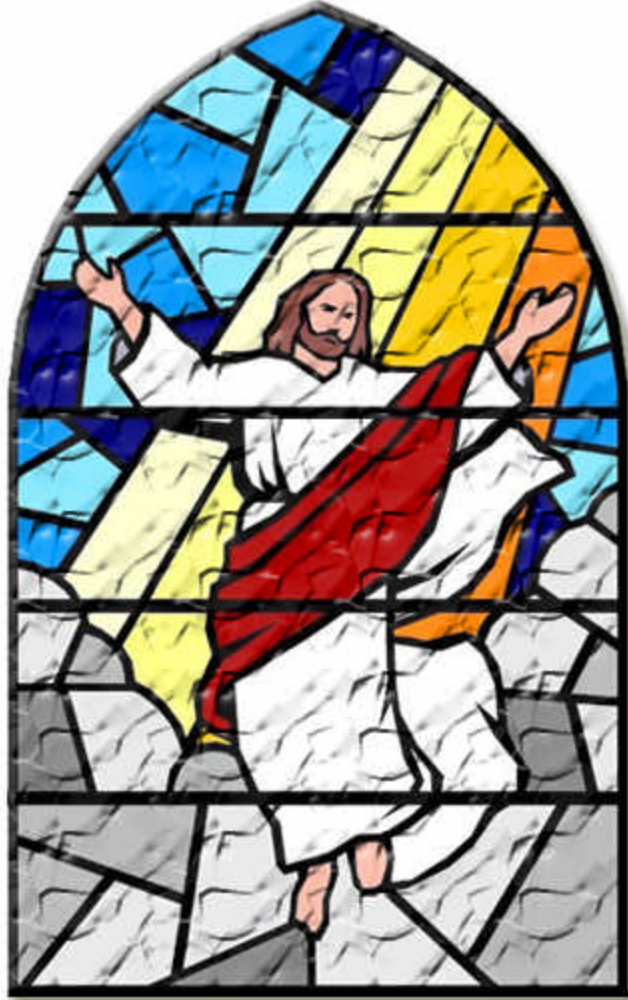


Welcome to the Episcopal Church

"Nurturing a way of life that attracts others to God's generosity revealed in Jesus"



ST. PATRICK EPISCOPAL CHURCH

"A Place Where Old Friends Feel Welcome And New Friends Find A Home"

Brunswick, Ohio

StPatrick4u.com

Getting Acquainted

We're glad you came to worship and visit with us. The Episcopal Church in the United States evolved from the Church of England at the time of the revolution. A majority of the founders of this nation, such as Washington, Hamilton, and Madison were members of this Church, which incorporates the heritage of centuries in a truly democratic structure. While we have this rich heritage of our own, we are strongly committed to the faith and mission of the whole Christian Church in its many branches and pray and work for its unity.

This booklet is designed to provide you a brief introduction of the Episcopal Church and its faith.



Peace be to you!

What does the name "Episcopal Church" mean?



"The Episcopal Church" is one branch of the world-wide Anglican Communion numbering 60 million members in over 100 countries. It is often described as the "bridge church" because it includes both Catholic and Protestant traditions. It preserves the ancient Catholic faith and sacraments and the historic ministry with Bishops as its chief pastors. ("Episcopal" comes from the Greek word for "Bishop") It is at the same time protestant, focusing on the basic authority of Holy Scripture and the proclamation of the Word of God.

What is the nature of the doctrine and discipline of the Episcopal Church?

The Episcopal Church offers a thoughtful approach to religion. It believes faith involves reason as well as emotion. Its doctrine is designed to point out, not dictate, the response to God's continuing revelation. The focus is on God's love and the invitation to respond in mature freedom, in thanksgiving, and in loving devotion. Basic beliefs are expressed in the Book of Common Prayer and especially the Catechism.



The Episcopal Church teaches us that the approach to morality is positive rather than negative. It is rooted in Jesus' summary of the law to love God with heart, mind, and soul and to love one's neighbor as oneself. Its focus is not on laws and restrictions but on free and mature response to God's love and in responsibility for our neighbors.



What are the basic beliefs of the Episcopal Church?



Episcopalians promise to follow Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

Episcopalians believe in One God,

The Father who creates us and all things,

The Son who redeems us from sin and death,

The Holy Spirit who renews us as the Children of God.

Episcopalians believe the Holy Scriptures to be the Word of God and to contain all things necessary for salvation. We believe God inspired human authors and continues to speak to us through the Bible.

Episcopalians affirm that salvation is the end of our separation from God and the beginning of a new relationship with God and with one another. The Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are basic statements of our beliefs in God.

How do Episcopalians worship?

In worship we unite ourselves with others to acknowledge the holiness of God, to hear God's Word, to offer prayer and praise and to celebrate the sacraments. The Celebration of the Holy Eucharist's the central act of worship in accordance with Jesus' command to His disciples. Three books are used: at every service lessons are read from the Holy Bible; the service follows the Book of Common Prayer, which is composed of both ancient and modern liturgies and prayers; the Hymnal includes both traditional and contemporary Church music.

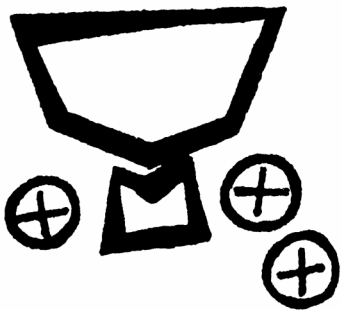


Episcopal services preserve the rich worship and tradition of the historic Church. All present participate actively in this joyous response to God's love.

What are the Sacraments of the Episcopal Church?

Sacraments are the “outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace.” Grace is God’s love freely given to us for forgiveness and spiritual renewal.

The two sacraments of the Gospel, instituted and ordained by Christ Himself as essential for every Christian’s salvation, are:



1. Holy Baptism: Administered once as a pledge of repentance and trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. It is the means by which God adopts us as His Children and makes us members of Christ’s Body, the church.

2. Holy Eucharist: In it we share bread and wine for the continual remembrance of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection until His coming again. Through it we receive the forgiveness of our sins and the strengthening of our union with Christ and one another.



They knew him in the breaking of the bread

Does the Episcopal Church offer any other Sacraments?

Yes, there are five other sacramental rites:

1. **Confirmation:** The rite in which we express mature commitment to Christ and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop.



2. **Holy Matrimony:** The sacrament of marriage, in which a man and woman commit their lives to one another and receive God's blessings.

3. **Reconciliation of a Penitent:** The confession of one's sins to God in the presence of a priest and the receiving of assurance of God's forgiveness and the grace of absolution.

4. **Ministration to the Sick:** The anointing of the sick with oil or the laying on of hands, by which God's grace is given for the healing of the spirit, mind, and body.

5. **Ordination:** The sacrament consecrating Christians in service to God as bishops, priests, and deacons.



*The blind
and the lame
came to him
and he
healed them*



What is the structure and ministry of the Episcopal Church?

The Episcopal Church is a democratic church with a government much like the government of the United States and with Bishops giving pastoral care and oversight. In each congregation the ministry is shared by Lay people and ordained clergy-priests and deacons.



--Lay Persons represent Christ and His Church and bear witness to Him wherever they may be according to the gifts given to them.

--Deacons assist in the proclamation of the Gospel, in the administration of the Sacraments, and as servants to those in need.

--Priests serve as pastors, proclaim the Gospel, and administer the Sacraments.

--Bishops serve as chief priests and pastors of dioceses and ordain others to continue Christ's ministry.

What is the Mission of an Episcopalian?

The mission of an Episcopalian is not simply a matter of "saving souls." Neither is it simply a matter of "feeding the hungry." Christian mission is seen as involving both the spiritual and the physical welfare of mankind, for Christ's love must extend to all of life. The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.



What does being an Episcopalian mean?

It means actively participating through Christ's Church in the work of God.

In church services and parish programs

In acts of charity and social justice

In spreading the Good News of Christ to other people

In learning more about God and how He shares His love with us

By giving of our means and talents to the greater purpose of God's work.

Specials Thanks To:

Laymen's Club

CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE

1047 Amsterdam Avenue at West 112th Street

New York, New York 10025

Phone: (212) 678-6888



Retype from Original: 04/01/06

Reason: Document readability and to continue the ministry of this document for the betterment of Episcopalian understanding.

St. Patrick's Episcopal Church - Brunswick, OH - StPatrick4u.com

E. Dean, Vestry