

What is *The Daily Office*?

A place I used to go to before I retired. Well, yes and not quite!

If you were present during Sunday's Annual Meeting, or, perhaps watching it on SsAM's YouTube Channel (or are planning to!), you might have heard and then looked through Danny Schweers' Communication Committee Report. In it, he says, among other important information, that *others contribute to our Facebook page, which is also used to share via video our church's ambitious schedule of 17 weekly prayer services.*

Ambitious indeed! It was our now retired Father David who gathered us to join him as part of a team to offer daily prayer during the pandemic and so we continue his legacy, 3 times a day, 5 days a week, and twice on Saturday, *live*. Each of us broadcast these services on the Parish Facebook page in real time from our phones or computers, from home, or wherever we are. This prayer practice is known as *The Daily Office*. Why *Office*? The usual use of the word is to describe a place where one does particular work for a living. In the case of *The Daily Office* or *The Divine Office* as known by some faith traditions, it is one way on the path to a Spiritual Living.

The practice has evolved from its early monastic roots of Christianity and was once only required for and accessible to monks, nuns, and ordained clergy. Its purpose is to slow us down a bit, to spend time *with* God ~ not to do something but to simply be with God. Through the time we spend with it, the words of the various services, mostly Biblically based, we are opened for God to work through us. It reminds us of the gift of being part of God's Creation and our call from Christ. It can transform us in ways that fill our thoughts and be reflected in our actions, even unconsciously. When done regularly, as with attending the Sunday Liturgy, it refreshes, renews, and anchors us. The *Office* is our space where the work of the Spirit attends to us, feeding and nurturing our souls. It's an easy space on Facebook *Live*, accessible through the Parish website if you are not on Facebook, or to connect with other parish events on and off the website through *The Episcopal Church of Saints Andrew and Matthew* Facebook page.

The *Office* is prayed **Monday to Friday** beginning with Morning Prayer at **8 am** by Dr. Wanda Smith, Evening Prayer at **5 pm** and Compline (kom-plin/night prayer) at **8 pm** by the rotating team members of Dr. Rosie Castelli, Mary C. Morgan, Adele Meredith, and me. On Saturdays, currently, the team members offer prayer at **8:30 am** and **Noon**. The Saturday Schedule will change to one Morning Prayer service at 10:30 am beginning July 2. Morning and Evening prayer may take 20-30 minutes. Compline and Noonday are about 15 minutes.

We generally use the Episcopal *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP), sometimes *A New Zealand Prayerbook*, and other resources. We do the *work*, you come and listen, pray in your heart, and just *be* with God. AND, they're all recorded and listed on the Facebook page under "view all videos" and available 24/7. Choose randomly or start with Compline or Noonday, even at 2 in the morning on one of *those* nights. It's anonymous unless you choose to "like" or comment. You can add prayers requests, too! You are NOT on camera, it's not Zoom. But you will be one of the *two or three gathered* and God will be in the midst of us even if you're a month late! Join us, it's free and there's a great spiritual payoff!

Christina Brennan Lee