

Who in the World are the Anglicans?

The Anglican Communion is comprised of some 85 million Christians in over 150 countries. The English Church was established wherever the British Empire spread in the world. As a federation of National Churches, each is independent, and yet linked by a common history, a shared theology born of our Book of Common Prayer and the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. Our worship is both Liturgical and Historic, combining elements of a rich musical tradition and the prayers of God's people from those preserved from Jesus' day through to the modern age. We are the Church of poets and sailors; scientists and theologians; merchants and Captains of State. Among us are William Shakespeare and Admiral Nelson; Charles Darwin and Isaac Newton; William Wilberforce and George Washington. Anglicanism gave birth to Puritans and Methodists. Charles and John Wesley, John Donne, Jonathan Swift and Thomas Coke were all Anglican priests their entire lives. We ministered on the streets of London, in the jungles of Africa, and in the wilds of India. We produced the King James Version of the Bible and gave the world the wedding service that every girl knows by heart. We have had times of greatness and times when our fallible human nature brought us low. Through it all, Anglicanism has enriched the world with Truth and brought the saving knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to her dark corners, snowy peaks, and far flung Islands of the seven seas.



We are members of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and consider ourselves to be both catholic and reformed. We are the Via Media, the Middle Way; in the middle between the overzealous Reformers and the reactive Romans. We have Bishops, but no Pope; we believe in Purgatory, but not Indulgences; we accept Mary as the greatest of Saints, but we pray with her rather than to her. We aren't going to tell you what you must believe, except in the broadest possible terms, but we will help you to find and live a faith that springs from your heart and fills your life. We believe that the Creeds are the foundation of a relationship that each of us builds with our creator.

Ascension and St. Mark's Church in Bridgeport is proud of our long Anglican heritage. We started as Ascension Church in Decatur in 1888 and have survived the struggles of many of our Christian neighbors over the decades. In 1965, we joined with St. Marks and built our current facility. We rejoice at the faithful proclamation of the gospel, no matter what the source, and we mourn the creeping modern dissolution of the "faith once delivered to the saints." Over the past many decades we have tried to remain faithful even though many of our Christian fellows have agreed to a watered down faith stripped of its power to convict the souls of every human being.

We believe that our clergy should be male and, when married, to someone of the opposite sex. We believe that, looked at properly, scripture should judge us, not the other way around, and that we should not interpret the bible according to our own cultural view of the day. We believe that all humans are sinners in need of saving and that love begins with telling the Truth, gently if need be. Until lately, we were Episcopalians, until that organization departed the faith that we celebrate and now stands outside the Anglican tradition. Today, we are joined with Anglicans around the world through the Anglican Church in North America and we stand happily alongside a growing body of devoted Christians who seek to serve Christ in the world.