

INVITATIONS

NEW MEMBER GATHERING

August 31, 2024



Andover Community Church
1 Chase Hill Road
Andover New Hampshire
www.andovercommunitynh.org

Welcome...

We are certainly in a season of excitement and growth. We welcome your curiosity in becoming members of Andover Community and hope this day God gives you an idea of your place in this church family.

Andover Community Church is firstly a community of Christians. The "Anglican" part is secondary, as it is the denomination, or ethos, wherein we have chosen to live out our lives in Christ.

Our time this morning will be about answering the most common questions we hear and you have.

On behalf of my wife, Cinnamon, and our deacons, Kathy and Nancy, I warmly welcome you to this morning of fellowship and exploration. I look forward to knowing you better and am available to be your pastor as we do life together in the grace of God.

Father Bill

SHARE

Icebreaker Discussion

Share a 3 minute summary of your entire life without leaving anything out.

Tell us something groovy about yourself.

What attracts you to this church? Why do you feel led to explore being here?

Any questions you'd like to have answered about this church by the end of our time together?



MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

VISION STATEMENT

Andover Community Church is a beacon of hope, inviting people of all walks of life, to experience the depths of God's love, the assurance of His healing, and the joy of serving together in the power of the Holy Spirit.

MISSION

Empowering and equipping Christians in the fullness of their God given gifts to share the Father's love.

VALUES

- *Presence:* We are a people who joyfully worship and welcome God's presence through scripture, Spirit and sacrament.
- *Messengers:* We are a light to the world around us , sharing the good news and forgiveness of Jesus Christ.
- *Prayer:* Prayer is the life and breath that empowers us to serve others with the unconditional love of Christ.
- *Service:* We serve as Christ served us, by being the hands and feet of Jesus, by loving, praying, clothing, and feeding those in need.

[ALMOST] EVERYTHING ABOUT MEMBERSHIP

Our church strives to be a place where people can meet God. We are intentional about that. Everyone who walks through our doors has been made in the image of God and this we honor. We have no expectations on visitors. But membership is different. Membership involves a certain degree of commitment, first to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and secondly, to one another as fellow members in the Body of Christ.

The following questions clarify just what it means to be a member, and may answer any questions you may have while discerning your place in the Body.

- **What are the requirements of being a member?**

Baptism and belief in the tenants of the Apostle's Creed are the two essentials for church membership.

- **What are some rights and privileges of membership?**

There are three tiers, or levels of membership in the church. Each has particular rights, privileges, and expectations. These are:

- Non-Members. Non-members are always welcomed. They remain happy to be anonymous and choose to participate in our gatherings, yet choose not to formally identify with the church.
- Church Members | Non-Anglican. These are members of the church. They are committed to "doing life" in this community of faith. They vote in annual meetings and participate in most ministry of the church.
- Church Members | Anglican participate in all ministries of the church, with the additional privileges of becoming ministry leaders, serving on the vestry (leadership board), and participating on other levels of diocesan and provincial leadership (ADNE, ACNA, etc.).

- **Why are there two levels of membership?**

Previous to becoming an Anglican Church (2018), we were a Congregational church. Some are still learning this "Anglican" thing. Others have personal or theological reasons why they have yet to be received or confirmed Anglicans.

- **How do I become a member?**

Candidates will attend *Invitations* to hear about the church, learn more about the pastors, and share faith stories. This also provides space to ask questions about the church, our theology, and share other thoughts as you seek continued discernment as to your presence in the church.

Shortly after the class, you will be received as fellow members of Christ's church here at Andover Community through a short liturgical rite which formalizes you to the Lord's good pleasure in this place.

Church Members who desire to become Anglican will attend a class on the Catechism of the church. The Catechism class is a great class which lays out the theology of the what we believe. Afterwards, you will be either received, or confirmed, by the Bishop.

- **What if I am already an Anglican and want to join this church?**

When Anglicans move, or relocate, from one place to another, they tend to seek out other Anglican churches. These people are already Anglican and therefore need not attend a special class, or be received by our Bishop. For them, taking this class, and the transferring of paperwork from their old church stating he or she is a "member in good standing", is all that is needed.

They are highly encouraged to take the Invitations Class so they can learn about and appreciate the culture of their new digs.

- **Are there expectations in being a member of Andover Community Church?**

Yes. Grow with us in the grace of God.

We also invite you to participate in stuff, to get involved in some of the fun around here - or, better yet, to begin things out of the passion of your heart. In short, we have something for you; you have something for us.

Expectations here have nothing to do with how you're perceived by others, or the measure God loves you, or if the pastor likes you, or whether or not you'll make it to heaven! They are decisions between you and God and, as in all things, they are to be lived out with freedom and faith.

Every church has expectations. Our listing is not exclusive to this church only, but to the vast majority of all Christians, regardless of where they worship.

- *Generous giving.* We give because God gave. The 10% tithe is a OT standard for giving for believers, but NT believers are free to give up and beyond that (see 2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

- *Discernment of personal giftedness* and stepping into a ministry or two (but not three). We are all members of one body, wired for specific activities. We encourage all members to either step into an existing ministry, or form a team and create a new one, according to the passion of their heart. Ministries are both "in-reaching," to the our own people, or "out-reaching" to those outside the walls of the church. Roughly 80% of our members are involved in some sort of ministry activities. A spiritual gifts inventory is highly recommended.
 - *Participation in worship services*. "Doing church" is a spiritual discipline. It's more than just showing up. It's actually engaging in what is going on, even when you're not feeling the love. (See Deuteronomy 10:12 and Hebrews 10:25.)
 - *Fostering of relationships within the church*. Fellowship within the church is essential. We are not a celebrity church. The pastor and deacons cannot be your best friend. We are all bound to one another in Christ's love, exhorted and encouraged by one another, and find great joy when we dwell together in unity. Our relationships rise up to heaven, and to either side, which creates a perfect picture of the Cross. You will find there are people just like you here - people struggling with life, addictions, and doing life in the "mystery" - just like you. Our people are wonderful.
 - *Being invitational/evangelical with others in the community*. "Come and see" is the invitation for all Christians to invite others into the goodness of God. Some stand on street corners and pray for people, others give food, still others do things for others. Either way, when asked, we are all called to give a reason for the hope that lives within us (see 1 Peter 3:15) and invite into the house of God. We love what God is doing in our church and invite others to check it out for themselves.
 - *Blessing and honoring the leadership, vision, and direction of the community*. Unity is essential in our church. Leadership decisions are made through a hierarchy of leaders which church membership votes on, and whom work hard to serve the needs of the people. We would hope that members would seek to build up and bless their church and not tear down.
- **I am not used to doing "liturgy," the church year, the meaning of Sacraments, and other things we do here. How may I better understand the service?**
- *Surf the Net*. There is much information on the web about the anglican church. When you search, make sure you're searching for:
 - The Anglican Church in North America. This is the website for the denomination in America. A search for GAFCON (Global Anglican Future Conference) will bring you to a worldwide appreciation for who we are and what we are all about.

- The Anglican Diocese of New England. This is the website for our diocese, which include churches in Rhode Island, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, and Maine.
- *A reading of "Getting Around the Place" would be tremendously helpful.* This book, written by Fr. Bill, is an insightful periodical on who we are as Anglicans, how we celebrate church seasons, the different parts of a Sunday morning service, with a bit of theology on the side. This document is found on the "About Us/Anglicanism pages on the church website: www.andovercommunitynh.org, or can be given as a hard copy upon request.
- *Steal a **red prayer book*** from inside the church and read it secretly.
- Take the class on Catechism (offered this August) taught by Jef DeMarie. This is an excellent way to parse what Anglicans believe about theology, issues, and history.



Notes | Questions

MORE INSIGHTFUL STUFF ABOUT THIS PLACE

Here's where you can hear about our systems of authority, how we interface with other churches, money handling, and answer more questions you may have before making your decision to join.

Money Matters. Every cent the church receives is considered a gifted provision for the Lord's work in this place. It takes money to run a church, develop and sustain ministries, pay salaries, maintain buildings, etc.. Donna Thompson, works tirelessly to account for every last shekel. She is always on hand give you an overview of where monies go, and answer any questions you have.

Episcopal Leadership. We operate in a hierarchical system (i.e. bishops, priests, deacons, and laity). This system has been in place since the Apostle Peter was installed as the first Bishop over Jerusalem and provides smooth lines of ecclesiastical praxis and accountability. Fr. Bill, our Rector, will share how our structure differs from other churches, and answer questions about structure and the ordination process and our "dream team" clergy!

Spiritual Integrity. As the Rector, Fr. Bill is responsible for everything that happens in worship. The following precepts guide his decision making and inform his worldview when in his role as priest:

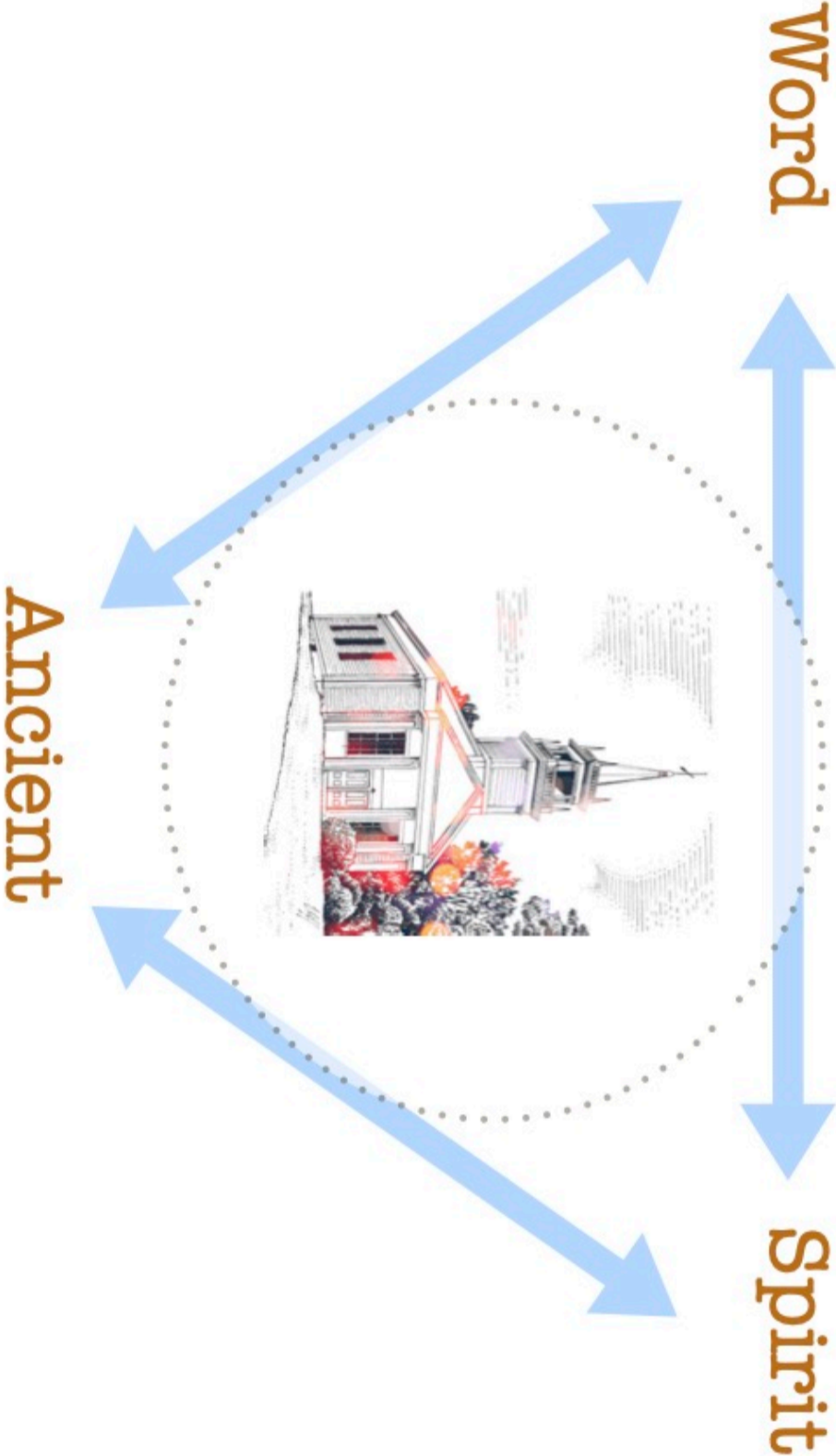
- We exist for the outsider, and create services as invitational events wherein the outsider can discover their place in God's heart.
- We are intent on creating "three-streamed" worship experiences each time we gather. This happens through ancient prayers and ritual (tradition), spiritual expectancy and expression (charismatic), and Gospel preaching (evangelical).
- We desire excellence in all we do (not perfectionism, but excellence). Our life in Christ reflects how we purchase things of beauty, how we behave, continuity in decorations, etc. Costs are deemed as secondary to the desires for excellence, both in serving the Lord, and in blessing his people.
- We like kids and welcome them.
- We believe we are happiest when ministering in gifts and skills that God has given us. All people are ministers. The role of clergy is not to do the stuff, but to train the laity to do the stuff.



Notes | Questions

WHAT DOES A THREE STREAMED CHURCH LOOK LIKE?

One River – Three Streams



	WORD	SPIRIT	ANCIENT
Also Known As	Evangelical	Charismatic/Pentecostal	Traditional/Liturgical
Definitives	Sriptures Salvation by Faith in Grace Alone	Experience Empowered to Continue Jesus' Ministry	Historical An extension of synagoue practice
Power Verse	John 3:16 Matthew 28:16-20	Acts 2 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 + 12:13	Luke 4:16-20 Acts 2:42
Salvation, Sanctification, and New Life	Forgiveness of Sins Personal Relationship with Jesus through confession as Lord and Savior	Assured and accredited through "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" Gifts and Anointing Central Continuous filling	Baptism as entrance rite, with Sacraments, community, and yearly rituals nurturing faith and belief
Worldviews of Culture	"Christ against culture" (Impartial) <i>lies in the power of evil one</i>	"Christ invading culture" (Invitational) <i>the fields are ready for harvest</i>	"Christ within culture" (Incarnational) <i>and God said it was good</i>
Gospel	Preached and Proclaimed	Experienced and Empowering	Immersed in the Whole of Life
Sunday Mornings	Solid Preaching the Word of God with intent to convict, convert, and disciple	Music and preaching intended towards intimacy, experience, and openness with the Holy Spirit	Invitation to mystery through liturgy and sacrament with saints seen and unseen
Majors	Cruciform emphasis The Great Commission Social activism Biblically Learned	Signs and Wonders Intimacy with Holy Spirit A "living faith experience" Gifts + Body Life	Creedal Reflective/Contemplative Spirituality Historic Episcopacy Beauty as sacramental
Minors	Fundamentalistic formula-driven faith Bibliolatry Seperation/Hostility with the systems of the planet	Individuialistic Faithwalk Emotionalistic and thrill seeking Tendancies of extreme accountability OR unaccountability <i>Me + God</i>	Spirit of Perfectionism Traditionology Roteness invites "a spectator's sport" Moral and Ethical freedoms may lend to liberalism

Appendix

A BIT OF HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

The meetinghouse of the Andover Congregational church has been many things in the past. It is an integral part of the colorful history of the town.

Since the 18th century the old East Meetinghouse has served as the original location for meetings of citizens of Andover –whether in worship of Almighty God or for early annual town meetings or for electioneering or debates over slavery and so forth.

The old East Meetinghouse has also been an integral part of the history of the Christian Church in Andover. Christians of several traditions have from the beginning held services of worship here – sometimes as Congregationalists, sometimes as Baptists or as simply "Christians," and often in a spirit of cooperation, community, and Christian unity.

The Andover Congregational Church was built as the Andover town meetinghouse, replacing the first meetinghouse, which was erected in 1773 and destroyed in 1795. The oak frame of the second meetinghouse, now the Congregational Church, was raised on May 3, 1796, on a foundation of granite blocks cut from a boulder found near Highland Lake.

The first sermon is said to have been preached in the building on July 3, 1796, but the meetinghouse was not dedicated until January 5, 1797. The building's cost of \$2,200 was presumably paid for by the sale of pews. No view or complete description of the meetinghouse as it was originally built is known, but the plan is published in the 1910 town history.

It appears to have been a standard late 18th century meetinghouse, a two story, gable roofed building, with the main entry in the south lateral facade and stair towers (with their own entries) serving the second story galleries, on the east and west gable ends.

The meetinghouse was used for town meetings and, at first, for the services of the Congregational town minister, the Rev. Josiah Badcock. But after his resignation in 1809, other sects used the meetinghouse for their services. In the 1830's the meetinghouse was shared by the Free Will Baptist church and the Christian Church, both organized in 1830. But in 1839 the Free Will Baptists built their own church building (South Church) in East Andover and withdrew from the meetinghouse. The meetinghouse soon fell into disrepair. It was described as early as 1822 as "now decaying" having received little or no repairs since its construction.

Under the auspices of the Christian Church, the remaining religious group in the meetinghouse, a movement soon began to convert it into a "proper church." At the annual town meeting on March 10, 1840, it was voted that "the Town relinquish their claim to the East Meetinghouse provided that the proprietors of some religious society will repair the same". At a meeting of the meetinghouse proprietors on March 16, 1840 it was voted to "repair" the meetinghouse, the vote being the owners of thirty and two-thirds pews in favor of the repairs, and the owners of eighteen and one third pews against repair.

The committee for repairing the building was Capt. Caleb Marston, James Marston, Sr., and Capt. William Graves, with Willard Emery serving as the financial agent. The "repairs", which cost \$2,146.42 and were paid for by the resale of the pews, were completed in the same year, and the church was rededicated on December 3, 1840.²⁶ Although described as "repairs", the work was actually a total rebuilding of the structure. One local historian stated that probably only the oak frame and granite foundation blocks of the 18th century meetinghouse still survive in the 19th century church.

The church was given a quarter turn so that its gable end faced south, and the foundation was rebuilt. A pavilion and tower were added to the new south facade. The walls were resheathed and trimmed with new ornament. And the interior was renovated. The result was an entirely new Greek Revival church commonly built in that era, which has become the classic New England style church building. Unfortunately, we cannot identify the designer or builders of this remodeled meetinghouse

The congregation of the Christian Church declined in the mid-century and did not continue in existence long. But in 1869 the new "North Church" housed a restart of the Congregational church.

Since that time the Congregationalists have made a few minor changes. The present window sash in the east and west side windows were apparently installed in 1886 restoring them from previous colored glass to the more historic clear glass panes. A furnace was installed and a partial basement with windows and bulkhead was excavated in June 1921. A used tracker organ was installed in 1886 and the chancel and choir loft areas redesigned in the 1980's.

At some point the building was electrified with lighting, and interior lights were redesigned in the late 1980's. A small restroom was added in the 1950's. The main entry acquired a light in 1969 and new exterior carriage lights were installed in 1999. A handicap ramp was added at the entrance in the early 1990's. The steeple was completely rebuilt and the belfry was restored in 1999 and the balcony area was remodeled in the early 2000's. All these changes since its construction, however, have been relatively minor leaving the church building looking virtually as it did in 1840.

Excerpted in part from...

David Ruell, "East Andover Village Center Historic District," for the
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
U.S. Dept. of the Interior