

Updated Vision Statement

Our parish leadership recently began discussing Redeemer in the context of other Episcopal parishes both in the Diocese of Southern Ohio and the national church. Our rector, Bruce Freeman, traveled to Texas to attend a conference where many parishes had a chance to discuss and compare perspectives. Several parish leaders also participated in various diocesan discussions over the last several months regarding the roles, focus, and evolution of congregations in Southern Ohio. When the vestry reflected on these national and diocesan interactions it became clear that we needed to update our vision statement. We felt that intentional and important things we do at Redeemer were not reflected in the current statement.

During the vestry/Board Chair retreat in February, we spent time in prayerful deliberation and discernment. The decision to update the vision statement for the parish was not the result of a change in our focus or direction -- our core commitments and intentions remain the same. Instead, the update is an expansion of our vision statement to capture in words what we already do in practice.

For several years the vision statement has been "*We invite all to know and serve Jesus as part of our faith community and to reach out with love and support to those in need,*" and we have used the shorthand "*Invite in, reach out*" to summarize the two components of the statement. This has been a useful and accurate representation of our intentions, and those elements of our vision remain central to what we do. However, we realized that there is a very important third component at the core of what we do that was not reflected in the statement. At Redeemer we also "grow faith."

Growing faith comes in many forms in our parish life. It includes formation programs where we learn more about our traditions, our scriptures, our historical relationship with God, and the practices of faith. It includes pastoral support that shapes our responses to life's experiences in a way that keeps us connected to God. Growing faith includes clergy preaching and lay leadership that challenge us and help us experience the redeeming power of Jesus Christ. It includes the inspiration we feel from observing and nurturing the deliberate faith practices of those around us and the intentional approaches they have to deeper spirituality. All of these things and more build and strengthen those who participate in our community and enable them to reach out and share the love of Christ with those in need.

Based on all of this, our new vision statement reads as follows.

Our community:

- *Invites and welcomes all*
- *Inspires growth in faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ*
- *Reaches out with love and support to those in need*

In shorthand we *Invite In, Grow Faith, and Reach Out.*

If you have any questions or concerns about the revised statement please feel free to contact one of the wardens or a vestry member to discuss it further.

Peace,

Matthew Stone, Senior Warden