

St. Paul's

EPISCOPAL  CHURCH

GUIDE TO WORSHIP

Information and Planning Guide

*A Reference for Newcomers, Visitors, Guests, and Anybody Else who may be wondering
“What’s this church all about?”*

—————

*With some of the most commonly asked questions about
the eucharist, worship, and ministry at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church*

FIRST THINGS FIRST

1. We're delighted you're here, and we want you to come back.
2. We suspect you may have some questions. Why? Look around you. Everybody you see was a newcomer at one time or another, and we've *all* had questions—probably the very same ones.
3. We want you to be comfortable so you can worship God and enjoy your visit today.
4. You can't do that if you're wondering which book to pick up next or trying "to do everything right," which usually means doing the same thing everybody else is doing. In the Episcopal Church, everybody doesn't always do things the same way.

SO . . .

Relax. The first rule is **When you're worshipping God, you can't get it wrong!**

The second rule is **If you need help, ask the person next to you. We like people here at St. Paul's.**

The last rule is **Regardless of what anybody else is going, don't do anything that makes you feel uncomfortable.**

THE SERVICE

You can do whatever makes you feel comfortable. Don't do anything that makes you feel funny.

The worship service begins on page 6 in this booklet if you want to skip this introductory stuff for now and read it later. But there is something we want to handle right up front. If you're wondering, "Am I allowed to take communion here?" the answer is not only "YES" but "AND WE HOPE YOU WILL." All baptized Christians are welcome to share communion at the altar rail. If you are not baptized we invite you to come forward and receive a blessing. Btw, we use real wine and we use a common cup. If you don't want to take the wine, simply cross your arms over your chest when the chalice bearer comes by. If you don't want to drink from a common cup then the chalice bearer will gladly take your wafer and dip it in the cup for you and put it in your mouth (if you promise not to bite). Baptized children are welcome to take communion, too.

Now, let's start with some of the basics of the service.

"What are those books in the rack in front of me?"

The smaller one with either a red or black cover with a gold cross on it is the *Book of Common Prayer*. The entire service you will experience is contained in it (with the exception of one portion that we will explain later) and a lot of other stuff. But you don't have to worry about that right now. You will find pretty much everything you need this morning in this booklet and in your worship bulletin.

and . . .

in the blue covered hymnal (*Hymnal 1980*) or the red, black, and green book called *Lift Every Voice and Sing* (often referred to as LEVAS, which sounds like "leave us" as some kids say). The songs we sing are indicated on the bulletin the nice usher gave you depending on whether you are at the 7:30 service, where there is a piano and only two songs, the 8:30 service that has one or two more hymns, or the 11:00 service where we pull out all the stops, so to speak.

"Why is everybody so quiet?"

It's an Episcopal thing. We take time before the service to say hello to God, to prepare for communion, to pray for the people we love and the situations that are confronting us this week, and perhaps to go over the readings printed in the worship bulletin. Here at St. Paul's, our mission is to **worship** God, **bring** all into a loving relationship with Jesus Christ, and **equip** all for ministry. Without the first, we can't do the rest.

"There's an awful lot of stuff in this church."

That's very true. The Episcopal way of worshiping exercises all the senses—sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste. We like to think of it as involving every part of us in worship. Which, by the way, gives God a lot of ways to reach us. If you want to know more about us and how Episcopalians worship and minister, consider joining us for our annual *Pilgrimage*. The person who greeted you this morning could tell you all about it or point you to someone else who can.

“Why are some people bowing and some kneeling before entering the pew and others don’t do anything at all?”

What you’re noticing is called “reverencing,” and people have different ways of doing it. Some bow in the direction of the altar, some “genuflect” (touch a knee on the floor), others come into the pew without reverencing at all. There are no rules or requirements about this. If you are with us over time, you will develop your own pattern of worship. It’s like we said, do whatever helps you to worship; don’t do whatever hinders that.

“Why do some people touch themselves on the forehead and the shoulders?”

Again, this is a very personal worship style. This is called making the sign of the cross. Some people do it out of habit, others because it reminds them of the price Jesus paid to enable us to respond to God’s love, still others because it’s their way of “taking up their own cross” and following him. You will see them doing this at times during the service, too, and this guide tells you when the most likely times are. But *you don’t have* to cross yourself just because they do.

‘I’m Protestant. Is this a Catholic church?’

No. Yes. Well, that’s a hard one to answer in a booklet like this. Why don’t you hold that one for the *Pilgrimage*. Let’s just say that at St. Paul’s you’ll see some people acting like Catholics and others acting like Protestants. What unites us this morning is the fact that we’re all here to worship God. That’s the most important thing.

“Hey, I just want to know one thing. Is anybody going to make me stand up and give my name or anything like that?”

Nah. Not because we don’t care; in fact, you will find we care very much. We just don’t want to embarrass you or make you feel funny. But we do want to get to know you, so writing your name on a nametag and putting it on would be helpful. You will see a lot of the people around you wearing nametags. And we hope you will fill out the Visitor’s Form in the back of the pew ahead of you and put it in the collection plate when it comes around. That’s just so we can greet you and see if you need anything.

“So, what’s going to happen next?”

One thing you can do before the service starts is familiarize yourself with the bulletin and the hymnal. Whatever we will be singing first is listed in the bulletin as the Processional Hymn. At the beginning of the service you will hear music from the organ or piano, depending on the service. Then somebody will announce the processional hymn, and we’re off and running. If you love the hymn, belt it out, whether you’re in tune or not. If you don’t know the hymn or you don’t want to sing, you can just read the words to yourself. Whatever works for you is fine with us.

“Who are the people in the funny clothes?”

Not much of a fashion statement, is it? Depending on the service, you may see a young person carrying a cross (watch people bow—reverence—as it passes them), a couple of younger kids carrying candles (torches), some grownups in white robes one of whom will be giving you a drink soon, and the clergy, the people wearing similar white robes and colored stoles (scarves) around their necks. At the 11:00 service the choir also processes. They’re the folks in the burgundy robes and white shirts over them. The clergy comes last (but they’re first in our hearts).

Look, tell you what . . .

Now that the service has started let's hold the rest of the questions until after the service. Don't miss the welcoming table in the front hall with all kinds of information about us and Greeters there to answer your questions. Just use this book and the service bulletin for the rest of the service and be sure of this,

God's glad you're here, and so are we.

Some helpful symbols as you follow along through the service.



places in the service where some people do the sign of the cross

Abcdefg

bold font lets you know when to respond

OKAY, HERE WE GO . . .

In the left margin we'll tell you the preferred posture—standing, kneeling, sitting. In every case, of course, do not do what is physically uncomfortable for you. There may be some instructions in brackets like these [*with the words in italics*] and then the words of the service in bold indicating where you respond. Remember, if you get lost, ask the person next to you to help you out. We will start with what is called the Liturgy of the Word with Bible readings, the sermon, prayers, group confession, and passing the peace. Then we'll move into the part of the service called the Holy Communion. We will also indicate the page number in the *Book of Common Prayer* [BCP] where this part of the service can be found.

Just a word of explanation. In our tradition, there are several alternative forms for this service and for different parts of it. What I am presenting here is a basic service that you would encounter on a typical Sunday in the season following Pentecost, the long season of the Church. Should the words you encounter in the service this morning be different, keep following along listening carefully. The bulletin contains all the Bible readings and where you can find the hymns in the hymnal. The essential elements of the service remain the same.

Sample Template of a Worship Service

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Stand

ACCLAMATION—BCP 355

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. ✱

And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name: through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GLORIA—BCP 356

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

[Opening collect; it will be in the bulletin.]

FIRST READING

Sit

[A layperson will read a selection from the Old Testament, which you will find in your bulletin. At the end of the reading the responses are]

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

[The Reader will lead in reciting the psalm printed in the bulletin. It will likely be in unison, but at the 11:00 service the choir will sing the verses and the congregation will sing the refrain.]

SECOND READING

[Same routine, though this time the reading is from the Epistles.]

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SEQUENCE

Stand

[The sequence is a hymn sung before the reading of the Gospel.]

THE GOSPEL

The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to _____.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

[You may see some people make three small crosses with the knuckle of their thumb, one on the forehead, one on the lips, one on the chest. This symbolizes our desire that the Gospel may be written in our minds, be spoken through our lips, and be known in our heart.]

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

[You may see some people bow, reverencing at the name of Jesus.]

THE SERMON

Sit

THE NICENE CREED—BCP 358

Stand

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.

Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of ✠ the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Stand, kneel, or sit

[There are several forms for the prayers in the BCP. Simply follow along in your bulletin for these prayers, responding as indicated.]

THE CONFESSION

Stand, kneel, or sit

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

THE ABSOLUTION

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

THE PEACE

Stand

The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**

[People greet those close-by with words such as “Peace be with you” or “The peace of the Lord.” We are sharing the peace God gives us with each other in preparation for sharing the communion.]

At this point the service shifts from the Liturgy of the Word to the Holy Communion. Again, there are several forms for this service that provide different words and emphases, though the actual order of the service remains the same. For the sake of simplicity and instruction we will be using Form A in this booklet. If we are using form B, C, or D this Sunday, the bulletin will tell you where you can find these in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

THE OFFERTORY—BCP 361

Stand

[Here we offer our gifts to God, knowing that whatever we are offering actually comes from God. Our real offering is ourselves. There may be a hymn or a choral anthem. At the end we sing the doxology.]

THE DOXOLOGY

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

PROPER PREFACE

[Here the priest offers a particular prayer for this day.]

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

SANCTUS perhaps sung

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

✠ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

Stand or kneel, or sit if you need

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.” Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom. All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

AMEN.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

THE LORD’S PRAYER—BCP 364

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

[or the optional contemporary invitation and version]

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

[Alleluia.] Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. [Alleluia.]

["Alleluia" is not used in Lent.]

BREAKING THE BREAD (fraction)

Proceed to the rail to receive communion. Remember, all baptized people can receive in the Episcopal Church; all others are welcome and invited to come for a blessing. You may kneel or stand. A priest or server will put a wafer in your hand, and you can eat it immediately. But you have a choice. You can also hold it to have it dipped into the wine (intincted) if you do not want to share a common cup. We use wine, not grape juice. If you prefer not to take the wine simply cross your arms over your chest after receiving the bread, or you can leave the rail. We teach that communion is complete even if we take only the bread or only the wine. Children are free to drink from the cup, but as a parent you need to decide if you want your child to do that, to have the wafer intincted for him/her, or not to take the wine at all. The chalice bearer will do whatever you wish.

During communion the server says:

The Body of Christ, the Bread of heaven. ✱

The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. ✱

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER—BCP 365

Stand or kneel

[After communion the priest says]

Let us pray.

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

BCP 366

Or an optional prayer

Almighty and ever-living God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

THE BLESSING

The priest blesses the People. ✱

The priest or a deacon dismisses the congregation after which the People say:

Thanks be to God.

RECESSIONAL HYMN

Stand

THE DISMISSAL

ORGAN POSTLUDE

Again, following the 8:30 service we invite you and your whole family to stay for Christian Education at 9:45 that includes one or two offerings for adults including a class specially for parents; or come before the 11:00 service. After the other two services stick around for coffee or just to say hello. We pray you had a refreshing time of worship with us that has been a blessing to you, and we hope you will come back. God bless you and all whom you love.

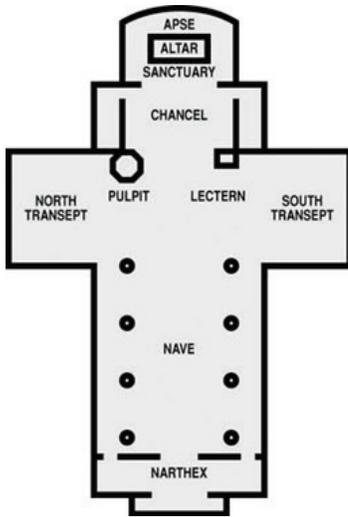
OUR WEEKLY SERVICES SCHEDULE

Sunday at 7:30 a.m., 8:45 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday at 7:00 a.m. in St. Andrew's Chapel

EPISCOPAL “STUFF”

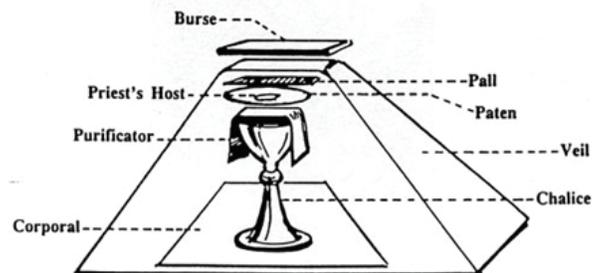
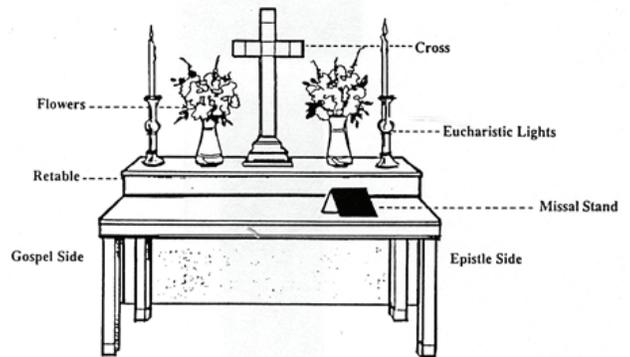
Right now, you will want to concentrate on your worship with us. But after the service, go on a treasure hunt and see how many of these “items” you can locate or how many you remember seeing during the service. Episcopal Anglicans use a lot of “things” to enhance, equip, and enrich our worship. We call these things “sacramentals.” They help us to worship God with



all our senses—sight (beauty), sound (music), smell (flowers, sometimes incense), touch (the bread, the chalice), and taste (bread and water). In this you will encounter the most catholic part of our nature. It begins with the building itself; it connects us to the experience of the cross and reminds us of the Heavenly City.

St. Paul’s “cross” is shaped a bit differently from this, but you can see all the parts here. We come into the narthex or front hall through the main doors, then enter what’s called the nave, where all the people sit. Our transepts are very short, but they’re still there. You will notice the baptismal font in the east transept. The area behind the rail is called the chancel, and the platform on which the altar stands is the sanctuary. Behind the altar, where the organ and choir sit, is an area called the apse. Medieval churches saw the building as a material symbol of the scene in Revelation where the saints, dressed in white (albus in Latin), circle the throne of God, set on high, singing “sanctus, sanctus, sanctus” or “holy, holy, holy.”

This drawing is also a bit different from our altar, but the same elements are present. The large candles on the altar are lit only when celebrating the eucharist. The six candles (lights) behind the altar are for any worship service. As here, our service book stands directly on the altar. Under our principal cross is a box called a tabernacle where we keep unused consecrated bread and wine as reserve or to take to home-bound parishioners.



These are the sacramentals used in the eucharist, the chalice for the wine, the paten that holds the bread (wafers), and the various linens that are used in the service: the corporal (or body) that collects any stray crumbs from the bread (body of Christ), the purificator for wiping the rim of the common chalice, the pall that covers the paten and priest’s wafer (it’s bigger than the others), and the burse that covers the stack. Many churches also cover the sacramentals with a veil in the proper liturgical color for the season.

The vestments (clothes) of the clergy begin with a cassock alb (again, from the Latin for white) that is held together at the waist by a cincture, or rope. Both the clergy and the eucharistic ministers (people who serve the chalice) wear this same basic garment. That helps ensure that when you look at the altar you see all those serving there as essentially equal, as we are equals in God’s eyes.





The clergy, though, will be wearing a garment around the neck called a stole (in the season's liturgical color), which in the ancient world was a symbol of office or rank, often rendered as a border on a coat or toga (thus the purple border of a Senator's toga). In the Christian church it has come to mean taking on the responsibility of caring for Christ's people. (For an explanation of these colors look at the inside back cover.)

After passing the peace you will see the priest who celebrated put on another garment called a chasuble, again in the proper liturgical color of the season. Like the other vestments, this reminds us of our Roman roots, because this was an "overcoat" in the ancient world. Notice the cross on the back that symbolizes taking on the cross of Christ.



THE CHURCH CALENDAR AND LITURGICAL COLORS

Every year in the cycle of the church calendar we repeat and re-experience the story of salvation history. The seasons of the church year are bounded and shaped by the three (Trinitarian) feasts associated with the work of God: Christmas, the incarnation, the work of God the Father; Easter, the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus, the work of God the Son; Pentecost, the birth and enabling of the Church, the work of the Holy Spirit. For each of these seasons the Episcopal Church assigns a color to focus our attention God's work progresses.

Advent—four Sundays before Christmas; stands for royalty and the Fatherhood of God; it reflects the preparational mood of Advent. Some churches use blue in Advent.

Christmas (white)—(okay, this is gray, not white, but it's the best we can do) denotes purity and the incarnation thus reflecting the work of God in the world; it is the color of Christmas and Easter and is also used at baptisms and funerals.

Epiphany—the revelation of Jesus to the world; extends from the feast of the Epiphany (January 6) until Ash Wednesday.

Lent—a penitential season that calls Christians to struggle with obstacles in our lives that separate us from God and prevent us from coming closer to God; extends for forty days, not counting Sundays, from Ash Wednesday to Easter.

Good Friday—not technically a liturgical color, black is used on this one day as a sign of mourning for the death of our best friend and recognition that through our sins we participate in that death.

Easter—the season when the Church celebrates God's gift of salvation to the world through the willing sacrifice Jesus made on the cross and the resurrection by which we are assured eternal life.

Pentecost—the feast of the Holy Spirit; it is used also on Palm Sunday, ordinations, and the feast days of New Testament martyrs (witnesses).

Season after Pentecost—celebrates the work of the church in the world; extends from Pentecost Sunday to Christ the King Sunday, the last Sunday before Advent.

St. Paul's
EPISCOPAL  CHURCH

WORSHIP ✕ BRING ✕ EQUIP