ST. ANDREW'S CROSS

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew

Prayer, Study, and Service

November 2026 The Episcopal and Anglican Magazine of Men's Ministry



A Season of Gratitude

WE ARE THE BROTHERHOOD OF ST. ANDREW, A LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND GLOBAL MEN'S EPISCOPAL AND ANGLICAN MINISTRY.

OUR AREAS OF MISSION FOCUS: DISCIPLESHIP AND MENTORING, PRISON MINISTRIES, RACIAL RECONCILIATION,



For many Brotherhood Chapters and men's ministry groups, preparing Thanksgiving baskets for persons in need is an annual tradition. Yet this familiar act of generosity can become even more meaningful when we focus not only on providing food, but also on building relationships and honoring the dignity of those we serve.

Here are six ways to deepen your Thanksgiving basket ministry and, in the process, perhaps open a door to inviting men to join with you in your ongoing Chapter or group.

1. Listen Before You Give. Ask recipient families about their needs and preferences. Consider dietary restrictions, cultural traditions, and family size. If you are providing a turkey, inquire if they have a pan (and oven) large enough to cook it or if they need any type of help with preparing it. A basket thoughtfully prepared for a particular household communicates genuine care, as well as gives you an opportunity to get acquainted with those you are serving.

2. Include More Than Food. Add a handwritten Thanksgiving greeting from your Brothers (including an invitation to an upcoming Brotherhood gathering), have some children in your parish offer a bit of colorful artwork, or maybe include a mum or a small seasonal bouquet of flowers. Simple touches like this remind families they are valued members of God's community.

3. Make It a Ministry of Relationships. When appropriate, offer other opportunities for personal connection. A friendly conversation, a warm welcome, or an invitation to a holiday parish event or meal (including transportation) can help transform a charitable act into a meaningful mutual encounter for both your men's ministry and your entire parish.

4. Involve the Whole Congregation in What You're Doing. Invite parishioners of all ages to pray, by first names, for those you are serving from Thanksgiving through Epiphany. Lead, as Brothers, in helping others in your church to name and claim continued ways they can serve and include your basket recipients. Shared longer-term service further strengthens the bonds of Christian fellowship.

5. Serve With Dignity and Respect. Even as you seek to get to know your basket recipients and offer invitation, protect their privacy. Avoid unnecessary questions or public displays of generosity. Remember that we are not simply helping others; we are recognizing Christ in our neighbors.

6. Continue the Mission. Keep the mission relationship sustained beyond Thanksgiving by also offering your recipients good connections in your community. For example, what agency in your area offers utilities payment assistance? Warm winter clothing? Job training and placement or educational assistance?

Thanksgiving should be the beginning of a relationship, not its conclusion. Jesus reminds us in Matthew 25:40 that whatever we do for the least of these, we do for him.

This Thanksgiving, let our Brotherhood baskets carry more than food. Let them carry compassion, respect, friendship, an invitation to be a part of your Brotherhood Chapter or men's ministry group, and the unmistakable message that every person is beloved by God.



Thanksgiving is often pictured as a joyful gathering around a crowded table, filled with laughter, familiar faces, and cherished traditions. But for many Brothers, Thanksgiving has changed. The children have grown and moved away. A spouse or partner has died. A marriage has ended. Family relationships have become strained, or circumstances have left us spending the holiday alone. What once brought happiness may now bring sadness and loneliness.

As men, we sometimes find it difficult to acknowledge these feelings. We may believe we should be strong, independent, and able to handle whatever life brings. Yet loneliness is not a weakness. It is a reminder that we were created for relationships, for companionship, and for community.

Our faith through scriptures offers us a meaningful reminder that we are never entirely alone. In the words of Psalm 23, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." God walks beside us through seasons of joy and sorrow. Our faith does not eliminate grief, but it assures us that God's love remains steadfast even when our lives change.

Thanksgiving can also become an opportunity to create new traditions. Invite a friend to share a meal. Volunteer at a community dinner. Reach out to another man in your Brotherhood Chapter or men's ministry (or even your parish) who you sense may be experiencing the same loneliness. Sometimes the most meaningful gift we can offer is simply our presence. And that gift of presence can also be like a healing balm for our sense of isolation.

Our parish community beyond our group of Brothers can also be a powerful source of connection. Holiday gatherings, shared work projects in our church, and just simple conversations at coffee hour remind us that we belong to something larger than ourselves. We need not carry our burdens alone.

This Thanksgiving, remember gratitude does not have to mean pretending everything is perfect. We can be thankful for memories while acknowledging our sadness. We can give thanks for friendships, for faith, and for the possibility of new beginnings.

Perhaps the greatest Thanksgiving blessing is discovering that even when life has changed, God's grace has not. We remain loved, valued, and connected through Christ. And sometimes, that is enough to take a step forward and begin again.

Upcoming Speaker Announced For Monthly Webinar

December: The Most Reverend Sean Rowe, Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church

Join Us For Our Monthly Webinars, On the First Wednesday of Each Month

HERE'S THE LINK: BROTHERHOOD OF SAINT ANDREW MONTHLY WEBINAR

MEETING ID: 851 3889 2685

Around the Brotherhood Community

Diocese of Texas Assembly Rebuilds Deck for Children in Need

By Randall Redd, Brotherhood Assembly, Diocese of Texas

The Brotherhood Assembly for the Diocese of Texas, which represents 31 Chapters, raises funds each year for charitable causes serving veterans, the homeless, and at-risk youth. This year, it supported Boys and Girls Country of Houston (BCGH) by funding the reconstruction of a lakeside fishing and event deck.





Founded in 1971, BCGH offers a residential, family-style home on a 50-acre campus outside Houston for children ages 5 to 18. The campus lake is a central space for recreation, fellowship, and special events, but a recent fire heavily damaged the deck overlooking it.

To meet that need, the Assembly funded the rebuild, led by the Chapter from Trinity Episcopal Church in The Woodlands. Over two Saturdays, a dedicated group of men, all volunteers but not all Brothers, demolished the damaged section and built its replacement.

The new deck was dedicated at a celebration on October 10. It restores an important gathering place for the children and the wider BCGH community, and it stands as a lasting example of how charitable giving and hands-on service can bring care, stability, and hope to those who need it most.

Brothers at Good Shepherd in Friendswood TX Provide Scholarship

By Peter Gilmour, Good Shepherd, Friendswood TX



The Brotherhood of St. Andrew at Good Shepherd in Friendswood(Houston), TX, was pleased to award a $500 scholarship this year during the 10: 30 a.m. service on Sunday, October 11 to Kooper Thompson. Kooper is studying Engineering at San Jacinto College and is the son of Joy and Kenneth Thompson.

The Brotherhood wishes to thank everyone who participated in our meat sales and Texas Hold'em fund raising events to make this possible.

Brothers at Friendship promote the spread of Christ's Kingdom among men and youth through the Brotherhood disciplines of Prayer, Study, and continuous Service. For more information, contact Peter Gilmour, Director at 480-206-9242 ptglmr7@gmail.com

Hello from the Brothers at All Saints, Beverly Hills, CA

This active Chapter proudly includes some demographic birth year ages from 1986 to 2003. They will soon be broadening their visibility and mission presence by participating in the convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles.



GET READY NOW

Three Ways to Renew National Dues for 2027

between DECEMBER 1 and JANUARY 31

There are at least three different ways to renew your membership dues for 2027. The official renewal period runs December 1 through January 31 so plan ahead now.

1. Through your Chapter by supplying the Chapter Treasurer with payment. Once the Chapter has collected all national dues, they can use a November meeting to update their roster, complete the 2026 annual Chapter report and return all paperwork with the collected dues to the National Service Center.

2. Individually online via debit card, credit card or PayPal on the Brotherhood website (https://www.brothersandrew.net/donate). You can also set your renewal as an automatic yearly recurring donation by checking the "Make this a yearly donation" box. Make sure you enter the year "2027" in the "Write a Note" box.

3. Individually by the USPS with a check or by supplying your credit card information (card number, expiration date, 3- or 4-digit security code, name on card as well as the billing person's email address and phone number) to Brotherhood of St. Andrew, P.O. Box 1382, Louisville, KY 40201. When writing a check, please list "2027 Dues" in the memo line.

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS FOR 2027

- Senior Member (men age 21 & older)—$50
- Junior Member (young men under age 21)—$10
- Associate Member (women)—$25

or

become a Life Member for one-time ministry dues of at least $1,000

BROTHERHOOD OF ST. ANDREW

Bible Study & Brotherhood Trivia

Each month, the Brotherhood is offering a contest where trivia questions are posted in the *Lead Like Andrew* enews and the answers are posted in the St. *Andrew's Cross*. Here are this month's answers.

IS THIS IN THE BIBLE?

NO The immaculate conception

NO This quotation: "*Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things*"

NO The doctrine of the Trinity

BROTHERHOOD HISTORY

NO Did the Brotherhood actively participate in the Spanish American War?

YES In the National Council report on November 30, 1900, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew had reached the 1,000 Chapter milestone.

A Season *of* Gratitude

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29 – THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2026

Preparing Our Hearts for Christ through Gratitude



Advent is a season of waiting, watching, and preparing. As Brothers, we are invited to use these weeks not simply to prepare for the busyness of the season but to reflectively prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ child and the wonder God incarnate brings. One powerful way to do this is through the spiritual practice of gratitude.

Gratitude calls us to recognize God's presence in the ordinary moments of our lives: in our families, friendships, work, parish community, challenges, and opportunities to serve others. It reminds us that our strength comes not solely from our own accomplishments, but from God's grace.

These 26 daily reflections are designed for Brothers to use individually, in men's ministry gatherings, or as part of a parish-wide approach to Advent study. Each reflection includes a scripture passage from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), a meditation, a practical invitation, and a brief prayer.

May this Advent journey deepen our gratitude, strengthen our faith, and prepare us to welcome the Christ Child with hearts overflowing with thanksgiving.



Sunday, November 29 – The Gift of Waiting

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 1:4-9

Advent begins with an invitation to wait. For many men, waiting is uncomfortable. We are accustomed to solving problems, accomplishing tasks, and moving forward. Yet the season of Advent reminds us that some of God's greatest gifts come through patient expectation.

Paul expresses gratitude for the grace God has given through Jesus Christ. Even as we wait for Christ's coming, we can be thankful that God is already at work in our lives. We do not wait alone. God sustains us, strengthens us, and calls us into fellowship with Christ.

Today, consider what you are waiting for. A healing? A reconciliation? A new beginning? What is your Chapter or men's ministry group waiting for? Give thanks that God's faithfulness does not depend on our ability to see the future.

Gratitude Practice: Name three blessings you have experienced while waiting for something important. Name one that applies to your Brotherhood Chapter or men's ministry group.

Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for your faithfulness in times of waiting. Help me to trust your timing and recognize your presence in every season of my life. *Amen*.



Monday, November 30 – Thankful for the Brothers Who Walk Beside Us

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

God did not create us to walk through life alone. We need Brothers who encourage us, challenge us, pray with us, and stand beside us when life becomes difficult.

The bonds of Christian friendship are a tremendous gift. Yet men sometimes struggle to express appreciation for one another. We may assume our friends know how much they mean to us. We may have sat next to a Brother in Saturday morning Bible study for years but never really expressed how we appreciate what he brings to the group. Advent invites us to be intentional about gratitude.

Think about the men who have helped shape your faith: a father, grandfather, mentor, priest, teacher, or friend. Their influence may have been quiet, but it has helped make you the man you are today.

Gratitude Practice: Contact one man who has positively influenced your life and tell him why you appreciate him. Consider doing that same thing at your next Chapter or men's ministry meeting.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the Brothers you have placed in my life. Help me to be a faithful friend and a source of encouragement to others. *Amen.*

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Tuesday, December 1 – Gratitude in the Ordinary

Scripture: Psalm 118:24

It is easy to be grateful when something extraordinary happens. We celebrate promotions, anniversaries, achievements, and answered prayers. But what about the ordinary weekday morning?

A warm cup of coffee, a familiar voice, a safe home, the opportunity to work, or the simple gift of another day can become occasions for thanksgiving. The challenge is not that God has stopped blessing us; sometimes we have simply stopped noticing.

A grateful heart sees the sacred in the ordinary. We do not need spectacular experiences to recognize God's goodness. Every day is an opportunity to encounter grace.

Gratitude Practice: Before beginning your daily responsibilities, pause and thank God for five ordinary blessings.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, open my eyes to the blessings I often overlook. Teach me to recognize your goodness in the everyday moments of my life. *Amen.*



Wednesday, December 2 – The Blessing of Work

Scripture: Colossians 3:23-24

For many Brothers, work occupies a significant portion of life. We may measure our worth by our productivity, accomplishments, or professional success. Scripture offers a different perspective: our work can become an offering to God.

Whether we are employed, retired, volunteering, caring for family members, or serving in our parish, we have opportunities to honor God through our efforts.

Gratitude transforms work from merely a responsibility into a vocation. It reminds us that our abilities are gifts and that the fruits of our labor can benefit others.

Today, give thanks not only for what work provides but also for the opportunities it gives you to serve.

Gratitude Practice: Identify one way your work or service has positively affected another person.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the gifts and abilities you have entrusted to me. May my work reflect your love and bring blessings to others. *Amen*.



Thursday, December 3 – Gratitude for Forgiveness

Scripture: Psalm 103:8-12

Men sometimes find it difficult to admit mistakes. We may fear that acknowledging our failures will diminish our strength or reputation. Yet Christian strength begins with humility.

The psalmist reminds us of God's compassion and forgiveness. We are not defined solely by our failures. Through God's grace, we are offered opportunities to repent, grow, and begin again.

Gratitude for forgiveness frees us from the burden of pretending to be perfect. It allows us to become more compassionate toward others because we recognize our own need for mercy.

Gratitude Practice: Bring one regret or mistake before God. Give thanks for the opportunity to learn and begin again.

Prayer: Merciful God, thank you for your forgiveness. Give me the courage to acknowledge my mistakes and the grace to extend forgiveness to others. *Amen*.



Friday, December 4 – A Heart of Generosity

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Gratitude naturally leads to generosity. When we recognize how much we have received from God, we become more willing to share our blessings.

Generosity is not limited to financial giving. It includes offering our time, attention, encouragement, experience, and compassion. A Brother can make a meaningful difference by listening to someone who feels forgotten or helping a neighbor who is struggling.

Advent is an opportunity to examine whether our gratitude is visible in our actions. The blessings we receive are not meant to end with us.

Gratitude Practice: Perform one act of generosity today without expecting recognition or repayment.

Prayer: Generous God, thank you for the abundance of your grace. Make me a cheerful giver who shares your love freely and faithfully. *Amen*.



Saturday, December 5 – Thankful for the Church

Scripture: Ephesians 4:1-6

The Church is more than a building. It is a community of people united in Christ, imperfect yet continually being shaped by God's grace.

Within our congregations, we find worship, fellowship, service, prayer, and opportunities to grow in faith. We also find people who may challenge us to become more patient, compassionate, and understanding.

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Gratitude for the Church includes appreciation for those who serve behind the scenes: altar guild members, ushers, lay readers, musicians, clergy, and volunteers. Their faithful contributions strengthen the Body of Christ.

Gratitude Practice: Thank a fellow parishioner for a contribution they make to your church community. Thank a fellow Brotherhood or men's ministry participant for the way they help to strengthen your mutual ministry.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for the community of faith and most especially for my Brothers. Help me to serve faithfully, encourage others, and strengthen the bonds of fellowship among your people. *Amen.*



Sunday, December 6 – Gratitude for Family

Scripture: Joshua 24:15

Family relationships are among God's most precious gifts. They are also among our greatest opportunities for spiritual growth.

Our families may not always be perfect. We experience misunderstandings, disagreements, disappointments, and seasons of distance. Yet gratitude helps us recognize the love, shared experiences, and opportunities for reconciliation that remain.

As men of faith, we are called to nurture relationships with our spouses, children, parents, siblings, and extended families. Our love is most meaningful when it is expressed through patience, kindness, and faithful presence.

Gratitude Practice: Tell a family member one specific reason you are grateful for them.

Prayer: Loving God, thank you for the gift of family. Help me to love those closest to me with patience, humility, and generosity. *Amen.*



Monday, December 7 – The Gift of Listening

Scripture: James 1:19

Listening is an act of love. Yet many of us are quick to offer advice, solve problems, or share our own experiences before truly hearing another person.

Gratitude for the people in our lives should inspire us to give them our attention. When we listen carefully, we communicate that their thoughts, feelings, and experiences matter.

The men in our lives, including our Brothers, may carry burdens they rarely discuss. A Brother may simply need someone who will listen without judgment.

Gratitude Practice: Have a conversation today in which your primary goal is to listen rather than to respond.

Prayer: God of wisdom, thank you for the people who share their lives with me. Thank you for our Brotherhood of St. Andrew community. Teach me to daily listen with compassion and to make others feel valued. *Amen.*



Tuesday, December 8 – Gratitude for Mentors

Scripture: Proverbs 27:17

Every man has opportunities to learn from others. A mentor may be a parent, teacher, coach, priest, colleague, or Brotherhood friend who helps us see possibilities we could not see on our own.

Mentors often provide wisdom through their example. They show us what integrity, perseverance, kindness, and faithfulness look like in everyday life.

Gratitude for mentors also reminds us that we have a responsibility to encourage those who are coming behind us. Mentorship is a Brotherhood of St. Andrew primary mission value. The wisdom we have received from those in our Chapter or men's ministry, as well as others in our day-to-day life, can become a gift we pass along.

Gratitude Practice: Reflect on a mentor who helped you grow. Who has mentored you in some way in your Brotherhood Chapter or men's ministry group? Consider how you might mentor or encourage another person.

Prayer: Gracious Lord, thank you for those who have guided and encouraged me, especially my Brotherhood of St. Andrew Brothers. Help me to share their wisdom and become a faithful mentor to others. *Amen.*



Wednesday, December 9 – Thankful for Second Chances

Scripture: Lamentations 3:22-23

Life rarely unfolds exactly as we expect. We make mistakes, experience setbacks, and sometimes disappoint ourselves and others.

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The good news of God's grace is that our failures do not have to be the final word. God's mercies are renewed each morning. Each new day offers the possibility of repentance, healing, and growth.

As Brothers, we can practice gratitude individually and collectively by acknowledging the second chances we have received. We can also become men who offer others the same grace.

Gratitude Practice: Think of a second chance that changed your life. Give thanks for the person or circumstance that made it possible.

Prayer: Faithful God, thank you for your renewed mercies. Help me to learn from my past and approach each new day with hope and humility. *Amen.*



Thursday, December 10 – Gratitude for Our Children and Those Who Follow Us

Scripture: Psalm 78:4

Whether we are fathers, grandfathers, uncles, teachers, or mentors, as Brothers we have opportunities to influence the next generation.

Children and young adults need more than instructions. They need examples of faith, integrity, kindness, and gratitude. They need to see men who admit mistakes, seek forgiveness, and trust God.

We may never fully understand the impact of our words or actions. A simple encouragement or a faithful example may shape someone's life for years to come.

Gratitude Practice: Encourage a young person today. Tell them something you appreciate about their character or potential.

Prayer: Loving God, thank you for the young people in our lives. Help us to guide them with wisdom, love, and faithful example. Help our Brotherhood group to always stay aware of the importance of lifting up the next generation with words of affirmation and appreciation. *Amen.*



Friday, December 11 – Gratitude for Those Who Serve

Scripture: Matthew 25:40

Advent reminds us that Christ comes to us in unexpected places, particularly through those who are vulnerable or in need.

Our gratitude for God's blessings should lead us toward service. We can honor Christ by caring for people who are hungry, lonely, sick, grieving, or struggling.

Service does not always require a large commitment. A visit, a meal, a phone call, or a helping hand can communicate the love of God.

As Brothers in mission, we are called to make our faith visible through compassionate action.

Gratitude Practice: Find one person or organization you can support through a practical act of service.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for the opportunity to serve you through others. Give me eyes to see those in need and a willing heart to respond. Help our Brotherhood group to stay ever-focused to our primary value of Service. *Amen.*



Saturday, December 12 – The Blessing of Brotherhood

Scripture: Hebrews 10:24-25

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew is a gift that deserves our gratitude. Men need places where they can share their faith, encourage one another, and build meaningful relationships. Our men's ministry can become such a place. It can provide opportunities for prayer, Bible study, fellowship, service, and honest conversation.

Brotherhood is not simply about gathering together. It is about helping one another grow in Christ. When one Brother struggles, others can offer encouragement. When one Brother experiences joy, others can celebrate with him.

Gratitude Practice: Reach out to a fellow parishioner you may not have spoken with recently. Ask how he is doing and offer to pray for him. Invite him to accompany you to an upcoming Brotherhood get together.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the gift of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew. Help us as Brothers to encourage one another and remain faithful in our shared journey of faith. *Amen.*

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Sunday, December 13 – Gratitude in Difficult Times

Scripture: Romans 5:3-5

The third Sunday of Advent, traditionally called Gaudete Sunday, invites us to rejoice. Yet joy can seem difficult when we are facing hardship.

Gratitude does not mean ignoring pain or pretending that everything is well. It means recognizing that God's love remains present even when life is difficult.

Challenges can deepen our faith, strengthen our perseverance, and help us become more compassionate toward others. We may not be thankful for every difficulty, but we can be thankful that God walks with us through them.

Gratitude Practice: Identify one difficult experience that helped you grow in faith, wisdom, or compassion.

Prayer: God of hope, thank you for remaining with me through difficult seasons. Strengthen my faith and help me discover your grace even in adversity. *Amen*.



Monday, December 14 – Thankful for Health and Healing

Scripture: Psalm 41:1-3

Our health is a blessing that we sometimes take for granted. The ability to walk, breathe, work, enjoy fellowship, and participate in daily life is a gift.

For those facing illness or physical limitations, gratitude may take a different form. It may arise from the care of a physician, the kindness of a fellow Brother, or the comfort of prayer.

As Brothers, we should remember that caring for our health is not a sign of weakness. Seeking help, acknowledging limitations, and supporting others through illness are acts of courage and faithfulness.

Gratitude Practice: Give thanks for one aspect of your health and offer a prayer for someone who is ill.

Prayer: Healing God, thank you for the gift of life and the care we receive from others. Strengthen those who suffer and help us to support them with compassion. Help our Brotherhood group remain attentive to those in our midst, and those close to them, who may need our prayers and special care during a health challenge. *Amen.*



Tuesday, December 15 – Gratitude for God's Guidance

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5-6

Men often face decisions that affect their families, careers, relationships, and communities. We may feel pressure to have all the answers.

Faith reminds us that wisdom does not come solely from our own understanding. God invites us to seek guidance through prayer, Scripture, the counsel of trusted people, and the discernment of our faith tradition.

Gratitude for God's guidance grows when we look back and recognize how we have been led through uncertain circumstances.

Gratitude Practice: Reflect on a decision in your life where you believe God provided direction. Is there a time you can recall when you believe God was truly present with direction for your Brotherhood group, as well? Give thanks for that guidance.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for guiding my steps. Help me to trust you in uncertain circumstances and to seek your wisdom in every decision. Help our Brotherhood group also to always lean on your direction as we exercise our ministry. *Amen.*



Wednesday, December 16 – The Freedom of Contentment

Scripture: Philippians 4:11-13

Our culture often encourages men to measure success by possessions, status, achievements, or income. The desire to accomplish good things is not wrong, but it can become a source of dissatisfaction when we constantly compare ourselves with others.

Paul reminds us that contentment can be learned. Gratitude helps us recognize that our worth is not determined by what we possess.

A grateful man can celebrate another person's success without feeling diminished. He can appreciate what he has while continuing to grow and serve.

Gratitude Practice: Identify one area where comparison has robbed you of contentment. Replace it with thanksgiving.

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Prayer: Gracious God, thank you for the blessings I already possess. Free me from envy and help me to live with contentment and generosity. *Amen.*



Thursday, December 17 – Gratitude for Courage

Scripture: Joshua 1:9

Courage is not the absence of fear. It is the willingness to act faithfully despite fear.

Brothers may need courage to speak the truth, apologize, seek help, stand up for someone being mistreated, or make a difficult decision.

God's promise to be present with Joshua reminds us that we do not face life's challenges alone. Our courage is strengthened by God's presence.

Gratitude for courage includes appreciation for the people who have encouraged us to take faithful risks and stand firm in our convictions.

Gratitude Practice: Take one courageous step today that reflects your faith values.

Prayer: Almighty God, thank you for your abiding presence. Give me courage to live faithfully, speak truthfully, and act with compassion. *Amen.*



Friday, December 18 – Gratitude for the Gift of Peace

Scripture: John 14:27

Many men carry responsibilities that create stress and anxiety. We may worry about our families, finances, work, health, or the future.

Jesus offers a peace that is different from the peace the world provides. His peace is rooted in the assurance of God's presence and love.

Gratitude can help quiet our restless hearts. When we remember God's faithfulness in the past, we become better able to trust God in the present.

Advent invites us to create space for silence, prayer, and reflection amid the busyness of the season.

Gratitude Practice: Spend five minutes in quiet prayer. Name the worries you carry and surrender them to God. Consider also doing this as a Brotherhood group.

Prayer: Prince of Peace, thank you for the peace you offer. Quiet my anxious heart and help me to trust in your love. *Amen.*



Saturday, December 19 – Thankful for the Opportunity to Begin Again

Scripture: Isaiah 43:18-19

Advent is a season of new beginnings. As we approach Christmas, we are reminded that God continues to create new possibilities in our lives.

Perhaps a relationship needs healing. Perhaps a spiritual discipline has been neglected. Perhaps we have become discouraged about our ability to change.

God invites us to look forward with hope. We need not remain trapped by past mistakes or disappointments.

Gratitude helps us recognize that each new beginning is an expression of God's grace.

Gratitude Practice: Identify one spiritual or personal habit you would like to renew before Christmas.

Prayer: Creator God, thank you for the new possibilities you place before me. Help me to leave behind what holds me back and faithfully embrace the future you offer. *Amen.*



Sunday, December 20 – Gratitude for the Promise of Christmas

Scripture: Luke 1:26-38

As the fourth Sunday of Advent arrives, our attention turns more directly toward the birth of Jesus.

Mary's response to the angel reflects remarkable faith and humility. She accepts God's invitation even though she cannot fully understand what lies ahead.

Her example challenges us as Brothers to remain open to God's calling. Faithfulness does not require us to understand every detail. It requires us to trust the God who calls us.

The promise of Christmas is that God comes among us. In Jesus Christ, we encounter God's love in a deeply personal and transformative way.

Gratitude Practice: Thank God for one unexpected opportunity or calling that has shaped your life. What is one that also helped shape the life

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of your collective Brotherhood ministry?

Prayer: Loving God, thank you for the gift of your Son. Give me and our Brothers the faith of Mary, that we may respond to your calling with trust and gratitude. *Amen.*



Monday, December 21 – Gratitude for the Light of Christ

Scripture: John 1:1-5

As the winter days grow shorter, the imagery of light becomes especially meaningful.

The light of Christ shines into the darkness of our world and our lives. It brings hope where there is despair, forgiveness where there is guilt, and love where there is loneliness.

As Brothers, we are called to reflect that light through our actions. We can be sources of encouragement in our families, workplaces, communities, and parishes.

Gratitude for Christ's light reminds us that even small acts of kindness can make a meaningful difference.

Gratitude Practice: Perform one act of kindness today that brings encouragement or hope to someone else.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for being the light of the world. Help me to reflect your light through my words, actions, and relationships. *Amen.*



Tuesday, December 22 – Thankful for the Gift of Humility

Scripture: Philippians 2:5-8

The Christmas story reveals a remarkable truth: the Son of God comes into the world not through earthly power or prestige, but through humility.

Jesus demonstrates that true greatness is found in service. This challenges the way we sometimes define success as men.

Humility does not mean denying our gifts or abilities. It means recognizing that they come from God and are meant to be used for the benefit of others.

Gratitude keeps pride in perspective. It reminds us that everything we have is ultimately a gift.

Gratitude Practice: Find an opportunity to serve someone today without drawing attention to yourself.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank you for your example of humility. Help me to use my gifts in service to others and to recognize your grace in all that I do. *Amen.*



Wednesday, December 23 – Gratitude for the Gift of Love

Scripture: 1 John 4:7-12

As Christmas approaches, we are reminded that love is at the heart of our faith.

God's love is not merely an idea or an emotion. It is revealed through action, sacrifice, and the gift of Jesus Christ.

Brothers are called to express love through faithful presence, compassion, patience, and service. We can demonstrate love by caring for our families, supporting our friends, welcoming strangers, and standing with those who are vulnerable.

Gratitude for God's love inspires us to become more loving people.

Gratitude Practice: Express your love and appreciation to someone who may not hear those words often enough.

Prayer: God of love, thank you for loving me so completely. Help me and my Brothers to share your love generously and faithfully with everyone I encounter. *Amen.*



Thursday, December 24 – Christmas Eve: Gratitude for Emmanuel

Scripture: Luke 2:1-20

Tonight, we stand at the threshold of Christmas. The waiting of Advent gives way to the celebration of Christ's birth.

The shepherds receive the extraordinary news that a Savior has been born. Their response is one of wonder, praise, and thanksgiving.

The name Emmanuel means "God is with us." This is the heart of Christmas and the foundation of our gratitude. God has not abandoned us. God has come among us in Jesus Christ.

As Brothers, we are invited to carry the wonder of Christmas into our daily lives. We can be men of gratitude, men of hope, men of service, and men who reflect the love of Christ.

Tonight, let us give thanks for the greatest gift of all: God's presence with us.

Gratitude Practice: Before attending Christmas Eve worship, pause and name the blessings of this Advent journey. Offer a prayer of thanksgiving for Christ's birth.

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Prayer: Almighty God, thank you for the gift of Emmanuel, your Son Jesus Christ. May the joy of his birth fill our hearts with gratitude, strengthen our faith, and inspire us to love and serve others throughout the coming year. Glory to you, O God, for the gift of your Son. Amen.

A Final Blessing…

May the God of hope fill your heart with gratitude.

May the light of Christ guide your steps.

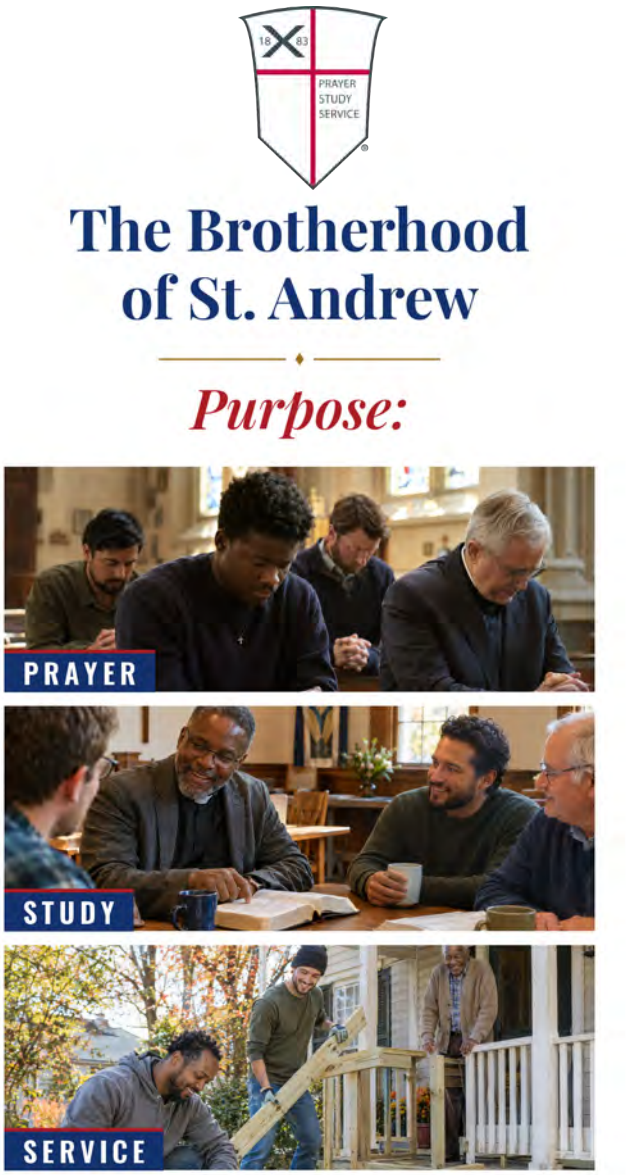
May the Holy Spirit strengthen you in faith, encourage you as a Brother, and inspire you in service.

May you recognize God's blessings in the ordinary moments of life, find courage in times of challenge, and share the love of Christ with everyone you encounter.

And may the joy of Christmas remain in your heart throughout the year.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

Thanks to some of the inspiration for this series: A Grateful Heart: Daily Advent Reflections for Episcopal Church Men; Hope in the Waiting: The Prophetic Call of Advent Reflections Blog; and Advent Readings for Candle Lighting: Loving Christ Ministries





A POEM FOR THANKSGIVING & ADVENT

From Harvest Table *to Advent Wreath*

The harvest is gathered, the table is cleared,
The last of the guests and their laughter have gone;
We gave thanks to God for the gifts of the year,
For bread and for brothers, for dusk and for dawn.

Now evening comes early, the fields have grown bare,
The maple has scattered its gold on the ground,
And into the hush of the cold, quiet air
A single small candle is lit without sound.

O Lord, who has filled every cup we have raised,
Now teach us to wait with an open hand,
To turn all our plenty to watching and praise,
And hope for a gift we cannot yet understand.

For thanks is the doorway and waiting the road,
And Christ is the Light at the end of the way;
So we kindle one flame where the harvest fire glowed,
And watch, giving thanks, for the dawning of Day.



The General Thanksgiving

From the Book of Common Prayer (1979)

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks for all your goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all whom you have made.

We bless you for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life; but above all for your immeasurable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.

And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies, that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise, not only with our lips, but in our lives, by giving up ourselves to your service, and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.



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JOIN US VIA ZOOM FOR WEEKLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Open to everyone

SUNDAYS, Compline Service
9 p.m. Eastern / 8 p.m. Central / 7 p.m. Mountain / 6 p.m. Pacific
us02web.zoom.us/j/87561851713?pwd=UJ5ok56elbb5aZGcZaNQQztaaxaand.1
We begin with a few moments of silence or meditation followed by the service from the *Book of Common Prayer* Page 127.

WEDNESDAYS, Mid-Week, Mid-Day Prayer
1 p.m. Eastern / Noon Central / 11 a.m. Mountain /10 a.m. Pacific
us02web.zoom.us/j/85663208398?pwd=UG0vTkJ2OXAwKzBEdGpYcTBCanZEZz09
Let's spend 20 minutes praying for the Brotherhood, our Brothers, and those in need. Share how prayer has made a difference in your life—it's a simple way to refill your spiritual tank.
Our devotional handbook and the *Book of Common Prayer* provide the words. To help lead a session, contact roy.benavides@brothersandrew.net.

THURSDAYS, Bible Study
8 p.m. Eastern / 7 p.m. Central / 6 p.m. Mountain / 5 p.m. Pacific
us02web.zoom.us/s/4485027479
Join the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, the Brooklyn and Queens Assemblies, and the Diocese of Chicago for weekly Bible Study each Thursday. Deepen your understanding of Scripture and connect with fellow Brothers. For questions, email: nychibiblestudy@gmail.com.





For General Convention to Triennial and many other Brotherhood of St. Andrew opportunities over the next year and beyond, we're working on a larger communication piece anticipated to be both electronic and print/direct mail that—among other things—will exhaustively highlight what's been happening with our Chapters and men's ministry groups church wide. We want to highlight YOU and have every state in the US represented. Please help us!

To that end, by November 30, write to editor@brothersandrew.net with a two-three line description of one thing your group has been doing, from a standard Saturday morning Bible study to some sort of special mission project. Here are just a couple of examples to inspire you.

- **Men at St. Swithin's in Bozeman, Montana just helped build a hometown Habitat for Humanity house for a family of six.**
- **St. Jim's in Newport, Rhode Island led weekly Sunday night summer Evening Prayer on the beach as a way of reaching out to both members and tourists.**

Also calling out....

To share the incredible breadth and depth of Brotherhood ministry across our church, we are seeking at least one parish, group, or person to highlight for EACH of our areas of Brotherhood of St. Andrew mission focus. To refresh your memory about these ministries, they include:

- **Discipleship and Mentoring**
- **Prison Ministries**
- **Racial Reconciliation**
- **Recovery**
- **Social Justice**
- **Veterans Ministries**
- **Youth and Scouting**

Who do you know who is doing impactful ministry in any of these areas? Might that even be you and the Brothers in your own Chapter?! Please help us cast a wide net, however you best communicate in your diocese or regional area, and help us gather ideas for who and what should be lifted up when we highlight this mission work. Send your suggestions by November 30 to editor@brothersandrew.net and put MISSION FOCUS SUGGESTIONS in the subject line. Please be sure to include full contact information for yourself and anyone you are nominating. Blessings and thank you!

We welcome...

- **General stories and photos about your Chapter or men's ministry activities.**
- **Stories and photos about your Province meetings or activities.**
- **Reflections about how you solved a common Brotherhood challenge, such as building attendance or increasing involvement in your project or ministry.**
- **Points of pride about your Chapter milestones.**
- **Personal spiritual or biblical reflections.**
- **Ideas related to the Brotherhood seven areas of mission focus.**
- **Stories about how you helped mobilize partnerships in your community.**
- **Practical tips/helps related to common Brotherhood activities out of your own expertise or experience.**
- **Photos of Brothers you have encountered in other places. For example—at a church you attended during your summer vacation.**

Send your contributions in standard MSWord 12 point type with no formatting.

Attach photos—don't embed them in your story.

Attach a separate Word document with photo ID's, from left to right, that correspond to your photos. *Don't forget to double check the spelling of any names you include. If it isn't obvious, describe what we are seeing in your photo/s and where/when they were taken.*

Email your material to editor@brothersandrew.net. *If you have questions or just want to brainstorm an idea, call Kathy at 502-345-6406.*

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