful example of real community than in that of the sacrament of baptism.

At Luminous, we have the honor of baptizing infants, children and adults. In the case of infants and children, since they are not yet old enough to make promises to God for themselves, others (i.e. their parents and Godparents/sponsors) make promises on their behalf and commit to raise those baptized to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. It is confirmation that these persons then have a chance to affirm their faith for themselves.

For the evangelical Christian, baptism is about their personal decision to believe. For the catholic Christian, baptism is about belonging. A baby's parents believe in Christ, so they intend to raise their child in the Christian faith. The baby is adopted into Christ through baptism. Confirmation is usually when a young (or older) person confirms their belief.

In an Anglican / Episcopal understanding, any baptized person belongs in Christ and is part of his Church. If that person is baptized as a child, at some point that person can make their faith "personal". The baptized belong, and we pray that someday they will believe. Some people who convert to the community of the church first, and then later convert to the beliefs of the Church. They belong before they believe.

Confirmation

Confirmation, Affirmation, & Reception: marks the point in a person's faith journey when they affirm the faith into which they were baptized as a child or adult, and their intention to live a life of discipleship to Jesus. This affirmation is confirmed through prayer and the laying on of hands by our Bishop. The church also asks God to give them power through the Holy Spirit to enable them to live in the Way of Jesus.

*We have information for parents and adults for baptism as well as Confirmation for adults and children older than 11 years.

The Processional

Each Sunday we begin our service with an entrance procession. The procession is the gathering of the saints together for worship. Biblically, there are multiple examples of processions, such as with the Ark of the Covenant (2 Sam 6, 1 Kg 8) and Jesus' triumphant entry (Mk 11, Mt 21, Lk 19, Jn 12). Historically, the whole church would gather outside and process into the sanctuary. We still do this on certain days like Palm Sunday. The procession has come to symbolize our journey from the outside into a space where heaven and earth collide, and we are offered a glimpse of God's in-breaking Kingdom. Ancient Celts referred to these spaces as "thin places." These "thin places" were put there on purpose to declare the glory of God. As such, our entrance procession is a celebration much like a wedding processional.

The Sign of the Cross

Anglicans tend to cross themselves when invoking the Trinity, before and after prayer, upon receiving the sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, and at other times. Sometimes, we are found at a loss for words we can practice this. Making the sign of the cross is a meaningful act of physical prayer, dedication, and remembrance of our baptism and God's fidelity toward us. It's a way of prayerfully declaring, "Christ in my mind, heart, and my whole being."

Bowing

Our posture invites us to be fully present in the moment—for example, bowing as the cross processes by you, standing at the proclamation of the Gospel, and kneeling for the confession. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul writes: "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." In this manner, you may have noticed that clergy bow at the mention of the name of Jesus Christ at various points in our mass. Additionally, you will notice people bowing at various other times in the service, such as the Gospel procession, at certain parts of the Nicene Creed, or when they walk in front of the Altar. In bowing we physically embody our gratitude, reverence, and love for Christ.

Understanding the Eucharist

We also occasionally do a Teaching Eucharist where we walk through the entire Liturgy with explanations of each portion. Liturgy and the Holy Eucharist is to be understood over time. The structure of what we have now, was in place by 155 AD. We must understand that it takes attention, reason, and imagination. The modern church has a dilemma, that few want to admit. The further the church has walked away from the great liturgy of the Ancient Church, the more it has lessened spiritual formation & discipleship. A *consumer* or observer may miss the intended and present depth of the Eucharist.

It takes all of us in the Kingdom's work. All churches hopefully meet a need and minister to those where others can't. That is a reality. We may not understand it, but we do rest in this mystery. Instead of bashing and competing with other modern churches, we simply do what we do, with the intention we are compelled, all while understanding it will only resonate with who it will.

We have 2000 years of the Church, and though we have many different families of the Eucharist, essentially they all bear some form of the early Church. The patterns are found in the Eastern Orthodox Church, Catholic, Anglican Church, & others as well as references to the first Passover meal.

Opportunities of Spiritual Practices

Throughout the year, we provide more opportunities to deepen our communion with Spiritual Practices. This can include but not limited to the following:

Luminous Groups (Table Groups): The primary community opportunity within our parish life is our Groups, which usually meet twice per month at homes. These are open to everyone. Some groups are more “kid-friendly” than others. We can connect you with the best fit. Furthermore, if you are willing to host a new group to help assist in more opportunities, please let us know.

Liturgy Team: Each Sunday, there are several opportunities to serve. Everything from reading Scripture, leading Prayers, Processional... We will help you with a formative understand of the “why” of the work of the people.

KiDS & Students: Each Sunday, we provide childcare (0-4 years old), Luminous KiDS (5-11), as well as Students (Middle & High School). This will continue to be a growing opportunity for our parish. We need volunteers assisting or teaching on a rotation basis. Background checks are required for anyone who is on these teams in addition to Safe Church policies.

Quiet Saturdays: From time to time throughout the year, we are a space together on Saturday mornings for silence, lectio divina, & prayer. These tend to be the first Saturday of most months.

Midweek Eucharist: Most Wednesdays at noon, we host a quiet spoken Eucharist in the chapel. This doesn’t include music and is very small.

Saint Francis Mission: Sundays at 5:30PM at McCreary’s Pub in downtown Franklin. A Community of Love & Reconciliation. This is a more intimate group that includes spoken eucharist, discussion, and space to get to know others.

Hiking: Seasonally, we love to be outside. Be it camping, picnics, or hiking, we love nature. We offer curated spaces of stillness, light conversation, and connection around the area at some of our favorite parks.

Luminous Mystics: For those who want to lean even more deeply into theological & philosophical conversations, books, and formation, our clergy and laity foster some robust discussions and resources for ongoing discovery & curiosity. If that is ever of interest, please let us know.