

The Eucharist¹

Daniel Stevick wrote that “The Church describes itself in faith as a people summoned into being by the redemptive activity of God which centers in Jesus Christ.”² That places worship precisely at the center of our existence. Both worship and mission as rooted in Christ are integral to our lives. Unlike members of the confessional churches such as the Lutheran denomination, Anglicans and Episcopalians have their faith defined liturgically through the practices found in the *Book of Common Prayer* (BCP). Our unity is often said to be found in our liturgy.

However, the Prayer Book can seem daunting and the organization of the services is very confusing, making one wonder whether there is anything unifying about our liturgy at all. Within the pages of the prayer book are many liturgical expressions of our faith, including two rites for the Eucharist, seven different forms of the prayers of the people, and eight different forms of Eucharistic Prayers. In addition, there is an Order for Celebrating the Eucharist (often called Rite III) which provides for great variety of liturgical expression within the confines of the rubrics (see BCP pages 400-405). Note that Rite III is *not* used for the principal Sunday worship service. The forms of the Eucharist found in the BCP are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Major Components of Holy Eucharist in the Book of Common Prayer

Rite	Prayers of People	Eucharistic Prayers	Comments	BCP Pages
I				323-349
		Form I	Sacrificial; from 1789	333-340
		Form II	Creation/Incarnation	340-343
		One fixed form		328-330
II				355-382
		Form I		383-385
		Form II		385-387
		Form III		387-388
		Form IV		388-389
		Form V		389-391
		Form VI		392-393
		Prayer A	Modernized Form I	361-363
		Prayer B	From Hippolytus (3 rd C.)	367-369
		Prayer C	Penitential/Creatioal	369-372
Prayer D	St. Basil (4 th C.)	372-376		
III				400-405
		Form 1		402-403
		Form 2		404-405

In addition to the forms of the Eucharist found in the BCP, there are three authorized forms of the Eucharist found in supplemental liturgical texts approved for use in the Episcopal Church. One of these supplemental texts is *Enriching Our Worship* (EOW). At St. George's, we use the prayers from EOW during the post-Pentecost season.

Today's class will compare and contrast the language and format of Eucharistic prayer A found in the BCP with Eucharistic Prayer I found in EOW which we will begin using in about five weeks.

¹ Jeffrey Lee. *Opening the Prayer Book*. Boston: Cowley Publications, 1999.

² Daniel B. Stevick. “The Spirituality of the Book of Common Prayer.” In William J. Wolf, ed. *Anglican Spirituality*. (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow Co.), 105.

Structure of the Holy Eucharist Using Rite II As The Example

Liturgy of the Word (BCP p. 355)

Entrance Rite (BCP p. 355)

Hymn, psalm, anthem *may* be sung

Collect for Purity (BCP p. 355)

Gloria (BCP. p. 356)

Not used during Advent or Lent (BCP p. 406)

Collect of the Day (BCP p. 357) (see also BCP p. 211-261)

Lessons (BCP p. 357). The Eucharistic or Sunday Lectionary is on BCP pages 888-931 and is arranged in a 3 year cycle (A, B, and C). 2000 is year B. At St. George's we use the Episcopal version of the Revised Common Lectionary, approved for trial use by the 74th General Convention.

(Note that a Psalm can follow each reading except the Gospel)

Sermon (BCP p. 358)

Creed (BCP p. 358)

(Note the Creed is required on Sundays and major festivals. The Baptismal covenant takes place of creed during Baptism services)

Prayers of People (BCP p. 359)

(Note, if Litany is done, prayers of people are omitted)

(Note the direction for the forms of the prayers on BCP p. 359)

Confession (BCP p. 360)

(Note, if penitential order is said, then confession is omitted; see Lee p. 108)

The Peace (BCP p. 360)

We gather

**We
Proclaim**

**We
Pray**

Liturgy of Table (Holy Communion) (BCP p. 361)

Offertory

**We Prepare
The Table**

The Great Thanksgiving (BCP p. 361 - see next page)

Greeting (BCP p. 361)

Sursum Corda (BCP p. 361)

Preface (BCP p. 361)

(Some Eucharistic Prayers have fixed prefaces [e.g., C and D] whereas others have proper prefaces. See BCP pp. 377-382 for some HE II proper prefaces).

We Bless

Sanctus and *Benedictus qui venit* (BCP p. 362)

Eucharistic Prayer (BCP pp. 362-363)

Lord's Prayer (BCP pp. 363-364)

Fraction (BCP p. 364)

Fraction anthem (*Agnus dei*)

We Break

Communion (BCP p. 364-365)

**We Eat and
Drink**

Post-communion Prayer (BCP p. 365 or p. 366)

Commissioning of Eucharistic Visitors

We Ungather

Dismissal (BCP p. 366)

Eucharistic Prayer A (BCP)	Eucharistic Prayer I (EOW)
<p>Opening The Lord be with you. <i>And also with you.</i></p>	<p>Opening The Lord be with you. <i>And also with you.</i></p>
<p>Sursum corda Lift up your hearts. <i>We lift them to the Lord.</i> Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. <i>It is right to give him thanks and praise.</i></p>	<p>Sursum corda Lift up your hearts. <i>We lift them to the Lord.</i> Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. <i>It is right to give our thanks and praise.</i></p>
<p>Preface It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. <i>Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.</i></p>	<p>Preface It is truly right, and good and joyful, to give you thanks, all-holy God, source of life and fountain of mercy. You have filled us and all creation with your blessing and fed us with your constant love; you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ and knit us into one body. Through your Spirit you replenish us and call us to fullness of life. <i>In place of the preceding, a Proper Preface from the Book of Common Prayer may be used.</i></p>
<p>Sanctus 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: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.</p>	<p>Sanctus Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels and with the faithful of every generation, we lift our voices with all creation as we sing (say): Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.</p>
<p>Benedictus qui venit Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.</p>	<p>Benedictus qui venit Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.</p>
<p>Prayer of Thanksgiving Plus A Recollection of Salvation History 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.</p>	<p>Prayer of Thanksgiving Plus A Recollection of Salvation History Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe and giver of life. You formed us in your own image and called us to dwell in your infinite love. You gave the world into our care that we might be your faithful stewards and show forth your bountiful grace. But we failed to honor your image in one another and in ourselves; we would not see your goodness in the world around us; and so we violated your creation, abused one another, and rejected your love. Yet you never ceased to care for us, and prepared the way of salvation for all people. Through Abraham and Sarah [here I add the names of the patriarchs and their women] you called us into covenant with you. You</p>

delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

Institution Narrative

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."

Memorial Acclamation

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Anamnesis and Oblation

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.

Epiclesis and Supplication

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.

Doxology

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.*

Institution Narrative

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus 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 poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Memorial Acclamation

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Anamnesis and Oblation

Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine.

Epiclesis and Supplication

By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world. Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with [___ and] all your saints, past, present, and yet to come, we may praise your Name for ever.

Doxology

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. *AMEN.*

Some Suggestions for Further Reading

Crockett, William R. *Eucharist: Symbol of Transformation*. New York, NY: Pueblo Publishing Co., 1989.

Fowley, Edward. *From Age to Age: How Christians Have Celebrated the Eucharist*. Chicago, IL: Liturgy Training Publications. 1991.

Hachett, Marion J. *Commentary on the American Prayer Book*. New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995.

Mitchell, Leonel L. *Praying Shapes Believing: A Theological Commentary on the Book of Common Prayer*. Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing. 1985.

Senn, Frank C. *Christian Liturgy, Catholic and Evangelical*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989.

Table 1: Major Components of Holy Eucharist in the BCP

Rite	Prayers of People	Eucharistic Prayers	Comments	BCP Pages
I	One fixed form	Form I	Sacrificial; from 1789	323-349
		Form II		Creation/Incarnation
				340-343
				328-330
II	Form I			355-382
	Form II			383-385
	Form III			385-387
	Form IV			387-388
	Form V			388-389
	Form VI			389-391
		Prayer A	Modernized Form I	392-393
		Prayer B	From Hippolytus (3 rd C.)	361-363
		Prayer C	Penitential/Creational	367-369
		Prayer D	St. Basil (4 th C.)	369-372
III		Form 1		372-376
		Form 2		400-405
				402-403
				404-405