**St. Anne’s Episcopal Church**

**Warsaw, Indiana**

**About The Eucharist:**

*an instructive guide to the “why” of our action*

*Our liturgy, our worship, is not a document but an enacted, sung and spoken event, in the life of the people of God. This outline, as a supplement for an Instructed Eucharist, attends to the Holy Eucharist, Rites One (I) and Two (II), as found in the* ***Book of Common Prayer*** *(BCP) of the Episcopal Church. This guide functions as an extended footnote to our enacted worship of the Holy Eucharist. Placements of the varying passages of Scripture that follow the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), hymns and musical settings from The Hymnal 1982 are noted generically with no citations or hymnal numbers. Liturgies enacted in the various seasons of the Episcopal Church Year use different eucharistic prayers. Any instructive commentary based on this guide should be adapted accordingly.*

*We acknowledge here our indebtedness to similar instructive eucharistic efforts attributed to: St. Peter’s Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Grace Church, Colorado Springs, Colorado; and St. Anne’s Church, Warsaw Indiana. Other communities are welcome to use this document as a guide for similar instructive liturgies. If you do use this text to any substantial extent, we ask that you note attribution to the aforementioned church communities.*

**Instructed Eucharists**

*This worship service today is an opportunity to learn more about the eucharistic worship we experience in the Episcopal Church tradition. Explanations of the various parts, spoken aloud throughout the service, are in place of the sermon. The explanations about the “why” of our enacted worship in this document will supplement and remind you of what you will have heard. Be free to take this document home with you for further reading and reflection AND to share its information with your family and friends.*

**About the Service**

The Holy Eucharist, also known as Mass, Holy Communion, Lord’s Supper, or Divine Liturgy, has been the central act of Christian worship since New Testament times. In it we give thanks – the Greek word *eucharistia* means thanksgiving – as we celebrate God’s savings acts in Jesus the Christ of our faith. We participate in Christ Jesus’ action in our midst by receiving the consecrated bread and wine which are, according to Jesus’ own words, his Body and Blood. The word “consecrated” here means set apart for sacred or holy use.

Throughout subsequent centuries, the Holy Eucharist has been regarded as both awesome and intimate, both majestic and “down to earth.” Christians have developed ceremonies and devotions to express all these aspects, emphasizing one or another. We draw upon these rich traditions in order to, both dramatize our reverence before the awesome majesty of God, and to bring home to all worshipers the loving intimacy of our Savior -- God-with-us (Emmanuel). Our worship continues the ancient rituals of Western Christianity and Eastern Christianity both drawn from roots of Jewish worship. Our worship also grows out of the practice of the reformed catholic Church of England, as found in the first Book of Common Prayer of 1549.

**About Worship Posture and Gestures**

We worship God with our bodies as well as our minds, our emotions – our heart! The congregation assembled in worship changes its posture according to the content of the unfolding worship experienced. An old Anglican adage “kneel for prayer, stand for praise, sit for instruction” has yielded over time to greater

variation. Within the last century, we have learned much more about ancient Christian customs, even as we

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have become more attentive to people with disabilities. We now know that the first Christians stood to pray

because they saw themselves as set free from slavery. Standing, which expresses liberation and human dignity, has been emphasized in Eastern Christianity. Kneeling, which expresses human sinfulness and unworthiness, has been emphasized in Western Christianity. Bottomline: some people prefer to kneel, others prefer to stand at various points in our worship as an expression of their spirituality. And of course, if our bodies are not able to kneel or stand, sitting in the midst of the community is always welcome. All body postures can be expressive of our worship of God. Hence there is considerable variation in body postures among Episcopalian worshipers. Many persons also use personal gestures of devotion such as bowing, genuflecting, and making the sign of the cross. Notes on these gestures follow below. Please remember: you are free to use postures and gestures that aid *your* worship of God, and free to omit those that do not.

*Bowing* may be a low reverence (bending from the waist) to recognize God’s presence when passing an altar or at the mention of Christ Jesus’ incarnation in the Nicene Creed. *Bowing* may at other times be a simple declination of one’s head, as is customarily done when the processional Cross passes by one at the beginning and ending of Mass, when the Holy Trinity is praised at the end of a psalm or hymn, when the Gospel is announced and concluded, at the opening words of the “Sanctus,” and in general whenever the holy name of “Jesus” is said or heard.

The *Sign of the Cross* is made with the right hand, touching the tips of one’s fingers from forehead to chest, then from left shoulder to right. This sign symbolizes God’s blessings on us through Christ Jesus’ self-giving on the cross. It also expresses our trust in God and in the hope we receive from our baptism, wherein we were born again in Christ and made one with him in his resurrection. The *sign of the cross* is both a reminder and renewal of our baptism, hence the practice of signing oneself with baptismal water in the sign of the cross upon entrance into and exit from our worship space. It is also often made at the Opening Acclamation prayer, at the mention of baptism in the Creed, at the Absolution after Confession of our sin, at the time of receiving Holy Communion, and at the final Blessing of Mass.

*Genuflection* is kneeling briefly on the right knee alone and returning to stand upright. It is appropriate to genuflect in respect and honor Christ Jesus when approaching or passing an altar and/or tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. At St. Anne’s, the tabernacle is the bronze receptacle embedded in the wall to the right when facing the altar. Some people also genuflect as they leave their pew or chair to receive Holy Communion and as they return.

Please remember: all gestures are optional. All are invited to use whatever postures and gestures that aid their personal worship and free to omit any that do not.

**About Vestments**

Before worship begins, members of the choir and persons serving as acolytes, chalice bearers, and clergy are usually dressed in special clothing. The “eucharistic” vestments have developed over the centuries from ordinary garments of the ancient Roman and Greek worlds. As ordinary fashions changed, the Church retained the older styles of garments and reserved them for particular functions in worship.

*Choir members (choristers) usually wear:*

Cassock – an ankle-length black or red garment (depending on church season). The cassock is the basic garment of those who minister in the church. It is not itself a vestment. Vestments are worn over cassocks. Cotta – a waist-length white vestment with large sleeves and usually a yoke shaped neck is most frequently worn over the cassock by choir members.

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*Acolytes, Chalice Bearers, Ministers of Healing usually wear:*

Cassock or Alb – An alb is an ankle-length white garment with narrow sleeves. The cassock or alb is the basic undergarment of vestments. The traditional vesting prayer associates the alb with the whiteness of purity. The word alb – *alba,* comes from a Latin word meaning *white thing*.

Cincture – is the cord or band used as a belt to gird the alb. The cincture represents the virtue of chastity, and recalls the cords that tied Jesus’ hands at his trial and, most likely, bound his arms when his hands were nailed to the cross.

*Clergy wear a cassock or alb and eucharistic vestments:*

Stole – a scarf-like vestment that bears the color of the season or day, e.g. purple in Advent, white on Christmas, green in the season of Epiphany. Worn over both shoulders by bishops and priests, and over the left shoulder by deacons, the stole is the distinctive sign of the authority granted in ordination and is worn for all sacramental functions and blessings. As chasuble designs have varied, sometimes the stole is worn under or over the chasuble.

Chasuble – The outer vestment put over the others, originally a poncho-like garment, is now the primary sign of priestly ordination. Representing the yoke of Christ, it is worn only for the Eucharist. The priest-presider may don the chasuble before or during Mass at the Offertory.

**Parts of Eucharistic Worship**

**The Liturgy of the Word**

Eucharistic Worship consists of two parts: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Liturgy of the Word comes to us almost unchanged from the early worship of Jewish synagogues. Originally the Liturgy of the Word was a series of lessons or readings from Scripture, alternated with responses from the Psalms and other words of hymns recorded in Scripture. The number of lessons gradually was reduced for Sunday worship until only two lessons were read. The Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) of the 1979 BCP, restored a third lesson from the Old (Hebrew or Jewish) Testament as optional. Overall, the RCL provides a sequence of readings for our Liturgy of the Word, paired with a gospel passage for the various seasons of the church year. The RCL follows a three-year cycle that, in its entirety, presents most of the Scripture passages attributed to the Old (Hebrew or Jewish) Testament and the New (Christian) Testament. In this way, Episcopal communities hear the entire Bible proclaimed over a three-year period. So, the current pattern of the Liturgy of the Word provides for a Hebrew Testament lesson, a psalm or selected verses of a psalm, a Christian Testament lesson ( Acts of the Apostles and early church Letters), a hymn, and a proclamation of a passage from one of the Gospels (Mark, Matthew, Luke or John). To these liturgies of the Word, a homily, a creedal statement, and prayers of the people have been added to help “hearers of the Word” better grasp the meanings of the various lessons.

**Entrance Hymns**

The Eucharist has had many different “openings” in its history. The earliest opening was simply to begin with a prayer, the “collect” of the day. Soon it became desirable to have a hymn or chant to accompany the entrance of the clergy and other ministers, known collectively as the altar party. The earliest acclamations used were borrowed from acclamations used at the passage of royalty, adapted to acclaim the royal priesthood of the Christ. This acclamation was the “Kyrie,” from the Greek expressing the yearning “*Lord, have mercy on us*.” It is not really a penitential lament as it sounds to us. Within early Christian communities it expressed joyful and hopeful praise for the King of Creation. A final opening hymn, the Trisagion – meaning in Greek “thrice

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holy” to describe three qualities of God’s holiness, was used widely in the period of Christianity before the Great Schism of 1054 when Eastern and Western Christianity split over differences in theology and dogma.

After a time, the Kyrie and Trisagion became part of the liturgy. This then precipitated a need for another entrance song, the “Gloria in Excelsis” (Latin for *Glory {to God} in the highest*), that was added. The “Gloria” soon came to be omitted during penitential seasons and was moved to follow the Kyrie. So, another entrance song was needed. An “Introit” (from the Latin *“introitus,” entrance*), usually consists of an antiphon, a psalm verse, and the “Gloria Patria,” that is “Glory be to the Father…” to accompany the entrance of the altar party. In the more “Puritan” reforms of the BCP, the Introit was eliminated.

The rise of modern hymnody came to the rescue. The common practice today is for the entrance of the altar party to be accompanied by a hymn. The result, of course, is that parish community that uses the full entrance options available could have three entrance rites, one after the other: a hymn, the Kyrie, and the Gloria!

**Preparation for Worship**

In the Episcopal Church, meditative quiet is our custom before the service. This is a good time for personal prayer time with God, opening self to God’s presence and offering to God your concerns from the past week and the coming week. Helpful resources include Psalm 43 (BCP p.644), Psalm 84 (BCP p. 707), and devotional prayers found in the BCP (pp. 832-35). An instrumental Prelude to the Service, often on the organ, is chosen to enhance meditative preparation. More recently, many churches provide the lessons, psalm, and Gospel to be read and proclaimed in advance of their Sunday worship. Reading and reflecting on these before worship begins enhances their apprehension when read and proclaimed. Resisting private conversation with pew-mates can help everyone!

**An Outline of the Liturgy of the Word**

**Prelude**

**Processional Hymn**

**Opening Acclamation**

The priest-presider and people, together the “celebrants” of the Service, begin not by exchanging greetings like “Good Morning,” but by stating briefly and beautifully what we have come together to do. First we have come to bless God, which means to give honor and worship to God. Second, we proclaim and remember that God is one in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Third, we celebrate God’s reign in the universe and our commitment to become part of it and to help God’s reign grow in our era.

*Ordinary time*

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

People: *And blessed be God’s kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.*

*Easter through Pentecost*

Presider: Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People: *The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.*

*Lent and on other penitential occasions*

Presider: Bless the Lord who forgives (forgiveth) all our sins.

People: *His mercy endures (endureth) for ever.*

**Collect for Purity**

This prayer has begun Anglican worship for centuries. As we pray it today, it links us with Episcopal and Anglican churches worldwide, known together as the Anglican Communion. In it we

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acknowledge who God is and recognize that we need help and grace in order to love and worship God. Rite I of the Liturgy of the Word preserves the archaic Elizabethan English in its expression, found parenthetically in the following prayer. In some churches it is prayed by all present, in others only by the priest-presider.

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

**Additional Entrance Prayers for Rite I**

**The Great Commands:** The Decalogue (aka Ten Commandments, Exodus 20, 1-17) BCP pp. 317-318

and/or the Commands of Love (Matthew 22, 37-40) BCP, p. 319.

**A Penitential Order: Rite I –** BCP pp. 319-321

**Kyrie**

Kyrie eleison. Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Christe eleison.*  *Christ, have mercy upon us.*

Kyrie eleison. Lord, have mercy upon us.

**Trisagion**

Holy God,

Holy and Mighty,

Holy Immortal One.

*Have mercy upon us.*

**Gloria**

**Rite I**

Glory be to God on high,  
    and on earth peace, good will towards men.

We praise thee, we bless thee,  
    we worship thee,  
    we glorify thee,  
    we give thanks to thee for thy great glory,  
O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;  
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
    that takest away the sins of the world,  
    have mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world,  
    receive our prayer.  
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,  
    have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy;  
thou only art the Lord;  
thou only, O Christ,  
    with the Holy Ghost,  
    art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**Rite II**

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.

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**The Word of God**

Presider: The Lord be with you.

People: (Rite I) *And with thy spirit.*

*(Rite II) And also with you.*

Presider: Let us pray.

**Collect of the Day**

The original beginning of the Eucharist, the Collect or Prayer of the Day is a special prayer in a particular form. Usually one (complex) sentence long, it begins with an address to God that names a divine attribute or action, which then forms the basis of a request. In the BCP there are collections of Collects identified as Traditional and Contemporary. Consider these examples:

**Traditional** **Contemporary**

(Easter) (Pentecost)

O God, who for our redemption didst give thine  Almighty God, on this day you opened the way of   
only-begotten Son to the death of the cross, and eternal life to every race and nation by the promised gift   
by his glorious resurrection hast delivered us from of your Holy Spirit: Shed abroad this gift throughout the   
the power of our enemy: Grant us so to die daily world by the preaching of the Gospel, that it may reach

to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord,

joy of his resurrection; through the same thy Son who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy

and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.  Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

*Amen.*

**The Lessons** Christians are people of The Book in that we regard the Bible as a revelation from God that offers us special insights into God’s nature and God’s purposes in our human story. “Why do we call the Holy Scriptures the Word of God?” asks our Catechism (BCP pp. 845-862). It answers “ We call them the Word of God because God inspired their human authors and because God still speaks to us through the Bible.” It is with this understanding that the reader or lector concludes the Bible passage with the declaration, “The Word of the Lord,” to which we affirm, “Thanks be to God.”

**Old Testament Lesson**

As already mentioned, this lesson was added as an optional reading with the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL). It can be omitted on particular feasts or in services that include the celebration of other sacraments such as marriage.

**Psalm**

As prayers addressed to God, with many attributed to King David, the psalms have always been fundamental in Jewish and Christian worship. In both Rites I and II, we usually read psalms in unison. As songs, psalms are appropriately set to music. A rich choral tradition has grown around them. At St. Anne’s we sometimes use Anglican and chant plainsong settings in different seasons. In Rite II liturgies, a choir and the congregation can alternate plainchant verses with a refrain sung in common.

**Epistle or Second Lesson/Reading**

This Scripture reading prescribed by the RCL is from one of the New Testament epistles or letters, usually addressed to early Christian communities by the Apostle Paul, or from an anonymous early Christian leader who attributed their letter, or series of letters, to one of the Apostles such as Peter, James or John.

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**Hymn or Gospel Acclamation**

A brief said or sung acclamation is used to set apart the Gospel proclamation from the Lessons already

read. It can be the simple spoken assertion “Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia” or a jubilantly sung scriptural verse.

**Gospel**

The liturgical Gospel is a reading from one of the four scriptural gospels as presented in the Bible: Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. Chronologically from their authorship, they can be listed as Mark, Matthew, Luke, then John. These Gospels proclaim words and acts of Jesus, as well as the earliest witnesses of Jesus as the Christ of our faith. The Gospel may be sung or said in the midst of the people as a symbol that Christ came into the midst of our world. Proclaiming the Gospel is one of the special tasks of a deacon. Because all priests in the Episcopal tradition also have been ordained deacons, if no deacon is present, a priest may read the Gospel. At the announcement of the proclamation of the Gospel, some people use the gesture using their right hand of signing themselves with a small cross on the forehead, lips, and heart to signify that the Gospel is to live in their understanding, be on their lips, and live forever in their hearts.

Reader: A Proclamation of the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *(the source Gospel is named)*

People: *Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

Gospel Proclamation

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

**Sermon or Homily**

The Sermon or Homily follows the Gospel with no interruption and is intended to be an exposition of the Word that has just been read. A Sermon indicates that the preacher will address a scriptural, theological, or moral topic, usually expounding on a type of belief, law, or behavior within both past and present contexts. A Homily indicates a type of sermon that explains and applies scripture to human living. The task is to connect the Christ we meet here in church with the Christ we meet at home, in the newspaper, on social media, at work, and walking our city streets and country roads. At an instructed Eucharist, these commentaries on its parts takes the place of the sermon or homily. Normally a sermon or homily is preached at every Eucharist. The Sunday Sermon is sometimes preceded by a Children’s Homily when children are prominently present at Mass.

**Creed**  The people’s response to the Gospel is the faith of the Church as expressed in the Nicene Creed. This Creed sum up the essential beliefs held by all faithful Christians. The Nicene Creed dates from the fourth century Church struggles against several false teachings or heresies of its era. An optional expression of the Nicene Creed is preserved in Rite I with its use of Elizabethan era expression (BCP pp. 327-328).

**Nicene Creed**

*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.*

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**Prayers of the People**

The people’s response to God’s Word continues with prayers of intercession. Prayer is offered for the Church, the nation, the welfare of the world, those who suffer and who are in any trouble, and those who have died and gone on to know fully resurrected life in Christ. Rite I offers only one form of the Prayers of the People (BCP pp. 328-330). Rite II offers six forms of the Prayers of the People (BCP pp. 383 – 393) as well as guidelines for congregations to write their own (BCP p. 383). With the variety of different forms of the Prayers of the People provided in Rite II churches use different forms in different Church seasons. In some forms of these prayers there are pauses where people assembled are invited to say aloud or silently their own particular prayer intentions or the names of people they are remembering. At these opportunities, people are encouraged to pray loudly and distinctly enough to be heard by all present.

**Confession and Absolution**

Before we approach the Lord’s Table where all are welcome, we remember the celebrated attributes of God, all-righteous, holy, all-merciful and forgiving. We are invited to kneel in penitence to acknowledge that, unlike God, we are sinful and are in need of the assurances of God’s forgiveness. Our repentance is an essential movement to faithfully receive God’s grace of forgiveness. Repentance expresses our desire to have a relationship between ourselves and God, set right with our initiative, as we approach the altar to share in Holy Communion. In the penitential season of Lent, the Penitential Order described here is moved to the beginning of the Eucharist, in place of the other entrance rites. Rite I preserves the first form of Confession found in the 1549 Book of Common Prayer (BCP p. 331); Rite I also has as an option, the contemporary expression of Confession found in Rite II (BCP p. 360), albeit with Elizabethan era language.

The Absolution after the Confession, spoken by the priest-presider in the absence of the Bishop, is not only a prayer that asks or hopes for our forgiveness, it is a declaration of our forgiveness. On some occasions, and especially in some seasons such as Easter, the Confession and Absolution may be omitted.

**Confession and Absolution in Rite II**

*The Deacon or Priest-Presider says*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Silence may be kept.*

*Minister and People*

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 Bishop, when present, or the Priest, stands and says*

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**

Greeting one another with the “peace of Christ” is the fruit of the peace between us and God that has been declared in the Absolution. In The Peace we affirm our reconciliation with on another prior to receiving Holy Communion. If I know of an unreconciled relationship I have with another worshiper, it would be appropriate to go to that person and briefly share an apology and/or offer forgiveness at this time. Gestures

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most often used at this time are: extending one’s hand to shake another expressing *“peace”* to each other, a brief

side hug, a kiss with family members, and hand-bumps especially with children. In this post-Covid era, a non-contact gesture can be the forefinger and middle finger of either hand creating the “peace-sign,” offered to others.

**The Peace**

Deacon or Priest-Presider: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: *And also with you.*

*All assembled extend the sign of Peace in a physical gesture with one another as described above.*

**Announcements**

Overall, there is no “good” place for announcements during a Eucharistic Liturgy without interrupting the liturgy’s flow and pace. Announcements are best provided in the church bulletin or Order of Service prepared for this Eucharistic Liturgy, emailed weekly, and shared on public announcement boards. Yet there are always matters important for all to hear. Many churches share announcements after the sharing of Peace and as part of the transition to the Liturgy of Holy Communion. An Offertory Sentence (BCP p.376) serves to announce this transition.

**An Outline of the Liturgy of Sacrament/Holy Communion**

The second half of the Eucharist was originally reserved only for people baptized and confirmed. Those who were preparing for membership in the Church were called “Catechumens” and were escorted out of the church sanctuary at the end of the Liturgy of the Word, often to another space to continue their Christian formation. The completed Liturgy of the Word had centered around the lectern where the Word was read, and the pulpit where the sermon or homily was preached. In some churches these areas are referred to as the Table of the Word as a parallel contrast to the Table of the Eucharist/Holy Communion also known as the Altar.

**Offertory**

The Offertory begins the second part of the Eucharist. The term “offertory” does not refer primarily to taking up the collection of money, but to the offering of ourselves together with our monetary gifts and the elements of bread and wine which will be *consecrated (i.e. set aside for sacred use)*. A deacon or sub-deacon traditionally prepares the altar or holy table by arranging the elements, i.e. the bread and wine. In their absence, the priest-presider does so. Enough bread and wine for all is placed on the altar and a little water is added to the wine in token of the union of human and divine natures in Christ. The money offered by the congregation to support the mission of the local congregation is also placed on the altar. All the elements on the altar are symbols of our lives. St. Augustine asserted, “See that bread and wine? That is you. You are there on the altar.” And just as the Eucharistic bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ, so we, in this Eucharist, become Christ’s mystical body. At the end of the Offertory, a server may assist washing the hands of the priest-presider, who prays a prayer resonant with Psalm 26, verse 6 “Wash away my iniquity, cleanse me of my sin O Lord, that I may go unto the altar of the Lord.”

A sung Offertory Anthem, a major music presentation, is chosen to enhance our worship, highlight themes of the day and season, and to inspire all assembled as we approach sharing Holy Communion.

**The Great Thanksgiving**

The Greek word “eucharistia” means thanksgiving and reminds us that the central act of the service is to give thanks to God. The form of our Eucharistic Prayers, each known as The Great Thanksgiving, derive from the Jewish form of prayer known as “berakah.” In a “berakah” prayer, it’s articulation in Hebrew meaning “blessed are you…,” is immediately followed by a reference to God, which in turn is followed by reasons for humanity to be thankful. Varying listings of what God has done for the people with whom God is in covenant are found in our various berakah-form Eucharistic prayers. Our Christian forms of these “berakoth” (plural of “berakah”) prayers

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are the various Eucharistic Prayers identified in Rites I and II of Holy Eucharist in our Book of Common Prayers, pages 323 through 405. Rite I offers two different forms of the Eucharistic Prayer. Rite II offers four. Each Eucharistic Prayer in both Rites I and II has the common berakah features of naming God who has given us reason to be grateful for what God has done in and through Christ Jesus. The Last Supper Narrative provides a central purpose for thanking God. The original Last Supper narratives are found in the bible from St. Luke and St. Paul, about “the night in which Jesus was betrayed,” when he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples. Following the Last Supper Narrative, additional reasons for giving thanks to God highlight Jesus’ passion, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, and his sending of the Holy Spirit into the lives of those who believe in Christ Jesus’ Way of forgiving love. These berakah narratives then emphasize the four central symbolic actions of our sharing in Communion: taking, giving thanks, breaking the bread, and sharing in Communion with one another. Finally, the berakah-like Eucharistic Prayers of Rite II also emphasize “thematic” reasons for giving thanks to God that are resonant with the seasons of the church year. Eucharistic Prayer A with its emphasis on Jesus’ passion, death and resurrection is resonant with Lent and the “ordinary time” following Pentecost. Eucharistic Prayer B is resonant with the seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany with its emphasis on Jesus’ birth. Eucharistic Prayer C is resonant with the “ordinary time” of summer with its focus on the ecology of creation and cosmos. Eucharistic Prayer D is resonant with Eastertide through Pentecost with its remembrance of Jesus’ life, passion, death, resurrection, and sending the Holy Spirit.

**Preface**

Over centuries of the development of the Eucharistic Prayers familiar to us, additional parts have been added to its berakah style. One part, added at the beginning of each Eucharistic Prayer like an introduction, is called the Preface. It begins with a dialogue between the priest-presider and the congregation and borrows it’s title from Latin phrase “sursum corda” or “lift up your hearts.” In the Preface prayer “proper” that follows the Sursum Corda, various preface prayers (BCP pp.344-349 and pp. 378-382) name occasions such as a baptism, a wedding, a funeral, a special season of the year, particular persons as Saints of God, and then thank God for them. At the end of the Preface prayer, joining the song of the heavenly host, we sing or say a three-fold “Sanctus,” Latin for “*Holy*.”

**Preface Dialogue**  
 Priest-Presider: The Lord be with you.

People: (Rite I) And with thy spirit. (Rite II) And also with you.

Priest-Presider: Lift up your hearts.

People: (Rite I) We lift them up unto our Lord God. (Rite II) We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest-Presider: (Rite I) Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

(Rite II) Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

People: (Rite I) It is meet and right so to do.

(Rite II) It is right to give God thanks and praise.

*Preface prayer suitable for the occasion of this worship service.*

**Sanctus**

*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.*

**God’s Saving Acts**

Each of the Eucharistic Prayers rehearses in different way crucial outlines of God’s saving acts in history from creation through the saga and sojourn of Israel. Jesus is represented as the culmination of God’s work in overcoming the powers of sin and death.

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**Last Supper Narrative / Prayer of Consecration / Words of Institution**

Remembering Jesus’ words and acts are central in all Eucharistic Prayers throughout Christian history. The form of the story is based chiefly on Paul’s account in his first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 11, and Luke’s story of the Last Supper in chapter 22, verses 7-38. At this point the prayerbook instructs: *“At the following words concerning the bread, the priest celebrant is to hold it, or to lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.”* These priestly actions focus the invocation of God’s presence in Western theology. It is important to remember that, although a priest or bishop alone presides, the prayer is offered on behalf of the entire congregation whose members corporately ARE the Celebrant.

**The Mystery of Faith**

At the very heart of the Eucharistic prayer, we acclaim the heart of Christian faith and the means by which God accomplishes our salvation. By our baptismal covenant with God we are made one with Jesus the Christ in his death and resurrection. Past, present, and future are included in the acclamation; God, dwelling in eternity, is beyond our limitations of time. Eucharistic Prayers in Rite I give expression to the mystery of our faith in narrative form. Eucharistic Prayers in Rite II have different acclamations as follows:

**Eucharistic Prayer A**

Priest-Presider: Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith.

People: *Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.*

**Eucharistic Prayer B**

Priest-Presider: Therefore, according to his command, O Father,  
People: *We remember his death, we proclaim his resurrection, we await his coming in glory.*

**Eucharistic Prayer C**

Priest-Presider: Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,

People: *We celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming.*

**Eucharistic Prayer D**

Priest-Presider: …we praise you and we bless you.

People: *We praise you, we bless you, we give thanks to you, and we pray to you, Lord our God.*

**Oblation**

In this portion of the Eucharistic Prayer, we offer God the bread and wine as fruits of both God’s creation and human labor. Most of the bread used at St. Anne’s is baked at home by church members. God then offers these gifts back to us as sacraments of God’s promised presence in the body and blood of Christ, and in us as God’s mystical body of the Christ.

**Oblation, Rite I, *Holy Eucharist I***

…we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy

gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make.

**Oblation, Rite II, Eucharistic Prayer A**

Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

**Epiclesis or Invocation**

Our prayer for the Holy Spirit in each Eucharistic Prayer is called the Epiclesis, Greek for “calling upon.” It is through God’s own Spirit that the gifts we offer become for us Christ’s body and blood. It is through the Spirit that Christ’s real presence is received and we are united with Christ as his Mystical Body in his death and resurrection. Unlike Western Christianity that holds the Last Supper Narrative as consecratory, for Eastern Christianity the Epiclesis is the consecratory moment for the bread and wine to become the Body

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and Blood of Christ in the Eucharistic Prayer. Our Episcopal theology holds that the whole Eucharistic Prayer is consecratory.

**Epiclesis, Rite I, *Holy Eucharist I***

…O merciful Father…vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine…

**Epiclesis, Rite II, Eucharistic Prayer A**

…sanctify them (…these gifts…) by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son…

**Conclusion and Great AMEN**

Eucharistic Prayers conclude with an anticipation of the consummation of all things in Christ and a doxology (praise offered to God as a trinity of persons). The final AMEN to Eucharistic Prayers is the only one in our prayerbook printed entirely in capital letters, signifying that hearty affirmation by the congregation is expected. In Rite II liturgies, the Conclusion and Great Amen are usually sung.

**Conclusion and Great Amen, Rite I, *Holy Eucharist I***

By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. AMEN.

**Conclusion and Great Amen, Rite II, Eucharistic Prayer A**

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 forever. AMEN.

**The Lord’s Prayer**

At this solemn moment of the Liturgy of Holy Communion, we turn to the prayer that Jesus taught, traditionally in the words found in Matthew 6, 9-13. It has not always appeared at this point in the liturgy, but its placement here brings us back to basics of our baptismal covenant. In the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, a contemporary translation of the Lord’s Prayer was introduced. The common recitation of the Lord’s Prayer functions to transition the congregation into receiving the Holy Communion as “our daily bread.”

**Traditional Lord’s Prayer**

*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, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*

**Contemporary Lord’s Prayer**

*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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.*

**Breaking of the Bread**

The breaking of the bread, also known as the Fraction Rite, both recalls Jesus breaking bread at the Last Supper to give to his disciples. It also reminds us that Jesus’ body was broken on the cross for us. The breaking of the bread is silent action. The anthems sung or said at the breaking of the bread all speak of Christ Jesus as the Passover Lamb, sacrificed to take away and free us from our sins.

**Fraction Anthem, Rite I**

Priest-Presider: [Alleluia] Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: *Therefore let us keep the feast. [Alleluia.]*

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O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.(Repeated)

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

**Fraction Anthem, Rite II**

Priest-Presider: [Alleluia] Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: *Therefore let us keep the feast. [Alleluia.]*

e.g. *sung* Jesus, Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us. (Repeated)

Jesus, Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, give us your peace, give us your peace.

**Holy Communion Invitation, Rites I & II**

Priest-Presider: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you,

And feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

**Ministration of Holy Communion**

In Holy Communion we are joined not only with one another, but also with God. It is the Body of Christ (the bread), given to the Body of Christ (the Church), in order to make us one Mystical Body in Christ. This is a time to pray the prayers of your heart. Prayers of devotion before and after receiving communion are found on BCP p. 834.

It is the custom of this Church community to welcome all baptized persons who come in faith and penitence to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion. One need not be a member of the Episcopal Church to share in Holy Communion. Children and adults who are not baptized, who do not receive Holy Communion, have a place at the Table of Holy Communion. Please signify your desire to share in the grace of this Table of Holy Communion by crossing your arms over your chest while kneeling or standing at the Communion rail.

To receive the Body of Christ, kneel and place your right hand over your left, holding them palms up. So that the priest or Communion minister can easily place the bread on the palm of your hand. We ask that you not seek to receive the bread between your thumb and forefinger. Proceed then to consume the bread. We also ask that you do not try to dip the bread in the one cup which tends to contaminate the cup and the wine with bacteria. At St. Anne’s, in this Covid and Flu era, the Blood of Christ, the wine, is offered both in the one cup and in individual cups. The Minister with the one cup usually precedes the Minister with the tray of individual cups. Wait to leave the rail until the person after you has received the chalice to avoid jostling one another.

After receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, return to your seat. It is customary in the Episcopal Church that we spend some moments in personal prayers after receiving communion. Choir anthems and congregational communion hymns are chosen to assist such devotion, and worshipers are encouraged to join in these.

**Post-Communion Prayer**

This prayer sums up what God has done with us in the liturgy. It stresses that our worship has prepared us for our daily Christian mission in the world. An appropriate sign at our front door as we leave church would be “You are now entering the mission field God gives you.”

**Post-Communion Prayer**

Priest-Presider: Let us pray.

All: *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.*

**Blessing and Dismissal**

Historically, various prayers, hymns, readings and blessings have been added on to the end of the liturgy until periodically they need to be removed to effect a direct end of the service. Today, very little obscures the ending

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of the liturgy. The priest blesses the people, using a form that changes from season to season. After an exit hymn, the deacon, or priest in the absence of a deacon, dismisses us. We respond with the thanks that is the very meaning of eucharist.

**Blessing (Illustration)**

Priest-Presider: My sisters and brothers, life indeed is short. We do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who journey the Way of Christ’s love with us. So be swift to love. Make haste to be kind, compassionate, forgiving. May our all-merciful God, creator, redeemer and sustainer keep us all in life everlasting.

All: *Amen.*

**Dismissal**

Deacon or Priest-Presider: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

**After Eucharist**

Just as it is ill advised to leap into worship without preparation, so too it is ill advised to leap out of the pew and dash off to Coffee Hour without spending a few moments alone with God. A helpful prayer to do this is found on BCP p.834: *Grant, we beseech you Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may, through your grace, be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honor and praise of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

**Postlude**

Like the Prelude, the Postlude is intended to assist in worship. You will find it edifying to yourself, as well as respectful to the musician(s), to remain quietly seated until its conclusion.

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