

Acolyte procedures for Holy Eucharist, Rite II at
Saint Paul's Episcopal Church, Altus, Oklahoma

20 minutes prior to the start of the service the acolytes will put on their robes.

The two *torch bearers*, or the *crucifer*, in their absence will go to church and light the altar candles.

In the *sacristy*, behind the sanctuary you will find the tapers in the...If there are two torch bearers they will enter the sanctuary at the same time, one from the right and one from the left. Walk to the front of the altar, stop, and bow then move up the candles and light them at the same time. Return to the front of altar, when both are present, bow and leave. If the candles are to be lit by one person, enter from either side and walk to the front of the altar, bow then move to the candle on the right (Epistle side), light it then light the one on the left (Gospel side). Return to the front of the altar, bow and exit. If there is a special candle, it will be lit last after leaving the front of the altar. Return the tapers to the storage area and return to the parish hall.

Get the cross and torches and walk to the narthex. Light the candles using the matches located in the drawer of the table next to the entrance to the *nave*. When instructed by the priest, enter the *nave* and take your positions facing the altar, just behind the last pews. Leave enough room for people to walk past you to go to the pews.

When instructed by the priest, begin the *procession*. The crucifer will lift the cross high and step off. Torch bearers will start after the crucifer reaches the second pew. Hold the torches high enough so the bottom of the torch does not touch the floor. The bottom of the torch should be at the top of your ankle.

When crucifer reaches the entrance to the *sanctuary* he will stop and wait for the torch bearers, if present. Together, turn and face the congregation, **the crucifer will lower the cross so the bottom of the staff rest on the floor**. Remain in this position until the last member of the choir crosses in front of you. Together, the crucifer and torch bearers will turn to their right and walk to the rack where you will store the cross and torches. After they are secure, turn and face the opposite wall with one torch bearer in the lead. After the celebrant and other servers enter the sanctuary walk to the entrance to the sanctuary, stop, turn and face the altar, bow then walk to your positions in front of your *sedilia* (seats), remain standing, with your back to the seat.

The service will continue with the Salutation, The Collect of Purity, The Gloria, and the Collect. After the Collect, be seated.

The First Lesson, remain seated.

Psalm, stand or remain seated, follow actions of celebrant.

The Epistle, remain seated.

Sequence Hymn

At the beginning of the sequence hymn, the crucifer and torch bearers will stand, walk to the entrance of the sanctuary, step outside of the sanctuary, turn and face the, bow, then together turn to the left and go to the rack where the cross and torches are stored. Line up with a torch bearer in the lead and return to the entrance of the sanctuary, stop, turn and face the altar. Crucifer will lower the cross the floor.

When the *Lay Eucharistic Minister (LEM)* starts walking to the altar, the crucifer and torch bearers will turn and face the congregation. Crucifer will raise the cross and start walking. The torch bearers will start after the crucifer takes two steps. The crucifer will walk to the fifth pew, stop and turn to face the altar, then lower the cross. Torch bearers will stop one pace from the crucifer and turn to face each other.

The Holy *Gospel* will be read.

After the gospel the reader and LEM and reader will step to the side to make room for the acolytes to return to the altar. The crucifer will raise the cross and begin walking to the front with the torch bearers walking two paces behind. When the crucifer reaches the entrance to the sanctuary he will stop and wait for the torch bearers. Together, turn to the left and walk to rack where the cross and torches are stored and return them to the rack. Line up facing the organ with a torch bearer in the lead and together walk to the pew beside the organ and be seated for the homily.

The *Homily*

After the homily the acolytes will stand, walk to the front of the sanctuary, bow and return to their seats, and remain standing facing the altar. Note, the crucifer will pickup the Gospel Book from the altar and place it on the bottom shelf of the credence table.

The Nicene Creed

Read the creed along with the congregation. After the creed walk to the kneelers and wait for the announcement for the reading of the prayers.

Prayers of the People

When directed, kneel and respond as required during the reading of the prayers. Remain kneeling for the:

General Confession

And
Absolution

The Peace

During the peace, feel free to walk among the congregation and share God's peace. After exchanging the peace, return to the front of the sanctuary, bow and return to your seats.

Announcements

Remain seated during the announcements.

Offertory

The offertory statement will be given by the celebrant. At the announcement the torch bearers will get the alms basins and walk to the front of the altar, facing the congregation, and wait for the ushers to bring the communion elements. Exchange the ***alms basins*** for the ***elements***. Bow to the ushers, turn and take the elements to the altar. If the celebrant is a Deacon, only one torch bearer will take the alms basins to the ushers. At the same time the crucifer will go to the ***credence table***, remove the top from the water curette, and place the linen towel over their left wrist, holding the bowl in the left hand the water in the right hand, walk to altar to assist the celebrant in washing their hands. Return the water, bowl and towel (***lavabo***) to the shelf and move to the kneeler beside the altar.

The Doxology

When the Doxology begins one torch bearer will take the large alms basin and walk to the front of the altar, face the congregation and wait for the ushers to return the alms basins. Accept the alms basins, bow to the ushers, turn, walk to the altar, step up on the ***predella*** and present the basins to the celebrant. The other torch bearer will receive the basins from the celebrant at the side of the altar and place them on the bottom shelf of the ***credence table***. Both torch bearers will return to their kneelers at the side of the altar. Acolytes will remain standing and participate in the communion service.

Holy Communion begins.

The Great Thanksgiving

The Sanctus

About half way through the Sanctus the crucifer will kneel and pull the bells from under the ***altar cloth***. When the Sanctus is finished ring the bells three times. The torch bearers will kneel at this time.

Ring the bell once after the statement is read about the bread and body, and again after the statement about the wine and blood.

The Lord's Prayer

The Breaking of the Bread

Agnus Dei

After this is sung the acolytes will receive communion. The choir will then receive communion. As the choir is returning to their pews the acolytes will stand and proceed to the front of the sanctuary. The torch bearers will pick up the kneeler cushion and place it in the opening between the other kneeling cushions along the altar rail. They will then move to the edge of the step leading up to the ***chancel***, one on each side, turn and face each other. Assist as necessary, anyone stepping up or down. The crucifer will close the ***altar rail gates*** at the altar rail and return to his seat.

When the last person receiving communion leaves the altar rail, the torch bears will return to the front of the altar rail and pick up the center kneeler cushion and return it to its original position. The crucifer will be opening the gate to the sanctuary at the same time. The acolytes will return to their position at the altar and remain standing until the celebrant announces “let us pray”, then kneel.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Benediction

Recessional Hymn

At the beginning of the recessional hymn the acolytes will stand, walk to the front of the altar, face it and bow. Proceed to the rack holding the cross and torches and take them. Return to the front of the altar, and remain standing facing the altar. When signaled by celebrant or LEM, turn and face the congregation, crucifer will raise the cross and begin processing out. The torch bearers will follow after the crucifer takes two steps.

When the acolytes reach the rear of the church they will turn and exit the church. Torch bearers will extinguish their candles as soon as they enter the narthex. Proceed to the robbing room and put away the cross and torches. The torch bearers will proceed back to the sanctuary pick up the candles lighters, enter the sanctuary, one from each side, walk to the front of the altar, bow and put out the altar candles. If there is only one person, enter from either side walk to the front of the altar, bow and then walk to the altar and extinguish the candle on the left (Gospel side) then the one on the right (Epistle Side). Return to the front of the altar, bow and exit from the side. Return to the robe room and remove robes.

Go eat.

Dismissal

Closing Voluntary

Terminology

Parts of the building:

Narthex: The entrance hall, called by some denominations the vestibule.

Nave: The pew area of the church building, where the congregation sits, stands or kneels during public worship. The nave is more than an auditorium, where people listen, because worship in the Episcopal Church involves everyone as participants.

Chancel: In classic church design, an area of pews, seats, stalls or prayer desks set apart from the nave, used by the ministers leading services and sometimes used by the choir.

Sanctuary: The area immediately surrounding the altar, often enclosed by an altar rail. In some denominations the word refers to the entire worship space.

Other Terms.

Acolyte - A term specifically applied to one who carries a torch or a candle in processions and at other times during the liturgy. This term is also commonly interchanged with server. Originally a minor clerical order but now usually a lay function in the church.

Advent - The beginning of the Church Year and the four weeks leading up to and concluding with Christmas (the entire Christmas season).

Advent Wreath - A special wreath (circle of greens) containing five candles used in churches and homes as reminders of the four Sundays before Christmas. Four of the candles are arranged in a circle, the fifth--a white candle--is placed in the center. By tradition one additional candle is lighted each Sunday until on the fourth Sunday all four candles are lighted. On Christmas, the fifth candle is lighted.

Agnus Dei - One of the anthems at the Breaking of the Bread; also found at the conclusion of the Great Litany (*BCP, 337, 407, 152*).

Aisle The center passage of a church building bisecting the pews, extending from the narthex to the chancel.

Alb - A long, white, sleeved linen vestment worn over the cassock, covering the body from neck to ankles. It is derived from the under-tunic worn in Roman times.

Alms From the Greek word *e/eos*, meaning "pity." Money given by the Church to the poor. According to the canons, the loose offering (cash and undesignated

checks) on the first Sunday of every month is supposed to go into an Alms account.

Alms Basin - An Episcopalian "offering plate."

Altar - A table, usually in the sanctuary, on which the bread and wine used in the Communion service are consecrated. Also known as and referred to in the prayer book as the Holy Table.

Alms - Money or other offerings of the people for the work of the Church.

Alms Basin - A large metal plate into which the money offerings of the people are placed before they are presented to the officiant.

Altar - A stone or wooden table at which the Holy Eucharist is celebrated.

Altar Cloth - A long piece of white linen that covers the top of the altar and hangs down the sides almost to the floor. When not in use, the altar cloth is usually protected with a dust-cover.

Altar Cross - A crucifix or cross which stands upon the altar or hangs above it.

Altar Rail - The rail or kneelers where the people kneel or stand to receive Communion.

Altar Rail Gates - The gates or hinged top of the center of the altar rail. When opened, these allow access to the altar area, and are closed before the administration of Communion.

Ambry (or Aumbry) - A closed recess in the wall of a church for reservation of the Blessed Sacrament or holy oil for the sick.

Celebrant - the main priest in a Eucharist, mass, or communion; the priest who performs the consecration of the bread and wine; the celebrant may be assisted by other priests, deacons, chalice bearers, acolytes, etc.

Chalice - From Latin, *calix*, meaning "cup." A chalice is the cup used to contain the wine used at Communion.

Chalice-bearer The person (ordained or lay) who administers the chalice during Communion.

Chancel - From the Latin *cancelli*, meaning "a grating" or "lattice." Chancel is the name for the section of a church building between the nave and the sanctuary;

usually the place the choir sits; sometimes also called the "choir". It is also usually a few steps higher than the nave.

Chant - Not exactly singing, nor reading, chanting is a recitation midway between singing and reading. Chanting originated in the monastic orders in the early centuries of the Church.

Ciborium - A cup that resembles a chalice, except that it has a removable lid. A ciborium is used to hold communion wafers during the Eucharist

Communicants - From the Latin word *communicare*, meaning "to share, or partake." Communicants are the members of a local church who do or who are eligible to receive communion.

Communion - The Christian sacramental meal, the Lord's Supper, commanded by our Lord ("Do this in remembrance of me."). For centuries the service used to celebrate the meal was called Holy Communion, but is now more commonly called the "Eucharist" in Episcopal churches.

Credence Table - A small table or shelf on the epistle side of the altar that holds the bread, wine and water before consecration.

Crucifer - A person in a religious procession who carries a large cross (a processional cross), and leads the procession into the church and the recession out of the church.

Cruet - From old French, *crue*, meaning "a vial or a glass." A cruet is the vessel (glass or metal) used to hold the water and wine for the Eucharist.

Deacon - The subservient rank in the three orders of the Church's ministry (Bishop, Priest, Deacon). There are two types of deacons - transitional deacons, who will soon be ordained to the priesthood, and permanent deacons, who chose the order as a permanent servant ministry. Priests are first ordained to the diaconate to remind them and the Church that they are, and that they always will be servants (see Matthew 20:25-28).

Elements - The bread and wine of Holy Communion.

Epistle - Usually (but not always) included in a Sunday service, the epistle is a reading from one of the New Testament books other than the Gospels. The epistle and the Old Testament lessons are typically read by a Lay reader.

Epistle Side The side of the building from which the Epistle lesson is read. The side depends on whether the altar is located against a wall or free standing, meaning the priest celebrates the Eucharist from behind it. If the altar is against

the wall, the Epistle side is the left side of the church building when one is facing the altar.

Font - A basin for water to be used in church baptisms.

Genuflection - From the Latin words *genu*, meaning "knee," and *flectere*, meaning "to bend." A genuflection is a sort of deep curtsey where the right knee touches the ground. The appropriate times for genuflection (if you do it at all) are when passing before the Reserved Sacrament, when entering or leaving your pew when the consecrated bread and wine are on the altar, and in the Nicene Creed at the words, "who for us and our salvation."

Gospel - Any reading from books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. We stand for the gospel reading in the service, to show reverence for Jesus, since he is speaking to us when the gospel is read.

Gospel Side - The gospel side is on the right-hand side. In medieval times the altar was pushed against the west wall, and the Gospel side then became the right side, when facing the altar.

Homily - A short sermon often on a single topic of devotion or morality. The difference between a sermon and a homily is primarily the length.

Host - The consecrated "bread" part of the Holy Communion. In most Episcopal churches a wafer is used as the host, but an increasing number of churches are using actual baked bread. The wafer the priest breaks at the fraction is called a "priest's host."

Lavabo - From Latin, meaning, "I will wash." The name originally referred to the ceremonial washing of the priest's hands before he or she celebrated Communion, while saying the words, "I will wash my hands in innocence." (Psalm 26:6). The name lavabo also refers to the small towel used to dry the hands and the bowl into which water is poured during the washing. Thus, to call the towel a lavabo towel, or to call the bowl a lavabo bowl would be technically redundant.

LEM - An abbreviation for "Lay Eucharistic Minister" A LEM is an individual who has undergone special training and is authorized by the priest to take pre-consecrated Communion to a sick or shut-in member of the parish or mission.

Offertory - Most think of the offertory as the time in the worship service where the offering is taken up. The offering of money is part of the offertory, but the offertory also includes the offering of bread and wine that is to be consecrated during the communion, and the offering of "...ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice."

Parish hall - A gathering place for a local congregation separate from the church building. The term "parish hall" also is used to refer to a large room inside the Parish.

Peace, The - Also known as "passing the peace." A part of the ritual in the Episcopal Church in which members of the congregation, including the clergy, greet one another. The priest says, "The Peace of the Lord be always with you." The congregation responds, "And also with you." (When using Rite I, the response is "And with thy Spirit.") Immediately after these words people shake hands or speak or sometimes embrace in the church

Predella - The raised area or platform on which some Altars or Holy Tables stand. The word is Italian and literally means "a footstool."

Procession - The line of choir, clergy, acolytes, crucifer, torchbearers and others walking into a church building to begin a service.

Processional Cross - The large cross carried by the crucifer during the procession.

Recession - The procession of the crucifer, acolytes, choir, readers, clergy and other assistants out of a church building at the end of a service.

Rite I - A portion of the Book of Common Prayer which contains worship services using the traditional worship language of the Church from as used from the 1600's until 1976.

Rite II A portion of the Book of Common Prayer containing worship services which use more modern language and place importance on a different theological emphasis than traditional Episcopal worship.

Sacristy - A room near the altar where the communion vessels, altar hangings, candlesticks, etc. are kept and cleaned. The room is often seen as the exclusive domain of the Altar Guild.

Sanctuary From the Latin word *sanctus*, meaning "holy." The sanctuary is the part of the church building where the altar or holy table is -- the area behind the altar rail. Many Protestant denominations use the word to refer to the whole inside of the church building, but this is not the usual Episcopal usage.

Sanctus Bell - The actual name for the bell is a "sacring bell," but most refer to it as a "sanctus bell" because it is rung at the time of the Sanctus. In medieval times, when the service was said in Latin and the masses spoke English, the bell was rung at the Sanctus as a signal that it was time to pay attention.

Sanctuary Lamp - A lamp hanging somewhere in the sanctuary. Sometimes there are three lamps, sometimes seven, but usually only one. A single, continuously burning sanctuary lamp indicates the presence of the Reserved Sacrament.

Sedilia - The seats inside the sanctuary, used by clergy and acolytes.

Server - Someone who assists the celebrant at the altar, helping him or her set the table and performs ablutions.

Thurible - The brass container that is used to burn incense during special services.

Torch Bearer - A person who carries a candle in a religious procession; often the Crucifer is followed by two "Torches" -- two persons each carrying a candle mounted on a short staff.

Wafer - The bread part of the Lord's Supper signifying to us the Body of Christ, and is often an unleavened and very thin cracker-like substance. After the wafer is consecrated, it is usually called the Host. Sometimes the wafer is imprinted with a cross, sometimes it is smooth. Wafers that will serve as priest's hosts are larger than the people's hosts, and can range from one inch to several inches in diameter. The people's host is usually about a half inch in size.

Wine - The beverage portion of the Lord's Supper. As Scripture reminds us, "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." (Matthew 26:27-28) In the Episcopal Church, wine is used at communion (instead of grape juice) and is often a port wine.