



August 2023

A United Methodist Church

Dear St. Andrew Members and Church Family,

One of the things I was pleased to find when I arrived here was our 5-Point Strategic Plan that had been completed by our leadership, based on feedback from the congregation, and that #1 is 'Inspiring Worship.'

The Inspiring Worship Committee formed from this and determined to '*make worship more inviting through an intentional creative process which will lead to modern musical arrangements, lay worship leaders, services at various times/days with different styles, etc.*' and I feel I fit in well with this strategy!

Worship is #1 for me as well: I believe that what we do at church on a Sunday should form us to *be* the church for the rest of the week. I love to plan and lead worship; I love to be creative with worship; I love the vast array of styles and varieties of worship that our Christian tradition has gifted us over the past two millennia and will continue to in the years to come. I believe worship should inspire us to grow closer to God and to each other as we follow Jesus Christ together into the world.

My experience with worship here at St. Andrew so far has been wonderful. Combining the services into one for the summer was a great way to bring everyone together; it has brought energy and enthusiasm and fuller pews to the sanctuary; and it has allowed me to worship with my new church family in a unified manner.

The Inspiring Worship Committee has recommended that we keep the one, 10:00 am service schedule through the Fall, and I and our staff feel this is a good way to proceed temporarily for various reasons:

- The afore-mentioned energy and enthusiasm, fuller pews, and unified feeling, which helps lead to:
- A more hospitable and welcoming environment for first-time guests who might feel more at-home and less conspicuous with more worshipers in attendance
- It is easier to find folks to serve in various roles, such as Acolytes, Ushers, Readers, Liturgists, Tech Team, Children's Church leaders, etc.
- A choir/musicians every Sunday, as opposed to having to rotate services each week
- Better stewardship of our monetary resources as the sanctuary lights, air, *et al* will be needed for a shorter time each week.

We will offer Sunday School Classes before the service at 9:00 am (or classes have the option to meet after the service if they would prefer). Following the worship service, we will continue with our Lemonade in the Shade fellowship time (and need folks to help serve each week). We will also be introducing several new groups, studies, and special events for adults, youth, and children that will meet weekly or monthly to continue taking what we do on Sunday out into our week and into the world.

Let me assure you, this is only temporary. We plan to resume a two-service schedule in January. It is our hope that during the Fall, we will continue to grow worship attendance, and we will be able to intentionally plan for the other service to resemble what the Strategic Plan listed: worship that is a little different, a little more 'modern' in style, while keeping the same Scripture, sermon, and liturgy that our more traditional service offers as well. We will keep you updated throughout the Fall as to our progress and would love for any of you with musical or creative abilities to let us know how you might want to be a part of worship, either style!

As I mentioned in a recent sermon, due to an injury, I've had to adapt my workouts. I've had to find new and different ways to move while maintaining some of my old workout routine, all so my injury can heal while my body can continue to stay healthy. We as the Church, the Body of Christ, are also called to adapt, to find new and different ways to be the Church while maintaining some of our 'old' routines as well, all so the Body of Christ can continue to heal and continue to stay healthy.

Grateful to be part of the body along with you! — *Jonathan*

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