

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

The Episcopal Church in Mountain Home, Arkansas



We are a vibrant, inclusive and welcoming community sharing
our gifts and the radical love of Jesus.

Everyone is welcome.

Get Acquainted Booklet

A user-friendly guide to worship at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

This booklet is a simple reference for newcomers, visitors, guests, and anybody else who may be wondering "What IS this church all about, anyway?" It cannot and will not answer all questions, of course, but hopes to serve as a brief, user-friendly guide to worship at St. Andrew's.

If you find it helpful, please take it with you.

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 511 Coley Dr., Mountain Home, AR 721653

First Things First

1. We're delighted you're here, and we want you to come back.
2. We suspect you may have some questions. Everybody you see was a newcomer at one time or another, and we've *all* had questions – probably the very same ones. So don't hesitate to ask any question!
3. We want you to be comfortable so you can worship God and enjoy your visit today. You can't do that if you're wondering which book to pick up next or trying "to do everything right," which usually means doing the same things everyone else is doing.

So...

Relax.

The first rule is: **When you're worshipping God, you can't get it wrong!**

The second rule is: **If you need help, ask the person next to you.** We like people here at St. Andrew's.

The last rule is: **Regardless of what anybody else is doing, don't do anything that makes you feel uncomfortable.**

You can do whatever makes you feel comfortable.

You shouldn't do anything that makes you feel uncomfortable.

You may want to skip the introductory stuff for now and read it later.

But there is something we want to handle right up front.

*If you are wondering, "Am I allowed to take communion here?"
the answer is not only "YES" but also "WE HOPE YOU WILL."*

Now, let's start with the basics...

What are these books in the rack in front of me?

The smaller red one is the *Book of Common Prayer*. The entire service as well as a lot of other stuff is contained in it. A smaller blue book with a cross on it is the Spanish language version.

And...

The larger blue book is the *Hymnal 1982* (some of the Hymnals are bound in red). The songs we sing are indicated in the bulletin the greeters gave you, and on the hymn board on the wall in front. We have a good music program here and our 9:30 service features our organ and choir (who take the summer off). The 12:30 Spanish language service is held in Keller Hall and printed handouts will be provided to help you follow the liturgy.

You will also find another songbook, *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. We use these books from time to time, and the hymn board will preface the number with an *L* that looks suspiciously like an upside-down 7. The bulletin will refer to this book as "*LEVAS*."

Why is everyone so quiet?

It's an Episcopal thing. We take time before the service to say hello to God, to prepare for communion (and, by the way, **everyone is invited to come to the altar rail for communion**) and perhaps to go over the readings or other information printed on the inserts in the bulletin.

Speaking of which, what is all this stuff?

The major parts of the service are listed in the bulletin, with page numbers which direct you to the proper place in *The Book of Common Prayer*. One of the inserts has the beginning prayer (known as a collect – emphasis on the first syllable - because it'll help you collect your thoughts) for the Sunday worship and the Bible readings, and the other one lists upcoming events at St. Andrew's and has our prayer list.

The prayer list is just what it sounds like – a list of people for whom we offer special prayers. If you would like to add someone's name to the prayer list, you will find cards in the rack in front of you which you may complete and put into the offering plate, or you may call the church office Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings (870-425-3560), email us at standrewssecretary@gmail.com, or drop us a note (our address is 511 Coley Dr., Mountain Home, AR 72653.) We'll include the name for four weeks, and you can renew the request if needed.

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

That's very true. The Episcopal way of worshipping exercises all the senses – sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste. We like to think of it as involving every part of us in worship. Which, by the way, gives God a lot of ways to reach us.

Why are some people bowing and some kneeling before entering the pews, and others not doing anything at all?

What you're noticing is called 'reverencing' and people have different ways of doing it. Some bow in the direction of the altar, some genuflect (touch their knee to the floor), others reverence silently or without gesture. It's like we said, do whatever helps you to worship; don't do anything that hinders that.

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

Again, this is a personal worship style. This is called making the sign of the cross. Some people do it out of habit, others because it reminds them of the sacrifice Jesus made to enable us to respond to God's love; still others because it's their way of taking up their own cross and following them. You will see them doing this at times during the service, too. But *you don't have to cross yourself just because others do.*

This looks very Roman Catholic to me. Is this a Roman Catholic church?

No. Yes. Well, that's a hard one to answer in a booklet like this. Although the ancient Church from which the Episcopal Church sprang was Roman Catholic, the present-day Episcopal Church has practices and beliefs that are distinctly different from those of the Roman Catholic Church. The Episcopal Church is often referred to as a 'bridge' church. We have deep roots in both the Catholic and Reformation traditions. The important thing, however, is our worship of God and our membership in the body of Christ.

Hey, I just want to know one thing. Is anybody going to make me stand up and give my name or anything like that?

No. Not because we don't care; in fact, you will find we care very much. We just don't want to embarrass you or make you uncomfortable. But we hope you signed the guest book when you came in, or will before you leave us today, and also please introduce yourself to our priest before you go.

So, what happens next?

As you wait for the service to start, you may hear the prelude, usually an organ solo. You may notice an acolyte in a white robe lighting the candles on the altar. Check out the bulletin and the hymn board, and be ready to sing the first hymn listed which will be the Processional. If you love to sing, belt it out, whether you're in tune or not. If you don't know the hymn, or don't want to sing, you can read the words to yourself. Whatever works. PS – Some Sundays we don't sing hymns. If that disappoints you, come back next Sunday. We'll probably be singing then.

Who are the people in the funny clothes?

Not much of a fashion statement, is it? Depending on the service you are attending, and the time of year, you will see the acolyte bearing the cross (you'll notice some people bowing toward the cross as it passes), the choir, one or two people also in white robes (they are the chalcers – they will serve the wine in a chalice – a cup - at communion) and finally the priest. The priest's vestments are often festive and colorful. Should the Bishop be present, he'll be the

last one in the procession. You'll know it's the Bishop by the pointy hat he wears (it's called a mitre.)

What about Communion? How does that work here?

ALL WORSHIPERS ARE INVITED AND ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNION. Communion is received at the altar rail, and the greeters will indicate when each pew is to stand and go to the rail. You may stand or kneel to receive communion. Just put your right hand, palm up, in your left hand and the priest will put a wafer in your hand, saying "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life" or "The Body of Christ, the bread of Heaven." Simply raise your hands to your mouth and eat the bread or wafer. You may request gluten-free wafers.

Next comes the wine. We use real wine – not grape juice – and a common cup. When the chalice bearer comes to you, help guide the cup to your lips and take a sip. If you do not wish to consume wine, just cross your arms over your chest as the chalice bearer approaches you. If you want wine, but don't want to drink from the cup, dip the wafer given to you by the priest into the chalice when the chalice is offered to you, and then consume the wafer. As the chalice bearer gives you wine, he or she will say, "The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life," or "The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation."

If you have a child who you do not wish to take communion, just have your child cross his or her arms across the chest. The priest will say a blessing (this is true for adults, too.) *Above all, please remember that all who love God, most especially children, are welcome to come to the Lord's table, and to receive communion.*

A word about symbolism...

In the very earliest churches, most people could neither read nor write. So it became necessary to invent ways to teach people about religious matters and let them know what was going on, especially since all services and prayers were in Latin! Many of these traditions still exist – like different vestment colors to denote various seasons of the church year, stained glass windows to tell Bible stories, Sanctus Bells to indicate the most solemn moments of Holy Communion (listen for them to ring three times), incense to indicate prayers. These subtle reminders enhance the beauty of our tradition and enrich our worship services today. At St. Andrew's, we don't necessarily have music, bells, or incense at every service. But sometimes we go all out!

Look, tell you what...

Now that the service has started, let's hold the rest of the questions until afterward when you can join us for some refreshments and fellowship time. Or – consider joining us for Adult Forum, after the service every Sunday. Until then, just use your service bulletin and the hymnal to follow the service. Remember, do what makes you feel comfortable. The point is:

God is glad you're here, and so are we!

Okay, here we go...

The service bulletin will help you navigate your way through the service. You'll sing hymns from the *Hymnal* or the *LEVAS* and find some reading like the Lessons, the Gospel, and the words to

the Offertory (sung by the choir) in the bulletin. Use the bulletin to guide you to the proper place in the *Book of Common Prayer*, and if you get lost, ask the person next to you to help out.

The Episcopal Church in the United States
The Most Reverend Sean Rowe, Presiding Bishop

The Episcopal Diocese of Arkansas
The Right Reverend John Harmon, Bishop

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Mountain Home, AR
The Reverend Dr. Bob Williams, Associate Priest

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, for children, was inspired by the Montessori principles of education. It enables the child to be self-guided in establishing a relationship with God. Holy Scripture is presented to children using child appropriate furnishings, activities, and hands-on materials.

The church office is open Tues-Thursday, 8:30 to noon.
Call us at 870-425-3560.

**We are very happy you've shared part of your day with us and we hope you've enjoyed our service.
We would love to have you join us again soon at St. Andrew's.**

Terms to better help explain the Episcopal Church and our worship practices:

People (not all Episcopal Churches have people in all these roles)

Acolyte - an altar attendant in worship.

Bishop - the head priest and pastor for a diocese.

Canon - a priest on a cathedral or diocesan staff.

Celebrant - the presiding priest or bishop at the Holy Eucharist (communion).

Chalist (or Chalice) - a person trained to serve the chalice of wine at communion.

Curate - a priest on his/her first assignment after ordination.

Deacon - an ordained minister charged specifically with a servant role. In Holy Eucharist, the Deacon may read the Gospel, prepare the altar, and give the dismissal.

Dean - the head priest and pastor for a cathedral.

Intercessor - the person who reads the prayers of the people during the worship service.

Junior Warden - the vestry member who is second in command to the senior warden and who is in charge of the building and grounds.

Lay Eucharist Minister - a person licensed to carry and serve blessed communion to the sick and homebound.

Lector - the person who reads scripture lessons in worship.

Oblationer - a person who presents the gifts of unblessed bread and wine to the altar during the Offertory.

Priest – the ordained individual who is authorized to celebrate the Eucharist (communion) and who is expected to minister to the congregation.

Senior Warden – the member of the vestry in charge of the governing board. Appointed by the priest.

Thurifer – a person who carries incense in procession.

Vergers – a person charged with organizing and guiding worship services.

Vestry – the elected lay governing board.

Things (not all Episcopal Churches use all of these things, and many use certain ones only at certain times)

Alms Basin – plates passed to the people to gather monetary offerings for the church.

Anglican Communion – the world-wide body of churches relating the Church of England (The Episcopal Church, The Anglican Church of Canada, The Scottish Episcopal Church, The Church of Ireland, The Anglican Church of Australia, The Holy Catholic Church in Japan, and many others).

Anthem – a piece of worship music often sung by the choir.

Blessing – a declaration of God's favor, given by the bishop or priest.

Cathedral – The seat of the Bishop which is also a parish church.

Communion – the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, referred to as the "Holy Eucharist". Also refers to receiving the blessed bread and wine.

Confirmation – the rite by which the candidates express a mature commitment to Christ and receive strength from the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop.

Dismissal – the last words of the Holy Eucharist service.

Diocese – The Bishop's jurisdiction (The Diocese of Arkansas includes the entire state).

Episcopal Church – the American branch of the Anglican Communion.

Fraction Anthem (or Fraction Hymn) – worship music sung by the choir and/or the people at the point of the breaking of the bread in the Holy Eucharist.

Healing – one of the seven sacramental rites. May include anointing with holy oil and a prayer for healing.

Holy Baptism – the rite of full acceptance, by water and the Holy Spirit, into the Church.

Holy Eucharist – literally means 'thanksgiving.' It is the name of the main service of the Episcopal Church. Sometimes referred to as 'communion' or as 'receiving the bread and wine.'

Hymn – a piece of music with words, sung by all the people in worship.

Incense – the fragrant smoke sometimes used in worship, symbolic of prayer.

Lectern – a stand with a book rest for the public reading of the Scriptures.

Lectionary – the schedule of Bible reading to be used on specific days throughout the church year.

Liturgy – a ceremonial form prescribed for public worship.

Lent – a season of penitence, the forty days before Easter Day.

Nave – the central part of the worship area, running lengthwise.

Offertory – in Holy Eucharist, the point in the service where the gifts of bread, wine, and money are presented to the altar.

Procession – the movement of those persons who take leadership roles in worship.

Pulpit – in a church, the structure from which the Sermon is preached.

Sacraments – the Episcopal Church as seven. Holy Eucharist (Communion) and Holy Baptism are the two great sacraments; Confirmation, Ordination, Marriage, Penitence, and Unction (healing) are the five lesser sacraments.

Sequence – a hymn or anthem sung before the reading of the Gospel in Holy Eucharist.

Song of Praise – worship music sung near the beginning of the Holy Eucharist service, either the Gloria in excelsis (Glory to God in the Highest), the Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy), or the Trisagion (Thrice Holy).

Sursum Corda – means “Lift up your hearts,” and begins the Holy Eucharist.

Thurible – a vessel used for burning incense in worship service.

Vestment – garments worn by those leading the worship service.

Voluntary – any piece of instrumental music in a worship service.

