

What are we doing this morning?

Morning Prayer and Communion

Fact: Morning Prayer is a wonderful and rich aspect of our Anglican Heritage

Fact: The Holy Communion Service is the primary way that the Body of Christ gathers together as His Body.

Dilemma: How do we honor our local Anglican Heritage, and yet become more faithful members of the Body of Christ by receiving the Blessed Sacrament every Sunday?

The Solution: We do both.

History: One of the glorious achievements of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer in compiling the Book of Common Prayer was the development of the Daily Offices of Morning and Evening Prayer. The Roman Church Offices were Matins and Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, Nones, Vespers and Compline. Other than those in the convents and monasteries, there were few who had the time to pray all 7 Offices, not to mention being able to understand the complicated rubrical instructions of which days were major feasts or ferial days of different classes. In merging Matins and Lauds into Morning Prayer, and Vespers and Compline into Evening Prayer, Cranmer made accessible the ability for all to pray the Offices of the Church.

The rubrics for Sunday Morning Worship was for Morning Prayer (which was to be prayed every day anyway), the Litany, AND Holy Communion. In the next 450 years the practices of the Church have changed back and forth, as has it's faithfulness and adherence to the apostolic practices (notice that we are not the only generation of fear the that Church is falling into faithlessness). One phenomenon that occurred was the saying of just Morning Prayer, or Morning Prayer with Litany alone. This was made permissible to parishes without a priest to celebrate the Holy Communion regularly, and eventually spread to parishes with full-time clergy as well. In the United States, this practice has differed

from parish to parish and diocese to diocese. The practices and traditions of the Church have changed radically since the founding of St. John's...at one time, a priest could be inhibited (not able to function as a priest) for having candles or flowers near the Altar. Although many parishes and dioceses around the world never deviated from the traditional practice of communion every Sunday, others did, and most have recently reclaimed that heritage

At St. John's - 2nd and 5th Sundays: Archbishop Michael Ramsey, the 100th Archbishop of Canterbury (1961-1974) recommended the combination of Morning Prayer and Holy Communion to those parishes desiring to preserve the Morning Prayer tradition, while being obedient to the apostolic tradition of receiving the Communion every Sunday.

We will be doing Morning Prayer as the ante-communion, which is the technical name for the portion of the Holy Communion service from the opening Collect for Purity through the Confession, Absolution, and Comfortable Words. We will then continue the Holy Communion Service from the "Lift up your hearts" through the end.