A Guide for
an Instructed Eucharist
BASIC LITURGICS

Litany
“Litany” comes from the Greek word leitourgia, which literally means “work of the people.” It was used to refer to a public work done at private expense and could be used to classify projects like a privately-financed bridge that was being built for the use of a whole town. The public libraries built by Andrew Carnegie could also be considered a of leitourgia. In church usage, liturgy is the act of worship that we do on behalf of ourselves, the wider Church, and the world.

Eucharist
The word Eucharist comes from the Greek word eucharistia, which means “thanksgiving.” For this reason the Prayer Book also calls the Eucharistic Prayer by the label “The Great Thanksgiving.” The service of Holy Communion is our great act of thanksgiving to God.

The Structure of the Eucharistic Liturgy
The Eucharistic Liturgy is divided into two main parts:

(1) The Liturgy of the Word
- The Gathering Rite
- The Lessons & Sermon
- The Creed
- The Intercessions and Confession
- The Peace

(2) The Liturgy of the Table
- The Offertory
- The Eucharistic Prayer
- The Lord’s Prayer
- The Fraction
- Holy Communion
- The Post-Communion Prayer
- Blessing and Dismissal

Terms for Those Who Help With Worship
Celebrate: A priest or bishop who presides at the liturgy
Deacon: A person ordained to the diaconate can help with reading the gospel, leading the Prayers of the People, leading the Confession, setting the Altar at Offertory, distributing Communion, cleaning up after Communion, the Dismissal
Crucifer: Someone who carries the processional cross
Acolyte: Literally this means “torch-bearer”
Lay Eucharistic Ministers: Lay people who have been authorized by the Bishop and the Rector to help distribute Communion, usually by being chalice-bearers
Book-bearer: The person who carries the Gospel Book in procession and holds it during the Gospel Reading
Preacher: A person who gives a sermon or homily
Lector: A person who reads a lesson from the Bible.
Intercessor: A person who leads the Prayers of the People.
Oblation-bearers: Those who bring up the gifts of bread and wine at Offertory
Ushers: Those who help people find their seat and the bulletin, who collect the offering and present it, and who help direct people during Communion.
Altar Guild: The team of people who help prepare the Altar area and are responsible for cleaning the vessels and linens
The Holy Eucharist: Rite Two

The Word of God: The Liturgy of the Word

Prelude
Often, when there is music accompanying the service, the musician will begin with an instrumental piece of music.

Processional Hymn
A hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung.

Opening Acclamation:
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.

In place of the above, from Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

In Lent and on other penitential occasions

Celebrant ✝ Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins;

People His mercy endures for ever.

The Collect for Purity
The Celebrant may say

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.

This sort of note, offering directions about liturgy is called a “rubric,” which comes from the Latin word rubrica (“red”) — referring to a time when these instructional notes were written in red type. In the Episcopal Church, the rubrics “have the force of law” — they are authoritative and binding. As part of their ordination oath, clergy agree to uphold them as part of the “worship of the Church.”

Many people cross themselves at the beginning of the Opening Acclamation. The “sign of the cross” dates back to at least the year 200 AD, when Christians marked themselves with the cross on the forehead. By the next century, the gesture had become the bigger one we use today.

The Collect for Purity was an English rendering by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer of the Latin prayer that started the “Sarum Rite” liturgy used by medieval churches in England before the Reformation. It remains a distinctive part of Anglican/Episcopal worship.
The Song of Praise:

The Gloria
When appointed, the following hymn or some other song of praise is sung or 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 Kyrie
On other occasions the following is used
Lord, have mercy. Kyrie eleison.
Christ, have mercy. or Christe eleison.
Lord, have mercy. Kyrie eleison.

or this

The Trisagion
Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,
Have mercy upon us.

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 Celebrant says the Collect.
People Amen.
The Lessons

The First Reading
The people sit. One or two Lessons, as appointed, are read, the Reader first saying
A Reading from

After each Reading, the Reader may say
The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Silence may follow

The Psalm (or Canticle)
A Psalm, hymn, or anthem may follow each Reading.

The Epistle
The Reader first saying
A Reading from

After each Reading, the Reader may say
The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Silence may follow

The Gospel Hymn (sometimes called the Gradual Hymn or Sequence Hymn)

The Gospel Reading
Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Gospel, first saying
The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

After the Gospel, the Reader says
The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Episcopal Church uses the three-year Revised Common Lectionary, shared by many of the major Christian denominations. The lectionary cycles the readings that are used. On Sundays and major feast days, generally three readings and a psalm are used:
1. a reading, usually from the Hebrew Scriptures (“the Old Testament”), except in Easter when the reading is from the Acts of the Apostles
2. a Psalm or Canticle (this is intended to be a response to the 1st reading not a reading in itself)
3. a reading from the Epistles (the letters by Paul and others that are included in the “New Testament”)
4. the gospel reading about Jesus from Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John’s account. (A gospel text must be read at every Eucharistic celebration. It is the one reading which can never be omitted.)

As Christians, the gospels about Jesus hold a special place in our worship. So we stand rather than sit for the reading, and whereas lay people (those not ordained) usually read the earlier readings. It is custom that only a deacon or priest reads the Gospel reading. We even have a special—often decorated—book, from which we read the gospel text. And often the gospel book is carried in procession before reading; this highlights its importance to us.

Often at the announcement of the gospel reading, people trace a little cross on their foreheads, then on their lips, and then on their chests. This symbolizes the unspoken prayer, “May the Gospel be in my mind, on my lips, and in my heart.”

Traditionally the clergyperson presiding kisses the gospel book after the reading ends.

Some people also bow during these responses to the gospel introduction and conclusion.
The Sermon

On Sundays and other Major Feasts there follows, all standing

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,  
of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were 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;  
his suffering and burial are according to 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

Prayer is offered with intercession for
- The Universal Church, its members, and its mission
- The Nation and all in authority
- The welfare of the world
- The concerns of the local community
- Those who suffer and those in any trouble
- The departed (with commemoration of a saint when appropriate)

Example: Form III
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.

The Prayers of the People are meant to represent the congregations prayer intentions for the local community and the world.
The Prayer Book includes six different “forms” (beginning on page 383). Although these are often used in worship, they do not have to be used: They were meant to be examples of how a congregation might draft Prayers of the People. Any draft of Prayers for the People is acceptable as long as it meets the criteria mentioned here.
Some people cross themselves any time that we pray for those who have died.
Confession of Sin

A Confession of Sin is said here if it has not been said earlier. On occasion, the Confession may be omitted.

The Deacon or Celebrant says
Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

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 Absolution

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

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

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

Often in Episcopal congregations, Announcements follow after the Peace.

The Prayer Book asks us to prepare for Holy Communion by
(1) examining our lives,
(2) repenting of our sins,
(3) being in love and charity with others. (see page 860 of the Prayer Book)
The Confession and Peace help us to do that preparation work.

Traditionally people kneel (or if standing, they bow) during the words of the Confession and the Absolution.

This declaration is called an “absolution,” and it is one of the ways that ordained priests and bishops fulfill the commission that Jesus gave to his disciples: “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained” (John 20:22-23).

Often, people cross themselves as the priest reads the words of Absolution.

The Exchange of Peace was a part of early Christian worship, though over the centuries its place in the liturgy changed and later it s importance diminished. It was restored by the Liturgical Renewal Movement. As early Christians did, we observe it before Offertory, with Jesus’ words in mind, “When you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:23-24).
The Holy Communion: The Liturgy of the Table

The Celebrant may begin the Offertory with a sentence of Scripture, such as
Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. Ephesians 5:2

Offertory Hymn: During the Offertory, a hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung.

Representatives of the congregation bring the people’s offerings of bread and wine, and money or other gifts, to the deacon or celebrant. The people stand while the offerings are presented and placed on the Altar.

Sometimes this versicle and response, from 1 Chronicles 29:14, are said:
All things come of thee, O Lord:
And from thine own have we given thee.

It is the function of a deacon to make ready the Table for the celebration, preparing and placing upon it the bread and cup of wine. It is customary to add a little water to the wine. The deacon may be assisted by other ministers. During the Great Thanksgiving, it is appropriate that there be only one chalice on the Altar, and, if need be, a flagon of wine from which additional chalices may be filled after the Breaking of the Bread.

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer A

The Dialogue
The people remain standing. The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest, faces them and 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 Preface
Then, facing the Holy Table, 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, such as
For you are the source of light and life; you made us in your image, and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord.

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:

During the Offertory, the Altar is prepared for Holy Communion and the bread and wine are brought forward. In the early Church, worshippers actually brought wine and bread for use in the Sacrament. Today the Church usually provides these elements, but we still present the gifts as a symbol of our labor and our offering to God.

The mixing of a water into the wine has been done since the first centuries. Probably Jesus originally did this because the wine was concentrated in antiquity and had to be diluted to be palatable. Some have seen this action as symbolizing the water and blood that flowed out of the side of Christ on the cross (John 19:34). Or in the Eastern Church it was seen to symbolize the infusion of the Holy Spirit into the People of God.

It’s also customary for the Celebrant to ceremonially wash his/her hands, an act called “The Lavabo” (from the Latin translation of Psalm 26:6). This symbolized a prayer for purity as he/she prepares to preside at this holy Sacrament.

This part of the Eucharistic Prayer is a special called “The Sursum Corda” from the Latin words for “Lift up your hearts.” It is an ancient part of the liturgy, and these words have been used in the Eucharistic liturgy since the very early centuries of the Church. It is a remnant of an early Jewish call to worship.

The Proper Preface often mentions the themes of the day or the church season.
The “Sanctus”
Celebrant and People
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 Prayer of Consecration

Then the Celebrant continues
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.”

Some people bow during the first part of the Sanctus out of respect for the awesomeness of God.

Many people cross themselves at the second part of the Sanctus.

The earliest Prayers of Consecration probably consisted of the story of the Last Supper and a prayer asking for the Holy Spirit to bless the bread and wine. Over time, the prayer evolved to contain several basic parts:

1. Omission - a prayer of offering
2. Institutional Narrative—the part recalling the Last Supper and Jesus’ “Words of Institution”
3. Epiclesis—The prayer invoking the Holy Spirit to consecrate the gifts
4. Anamnesis—The recalling of Jesus’ death and resurrection, while expecting his eventual return
5. Doxology & Great Amen—the Trinitarian ending and people’s “Amen”

“This is my body...” and “This is my blood...” are called the Words of Institution.

Some people cross themselves after each part of the Words of Institution, in reverence for the holiness of the Sacrament.

The Institutional Narrative comes from the account of the Last Supper recorded in the gospels (Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-20) and in Paul’s letters (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).
Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

This phrase, anticipating the Anamnesis, is referred to as a “Memorial Acclamation.” It can be said or sung.

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.

The Lord’s Prayer
The Celebrant continues
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, on 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 Lord’s Prayer, called “The Our Father” or Pater Noster by some, has been recited by the Church in worship since the earliest followers of Jesus. This traditional version of the Lord’s Prayer comes from the English translation used in the first Book of Common Prayer in 1549. The prayer was taught by Jesus to his disciples when they asked how they should pray. (See Matthew 6:5-13 and Luke 11:1-4.)
The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.

The Fraction Anthem

Then may be sung or said

[Alleluia.] Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast. [Alleluia.]

In Lent, Alleluia is omitted, and may be omitted at other times except during Easter Season.

In place of, or in addition to, the preceding, some other suitable anthem may be used.

The following is a commonly used Fraction Anthem:

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
    have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
    have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
    grant us peace.

The Invitation to Communion

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

and may add Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.
Holy Communion

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 (Blood) of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life. [Amen.]

or with these words

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

The Communion Hymns

During the ministration of Communion, hymns, psalms, or anthems may be sung.

The Ablutions

If any of the consecrated Bread or Wine remain, apart from any which may be required for the Communion of the sick, or of others who for weighty cause could not be present at the celebration, or for the administration of Communion by a deacon to a congregation when no priest is available, the celebrant or deacon, and other communicants, reverently eat and drink it, either after the Communion of the people or after the Dismissal.

The Post-Communion Prayer

After Communion, 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.

In the Anglican Tradition, the people are always offered both the Bread and the Cup. At the same time, the Church has always believed in concomitance, that is that Christ is fully and equally present in both elements and receive one is sufficient.

It is common for Anglicans to cross themselves before receiving each element, and then again before leaving the Altar rail.

The words of administration of the elements combine two ancient forms, one used in many early liturgies (“The Body of Christ”) and the other used in an early rite of baptism (“The bread of heaven in Christ Jesus”). Additionally, Jesus describes himself as the bread of heaven in chapter 6 of John’s gospel and Psalm 116 speaks of the “cup of salvation” (v. 13).

The remaining consecrated elements, called the Reserved Sacrament, is kept for clergy and Lay Eucharistic Visitors to take Communion to the sick and those who are homebound or in nursing homes. Until distribution, it is kept securely in the locked cabinet, called a Tabernacle or Aumbry, in the Sanctuary. The presence of the Reserved Sacrament is marked by the lit red candle that hangs nearby.

It is customary for a prayer of thanksgiving to be said following Communion. On normal Sundays it is said by the Celebrant and People together. On other occasions (Weddings, Funerals, Ordinations), there are special Post-Communion Prayers that are substituted by the Celebrant for the ones here.
or the following

Almighty and everliving God,
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom.
And now, Father, send us out
to do the work you have given us to do,
to love and serve you
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The Blessing
The Bishop when present, or the Priest, may bless the people.

There are blessings that change with the church seasons, one common blessing follows:
The peace of God, which passes all understanding,
Keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

The Closing Processional Hymn
A hymn may be sung before or after the postcommunion prayer.

The Dismissal
The Deacon, or the Celebrant, dismisses them with these words
Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
People Thanks be to God.

or this
Deacon Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

or this
Deacon Let us go forth into the world,
rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.
People Thanks be to God.

or this
Deacon Let us bless the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

From the Easter Vigil through the Day of Pentecost “Alleluia, alleluia” may be added to any of the dismissals.
The People respond Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

The Postlude
Often there will be an instrumental piece of music immediately after the liturgy has ended.
EUCARISTIC VESTMENTS

ALTAR LINENS

(A folded up square cloth, called a Corporal, is placed inside the Burse.)