

A Note About the Episcopal Church

The Episcopal Church in the United States is descended from The Church of England. When the American Revolution severed our political ties with England, the church in America started by the Church of England could not remain part of the old church. While remaining in close touch with the Church of England, we became an independent branch of what would become known as the worldwide Anglican Communion, a network including the Episcopal Church and 37 other independent provinces that have roots in the Church of England.

As “Anglicans” we hold to a faith that keeps its deep, ancient “catholic” or universal teachings, but we have also adopted reforms that grew out of the Protestant Reformation in the early 1500’s. There are three basic sources for authority and belief in The Episcopal Church: **Scripture**, the main source of our doctrine and beliefs; **Reason**, the gift of the Holy Spirit to help us understand God’s will in the Scriptures; **Tradition**, the ancient practices and wisdom handed down from the earliest Christian times. As Christians, we hold fast to the doctrines of the Church that were worked out early on in the Church’s history and which are formulated in the Creeds of the Church, especially the Nicene and Apostles’ Creeds. One of the marks of our Anglican heritage, however, is the ability to hold several different opinions and interpretations of the faith in tension, while living together and struggling to understand God’s will for the Church.

We are a Sacramental and Worshipping Church. We recognize seven sacramental rites, uppermost of which are Holy Baptism and The Holy Eucharist, instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ himself. Our ministers include the ancient orders of Bishop, Priest and Deacon. The name of our Church, “Episcopal” comes from the Greek word meaning a church governed by Bishops. We use a *Book of Common Prayer* for our worship, but there is flexibility among congregations in how the rites are carried out.

There is much more to The Episcopal Church than can be told in this short space. We are a Church that is both Catholic and Protestant, ancient and reformed, liberal and conservative. Come join us and learn more, through worship, fellowship and in the educational opportunities we offer.

As believers in Jesus, we come together each week to worship God through Jesus, giving thanks for the wonderful gifts God has given us, and to receive strength from Jesus Christ himself in Holy Communion. Our worship follows an ancient form, dating back to the first Christian Church. It is called by various names: Holy Eucharist, Holy Communion, Mass, The Liturgy and The Lord’s Supper among others. Today as we worship, we will stop periodically to talk about *why* and *what* we do in our worship. Please follow the narration and the portions of the service as outlined below. If you are an Episcopalian, it may be quite familiar. If you are new to the Episcopal Church, we hope it will help you to be more comfortable with our form of worship and thus feel welcome to make this church your spiritual home.

The worship service we use is divided into two parts:

The first is called the **The Word of God** or **The Liturgy of the Word**. It contains readings from the Bible, a Sermon, and Prayers. This part of the service was borrowed from the Synagogue worship service known to the first Christians, who were Jews.

The second half of the service is called **The Holy Communion** or **The Great Thanksgiving**. This title comes from the Greek *eucharist*, which means “thanksgiving”. It also gives us the name for our worship in general: **The Holy Eucharist**. In this part of the worship we remember Jesus’ last supper with His disciples, where He proclaimed that the bread and wine were his body and blood. We believe that Jesus commanded us to faithfully participate in the Holy Eucharist regularly. We also believe that during the priest’s prayer over the bread and wine, called **The Prayer of Consecration**, Jesus becomes present in these elements. We do not claim to know how Jesus becomes present, as some denominations do. We simply believe that because Jesus said that the bread and wine were His body and blood He truly is there to strengthen us with His real presence.

Worship in the Episcopal Church involves the whole person in the action—body, mind and spirit. We sense God’s presence not just with our minds, but with our intuition and with all of our senses: sight, smell, hearing, taste, feeling. Our worship is a movement of the heart as much as it is a movement of the head. We stand, sit, kneel, and use various actions to involve more than just our minds in worshipping God. Bowing the head, making the sign of the Cross, and genuflecting (kneeling briefly on one knee) are ceremonial actions many Episcopalians use to bring more meaning to their worship. It is a matter of the heart, the emotions and the senses, where color, pageantry and “the beauty of holiness” bring us closer to God. Before the service begins we light candles on the altar to drive back a tiny bit of the world’s darkness, kindling a light that reminds us of Jesus, who is the Light of the world.

GETTING READY TO WORSHIP

It is customary to enter God’s House in reverence and silence to begin a period of quiet preparation for the worship, including private prayer. Kneeling or sitting in private devotions as we reach our pew is the form of etiquette that the Church has long used to express our respect for God. This is not a time for visiting with others in your pew. A helpful reminder for all of us is this: *“Before the Service, speak to God. During the Service, let God speak to you. After the Service, speak with one another.”*

It is the custom in the Episcopal Church to bow (or genuflect) toward the **altar** whenever one enters or leaves the pew, or whenever one passes in front of the altar. The altar is the place where the priest says the prayer through which Jesus becomes present in the bread and wine. It is especially appropriate to bow or genuflect when the bread and/or wine are present after this special prayer. It is also appropriate to bow or genuflect when passing the **Tabernacle**, a special container on the altar that holds extra consecrated bread and wine. This bread and wine are used primarily to take communion to shut-ins and those who are too ill to come to church.

PART I: THE WORD OF GOD
ENTRANCE AND COMMUNITY PREPARATION

This portion of the worship service contains the following pieces:

An opening hymn: This is one of several places where we offer God praise through music. At this point the clergy and other participants in the service enter. In many Episcopalian churches incense is used in the service, and it is during this hymn that the priest (called the **Celebrant**) censes the altar, symbolically cleansing it for the worship to come. When the processional Cross passes by your pew, it is appropriate to bow your head.

The Opening Acclamation: This gathers us in the name of the LORD and focuses our attention as we begin to worship.

The Collect for Purity: A **collect** is a short prayer offered by the Celebrant on behalf of us all. This one asks God to give us pure hearts so that we may worship Him properly. We are reminded that God knows our innermost thoughts and desires.

Gloria in excelsis Deo (Latin for “***Glory to God on High***”): This is one of the great ancient hymns of worship, which has been part of the Mass from the beginning. The first verse is what the shepherds heard the angels singing on the night of Jesus’ birth. The *Gloria* is not used during the seasons of Advent and Lent, the two penitential seasons of the Church year. Instead, we might use the penitential plea known as the ***Kyrie eleison***, Greek for “*Lord, have mercy*” or another ancient penitential sentence called the ***Trisagion***.

The Collect for the Day: This prayer “collects” our prayers into one theme for the day or season.

The *Gloria*, *Kyrie* and Collect for the day are often sung. Music for these prayers is found in the Mass booklet provided for each service, or in *The Hymnal 1982* (in the front, as “Service Music”).

A note on incense: Incense has been used in worship for centuries and is mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments. Incense was an integral part of the worship in the Temple in Jerusalem, with an altar set aside especially for its burning. The Wise Men brought Jesus frankincense, a type of incense quite often used as the basis for incense we use today. A verse from the hymn *We, Three Kings of Orient* reminds us that “incense owns a Deity nigh,” meaning that incense is a sign of Jesus’ real presence with us. In the Book of Revelation, Chapter 5, Verse 8, we read of a bowl of incense that is the prayers of the saints. Today incense has other symbolic meanings. Incense is a physical representation of the prayers of the faithful rising to God. The slight haze it produces reminds us of the mystery of God. Incense is also a representation of the pillar or cloud that led the Hebrews on their journey to freedom out of Egypt, the cloud that contained the essence of God as He guided and protected His people. Incense is one more way to worship God with our whole being, with all of our senses.

Please follow along now as we begin our service of Holy Eucharist with the opening hymn.

Processional Hymn (See Bulletin or Hymn Board)

The people standing, the Celebrant says

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People *And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever.*
Amen.

The Celebrant says

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 in excelsis Deo *The following hymn is said, all standing*

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 Collect of the Day

The Celebrant says to the people

The Lord be with you.

People *And also with you.*

Celebrant Let us pray.

The Celebrants says or sings the Collect.

People *Amen*

PART I: THE WORD OF GOD THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

After the Collect for the Day we hear the proclamation of the Word of God, through Scripture readings and the Sermon. As in the early Church, three Scripture lessons are read, along with a Psalm, and followed by a Sermon:

Old Testament: A reading from the ancient Hebrew Scriptures is a reminder of the link between Christianity and Judaism. It is our way of seeing the whole picture of God's actions in history.

A Psalm: This is from the Psalter, the "hymnal" of the Old Testament. It is believed that Israel's great King David wrote many, if not all, of the Psalms. The Psalm is read or sung after the first lesson.

New Testament Epistle: Epistles are letters written to churches or individuals for teaching, correction of behavior or belief, and for encouragement in times of hardship or persecution. Many Epistles in our New Testament were written by St. Paul. A hymn, called the **Gradual Hymn** or **Sequence Hymn**, is often sung after the Epistle. In some parishes an Alleluia verse is sung instead.

Gospel: A lesson is now read from one of the four books of the New Testament that contain the life and teachings of Jesus, namely Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The Gospel is read or chanted from the middle of the congregation, symbolic of the Gospel being taken to the people of the world. As the Gospel is announced, some people use the right thumb to make a sign of the cross on their forehead, on their mouth and over their heart. This signifies a threefold prayer. "May the Word of God be received in my mind that I may understand it, upon my lips that I may speak it, and in my heart that I may believe it." As in all ceremonial actions, if it contributes to your worship life, then use it. If it does not enhance your worship, then feel free to omit it. The Episcopal way of worship allows for flexibility and variety in such matters.

The Sermon: This is a proclamation of God's Word for our own day, usually drawing upon one or more of the Scripture lessons appointed for the day. Listen attentively to the readings and the sermon for God to speak to you. *Today our comments on the service are a substitute for the Sermon.*

We now continue our worship with the Lessons and Psalm.

The first Lesson (See Bulletin)

The people sit. After the reading, the Reader says

The Word of the Lord.

People *Thanks be to God.*

The Psalm (See Bulletin)

The Second Lesson (See Bulletin)

The people sit. After the reading, the Reader says

The Word of the Lord.
People *Thanks be to God.*

The Gradual Hymn (See Bulletin or Hymn Board) The hymn is called a “gradual” hymn, because it happens while the Gospel is brought down the steps from the altar, into the congregation. *Gradus* means step in Latin.

The Gospel (See Bulletin)

As the Gospel is brought into the midst of the people, the people sing an Alleluia verse. The word “Alleluia” (Hallelujah) means, literally, “Praise to the LORD!”

All standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads or chants the Gospel, first saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to [Matthew, Mark, Luke or John].
People *Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

After the Gospel, the Reader says

The Gospel of the Lord.
People *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

The Sermon In our worship today the sermon is omitted. Our commentary on the service is today substituted for a sermon.

PART I: THE WORD OF GOD THE CREED, PRAYERS, CONFESSION AND PEACE

Having heard the Word of God proclaimed in Scripture and Sermon, we continue with The Creed, Prayers of the People, a confession and an expression of Peace.

Nicene Creed: We stand to proclaim our Christian faith in the words of the Nicene Creed, produced at the first Council of Nicea, in modern-day Turkey, in *A.D.* 325, and at the first Council of Constantinople (also in Turkey) in *A.D.* 381. Down through the centuries Christians around the world have acknowledged this Creed as the basic summary of orthodox (or authentic) teaching. An ancient custom is to genuflect or bow during the *Incarnatus*, the portion of the creed that says that God became man in Jesus Christ. We do this out of reverence for God’s love in coming among us, as one of us, to save us. Since eternal life was made possible by Jesus’ death on the cross, it is also a common practice to make the sign of the cross at the concluding words of the Creed concerning the resurrection to eternal life. Although we will say the Creed today, it can also be sung.

Prayers of the People: Immediately following the Creed we offer our prayers and thanksgivings to God. We have several forms to choose from in our Prayer Book. One of six forms of intercession beginning on Page 383 in the *Book of Common Prayer* is normally used.

An important part of our ministry as a priestly people is to pray for the Church, the world, ourselves and others. We include prayers for the faithful departed and the Saints. Later, in the introduction to the **Sanctus**, we are reminded that the angels, archangels and all the company of heaven join us in our prayers. We always pray for our earthly friends and ask them to do the same for us. We also ask for the prayers of our loved ones who have gone beyond earth to be forever with our Savior. Our prayers are an opportunity for bringing God's grace and power to bear in our life and in the life of others, in ways that surpass our knowing. In our prayers we are also offering up prayer for those who have not or will not pray for themselves.

General Confession: Next, the Deacon invites us to make a confession of our sins. It is called a "general confession" because it is for everyone, and its wording is general, not specific. The prayer says quickly and pointedly that we have sinned against God and our neighbor in thought, word and deed, but before saying this prayer we pause to call to mind our own sins that are offered up in prayer. For most of us, this prayer says all that needs to be said, at least in public. After the confession, the Celebrant stands before the congregation and pronounces the absolution assuring all of us of God's forgiveness. When we make the sign of the cross over ourselves during the absolution, we are symbolically showing that we have faith in God's forgiveness, which was made possible by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

The Peace: Following the absolution, the Celebrant invites us to exchange the Peace. This was an important part of the liturgy of the early Church, as it is now. The Peace celebrates our reconciliation with one another, just as we have been reconciled to God in the confession immediately before. Remember that it is God's peace we share, and we are encouraged to "greet one another in the name of the Lord." Do not trivialize this time with small talk and "chit-chat." Extend God's Peace to your neighbor by saying something like, "The Peace of the Lord be with you" or "God bless you." News and other greetings should be left for later. Now that we have been forgiven by God, and reconciled to Him and to our neighbor, we can approach God in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Please stand now as we continue with the Nicene Creed through the Peace and Announcements.

The 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.

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.

The Prayers of the People (*See Bulletin for the Weekly Prayer List.*)

Form III

The Deacon or other Leader offers the following petitions, including current prayers and thanksgivings. The People pray responsively.

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest;
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

Silence

The People may add their own petitions.

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

Confession of Sin

The Deacon or Celebrant says

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

The people kneel. 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

All stand. The Celebrant says to the people

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

Then the Ministers and People greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Announcements

PART II: THE GREAT THANKSGIVING THE OFFERING

The Offertory Sentence said by the Celebrant and the Offertory Anthem or Hymn that follow the Peace begin the second half of our Eucharist and signifies the offering of our very selves to God at His altar, and is thus a very important part of our worship. Members of the congregation present bread and wine at the altar. A monetary offering (called **alms**) is also received from the people and is presented to the Celebrant at the altar following an offertory procession. The gifts represent the productivity of our lives being offered to the glory of Almighty God and for use in the Church's ministry in the world. The choir usually sings an anthem at this time, or a hymn is sung by the congregation, not just to "entertain" during the collection, but as an integral part of our alms and oblations, our giving to God. The anthem corresponds to the liturgical and scriptural emphasis of the day.

While the offering is received from the congregation, the Deacon prepares the bread and wine for Communion. The bread and wine are the material elements that the Lord used in the Last Supper, transforming their essence when he said, "This is my Body, this is my Blood." Remember, this is a time of self-offering. What is placed on the altar is a token of ourselves. God has given us all we have, and we joyfully acknowledge this in the singing of the Doxology at the time our gifts are presented at the altar.

PART II: THE GREAT THANKSGIVING [THE HOLY COMMUNION] THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

After the offertory anthem or hymn is sung or said while the alms are presented, we are prepared for the Holy Eucharist. This portion of our worship service contains elements that have been part of Christian worship from the beginning. We start with the *Sursum corda* and *Sanctus*.

Sursum Corda and Sanctus: This part begins with an ancient exchange between the Celebrant and people known as the **Sursum Corda**, Latin for "*lift up your hearts*". The Celebrant inserts into this joyful expression of praise one of the **Proper Prefaces**, the theme of which changes with the occasion or Church season being celebrated. All then join in the **Sanctus**, Latin for "*Holy*", words of heavenly worship from the vision of the prophet Isaiah in Chapter 6, verse 3.

At the conclusion of the *Sanctus* and during the Prayer of Consecration, bells are rung. The *Sanctus* bell originated in the 12th century cathedrals, where size and dimness, along with the Mass in Latin rather than the common language of the people, made it difficult for worshipers to know what was happening at the altar. The ringing of the bell signaled particularly important moments in the rite, such as the *Sanctus* and the Consecration of the elements of bread and wine. Often a large tower bell was rung at the same time to alert workers in the fields that something special was happening in the nearby church. Today we also use bells to draw attention to particular parts of the service. Not all churches use *Sanctus* bells. This reflects, once again, the flexibility of worship in the Episcopal Church.

The Prayer of Consecration: We now kneel for the central prayer of the Eucharist, which offers thanks to God for creation and redemption, and calls upon Christ to be present in the bread and wine. The Celebrant solemnly recites the **Words of Institution**, recalling the words and actions of Jesus at the Last Supper. By the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, the bread and wine are consecrated and become the Body and Blood of Christ. We, too, are **sanctified**, or *made holy*, by the Holy Spirit as the people of God, when we offer ourselves as living sacrifices in His service. The “Great Amen” comes at the end of the Prayer of Consecration. Notice that it is printed in capitalized letters, indicating that all people are to say it or sing it heartily and joyfully, in a loud voice. It marks a great high point of the liturgy when the Celebrant elevates the Blessed Sacrament, calling the faithful to look up in adoration to behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

The Lord’s Prayer: Concluding this section of the liturgy, all join in the Lord’s Prayer, the earliest prayer of the Christian Church, coming from the lips of Jesus himself. The reason it is introduced with the words “we are bold to say” has to do with our confidence in addressing God as our Father. We can address God as Father with boldness because we are redeemed sinners, reborn as children of God in Baptism, and have the Holy Spirit dwelling in us as His temple. This is the family prayer of the Church, the Body of Christ, all baptized people, in this life and in the world to come.

PART II: THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

The Fraction: The Celebrant’s next action, **The Fraction**, or **The Breaking of the Bread**, is one of the most ancient practices in the celebration of the Eucharist. It symbolizes the breaking of Christ’s Body on the Cross for our sins. The proclamation that “Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us” reminds us that because of His self-offering we are empowered to “keep the feast” of the redeemed life.

The Agnus Dei: The **Agnus Dei** (“*O Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world*”), is one of the oldest Christian hymns. The Celebrant proclaims that God’s Lamb is in our midst, and we all acknowledge that although we are unworthy to receive God, that by His mercy we may be healed. We proclaim that all has already been done for us by Christ himself, and that our proper action is to respond in love and trust to God’s great gift of Himself through Christ.

Invitation to Communion: The Celebrant and Deacon now hold the chalice and bread (often referred to as **the host**) before the people as an invitation for us to come to the altar rail to receive the Sacrament. In the Episcopal Church, all baptized persons, accustomed to receiving Holy Communion in their own church, who acknowledge the real presence of Christ in the Sacrament, and who have made a proper spiritual preparation, are welcome to receive the consecrated Bread and Wine.

As we approach the altar, it is appropriate to genuflect or bow as a special sign of reverence for the Blessed Sacrament. Many find it helpful in their personal devotions to make the sign of the cross immediately before and after receiving the bread and the wine. We receive Christ's Body and Blood in this Sacrament that "we may evermore dwell in him, and He in us."

In receiving the Sacrament, it is customary to place one hand in the other, palms up, to take the host (the bread). When you receive the chalice, guide the cup gently to your lips. This helps the chalice bearer. Some people prefer to **intinct**, meaning having the host dipped briefly in the chalice rather than drink from the common cup. If a person wishes to receive the host this manner, it is preferred that he or she hold the host up to be taken by the chalice bearer, who then dips the host in the wine and places it on the tongue of the communicant. Done this way, it avoids many fingers finding their way into the wine, since the chalice bearer is trained to do this properly. In most parishes, however, the custom has developed whereby the communicants do the intinction as the chalicer holds the cup for them. If you do not wish to receive the Sacrament, you are still urged to join us at the rail for a blessing. Simply cross your arms over your chest as a sign that you do not wish to receive the Sacrament, and the Celebrant will give you a blessing instead. If you wish to receive the bread only but not the wine, simply cross your arms as above after receiving the bread and the chalice bearer will understand. Once again, as we receive the Sacrament, our senses come into play as we receive the bread in our hands and on our tongues and as we taste the wine. We receive the only earthly food that can sustain our souls. It is Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life, who gives himself to us in every Mass.

After all have received, the Deacon or Celebrant cleanses the vessels. The remaining consecrated elements are either consumed or reserved in the tabernacle for use at another time, such as taking communion to a shut-in or someone who is ill. During this time, the congregation normally sings a post-communion hymn. This hymn is another expression of thanks to God for welcoming us to this Feast of Thanksgiving.

Please join us as we continue now with the Offertory through the Communion of the People.

The Celebrant begins with an Offertory Sentence

Offertory Anthem or Hymn (See Bulletin)

The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer A
Sursum Corda

The people remain standing. The Celebrant sings or says

The Lord be with you.
People *And also with you.*
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.
People *We lift them to the Lord.*
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

The Celebrant proceeds

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

Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed. The Celebrant continues

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 *Celebrant and People then sing or say*

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.

The people kneel as the Celebrant continues, facing the altar

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.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or 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.

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 (*Celebrant and People*)

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues

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,

People and Celebrant

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
one 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.

The Breaking of the Bread

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread & a period of silence is kept.
Then the following fraction anthem is said*

Alleluia. Christ or Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Celebrant says the following Invitation:

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those who are called to His supper.

The people respond:

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed.

The ministers receive the Sacrament in both kinds, and then immediately deliver it to the people.

The Bread and the Cup are given to the communicants with these words

The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven. **Amen**
The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. **Amen**

Post-Communion Hymn (See Bulletin)

PART II: THE GREAT THANKSGIVING THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER, THE BLESSING, THE DISMISSAL

Before leaving our worship to serve others in the world around us, we offer a final prayer called the **Post-Communion Prayer** (a prayer of thanksgiving). This expresses our gratitude to God for the gifts we have just received. In it we are reminded of the reality that we are the Body of Christ. We ask God to make our lives living proof of our union with Christ. After we have lost ourselves in wonder, love and praise for God, we are called to empty ourselves, to let God use our lives, just as Mary, the Queen of Saints, let God use her life for others.

The Eucharist ends with the **Blessing** by the Celebrant. At sung services this is followed by a recessional hymn, a final, joyful act of praise to God. The Deacon then dismisses the people, using a sentence such as “Let us go forth in the name of Christ.” From the Easter Vigil through the Day of Pentecost, “Alleluia, alleluia” is added to make our response even more joyful. Our response is “Thanks be to God.” To say this is our gratitude, our praise, and our promise to God that what we have done here today may affect all that we are and do every day of our lives. Worship must lead to action, to insure justice and to help the poor, and to bring others to know, love, accept and follow Jesus. Without action our worship is empty and vain. Do not come to worship just to gratify your needs only, but to give glory to God. God has sent us into the world to bring Jesus Christ to all people in our own words and actions. Our worship helps equip us for this task. As we leave our place of worship, we ask “Am I ready now to go forth into the world in Christ’s name to do God’s work, to introduce all people to Jesus so that they may have their lives changed for the better, too?”

Once the worship service is over, we are still mindful that we are in the house of God, a place of prayer. Avoid standing around and talking inside the church as best you can. Others may want to remain kneeling for some quiet time alone with God after service. Fellowship time and small group visiting are more appropriately saved for the Parish Hall or the sidewalk outside.

We now conclude today's worship with the Post Communion Prayer, the Blessing, the final hymn and the dismissal.

After Communion, the people kneel as the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

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.*

The bishop when present, or the Priest blesses the people.

Recessional Hymn (See Bulletin)

The Deacon, or the Celebrant, dismisses the people

People Thanks be to God.

Musical Postlude