

Annual Meeting

January 28, 2018

As I reflected on this past year together as a parish I couldn't help but realize the community of wellness, stability, maturity, and faithfulness that is the foundation of our rich life together. Some bear the fruit of being here for decades providing wisdom and stability. Others bear the fruit of sharing our catechumenal community, Pilgrims In Christ, and benefit from a deep connection to the spirituality and tradition of the Anglican tradition and Benedictine spirituality. Our catechumenal experience has also provided a sense of community as we journey through the seasons of the church and reflect upon the meaning and themes each season holds. Every year is a pilgrimage here at St. Andrew, and an opportunity to grow deeper in our spirituality if we give ourselves mindfully to the journey.

I believe we have also been enriched by the long and faithful work of prayer that has been offered from and for our shared life. I hope all hold dear appreciation for Jack and Hazel Mapes who have seen to weekly prayer from this church for over thirty years. And for Stew and Judy Lauterbach who have offered evensong on Wednesday Nights for the past seven plus years. And for Margaret Cardwell who carried the intercessory prayer list for thirty years and who prays for us still from her home in Florida. For the past five years, Corinne Givens has carried on Margaret's work facilitating many to pray for hundreds of requests carried by our parish. I am also thankful for those who have responded to the call to offer the daily office from the all soul's chapel doing the work the church is empowered to do on behalf of the world and our local community. Prayer and the Eucharist are the two primary works of the church and we are called to do that work, throughout the week, multiple times a day. And though, and though all of us have been invited to share that work, few choose to do it. And yet, even with the work of few, MUCH has been accomplished.

In addition to a vital prayer life, our community is blessed with beautiful music and art. Creativity is prayer. Art and music are sacraments, audible and visible manifestations of the invisible and inspiring presence and grace of God. The fact that Danny and Rick have remained with us for 24 and eighteen years is a precious gift to this parish. Throughout the years I have been here, we have journeyed through good times and tough times. We have watched our parish wax and wane, grow and diminish, The steady and uplifting chorus of music, both instrumental and vocal, has been our constant companion for two decades.

And I offer equal thanks to those who have given their talents and their time for the sake of incredible music of the 11:11 service. Annie has been there for seventeen years, Gabe doucette has offered his life for twelve years, and the band has offered their talents for almost ten years along with Jack Ashburn who has provided the powerpoint since he was in fourth grade. The 11:11 community has become the home for many persons who would and could not be at home in any other church.

The space we gather is a work of inspiring art for which we offer thanksgiving to those who have gone before us. This church, like many of its era, was built for and to the glory of God. When people experience this space they are embraced by its peace and beauty. When they experience the community who call this church home, they experience love and acceptance and belonging. This church is a holy place, filled with the peace, healing, and grace of God for those of us who call it home and for the city of Kokomo for whom we intercede.

If you read the gospels, one of the most repeated lessons or teaching that Jesus gives to his disciples, is the act and attitude of being a servant. People being servants is the driving force of any vital community. . Our parish is filled with servants who do the vast majority of work around here. All the shared meals, all the mowed landscape, all the financial management, all the common worship, all the care of children, happens because people step up and serve... over and over and over again. I believe the Kingdom of God is experienced here, because of a parish filled with those who choose to serve and not simply be served.

The Benedictine tradition offers us a guidepost and template for our shared life and growth. Benedictine community is marked by the shared commitment to **Stability** – being steadfast and fully invested right where you are. Do not run away from problems or difficulty and be part of the hard work that produces health and vitality. Don't simply be along for the ride but be a significant cog in the wheels that move us along in our journey.

A commitment to accept our own **conversion** throughout life. Do not come to a place from which you will no longer grow or change. Do not accept comfort for completion. Our conversion is life long and our shared life must bear the dynamic of all of us choosing to grow and embracing change.

And a commitment to **obedience** – Choosing not to live simply for ourselves but instead choose the way of faith, the way of love, and the way of hope. When I take the time to take a step back and consider the fellowship and community we share, I am thankful to be here. There is stability here, there is conversion here, there is the maturity of obedience here.

God has enriched in so many ways. God has filled us with so many blessings and filled our gatherings with beauty and joy. To whom much is given, much is expected. We have a call upon us; we have work to do. We have a message to share. May we continue to do so with God's help and blessing.

Amen