

Let's Get Acquainted



A user-friendly guide to worship at
Saint Barnabas Church

We are glad you are worshiping with us. This booklet is a simple reference for seekers, visitors, guests and anybody else who may be wondering, "What's this church all about?" It cannot and will not answer every question, but we hope it will serve as a brief, user friendly guide to worship at St. Barnabas Church. We thank the people of Grace Cathedral, Topeka, Kansas, for the concept and some of the ideas we have borrowed. Please take the booklet with you if you wish.

Before we go any further...

First, we're delighted you're here and we want you to return.

Second, you probably have some questions. Everybody you see here was a visitor or seeker at one time, and we all had questions. Don't hesitate to ask any questions — we probably had the very same ones.

Third, we want you to be comfortable so you can worship God and enjoy your time with us. That can be difficult if you're wondering which book to pick up, when to stand, kneel or sit, or any of the other things many Episcopalians take for granted.

So...

Relax..

We believe: *When you're worshipping God, you can't get it wrong.*

If you need help, ask the person next to you. We try to be a friendly church. If some of the words seem strange to you, there's a description of some of the "churchy" terms at the back of this booklet.

Finally, *regardless of what anyone else is doing, don't do anything that would make you feel uncomfortable.* We believe in "unity without uniformity," so we're not all going to do things in the same way.

If you want to skip the next part for now, take this booklet home and read it later. But know this...

It is the Lord's table around which we gather. All baptized Christians (including children) are welcome to receive Communion, and we hope you will.

Let's start with the basics...

What are these books in front of me?

The smaller red book is the *Book of Common Prayer* ("BCP" for short). It contains the entire service as well as a lot of other material about who we are and what we believe. We think of it as our "user-friendly guide to worship."

The larger blue book is the *Hymnal 1982*. It contains most of the songs we sing. The numbers are indicated in the bulletin you received when you came in and are listed on the hymn board on the wall by the holy table. We have a great music ministry here, and our choir sings at the 10:00 o'clock service except during the summer. Some days we have other singers or instrumentalists.

Why is everyone so quiet?

It's an "Episcopal thing." We take time before the service to privately say "Hello" to God, to prepare to hear God's Word in the scripture readings and its interpretation in the homily, and to prepare for Communion. It's also a time to go over the information in the bulletin so we can fully participate in our worship.

This all looks pretty long and complicated.

It sure does, but it really isn't. The major parts of the service are in the bulletin. If you want to follow the service word for word, the bulletin directs you to the page numbers in the *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP for short). Included are a list of the members of the ministry teams (people who serve in specific ways in today's service) and a "Who's Who" at St. Barnabas Church (our staff and other leaders). Announcements of upcoming events and a schedule of services and activities for next week are printed on the "blue sheet", Parish Notes.

There's an awful lot of stuff in this building.

You're right. Our Episcopal way of worshiping uses all of our senses — sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste. We think of it as involving every part of us in worship, which gives God many ways to reach us.

Why are some people bowing and some kneeling before they sit down, and others don't do anything at all?

What you're seeing is called “reverencing”, and people have different ways of doing it. Some bow towards the holy table, some “genuflect” (touch one knee to the floor), and others reverence silently or without any gesture. As some of us were taught, it's our way of saying “Hello” to the host of the event, who is Jesus. His presence in our building is represented by the altar or holy table.

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

This, again, is a personal worship style. It's called making the sign of the cross — forehead, chest, left shoulder, right shoulder, and back to the center. Some people do it out of habit, others do it because it reminds them of the price Jesus paid to enable us to respond to God's love. Still others do it because it's their way of “taking up their own cross” and following Jesus as well as a physical form of prayer recalling our being signed with the cross at baptism. Once again, you don't have to do it just because others do. If you're new to the Episcopal Church, you might want to try it to see if it has personal meaning for you.

Is this a Roman Catholic church?

This is a hard one to answer in a booklet like this. The quick answer is, Roman, no; catholic (small “c”), yes. The word

“catholic” means “universal,” so in that sense Episcopalians are connected with all Christians everywhere. Most Christians of the Western world trace their church history through Rome. Many of those also come through the “protestant” tradition of the 16th century reformation. Episcopalians view themselves as both “catholic” and “protestant.” Many of our beliefs and practices are distinctly different from those of the Roman Catholic Church. The important thing, however, is our worship of God.

Hey! Is anybody going to make me stand up and give my name or anything like that?

No. It isn't because we don't care; you will find we care very much. However, we don't want to embarrass you or make you uncomfortable. We do hope you will fill out one of the “visitor” cards in front of you — just give it to one of the clergy at the door when you leave or place it in the offering plate.

So, what's going to happen today?

As you wait for the service to start, you will probably hear the Opening Voluntary, usually an organ solo. You may see people placing things around the holy table to be sure the service can flow smoothly once we begin. Acolytes (usually wearing white robes known as “vestments”) will light candles at the holy table. One thing you can do before the service begins is familiarize yourself with the bulletin and the hymnal. Whatever we will be singing first is listed towards the beginning of the bulletin. If you love the hymn or song, “sing lustily” as John Wesley said, whether you're in tune or not! If you don't know the hymn or song, just do your best. That's all any of us are doing.

Who are the people who are all dressed up?

Many of our worship leaders wear vestments, or robes, so

that they have a more uniform appearance. Some vestments, such as the “poncho-like” vestment worn by the person presiding at Communion, tell us who’s doing what.

What about Communion? How does it work here?

All baptized Christians are welcome and encouraged to receive Communion. Normally, Communion is received at the altar rail. You may stand or kneel as you wish. If you are not able to come to the rail, Communion will be brought to you where you are seated. At other times Communion is received at stations in various places inside our liturgical space. Ushers will direct you.

Just put your right hand, palm up, in your left hand, and the bread will be placed in your hand with the words, “The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven.” Simply raise your hands to your mouth and eat the bread.

Next comes the wine. We use real wine, not grape juice, and a common cup. When the chalice is presented to you, guide the cup to your lips and take a sip. If you don’t wish to consume wine, just cross your arms over your chest as the person with the chalice approaches you. If you want wine, but don’t wish to drink from the cup, leave the bread in your palm and the person administering the chalice will dip the bread in the wine and put it on your tongue. The chalice will be presented to you with the words, “The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.”

If you don’t wish your child to take Communion, just have her or him cross her or his arms across the chest. The priest will then offer a blessing to your child (this is true for adults, too).

Some words about symbolism in our worship...

In the earliest days of Judaism and Christianity, most people

could neither read nor write. It was necessary to devise ways to teach people about their faith and let them know what was happening without written texts. Many of these traditions still exist: different vestment colors mark the various seasons of the church year; windows with pictures tell biblical stories; incense reminds us of our prayers going to God; bells mark moments in the Holy Communion. None of these reminders are essential to our worship, however they can enhance and enrich our worship experiences.

Worship is starting now...

The Opening Voluntary is beginning, so let's save the rest of the questions until later when you can join us for some refreshments and fellowship time. If you have children in Sunday Church School today, they will join you in the middle of the service. For now, just dig in. Use your service bulletin and if you need help, ask the person next to you. Just remember, be comfortable, and don't let something get in the way of your worship of God.

**We're glad you are here
and have chosen to spend part of your day
with us worshipping God
and renewing your spirit.**

**We hope you will join us again soon.
Please remember to sign one of the visitor
cards before you leave.**

Here are some terms we use in the Episcopal Church that may be helpful...

People

- Acolyte** an attendant in worship at the holy table.
- Anglican** the worldwide body of churches related to the Archbishop of Canterbury in the Church of England (the Episcopal Church, the Anglican Church of Canada, The Anglican Church of Australia, the Episcopal Church of Mexico and many others).
- Communion**
- Bishop** the head of a diocese.
- Canon** an honorary title given by a bishop or a member of the bishop's or cathedral staff.
- Celebrant** the priest or bishop presiding at Holy Eucharist (Communion)
- Church** the People of God united with Christ and one another by baptism.
- Deacon** an ordained person charged specifically with modeling servanthood to God's people. In the Holy Eucharist the deacon reads the Gospel, prepares the holy table and gives the dismissal.
- Eucharistic Minister** a person licensed to assist in the administration of Communion.
- Faith Community** a description of the church; a parish.
- Intercessor** a person who leads the Prayers of the People.
- Lector** a person trained to read scripture readings in worship.
- Seeker** an individual who comes to the faith community.
- Thurifer** a person who carries incense in procession.
- Vergers** a person charged with organizing and guiding worship services.
- Vestry** the elected governing board of a parish church.
- Warden** a lay leader of a parish.

Places and Things

- Advent** a season of preparation in the Christian liturgical year, four weeks before Christmas Day.

Alms Basins	plates passed among the people to gather monetary offerings for the church.
Ambo	the place from which both scripture is read and the homily is preached.
Anthem	usually a piece of music , which may be sung.
Baptism	the sacrament by water and the Holy Spirit of full initiation into the Body of Christ, the Church.
Blessing	a declaration of God's favor, given by a bishop or priest.
Choir	the place in the liturgical space between the nave and the sanctuary.
Communion	the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, also referred to as Holy Eucharist, Holy Communion, and The Mass.
Diocese	a bishop's geographical jurisdiction (the Diocese of Olympia includes all of Western Washington State to the crest of the Cascade Mountains
Dismissal	the last words of Holy Eucharist when the people are sent out.
Easter	a season from Easter Day to the Day of Pentecost celebrating the resurrection of Jesus the Christ.
Episcopal Church	The American branch of the Anglican Communion.
Fraction Anthem	words said or sung at the point of the breaking of the bread in the Holy Eucharist.
Holy Eucharist	literally means "thanksgiving," the name of the principal service of worship in the Episcopal Church.
Hymn	a text set to a hymn tune, usually sung by the people.
Incense	resin on hot coals that produces a fragrance. A symbol of prayer, incense is sometimes used at the holy table and among the people as a mark of holiness.
Lectionary	a schedule of Bible readings used on specific days throughout the church year.
Lent	a season of penitence, the forty days before Easter Day.
Liturgical Space	the room in which the faith community gathers to worship.
Liturgy	another term for worship. It literally means "the work of the people."
Nave	the place in the liturgical space where the people sit.
Offertory	in Holy Eucharist, the point in the service where the gifts of bread, wine and money are presented at the holy table.

- Pentecost** the day celebrating the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples that also marks the beginning of the Christian church.
- Procession** the movement of those persons who take leadership roles in worship.
- Pulpit & Lectern** some liturgical spaces have two places for reading and preaching. Rather than one as at St. Barnabas Church. Where there is a pulpit and lectern, reading of scripture is done from the lectern and preaching is done from the pulpit.
- Sacrament** “the outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual grace.” The Episcopal Church has two biblical sacraments (Baptism and Eucharist) and five others (Confirmation, Marriage, Ordination, Reconciliation of a Penitent (confession), and Unction (healing)).
- Sanctuary** the space around the holy table in the liturgical space.
- Sanctus** the Latin word meaning “holy”.
- Thurible** a vessel used for burning incense in worship services
- Vestment** a garment worn by those leading public worship.
- Voluntary** any piece of instrumental music in a worship service

Saint Barnabas Episcopal Church

...reaching out through worship, prayer, and action to bring
the peace of Christ to one another and this world

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