

Instructed Eucharist – 8:00 am, Rite I
St. John's Sharon, Feb 10, 2013
Rev. Adam Trambley

After prelude, before bells are rung

Today we will be doing an Instructed Eucharist. Instead of having a formal sermon, throughout the service, I will give explanations that Father Adam has put together describing what we are doing during our worship and why.

Music is an important part of worship. It touches our heart and soul in ways that support the words being sung or that move us beyond words. The musical preludes before the formal start of the service allow us a moment to get centered and prepare for worship. As ministers and others enter the sanctuary, they often bow or genuflect in the center. These acts are ways of showing respect to God who is present in a particular way at the altar and in the Blessed Sacrament held in reserve in the tabernacle, which is the gold box behind the altar. While not required, when crossing in front of the tabernacle, it is customary to acknowledge God's presence in an intentional way.

After Salutation (Blessed be God)

Our worship service starts with a Salutation between the priest and the people. This greeting is the liturgical way we say "Good morning" to each other, but instead of only focusing on each other, our focus is on God. Most of the year we say "Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit" "And blessed be his kingdom forever and ever," but it changes during Lent and Easter. Some people make a sign of the cross during this opening salutation or at other times when the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are mentioned. Traditionally a cross is made over one's body by saying "In the name of the Father" while touching the forehead, "and of the Son", while touching the heart, and "and of the Holy Spirit" by touching both shoulders. Western Christians usually touch the left shoulder first and Eastern Christians generally start with the right shoulder.

Next the priest says the *Collect for Purity*. A collect is a prayer that collects the prayers of the people into one prayer to God. This collect is prayed at the beginning of our liturgy asking God to make our hearts and minds ready for the rest of our worship. We know we need to pray even to pray well.

The priest reads Jesus' summary of the law to keep us mindful of our most important duties to love God and neighbor.

The final piece that opens our worship is a hymn of praise. Praise, whether spoken or sung opens our hearts and minds for worship and lifts us up with the saints and angels to the throne room of God where he is always praised. Our praise blesses God by recounting who he is and his marvelous deeds in order to open a channel to heaven for us. In some churches, a time of extended praise at the beginning is seen as essential preparation for Spirit-filled prayer throughout the rest of the worship service. In the Episcopal Church, the Gloria, a fourth century prayer, is the most common hymn of praise.

The *Collect of the Day* is a special prayer that the Episcopal Church has ordained for each week of the liturgical year.

After Collect of the Day

Usually on Sunday we read three lessons and the psalm. One lesson comes from the Old Testament about the people of Israel before Jesus time, one lesson comes from the New Testament, either the letters of the early apostles or the book of Revelation. A psalm is read or sung. The psalms are the hymnal within the Bible, and have been chanted for about three-thousand years in worship. We also read a passage about Jesus from one of the four Gospels. The Gospel is read from the center of the congregation as a sign that we are all gathered around the good news of Jesus. The deacon traditionally reads the Gospel because of the deacon's role in taking the Gospel out into the world. Sometimes people make small crosses on their forehead, mouth and heart during the announcing of the Gospel. This act stems from a Catholic tradition where, as the crosses are made, one says "May your word be in my mind, and on my lips, and in my heart."

After Gospel

Please be seated. On most Sundays a sermon is preached. Some have said a good Episcopalian sermon is about Jesus and about ten minutes, but the goal is really to help us live out our life of faith by offering teaching, challenge, encouragement and vision for where God is working in our lives. Instead of a sermon today, we are doing an instructed Eucharist.

One note at this point about the language in our Rite I service. The poetic English we use was primarily written by Archbishop Thomas Cramner during the sixteenth century. While occasionally more difficult to understand, many people like to use it for its beauty. One primary difference from contemporary English is the use of the pronouns thou, thee, thy and thine. When they were used in everyday English, they were a way of saying "you" to people that were very close and familiar, like family members or close friends. God was also referred to in this very intimate way. Today, since we only hear this language in traditional church phrases, sometimes we think of it as exalted language reserved for God, but that is the opposite of what it really means. Each time we say "thee" to God, we are talking to him like our dearest friend or loving family member.

After the sermon, we recite the Nicene Creed. These words go back to the fourth century and provide us with the core belief of our faith. The Apostle's Creed, that we use at services with baptisms, is older and simpler. The Nicene Creed incorporates the insights about the Trinity that the church worked out during the Council of Nicea in 325 and later church councils.

The Prayers of the People are the time we offer our prayers for the needs of ourselves, the church, and the world. We include in these prayers those in our parish who are sick or have asked for our prayers, and we intentionally pray for the growth of our congregation's mission.

After Prayers of the People

Before we begin communion, we confess our sins and exchange the peace. These pieces are normally done at this time because of Jesus' instruction in the fifth chapter of Matthew to make

peace with our brothers and sisters before bringing our gifts to the altar. We confess our sins together and receive absolution from them by the priest so that we are prepared in both heart and mind to receive communion. While personal confession is always possible and encouraged when we have fallen into serious sin, our liturgical confession lets us repent and be cleansed of the small failings that beset us during the week. God is merciful and always forgives us if we are sorry. The peace is a chance to recognize that we come together as a community to be reformed as the Body of Christ and to offer that intention to live in God's love with each other.

After Peace – beginning of announcement

After we have a time of announcements for the life of our parish, St. John's has the tradition of offering blessings on birthdays and anniversaries. Then the priest recites the offertory sentence. In the 1549 Prayer Book, twenty sentences of scripture were given to be sung while people placed their offerings in the "poor men's box." Today, one scripture is chosen that either goes with the theme of the season or reminds us of our need to offer our hearts and minds to God.

During the offertory, the bread and wine are brought forth as specific gifts given to become Christ's Body and Blood. The collection is taken and it is then brought forward as a concrete offering we make to God and the church, and as a symbol of all that we offer to God. During the offertory, the altar is also prepared. One of the roles of a deacon is to prepare the table as a reflection of the diaconal ministries of preparing tables for the hungry in the community.

After Offertory before Eucharistic Prayer starts.

Please be seated for a moment. The Eucharistic Prayer is also called the Great Thanksgiving because it presents our prayers for Christ's salvific work that we are most thankful for. It begins as the priest again formally greets the people with "The Lord be with you," and then invites them to participate with their whole hearts in the prayer. The next part of the prayer is called the preface, and recounts God's mighty deeds, focusing on one that is central to the season we currently are celebrating. The congregation responds with the Sanctus, singing "Holy, holy, holy." The words are taken from the scene in Isaiah of God's heavenly throne room, and we are invited to join our voices with angels and archangels in this song of praise. Bells are rung at this time to add to the noise of praise.

After the Sanctus, the rest of the Eucharistic Prayer is said. The Episcopal Church sees the entire prayer of thanksgiving by the congregation as effecting the change of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. Within the prayer however, a few moments are particularly important. The first moments are called the words of institution when we remember and recite Jesus statements that "This is my body" and "This is my blood". We ring the bells and elevate the sacrament at that moment to draw attention to the importance of doing what Jesus commanded in remembrance of him. The second special moment, called the Epiclesis, is when we invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit upon the gifts. Finally, the prayer concludes with a doxology of praise to the Holy Trinity when the gifts are again elevated, and the congregation responds with the "Great Amen." This Amen is meant to be enthusiastic, as it is the people's affirmation of the entire Eucharistic Prayer just said. Given its importance and energy, the bells are also rung during the Great Amen.

Following the Eucharistic Prayer we pray the Lord's Prayer together. This prayer was Jesus instruction to us of how to pray, so we use it in every public service of prayer in the Episcopal Church.

After Lord's Prayer

After the Lord's Prayer the priest breaks the bread. On one level, this act is a practical way to prepare communion for the congregation. At the same time, the Eucharistic service follows the same actions that Jesus performed at the last supper when he took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to his disciples. After the breaking of the bread, a response is usually said or sung, traditionally the Lamb of God. During this time, the chalices are prepared and the rest of the practical details for communion are completed. During the Rite I service, the Prayer of Humble Access is often said, which asks God to come to us in the Body and Blood of Christ even though we are unworthy.

After "Gifts of God for the People of God"

The tradition in the Episcopal Church is for people to receive both the bread and the wine, although no one need receive both to receive the full benefits of communion. Communion is administered with the words "The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven" and "The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation," or other similar words. We respond "Amen" before receiving to profess our agreement that what we are receiving is the Body and/or Blood of Christ.

After Communion, before Post-Communion Prayer

The Post-Communion prayer reminds us that once we have been strengthened by Communion, we are called to go out in mission to do God's work. The priest blesses the people. Finally the deacon dismisses the people to go out in mission. The word "Mass" derives from the dismissal of the people in mission, and all respond to this call outward into the community with "Thanks be to God."

Instructed Eucharist – 10:00am, Rite II
St. John's Sharon, Feb 10, 2013
Rev. Adam Trambley

After prelude, before bells are rung

Today we will be doing an Instructed Eucharist. Instead of having a formal sermon, throughout the service, I will give explanations that Father Adam has put together describing what we are doing during our worship and why.

Music is an important part of worship. It touches our heart and soul in ways that support the words being sung or that move us beyond words. The musical preludes before the formal start of the service allow us a moment to get centered and prepare for worship. The hymns are selected to lift our souls in praise, as well as to support the theme of the readings and liturgical season. The opening procession is meant to be a beautiful way to allow ministers to enter the sanctuary. As ministers and others enter the sanctuary, they often bow or genuflect in the center. These acts are ways of showing respect to God who is present in a particular way at the altar and in the Blessed Sacrament held in reserve in the tabernacle, which is the gold box behind the altar. While not required, when crossing in front of the tabernacle, it is customary to acknowledge God's presence in an intentional way.

After Salutation (Blessed be God)

Our worship service starts with a Salutation between the priest and the people. This greeting is the liturgical way we say "Good morning" to each other, but instead of only focusing on each other, our focus is on God. Most of the year we say "Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit" "And blessed be his kingdom forever and ever," but it changes during Lent and Easter. Some people make a sign of the cross during this opening salutation or at other times when the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are mentioned. Traditionally a cross is made over one's body by saying "In the name of the Father" while touching the forehead, "and of the Son", while touching the heart, and "and of the Holy Spirit" by touching both shoulders. Western Christians usually touch the left shoulder first and Eastern Christians generally start with the right shoulder.

Next the priest says the *Collect for Purity*. A collect is a prayer that collects the prayers of the people into one prayer to God. This collect is prayed at the beginning of our liturgy asking God to make our hearts and minds ready for the rest of our worship. We know we need to pray even to pray well.

The final piece that opens our worship is a hymn of praise. Praise opens our hearts and minds for worship and lifts us up with the saints and angels to the throne room of God where he is always praised. Our praise blesses God by recounting who he is and his marvelous deeds in order to open a channel to heaven for us. In some churches, a time of extended praise at the beginning is seen as essential preparation for Spirit-filled prayer throughout the rest of the worship service. In the Episcopal church, the Gloria, a fourth century prayer, is the most common hymn of praise, although for the past few weeks we have used a different prayer taken from the Song of the Three Young Men who survived Nebuchadnezzar's furnace in the book of Daniel.

The *Collect of the Day* is a special prayer that the Episcopal Church has ordained for each week of the liturgical year.

After Collect of the Day

Usually on Sunday we read three lessons and the psalm. One lesson comes from the Old Testament about the people of Israel before Jesus time, one lesson comes from the New Testament, either the letters of the early apostles or the book of Revelation. A psalm is read or sung. The psalms are the hymnal within the Bible, and have been chanted for about three-thousand years in worship. We also read a passage about Jesus from one of the four Gospels. The Gospel is read from the center of the congregation as a sign that we are all gathered around the good news of Jesus. The deacon traditionally reads the Gospel because of the deacon's role in taking the Gospel out into the world. A hymn is usually sung during the procession of the Gospel into the midst of the people. Sometimes people make small crosses on their forehead, mouth and heart during the announcing of the Gospel. This act stems from a Catholic tradition where, as the crosses are made, one says "May your word be in my mind, and on my lips, and in my heart."

After Gospel

On most Sundays a sermon is preached. Some have said a good Episcopalian sermon is about Jesus and about ten minutes, but the goal is really to help us live out our life of faith by offering teaching, challenge, encouragement and vision for where God is working in our lives. Instead of a sermon today, we are doing an instructed Eucharist.

After the sermon, we recite the Nicene Creed. These words go back to the fourth century and provide us with the core belief of our faith. The Apostle's Creed, that we use at services with baptisms, is older and simpler. The Nicene Creed incorporates the insights about the Trinity that the church worked out during the Council of Nicea in 325 and later church councils.

The Prayers of the People are the time we offer our prayers for the needs of ourselves, the church, and the world. At the ten-o'clock service, we write our own prayers following the guidelines in the Prayer Book of who we should be praying for. We include in these prayers those in our parish who are sick or have asked for our prayers, and we intentionally pray for the growth of our congregation's mission.

After Prayers of the People

Before we begin communion, we confess our sins and exchange the peace. These pieces are normally done at this time because of Jesus' instruction in the fifth chapter of Matthew to make peace with our brothers and sisters before bringing our gifts to the altar. We confess our sins together and receive absolution from them by the priest so that we are prepared in both heart and mind to receive communion. While personal confession is always possible and encouraged when we have fallen into serious sin, our liturgical confession lets us repent and be cleansed of the small failings that beset us during the week. God is merciful and always forgives us if we are sorry. The peace is a chance to recognize that we come together as a community to be reformed as the Body of Christ and to offer that intention to live in God's love with each other.

After Peace – beginning of announcement

After we have a time of announcements for the life of our parish, St. John's has the tradition of offering blessings on birthdays and anniversaries. Then the priest recites the offertory sentence. In the 1549 Prayer Book, twenty sentences of scripture were given to be sung while people placed their offerings in the "poor men's box." Today, one scripture is chosen that either goes with the theme of the season or reminds us of our need to offer our hearts and minds to God. At 10:00, the offertory sentence has been set to music along with our purpose statement. We sing these together as a way of reminding us of how we are called to offer ourselves as part of St. John's. Worship God, Care for People and Grow as Christians is the particular call we believe God has given us, and our financial offerings as well as our spiritual gifts are used to undertake this mission.

During the offertory, the bread and wine are brought forth as specific gifts given to become Christ's Body and Blood. The collection is taken and it is then brought forward as a concrete offering we make to God and the church, and as a symbol of all that we offer to God. Often during the presentation of the collection the Doxology is sung. This seventeenth century hymn set to an even older tune has a tradition of being used at this time. It is familiar and easy to sing, while reminding us that God is the giver of all our blessings. During the offertory, the altar is also prepared. One of the roles of a deacon is to prepare the table as a reflection of the diaconal ministries of preparing tables for the hungry in the community.

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