

## Progressive Journey of Servants

From our birth, we are hard-wired with the need to belong. This mechanism impels us to seek out and form relationships. The most important, is the bond between mother/father and child. This forms first, followed by the desire to extend this bond to others in the immediate family. Familial bonds, when formed correctly, with love and nurturing, last throughout life. As we form relationships beyond the family, we demonstrate the need for close knit support groups, thus forming communities and so forth. Within these communities, we find strength, protection, support, nurturing and meaning. We develop self-identities and identify with the greater group as well. We find a place to belong and a purpose.

Within the Anglican Family, we express our bonds of love in our selfless serving of one another. Based on the example of Christ as a servant, we build community by serving each other and in growing in purpose as followers of Christ who laid down his life for us, the ultimate expression of love.

We are all called to a level of responsibility for one another as Christians. Jesus said, "Salt is good but if the salt has lost its saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace one with another." (Mk. 9:50) St. Francis made a point to stand for unity, social justice, and to be a living witness to the world. If we are to truly follow "he" that followed HIM, then we must be accountable to our brethren and live in a way that is favourable in the eyes of our Lord. And if we choose to pick up our own cross and bear it, then we must live by a certain rule of life; a guideline to which we may be answerable to. It has been written, "And he that does not take his cross and follows after me, is not worthy of me." (Mat. 10:38)

Accept all as coming from God, do all for God, offer all to God, and seek ardently the perfection of Charity and the love of the Cross.

### Progressive Direction

The Progressive Anglican Community is committed to praying and working for a fuller expression and realization of the unity of the Body of Christ through the ministry and sacrament of reconciliation, which heals the dismembered Body of Christ—the Church. Reconciliation begins with our relationship with God, one another and our self. The continual healing of the Body of Christ makes visible of His presence, kingdom, love and grace in the present moment. This practice is not meant to be a burden, but is to enable us to live the common life in Christ. In our daily life in society these disciplines must be lived. It is here that God shapes Christ in us. It is here Christ calls us to be his Body, living in love, joy, peace, patient endurance, kindness, generosity, faith, gentleness and self-control. It is here God gives us our place among the faithful.

Any common life shared by Christians is built upon the new commandment given to us by Jesus; "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 15:12). Within such company, mutual acceptance and forgiveness is to transcend discord. The pursuit of truth and honesty is to build faith on a spirit of generosity and hospitality. Its' goal is to extend peace to all neighbours, both friend and stranger alike. This quality of love, including all of its' practical applications, is the aim of progressive Anglicanism. This leads us to a four-fold life vision. We base our lives in (1) prayer, (2) reconciliation, (3) friendly presence for each other and (4) a willingness to be transparent and vulnerable for one another in a pastoral manner.

### HOW DO WE GET THERE? Four Keystones for Progressive Serventhood

(A) We start in gratitude for the gift of life as we seek to be aware of God present in every moment, trusting that as we respond in faith to the duties of each day God is revealed. The Word made flesh and dwelling among us shows His glory in the ordinary circumstances of daily life, in

our neighbour's need, in the beauty of creation, in the tasks set before us and in the rub of community life. In these moments we would see and hear and taste and touch the goodness of God. And we would ask the Holy Spirit to guide our thoughts and words and actions that we might glorify God in all. It is a sacrament of life.

(B) In recognition of God's longing for us and our longing for God we will set aside a time each day for prayer. As a part of the whole people of God, we pray in our own way as the primary expression of our life together in Christ. Remembering God's command and promise we will delight in the Lord by keeping our life centered in God's inclusive love. As individual members of the Body of Christ, we will give ourselves to personal prayer, to being with God and to listening for His word to us. These times set aside for prayer, corporate and personal, are to enable us to pray "unceasingly" and to live prayerfully.

(C) Acknowledging God as Giver and Sustainer of life we will order our lives in simplicity, relying on God's Providence. We will seek daily to un-clutter our lives by letting go of things, concerns and habits that divide our hearts and keep us from simplicity itself. We will content ourselves with the place and provision God grants and call to mind each day the plight of the poor and the needs of the world's peoples. We will order our day so that we will have time — time for God, time for people, time for ourselves, observing a rhythm of work and leisure.

(D) In thanksgiving we will gather at Christ's table regularly, receiving His Body and Blood given to us for the life of the world. The celebration of Eucharist is central in the life of faith. "The one who feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me; and I in him. Just as the Father who has life sent Me and I have life because of the Father, so the one who feeds on Me will have life because of Me" (Jn 6:56-57). Christ offers Himself to us in this sacrament, and we respond in obedience. In receiving Christ, we become that which we receive, the Body of Christ. The Divinity of Jesus rests within us and around us. Taken, blessed, broken and distributed, we are drawn into the mystery of the paschal pattern of dying and rising. In this sacrament we anticipate the fullness of the kingdom when all creation will be gathered as one at Christ's table. We will celebrate this hope each day as we gather at table, making each meal a remembrance of Christ's feast. Added to this, we read, study and serve in community. We form community in our home, our extended family and in our parish. We risk and serve beyond our local community and reach out to the world as God calls us.

We are servants of God who humbly work at testing our actions against the measure of Jesus. We don't work for our self-interest. We work for the interest of all, the planet and our service to responsibly respond to the vision of God-to be people of Love.