

## Bishop's Note - Why I'm an Anglican #5 - We are Evangelical and Evangelistic

This morning in the Bishop's Note, I move along to the fourth reason why I am an Anglican - because we are EVANGELICAL and EVANGELISTIC! Now, in the previous weeks I've explained that I am an Anglican because we are Biblical, Liturgical, and Sacramental. Being Evangelical and Evangelistic go hand-in-hand with the previous reasons, because it's all based on the person and mission of Jesus Christ - his life, death, and resurrection!

What does it mean to be Evangelical? The term "evangelical" comes from the Greek word (εὐαγγέλιον) *euangelion*, meaning "the good news" or the "gospel." Thus, the evangelical faith focuses on the "good news" of salvation brought to sinners by Jesus Christ.

I love the fact that our worship from the Book of Common Prayer is Evangelical from start to finish - we boldly proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ without holding any punches. The proclamation of the Good News was embodied by the early missionaries of the Anglican Church, who took the gospel of Jesus Christ wherever the English flag went, and sometimes where the English flag did not go. This includes China, Africa, the Eastern Coast of Central America, and especially East of Africa - where the Anglican Church is thriving. This evangelical zeal distinguishes the Anglican Church in North America (and the vast majority of Anglicans around the world) from many "mainline" denominations, which no longer teach that Jesus is **"The Way, the Truth and the Life and no one comes to the Father except through Jesus."** (Paraphrase of John 14:6) We in the Anglican Church in North America, and here in the Diocese of San Joaquin, are proud signers of The Jerusalem Declaration, which clearly states that salvation is found in and through Jesus Christ, and him only. Here is a link to the Jerusalem Declaration [http://fca.net/resources/the\\_jerusalem\\_declaration/](http://fca.net/resources/the_jerusalem_declaration/) or you can find it on our website [www.dioceseofsanjoaquin.net](http://www.dioceseofsanjoaquin.net) and click the News and Events tab.

The Good News of Jesus Christ is that Jesus died on the cross to redeem man, and thus to reconcile God and Man. All who put their trust in him, all who claim Jesus as Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead, have eternal life. (Romans 10:9) Thus, when we take our last breath on earth, the very next second the believer takes his first sweet breath with Jesus in Heaven.

Evangelical describes our beliefs and acknowledges Jesus' call to us in the Great Commission to go to all the world **"baptizing in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."** (Matthew 28:19) This is seen in all aspects of Anglicanism, and moves us from simply being evangelical to being evangelistic - putting evangelical beliefs into practice.

Archbishop Cranmer captured our evangelical and evangelistic spirit when we wrote the collects (prayers setting the tone of that Sunday's worship) in the first Book of

Common Prayer. These collects have been passed down through the generations, and are used every Sunday in our worship. The Collect for the Second Sunday after the Epiphany reads: "**Almighty God, whose Son our Savior Jesus Christ is the light of the world: Grant that thy people, illumined by the Word and Sacraments, may shine with the radiance of Christ's glory, that he may be known, worshiped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who with thee and the Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth, one God, now and for ever. Amen**"

What would the church be like if we lived into the beautiful image that collect sets forth? Clearly we are not there yet, but I live for the day when the Diocese of San Joaquin and all Anglican Christians see that beautiful prayer realized.

Blessings to you all!

Bishop Menees