

## Episcopal Vocabulary

**Amen:** From the Hebrew for "verily," "it is so," or "I agree." Response said or sung at end of prayers, hymns and anthems, showing agreement with what preceded.

The Great Amen comes at the end of the Doxology, just prior the Lord's Prayer, during the Eucharist.

**Antecommunion:** Another name for the Liturgy of the Word, the first half of the Eucharist. The first half of the Mass was called the Mass of the Cat

**Anthem:** Sacred vocal music using text from Scripture or other sources that is sung or said during the liturgy; also any vocal music or hymn sung by a choir but not by the congregation.

The Anthem at the Fraction are the words that are said or sung at the Breaking of the Bread (BCP, p. 337 or 364).

**Antiphon:** From the Greek anti ("against") and phone ("sound"). An antiphon is literally a song sung back and forth by two choirs, or by one choir divided into two sections. In the Episcopal Church, the Kyrie and the Sursum Corda are two examples of antiphons. The familiar exchange "The Lord be with you"/"And also with you" is also an antiphon.

**Apocrypha:** The collective name for the books that are in the Septuagint (the collection of Old Testament book translated into Greek by the Jewish scholars of Alexandria) but are not in the Hebrew Bible. The Roman Catholic Church considers these books to have the same authority as the other books of the Old Testament, while some Protestant denominations reject them. The Episcopal Church considers them as worthy of teaching, but not of necessary doctrine for salvation.

Also known as the Deuterocanonicals ("second canon").

**Baptism:** The sacrament that celebrates a person's joining of the Church. At our baptisms we are cleansed from sin, adopted by God as His children and as members of Christ's Body, and made heirs of His eternal Kingdom. Since we can only be adopted once, baptism is a final, non-repeatable act. The Episcopal Church recognizes baptism in other Christian bodies, done with water in the name of the Trinity.

The church recognizes both adult and infant baptism and offers both. In the Episcopal Church, one can be baptized by being immersed, by being sprinkled (as with an aspergillum), or by having water poured on the head; a Baptismal Font is often used for this.

Except in emergencies, Baptism is administered in a church, increasingly often with the congregation present. Nearly always baptism is administered by a member of the clergy, though any baptized lay person may administer the sacrament in an emergency.

Baptism and Holy Communion are the two great sacraments of the Episcopal Church. (BCP, pp. 299ff.; also, Chapter 16)

**Benediction:** Any blessing by a bishop or priest; or, a service of devotion to Our Lord present in the Blessed Sacrament.

Breaking of the Bread: See Fraction.

**Canon:** Section of the Eucharist following the Offertory and Sanctus.

**Canticle:** A hymn, usually taken from Scripture, sung or said after the lessons at Morning or Evening Prayer, or as the Song of Praise at the Eucharist (BCP pp. 144-145 for list).

**Chant:** A recitation midway between singing and reading. In some churches, the Psalm is chanted. Chanting originated in the monastic orders in the early centuries of the Church. They were invented to encourage congregational singing, requiring less musical skill than songs. The advantage of chanting is that most any text can be chanted to any tune without modifying either the tune or the text.

**Chrismation:** The anointing of a person with chrism at Baptism (BCP, p. 308).

**Collect:** From the Latin collecta ("assembly"). The prayer near the beginning of the Eucharist that precedes the Lessons, summarizing the message of the lessons. Also any short prayer, usually one sentence, that contains an invocation, a petition, and a pleading in Christ's Name (in that order).

Pronounced "CALL-ect".

**Communion:** The Christian sacramental meal, the Lord's Supper, commanded by our Lord ("Do this in remembrance of me."). In the Holy Eucharist Episcopalians make a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, so as to make present the sacrifice of Christ, and unites us into his one offering of himself. In this sacrament we are fed spiritually with the Body and Blood of Christ.

For centuries the service used to celebrate the meal was called Holy Communion, but is now more commonly called the Eucharist in Episcopal churches. Also known as Mass in Roman Catholic churches.

**Compline:** A monastic evening service used to end the day. Though a very old tradition, it was included for the first time in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer.

It is pronounced "comp-lyn," not "comp-line."

**Confession of Sin:** A public prayer of penitence at the Eucharist (BCP, pp. 330, 360, & 393), the Daily Offices and other times. Also, the Reconciliation of a Penitent (BCP, pp. 447ff.).

**Confirmation:** From the Latin firmare ("to strengthen") and com, which adds force to the word, thus "to strengthen greatly." At Confirmation a person makes a mature, public confession to their baptismal vows. The bishop then lays his or her hands on the confirmand (the person undergoing confirmation), and prays for the Holy Spirit to "strengthen greatly" the person in the rest of his or her life.

Confirmation is considered to be one of the five sacramental acts, or minor sacraments, of the Episcopal Church. (BCP pp. 412ff.)

**Consecration:** The word literally means "to set aside."

At the Eucharist, the elements are consecrated to invoke God's Presence on them whereby they become the body and blood of Christ.

Other consecration services include dedications and ordinations.

**Creed:** The affirmation of the faith of the Church.

The Apostles Creed was originally used for baptismal instruction, outlining the faith of the Apostles; it is currently used in the Daily Office.

The Nicene Creed is a statement of Christian faith dating from the 4th Century; it was composed to fight heresy, and is used regularly at the Eucharist. (see BCP p. 53 for the Apostles' Creed, pp. 326-327 for the Nicene Creed, p. 864 for Athanasian Creed).

**Daily Office:** When used in the singular, usually refers to the Morning Prayer. Also used collectively for the Morning Prayer, Noonday Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Compline (BCP, pp. 35ff.).

**Decalogue:** The Ten Commandments. (BCP pp. 317-318, p. 350) These are the laws given to Moses and the people of Israel, through which we learn our duty to God and to our neighbors (BCP p. 847).

**Dismissal:** The words said or sung by the deacon (or celebrant) at the conclusion of the Eucharist (see BCP, pp. 339 or 366).

**Doxology:** Words said or sung in praise of the Holy Trinity ("By him, and with him, and in him ....") (see Gloria Patri; also, the conclusion of each Eucharistic Prayer).

**Elevations:** The lifting up of the Consecrated Elements after the Words of Institution, at the conclusion of the Great Thanksgiving, or at the Invitation to 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 lector, or possibly by a subdeacon.

**Eucharist:** From the Greek, literally meaning a "good gift" or "thanksgiving." The current usage in the Episcopal Church to refers to the entire Communion service, or a worship service where Holy Communion is served.

A general outline of the Eucharist services (BCP pp. 323-349 or 355-382), taking into account differences between Rite I and Rite II, would look like:

- The Word of God Procession
- Decalogue (Rite I)
- Kyrie
- Gloria
- Collect
- Lessons Epistles
- Gradual Psalm
- Gospel
- Sermon
- Nicene Creed
- Prayers of the People
- Confession of Sin

- The Peace
- The Holy Communion Offertory
- Great Thanksgiving Eucharistic Prayer Salutation
- Preface
- Sanctus
- Words of Institution
- Doxology
- Great Amen
- The Lord's Prayer
- Breaking of the Bread (Fraction)
- Invitation to Communion
- Communion
- Post-Communion
- Benediction
- Dismissal

**Eucharistic Prayer:** That part of the Great Thanksgiving beginning with the Salutation and Preface and concluding with the Doxology and Amen. In The Book of Common Prayer there are several Eucharistic Prayers: two for Rite I (BCP, pp. 333ff. and 340ff.); four for Rite II (BCP pp. 360ff., 367ff., 369ff., and 372ff.); and two forms in An Order for Celebrating the Holy Eucharist (BCP, pp. 402 & 404).

**Evening Prayer:** An Order of Worship for the Evening, part of the Daily Office.

**Evensong:** Sung Evening Prayer, usually featuring a choir.

**Exultet:** The paean of praise that is sung or said during the first part of the Great Vigil of Easter by the deacon or other person appointed (BCP p. 286).

**Fraction:** The part of the Eucharist where the Communion bread is broken by the celebrant. According to the prayer book, a period of silence is to follow, and then can be said or sung, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us" (also known as the Anthem at the Fraction).

**Genuflection:** From the Latin genu ("knee") and flectere ("to bend"). A genuflection is a sort of deep curtsy where the right knee touches the ground. Genuflection is a matter of personal and local custom; 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 ...."

**Gifts:** The offerings of Bread and Wine and Alms presented to the celebrant at the Offertory of the Eucharist. Also known as oblations.

**Gloria:** Portion of the Word of God during the Eucharist where the congregation praises, "Glory to God in the highest ...." (BCP p. 356)

**Gloria Patri:** The Doxology which concludes the recitation of a Psalm at the beginning of the Eucharist ("Glory be to the Father ...") (BCP p. 406); at the end of the Psalms in the Daily Offices; and at other times as listed in the Prayer Book.

**Gospel:** Any reading from Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. If the service is a Eucharist, then the Gospel must be read by a member of the clergy. It is often read from the Gospel Book.

**Gospel Procession:** The movement of the deacon (or celebrant) with torches (incense and processional cross) to the place of the proclamation of the Gospel (the nave, the lectern, or the pulpit).

**Gradual Psalm:** The Psalm appointed to be read or sung after the Lesson at the celebration of the Eucharist (BCP pp. 326, 357, and 889-931).

**Great Litany:**

**Great Thanksgiving:** The major prayer of the Eucharist beginning with the salutation and preface and concluding with the Lord's Prayer.

High Church, Low Church, Broad Church: Unofficial terms for three different styles of worship within the Episcopal Church. To generalize:

High Church emphasizes liturgical and theological formality. Vestments are more formal. Parts of the service are often sung or chanted, and may include incense and sanctus bells (a.k.a. "smells and bells"). High Church often uses Rite I.

Low Church is usually less formal, sometimes emphasizes good sermons over good liturgy, and avoids the stylistic trappings of High Church. A Low Church might alternate Morning Prayer with the Eucharist for their primary Sunday worship.

Broad Church falls somewhere in-between the other two.

Or, to generalize further, in the words of an old saying, "High and crazy; broad and hazy; low and lazy."

Different Episcopalians feel greater comfort with one style or another, or prefer different experiences at different times of the year. The point about church customs, though, is that these are ways we have of worshipping together. They are neither more moral or less, but are designed to bring us closer to each other and to God. Worship is not about fulfilling the requirements of some ecclesiastical Emily Post as much as it is about the saving power of God in our human life.

St. James is probably best characterized as Broad Church. During Christmas and Holy Week, our services are more formal than during the rest of the year, and we use sanctus bells. We nearly always use Rite II, and strive for an inclusive tone. Sunday 7:45 service is Rite I and the 10:00 is Rite II. The Wednesday evening service is Rite II. All of the above services are Eucharists.

**Holy Orders:** Another term for ordination.

**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.

**Hymn:** From the Greek *hymnos* ("song of praise"). A hymn is a poem or other metrical composition adapted for singing in a church service. Hymns (as distinct from Psalms and anthems) have only been allowed in the Anglican Church since 1820.

**Incarnatus:** That part of the Nicene Creed which states "He became incarnate ... and was made man." In many churches it is customary to bow or genuflect at this part.

**Inclusive language:** This refers to the efforts to find forms of religious expression which are not biased in favor of either gender. Some churches favor an inclusive Lectionary which avoid male or female pronouns such as "him" or "her." Some have altered prayers and hymns so that male images and pronouns are removed, e.g., "Our God who art in heaven ..."

The Episcopal Church's current Hymnal (1982) altered most of the classic hymns in an effort to make them more "inclusive."

**Installation:** A service in which a person is "installed" into his or her office, becoming the official bearer of a clerical or academic office. In the Episcopal Church, installation services are offered for new ministries ranging from rectors and bishops to Sunday School teachers and Vestry. There are also installations of an already-consecrated bishop as bishop of a diocese.

**Intinction:** Dipping of the Host into consecrated wine.

**Introit:** The hymn, Psalm, or anthem sung (or said) at the processional or entrance of the ministers at the Eucharist (BCP p. 323 or 355). Also known as the Processional Hymn or Entrance Hymn.

**Invitation to Communion:** The invitation to the congregation to partake of Communion ("The Gifts of God for the People of God ..."). Occurs in the Eucharist after the Fraction, prior to distribution of the Sacrament.

**Invitatory:** At Morning Prayer: the Venite, Psalm 95, Jubilate, or Christ our Passover; at Evening Prayer: O Gracious Light (Phos Hilaron) or other suitable hymn or Psalm. The invitatory is used at the beginning of an Office after the opening versicle and response and before the appointed psalms.

**Kneeling:** A posture signifying reverence or penitence.

**Kyrie:** From the Greek for the actual name, *Kyrie Eleison* ("Lord have mercy"). The Kyrie comes after the Ten Commandments or the summary of the law in the Rite I Eucharist, to serve as a reminder to us that we cannot, by our own effort, keep the commandments. It is a plea for grace by fallen sinners. In Rite II, where there is no recitation of the Ten Commandments or a summary of the law, the Kyrie seems out of place, and is, for that reason, often omitted.

**Lavabo:** From the Latin for "I will wash." The part of the service where the celebrant goes through his ceremonial ablutions, using a water basin also called a *lavabo* or *lavabo bowl*. This is usually done after the Offertory at the Eucharist (before the elements are touched) or at other times such as when oil or chrism is used or after the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday.

**Lectionary:** The complex series of Biblical readings used in the Episcopal Church throughout the year. The Church uses a three-year cycle of lessons for Sunday readings and a two-year cycle for daily readings. The present Lectionary is based on the Roman Catholic lectionary established after Vatican II; readings are often the same on a given date between a Catholic and Episcopal service.

The Lectionary can be found in the Book of Common Prayer (pp. 887ff.).

**Lesson:** A reading from the Bible during a worship service, sometimes also called Epistles. Lessons are usually read by a lay person (lector) and are not taken from the Gospel or the Psalms. Where applicable to the architecture, lessons are read from the epistle side of the church building and conclude with the reader saying, "The word of the Lord," "Here ends the reading," or "Here ends the lesson."

**Litany:** Any form of prayer with petitions and responses, such as the Great Litany (BCP pp. 148ff).

**Liturgy:** From the Greek *laos* (people) and *ergon* (work), this literally means "the work of the people," and is generally used to refer to the entire, complete worship service.

Liturgical describes a particular style of worship that requires active participation (standing, sitting, kneeling, recitation, common prayer, etc.) from both the clergy and laity. Episcopal, Lutheran, Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches are generally considered to be liturgical churches, while most Protestant denominations are not.

**Lord's Prayer:** The prayer taught by Christ, in which "we are bold to say" that God is "Our Father who art in heaven." (e.g., BCP p. 364). It occurs at the end of the Great Thanksgiving in Eucharist services.

Lord's Supper, The: The celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

**Magnificat:** The song of Mary (Luke 1:46-55) normally used as one of the canticles at Evening Prayer; also, may be used as a Song of Praise on Feasts of St. Mary or at other times (BCP p. 65 or 119).

**Mass:** The Roman Catholic name for the celebration of the Christian sacramental meal but sometimes used by conservative Episcopalians to refer to communion or eucharist.

**Matins:** Morning Prayer.

**Matrimony:** One of the sacramental acts of the Church. (BCP pp. 422ff.) It differs from the others because it is administered, not by the clergy, but by the couple themselves, with the clergy as witness for the church and the state. The Church requires that at least one of the parties be a baptized Christian, that the ceremony be attested to by at least two witnesses, and that the marriage conform to the laws of the State and the canons of the Church.

Most Episcopal churches do not administer Matrimony during Lent or on Sunday.

**Morning Prayer:** A daily morning worship service without communion; Also known as the Daily Office or Matins (BCP pp. 37ff, 75ff). In some churches, Morning Prayer is alternated with Eucharist as the principal Sunday service. Since Morning Prayer does not require the presence of ordained clergy, the service is sometimes used in the absence of the rector or vicar.

**Nicene Creed:** The Creed of the universal (catholic) Church, formulated at the Council of Nicea in AD 325, and expanded at the Second Council at Constantinople in AD 381. It is the only creed that was promulgated by any of the seven ecumenical councils and thus it is the only creed that is truly ecumenical and universal. It actually predates the selection of the canon of the Bible, and so represents a fundamental identity of Christianity, Recited at the Eucharist.

**Noonday Prayer:** A short prayer service held at midday, part of the Daily Office. It does not require the presence of clergy. (BCP, pp. 103ff.)

**Nunc Dimittis:** Literally "Now You Dismiss". The Song of Simeon (Luke 2:29-32), normally used as one of the canticles at Evening Prayer and Compline (BCP pp. 66, 120, & 135). Also used at Candlemas.

**Oblations:** Offerings or gifts to God at the Eucharist.

**Offertory:** The presentation, reception, preparation, and offering of the gifts at the beginning of The Holy Communion, the second part of the Eucharist.

The offering of alms is part of the offertory, but the offertory also includes the gifts of bread and wine that are to be consecrated during the communion, and the offering of "... ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice." (BCP. Page 336.) Or, as Rite II says, "Sanctify us also." (BCP. page 363

**Offertory Sentence:** A passage of scripture that may be said or sung at the beginning or during the Offertory (BCP pp. 333 or 361).

**Offertory Procession:** At the Eucharist, the presentation of the bread, wine, and other gifts by members of the congregation.

**Ordination:** The taking of Holy Orders, in which a person is admitted into the clergy as a deacon, priest or bishop. Until being ordained, a person is considered a member of the laity.

Those who believe themselves called to this vocation must undergo considerable preparation, including schooling and "on-the-job" training. A candidate for Holy Orders must also pass certain examinations and be recommended by a number of groups as well. The actual services (there are three in the prayer book, one for each order) include the laying on of hands by the bishop with prayer for the Holy Spirit for the gift of the particular order.

**Passion Narrative:** The name given to the Gospel reading on the Sunday of the Passion, Palm Sunday. The reading chronicles the final hours of Jesus' earthly ministry. The reading traditionally begins with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, and continues through his arrest, trial, crucifixion, and death. It is the longest Lesson read in the Church year, and the only gospel reading with an option allowing the congregation to sit during the first part of the reading. In many parishes the narrative becomes a passion play. Specific roles (Pilate, Peter, etc.) are assigned to different persons, and the congregation plays the part of the crowd assenting to the crucifixion.



**Peace, The:** Also known as Passing the Peace. A part of the Eucharist 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.

Introduced as part of the 1979 BCP reform.

**Post Communion:** The Prayer of Thanksgiving after Holy Communion (BCP pp., 339, 365-66). There are also proper Post Communion prayers appointed for various occasions.

**Prayers of the People:** Several forms of prayers offered with intercession for the Church, the nation, the welfare of the world, the concerns of the local community, those who suffer or in any trouble, and the departed. (BCP pp. 383ff.)

**Preface:** A prayer. The first part of The Great Thanksgiving up to the Sanctus. Proper Prefaces are appointed for certain occasions (BCP pp., 344-49 or 377-82).

**Procession:** The line of choir, clergy, acolytes, crucifer, torchbearers and others walking into a church building to begin a service. The crucifer usually bears processional cross.

**Proper:** The scripture readings (Epistles, Psalm, Gospel) and Collect appointed for the day or occasion.

**Psalm:** A portion from the ancient Jewish hymn book found in Scripture (The Book of Psalms) and in The Book of Common Prayer (BCP pp. 585-808).

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

**Reconciliation of a Penitent:** Also called Absolution or Penance, it is administered by a priest or bishop, usually by appointment.

**Requiem:** A celebration of the Eucharist for the commemoration of the dead; a funeral service or memorial service. Sometimes also called Solemn Requiem. As High Requiem, portions of the service will be sung or chanted.

**Reverence:** (of the Altar or the Blessed Sacrament) A genuflection or solemn bow.

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

**Rite II:** A portion of the Book of Common Prayer introduced in the 1970s, containing worship services which use more modern language and place importance on a different theological emphasis than traditional Episcopal worship.

**Rubric:** The ceremonial and other directions found printed in italics in The Book of Common Prayer. The word comes from the Latin for "red" since the directions were traditionally printed in that color

**Sacraments:** From the Latin *sacrare* ("consecrate"). According to the prayer book, sacraments are "outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace." Sacraments are physical actions that point us to deeper realities than we are able to experience with our five senses. They sustain our present hope and anticipate its future fulfillment.

The Episcopal Church recognizes two major sacraments (or gospel sacraments because Jesus told us in the gospels to do them until he comes again):

- Baptism
- Communion

The Church also recognizes five minor sacraments, or sacramental acts. The five sacramental acts (or minor sacraments) are not all necessarily required of all Christians. They are:

- Confirmation
- Matrimony
- Ordination
- Reconciliation
- Unction

God does not limit Himself to acting through these rites; "they are patterns of countless ways by which God uses material things to reach out to us" (BCP p. 861).

**Salutation:** The antiphon at the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer, where the celebrant begins, "The Lord be with you."

**Sanctus:** The Latin for "holy." The part of the Holy Communion service that begins with the words, "Holy, Holy, Holy." It occurs at the conclusion of the Preface of the Great Thanksgiving (BCP pp. 334, 341, 362ff.).

**Sermon:** A verbal address given after the Lessons, and given to further explain the readings and to put them in a modern context, so as to provide teaching and encouragement. In the Anglican Church the sermon is seen as a bridge between the Biblical world and the modern world. A shorter sermon is sometimes called a homily.

**Sequence Hymn:** A hymn sung between the Epistle and Gospel (after the Alleluia Verse or Tract) which normally relates to the Lessons appointed for the day.

**Song of Praise:** The hymn or canticle at the beginning of the Eucharist following the Acclamation (BCP pp. 324 or 356).

**Station:** In a solemn procession, a place where a pause is made for a versicle, response, and collect, such as at the creche at Christmas, at the entrance to the church on Palm Sunday (BCP pp. 271-72), or at the Baptismal Font on the Day of Pentecost.

**Sursum Corda:** Latin for "Lift up your hearts." The *Sursum Corda* is part of an antiphon that has been in the Eucharist since the third century.

**Te Deum:** A canticle used at Morning Prayer, as a Song of Praise at the Eucharist, or added to a service on days of special Thanksgiving.

**Tract:** A sentence of scripture sung or said in place of the alleluia verse during Lent.

**Unction:** From the Latin unguere ("to anoint"). Unction is the process of anointing someone with consecrated oil for religious purposes. As one of the minor sacraments, Episcopalians use the word to refer to anointing the sick for the purpose of making them well (see James 5:14)..

**Veneration of the Cross:** On Good Friday, after the cross has been brought into the church, it may either be venerated while all kneel in place or each person may come forward individually to venerate the cross. In some places, the veneration is an act of kissing the foot of the cross.

**Versicle:** A short sentence, often taken from the Psalms, sung or said at the liturgy and followed by a response from the people.

**Vigils:** A period or service of preparation before major festivals or celebrations (see Great Vigil of Easter,

**Washing of Feet:** The rite performed on Maundy Thursday commemorating Our Lord's washing the feet of the apostles at the Last Supper.

**Way of the Cross:** A procession with stations commemorating the Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Also called the Stations of the Cross. The classical stations of the cross are 15 events which happened within the last 24 hours Jesus was on the earth. Often performed on Good Friday.

**Word of God, The:** The first part of the Holy Eucharist ending with the Peace. The focus of this part of the Eucharist is on the reading of Scripture and prayers of praise and petition. Also known as the Liturgy of the Word or the Antecomunion.

**Words of Institution:** That part of the Eucharistic Prayer recalling the words and actions of Our Lord at the Last Supper. "Do this in remembrance of me."