

The Episcopal Church has a long tradition, and over that time has inherited, created, or retained many words that might not be familiar all. These special terms, though confusing at first, are part of our rich heritage.

Some of these words and phrases are more common in other parishes than at Good Shepherd.

Nor is this list by any means exhaustive. Nor (and this is important) is memorizing any list of words a prerequisite to being a good Episcopalian.

General terms

These are general terms used in the church that don't fall into the other categories.

Alms: Money or other offerings of the people for the work of the Church.

Anglican: Literally, "English." The term usually refers to the Church of England and the worldwide assemblage of autonomous churches in communion with it. That assemblage, including the Episcopal Church, is known as the Anglican Communion. There are nearly 40 self-governing -- and largely self-supporting -- provinces of the Communion, located in more than 164 countries, making up 75 million people world-wide. Its emblem is shown to the right.

Apostolic Succession: Episcopalians, along with other Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Orthodox and some other Christian sects, trace their bishops' spiritual heritage in an unbroken line back to the first apostles of Jesus, which is why all Episcopal bishops are consecrated by three other bishops. The importance of the historic episcopate is a major point in ecumenical discussions.

Canons: From the Greek kannon, "measuring stick". These are the written rules governing church policy, structure and procedure. There are national canons set by the General Convention, and each diocese has its own as well.

The Canon can also refer to the official list of books contained in the Bible.

Catechism: A summary of religious doctrine often in the form of questions and answers. The catechism (found in the Book of Common Prayer, pp. 844ff.) is intended to give an outline for instruction in the Episcopal faith, or to provide a brief summary of the Church's teaching for an inquiring stranger who picks up a Prayer Book.

Cathedral: From the Greek cathedra, "seat." The term came from the bishop's throne or cathedra. The church where that throne was kept became known as the cathedral church, and later just as the cathedral.

In present usage, a diocese's cathedral is the church where the bishop makes his headquarters. The city in which the cathedral is located is the "see city." Some dioceses do not have a cathedral.

If the cathedral is also a parish church, its rector is referred to as the Dean of the Cathedral.

Catholic: From the Greek katholikos ("universal"). It usually refers, when it begins with a small c, to all Christians, as in the Nicene Creed ("We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church"). In early Christian writings it is a synonym for Christian. The Church is catholic in the sense that there are no restrictions on who can join; it is open to everyone in every place.

Sometimes it is used with a capital C when the writer is referring to the Roman Catholic Church.

Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral: In 1881 the world's Anglican bishops, meeting at Lambeth in England, adopted four articles as essentials in any plan of union with other Christian bodies: The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, The Apostles' and Nicene creeds, The sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, The historic episcopate (see Apostolic Succession) Also known as the Lambeth Quadrilateral.

Church: From the Greek word kurios ("master, lord"), in its form kuriakon ("pertaining to, or belonging to the lord"), to refer to the building used by the Lord's people.

The French and other Romance languages get their word for church from the Greek word ekklesia ("called out"). In French, this became eglise, which means an assembly of people. Interestingly, the Bible always uses this term, ekklesia, not kuriakan, considering the church as its people, not the building.

When the word is capitalized, it usually refers to the universal, or catholic church.

Church of England: The official name of the original Church in England, the Anglican Church.

Starting in the reign of King Henry VIII, the Church, in England, broke formal ties with Rome and became the Church of England. Sometimes referred to as the "C of E."

Convocation: A special gathering of a religious or academic group, usually marked by use of special vestments, liturgy, procession, etc. Also the name of a special group of ordained persons. Sometimes the meeting of all the clergy of a diocese is called a convocation.

Deanery: An organizational unit between a parish and a diocese. Not all dioceses are divided into deaneries, and in some dioceses, deaneries are known as regions.

Deaneries are overseen by a dean; if there is more than one bishop in a diocese, each bishop may be responsible for a separate deanery.

Diocese: This is the basic local unit of the Church, after an administrative unit (similar to a county) in the Roman Empire. A diocese is made up of several local congregations (parishes and missions) with a bishop as its chief pastor. A state may have one or several dioceses. Some dioceses are further split into deaneries or regions. The dioceses in the Episcopal Church can be seen on this lap

The legislative body of the diocese is an annual convention of clergy and lay deputies from each congregation. Dioceses also have diocesan councils which function similar to the vestry on the local level.

Episcopal: An adjective derived from the Greek word, episkopos, meaning overseer or bishop. Episcopalian is the noun. Episcopalians attend the Episcopal Church.

Episcopal Church: The Episcopal Church, USA, a.k.a. ECUSA. It has about 2.5 million members in about 100 dioceses, including dioceses in Central America, the Caribbean, northern South America, and Taiwan, plus 11 parishes and missions in Europe and the Mission Territory of Micronesia.

The Episcopal Church was constitutionally inaugurated by the General Convention of 1789, in conjunction with the American War for Independence. The name was chosen both because of the tradition of the episcopate and apostolic succession, and to distance it from England. There was no resident bishop in the British colonies, causing problems when many of the clergy sided with the Crown during the American Revolution. The first bishop of the Episcopal Church, Samuel Seabury, was consecrated by bishops in the Scottish Episcopal Church in 1784.

The primate of the Episcopal Church is called Presiding Bishop.

Executive Committee: In many parishes, the rectors, wardens and the parish treasurer form an executive committee. They meet separately from the whole vestry, between official vestry meetings.

Executive Council: The Presiding Bishop's version of an executive committee, consisting of appointed friends and the elected president of each province.

General Convention: The General Convention is the highest legislative body of the Episcopal Church. It meets every three years (triennially) enact laws (canons) to govern the Episcopal Church, and to pass resolutions stating the "mind of the church" on topical issues. It is made up of a House of Bishops and a House of Deputies.

Other members of the Anglican Communion hold similar meetings, though these are sometimes called General Synods (as in England, Canada, Australia and New Zealand).

The General Convention in 2000 was held in Denver.

House of Bishops: all the bishops of the Episcopal Church sitting as a legislative and judiciary body of the Church.

House of Deputies: The lay and presbyter delegates to a general convention sitting as a legislative body. Each diocese sends a delegation of deputies; half are clergy and half lay persons.

Incarnation: The Christian doctrine that the eternal Son of God took human flesh from his human mother and that the historical Jesus is at once fully God and fully human.

Lambeth Conference: This is a meeting every ten years (on years ending in "8") of bishops from the various members of the Anglican Communion, called by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Broad, non-binding resolutions as to the "mind of the church" are passed during the Conference.

Mission: This is a local Episcopal congregation that is not able to be financially self-supporting. The congregation's rector is the diocesan bishop, and the bishop appoints a priest-in-charge as his/her representative, commonly referred to as a vicar. , and the equivalent of the vestry would be the mission council. Usually a mission does not have a full-time minister and does not have the full complement of daily or weekly services.

When a mission is able to be self-supporting, it may apply to be admitted to the diocese as a parish.

Parish: A group of people of a certain area who are gathered into self-supporting church (as opposed to a mission church). Sometimes it also refers to a geographical region; counties in several southern states were based on parishes, and vice-versa (and the term is still used for counties in Louisiana).

The priest in charge of a parish is called a rector.

Province: For the Episcopal Church this is a group of dioceses in a particular region of the United States. Provinces are usually under the direction of a diocesan bishop who serves as president of the province. This is primarily an organizational or administrative division; for most church members, the division into provinces is not very meaningful.

The term is also used across the Anglican Communion. Most national churches in the Communion are subdivided into provinces (e.g., the 9 provinces of ECUSA, the four provinces of the Church of Canada); some are not, with the result that the church in its entirety is referred to as a province. Indeed, some provinces are transnational (e.g., the Province of Central Africa), made up of several countries.

The Diocese of Colorado is in Province VI (along with most of the states to the northeast and -west) of the Episcopal Church. Click on the map to the right for more information.

Region: Dioceses are sometimes broken up into regions, as a further means of organization. In some dioceses, these are known as deaneries.

Good Shepherd is part of the High Plains Region of the Diocese of Colorado.

See: From the Latin sedes ("seats"). Originally used to refer to the bishop's seat or cathedra, the earliest of all symbols of authority. The seat was kept in the cathedral, and the bishop's see was the town where the cathedral was located. Now the word is used (primarily by Roman Catholics) to refer to a whole diocese (e.g., the Pope is Bishop of Rome or of the "Holy See").

Trinity, The: A fundamental symbol of the Christian faith and a very important doctrine in catholic Christianity, referring to the oneness and essential unity of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Via media: A Latin phrase which means "by the way of the middle." Many would say that the adherence to the middle way in all matters is one of the major identifying characteristics of classical Anglicanism.

Visitation: An official appearance by a diocesan bishop. According to the national canons, the bishop must visit each congregation within his or her jurisdiction at least once every three years.

Titles and jobs

These are "job titles" for both clergy and laity, both individuals and groups. The Episcopal tradition has kept many of these for centuries, and they are still used today.

Acolyte: From a Greek word meaning "to follow." While originally a minor clerical order, acolytes are now commonly lay volunteers who follow the Cross in the procession and recession, light and sometimes carry candles, and assist the priest in worship.

Altar Guild: A special, usually lay, group in a church, charged with the maintenance and preparation of the altar and its furnishings in a church. Altar guilds may also supervise church decorations and flowers.

Archbishop of Canterbury: The presiding bishop of the Church of England; sometimes acknowledged by American Episcopalians as the honorary spiritual head of the entire Anglican Communion.

Bishop: From the Greek episkopos ("overseer," the same as the Latinate "supervisor"). The qualifications for bishops are given in 1 Timothy 3, but there is no scriptural description of their duties, save in Titus 1. A bishop in the modern Episcopal Church is a chief minister (servant) or chief pastor (shepherd), serving a number of local churches that make up a diocese. S/he is a successor of the apostles, through the direct lineage of bishops through the centuries (the episcopate). When present, the bishop is the principal celebrant at sacramental liturgies.

A large diocese may have more than one bishop. In that case the chief bishop is called the diocesan bishop. Assisting bishops are usually called assistant bishops (if appointed by the bishop) or suffragan bishops (if elected). An assisting bishop who will succeed the diocesan is a bishop coadjutor. All are addressed as "bishop," or "The Right Reverend [full name]."

A bishop who oversees (has "metropolitan authority" over) multiple dioceses or a national church may be known as an archbishop, as in the Archbishop of Canterbury. The Episcopal equivalent is the Presiding Bishop.

Canon: When used in reference to people, a canon is the title of a priest who either serves on the staff of a cathedral, or who has exhibited exemplary service to a diocese.

A canon is addressed as "The Reverend Canon Jane A. Doe". Salutation in letter is "Dear Canon Doe" or "Dear Ms. Doe".

Cantor: A person who chants or sings; often a solo voice that begins the service. The Festival of Lessons and Carols begins with the solo of the cantor.

Celebrant: The person who leads the worship service, the principal officiator. In a Eucharist, the celebrant is the bishop, or a priest who the bishop appoints to lead the service for him. In a service of Morning Prayer, the celebrant may be either lay or clergy.

Chalice Minister: The person (ordained or lay) who administers the chalice during Communion.

Also known as the chalice bearer.

Chancellor: The spiritual head of a clerical house, order, college, or university. In some dioceses the chief administrative assistant to the bishop is known as the chancellor.

Chaplain: The clergy person in charge of a chapel or one who ministers to a group of people who are not organized as a mission or church. e.g., the minister of a hospital or nursing home is a chaplain.

Clergy: The group of ordained people, consecrated for unique ministry for a particular church or denomination. In the Episcopal Church, the three orders of clergy are deacons, priests and bishops.

The adjective is clerical. Clerk: Secretary of the Vestry.

Communicants: Those in a church who do or who are eligible to receive communion. Sometimes used to refer to the roll of the local church, e.g., "St. Mark's has 300

communicants [= official members]." But, "There were 37 communicants at the Eucharist at the early service [= 37 people received the Lord's Supper]."

Concelebrant: An ordained bishop or priest who celebrates the Eucharist with the principal celebrant.

Crucifer: A Latin word meaning "cross-bearer." A person in a religious procession who carries a large cross (a processional cross), and leads the procession into the church and the recession out of the church.

At Good Shepherd, the Crucifer is usually one of the Acolytes.

Curate: From the Latin curatus ("the person in charge"). The term has come to refer to a transitional deacon or an assistant (or the newest assistant) to the rector. The word "cure" is related to our word "care"; a curate takes care of the cure, i.e., the spiritual care of the congregation. D. Min.: Doctor of Ministry, a special graduate program for clergy offered by many seminaries; courses are often scheduled in the summer so that parish clergy may attend.

D.D.: Common abbreviation of the honorary degree Doctor of Divinity; an honorary degree

reserved exclusively for ordained persons, especially bishops. The abbreviation is used after the bishop's full name: "The Rt. Rev. Jane C. Doe, D.D."

Deacon: From the Greek diakonos ("servant"). A deacon, like a bishop or priest, is an ordained minister, the initial level of ordination in the Episcopal Church. There are two types of deacons - transitional deacons, who will soon be ordained to the priesthood, and permanent deacons, who chose the order as a permanent servant ministry.

The New Testament records the appointment of the first deacons in Acts 6 and lists their qualifications for office in 1 Timothy 3.

Deacons usually serve in local congregations and have a special ministry to "the poor, the sick, the suffering, and the helpless" (BCP p. 510). During the Eucharist, the main jobs of the deacon are to read the Gospel, (in some churches to lead the Prayers of the People), prepare the gifts at the Offertory, help with the ablutions, assist with the administration of Communion, and dismiss the people. In the absence of a bishop or priest, a deacon may administer Communion from the Reserved Sacrament (BCP, pp. 408-409).

Deacons are addressed as Deacon, Mister, Miss, Mrs., etc. according to preference or local custom, or, more formally, "The Reverend [full name]." The state of being a deacon, or the life of deacon-like service in the church, is known as the diaconate.

An archdeacon is a priest who is part of a bishop's staff and who usually has some administrative supervision over missions for the bishop or other such functions.

Archdeacons are referred to as "The Venerable [full name]" as in "The Venerable John Smith." Archdeacons sometimes wear purple cassocks instead of black ones, or black cassocks with purple piping.

Dean: From Latin decanus ("ten"). Originally the title was given to a minor official who served in some supervisory position over ten people. The title is now used to refer to the chief clergyman of a cathedral, the chief academic officer of a college or seminary, or the head of a deanery.

If the dean is ordained, the title "The Very Reverend [full name]" is appropriate; if the dean is a lay person, this title is not used.

Diocesan: The chief bishop of a diocese.

Epistoler: The person who reads the Epistles. Another term for subdeacon.

Father: A priest in personal conversation or in the salutation of a letter, e.g., "Father Smith,"

"Dear Father Smith." Typically used of all Roman Catholic clergy and of some Episcopal clergy.

Usage varies between congregations and individual priests, and has diminished (or become more controversial) in some quarters since the ordination of women (though some female priests are referred to as Mother).

Gospeller: The person who reads the Gospel. Another term for deacon.

Laity: From the Greek *laos* ("people"), the laity are the non-ordained members of a church, as distinguished from the clergy. A single member of the laity would be referred to as a lay person.

Lay minister is sometimes used to refer to laity who work closely with a church or religious program, either as unpaid volunteers or paid staff.

Lector: From the Latin for "reader." Also known as a lay reader, a lector is non-ordained person who participates in reading part of the church service. Lectors can read any prayer, psalm, or lesson, but if the service is a Eucharist, the Gospel must be read by a member of the clergy.

Lay Eucharistic Minister: Sometimes abbreviated LEM, this is an individual who has undergone special training and is authorized by the priest to take pre-consecrated Communion to a sick or shut-in member of the congregation.

Minister: This is a Latin word, meaning "servant," or, more fundamentally, a doer of small deeds (vs. a magister, a doer of great deeds). In the Episcopal Church lay persons as well as bishops, priests and deacons are ministers, servants of God, caring for their brothers and sisters in the church and those outside it.

Assisting Ministers are persons, lay and clergy, who assist the celebrant (BCP pp. 322 & 354).

Mr./Mrs./Ms.: Used in referring to clergy when the full name is not used: "The Reverend Susan B. Smith," but "The Reverend Ms. Smith"; "The Very Reverend John Q. Public," but "The Very Reverend Mr. Public."

Officiant: A person who officiates or moderates at the Daily Offices and other rites. This person may be clergy or lay.

Parson: From the Latin *persona* ("person"), used to refer to the parish priest. The title was first used, as a legal term, in eleventh century England, where the parish priest was, effectively, the designated "person" to deal with. Today, the term is not used as often as it was, except sometimes a term of affection for an older clergyman, especially of rural background.

Pastor: From the Latin for "shepherd." Another name for a clergy person. The term is used universally for Lutheran clergy, and by many Episcopal and Roman Catholic clergy as well. The adjectival form is pastoral.

Preacher: Preaching is only one function of the ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church and so preacher is not an appropriate or complete synonym for bishop, priest or deacon.

Presbyter: The actual, official name for an Episcopal priest. The word is from the Greek *presbyteros* ("elder"). The presbyter represents the bishop in a parish or mission, just as in the earliest years of the Church, when older members of a congregation were chosen to represent the bishop.

The qualifications for presbyters are given in 1 Timothy 5, but their duties are not listed in Scripture. **Presiding Bishop:** The elected episcopal head and chief administrator of the Episcopal Church. Until the 1920s, the Presiding Bishop was simply a diocesan bishop elected to preside over General Convention. In more recent history the Presiding Bishop has become the American equivalent of an archbishop, the chief pastor and primate. The proper title of address is "The Most Reverend [full name]."

Priest: This word comes from the Greek *presbyter* ("elder"). Usually the chief minister in a local congregation, the duty of a priest, according to the prayer book, is to baptize, preach the Word of God, celebrate the Eucharist, and to pronounce Absolution and Blessing in God's Name. The term is used in Anglican, Orthodox and Roman Catholic denominations.

Forms of address -- Father, Mother, etc. -- depend upon the priest's preference and local custom. The formal title of address is "The Reverend [full name]".

Primate: From the Latin for "first one," the term for the leading or highest bishop in a particular national church. The primate of the Episcopal Church is called the Presiding Bishop.

Rector: From the Latin for "ruler." The priest in charge of a parish, elected by the vestry, in consultation with the bishop. Assisting priests the Rector appoints may be called curate, assistant or associate priests.

If the parish is also the cathedral, then the Rector is instead called the Dean of the Cathedral.

Reverend: The: "The Reverend" is an appropriate title to precede the full name of a priest or deacon, as in "The Reverend John Smith." The Right Reverend is used for a bishop, The Most Reverend for an archbishop.

Reverend is an adjective, not a noun, and is incorrectly used with a last name only, or without the article the, as in "Reverend Smith."

Reverend Doctor: An ordained person (hence Reverend) who also holds some degree at the doctorate level (hence Doctor) -- a way of referring to a clergy person who was also a professor, or to a member of the clergy who holds an honorary or earned doctorate. A bishop who held a doctorate would be referred to as "the Right Reverend Doctor."

Sacristan: In earlier times the sacristan was the man in charge of the sacristy, and sacred vessels, vestments, etc. therein. Some cathedrals still designate a priest as a Canon Sacristan, but now the usage of the word has often become interchangeable with the title Sexton.

Server: One who assists at the altar.

Sexton: An older English title for the person in charge of the church building (or a special portion of it) and grounds. In the US, the Sexton is also commonly head of maintenance and custodial services and may perform additional duties such as ringing the church bell. Also sometimes called a Verger.

Subdeacon: A lay person who assists the deacon and celebrant, and normally reads the Epistle at the Eucharist. Also known as the epistoler.

Thurifer: The person who handles the incense and thurible.

Verger: From the Latin verga ("rod"). A Verger is a committed lay minister within the Church who assists the clergy in the conduct of public worship, especially in the marshalling of processions (where they will usually carry a mace or ceremonial staff). Full-time or part-time, paid or volunteer, their duties can be purely ceremonial or include other responsibilities, such as parish administration, leadership of the worship committee or Sexton.

Vestry: From the Latin vestire ("to clothe, to put on"). Originally the word referred to the room where the priest would put on his vestments, at which time local laity would meet with him to discuss the affairs of the parish. Later, the word came to refer to the leaders, instead of the room.

The Vestry is the governing board of a local Episcopal parish consisting of the Rector, the Wardens, and lay members. The Rector presides at meetings of the vestry (or, in his/her absence, the Wardens), which handles the parish's business and temporal matters and serves as a council of advice for the Rector.

Unlike some denominations, the Episcopal Church uses a representative form of government instead of a pure democracy. Lay members of the Vestry are elected at a parish's annual meeting. In the Anglican Church this is known as the Parochial Church Council.

In many parishes, the Rectors, Wardens and the Treasurer form an executive committee, and will often meet separately from the whole Vestry between Vestry meetings.

Vicar: From the Latin vicarius ("a substitute"). The vicar is the priest-in-charge of a mission, appointed by the bishop (who is, technically, the Rector of the mission).

The term is still used today to describe an English priest in who is charge of a small parish, a vicarage (the term is also used to describe the house where the priest lives). That's because most churches in England are supported by their diocese, rather than being self-supporting, so most Anglican priests in England are considered vicars.

Warden: One of two Vestry members chosen to serve their congregation in a special fashion, and who act as presiding officers of the Vestry in the absence of the Rector. Wardens can either be elected or appointed, depending on local parish or diocesan canons.

Although the duties vary widely, in most cases the Senior Warden is viewed as the "top" lay person in a parish. In many larger parishes the Senior Warden is chosen by the rector, and serves as a liaison between the rector and the parish. Because of this function, the Senior Warden is sometimes referred to as "the rector's warden" or (at a cathedral) "the clergy's warden."

Junior Wardens are often elected by the parish at the annual congregational meeting, and are thus referred to as "the people's warden." The tasks for a Junior Warden vary from parish to parish, but the majority find themselves placed in charge of the Buildings and Grounds Committee.

Sacraments, services and liturgy

This section deals with some of the terms used during worship services, or to describe different types of services themselves.

Ablutions: Ceremonial washing of communion vessels during the service and/or the ceremonial washing of the hands of the celebrant (also called the lavabo).

Acclamation: A versicle and response of praise at the beginning of the Eucharist and other services; also, in Rite II, the (memorial) response of the people during the Eucharistic Prayer.

Absolution: A declaration by a bishop or priest, announcing forgiveness by God to those who have confessed their sins and repented. (BCP, pp. 447ff) One of the sacramental acts. See Reconciliation.

Agnus Dei: From the Latin agnus ("lamb") and dei ("of God"). The term refers to a three-part litany frequently said or sung after the fraction in the Holy Communion part of the Eucharist. (BCP pp. 337, 407, 152).

Alleluia:

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.

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 neighbours (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 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 curtsey 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.

Good Shepherd 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 a sanctus bell.

We nearly always use Rite II, and strive for an inclusive tone, but all Sunday and Wednesday 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 colour

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 and 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 *ungere* ("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 of 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."

Seasons, Feasts and Holy Days

The following section describes various special dates, festivals, and services around the year. The Church Year is divided into Seasons. There are six seasons: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and the season after Pentecost. Each season has one or more associated Colours used for vestments and decoration. The seasons are dependent upon two cycles of feasts and holy days: the first date of Christmas (Dec. 25), and the movable date of Easter.

The church new year begins with the season of Advent, beginning four Sundays before Christmas day.

Christmas is a 12-day season that begins Christmas day and continues to January 6th.

Epiphany is both a day (Jan. 6) and a season, and represents the manifestation (epiphany) of the gospel into the world. It can last up to 9 weeks.

Lent begins 46 days (6 weeks) before Easter with Ash Wednesday, and is a time of preparation for Holy Week and Easter.

Easter is a six week (50 day) season which ends on Pentecost Sunday.

The season after Pentecost runs from Pentecost to Advent.

Advent: From the Latin *adventus* ("coming"), the period celebrating the coming of Jesus at Christmas. The beginning of the Church Year and the four weeks leading up to and concluding with Christmas (the entire Christmas season). The Colours for Advent are violet or blue.

An Advent Wreath is a special wreath (circle of greens) containing five candles used in churches and homes as reminders of the four Sundays before Christmas. Four of the candles are arranged in a circle, the fifth -- a white candle -- is placed in the center. By tradition one additional candle is lit each Sunday until on the fourth Sunday all four candles are lighted. On Christmas, the fifth candle is lighted.

All Saints' Day: November 1; a feast day in the church in commemoration of all the known and unknown saints.

Ascension: The Feast commemorating the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ into heaven.

This Feast is forty days after Easter and always occurs on a Thursday. The Colour for Ascension are white or gold.

Ash Wednesday: A day of special devotion which marks the beginning of the season of Lent, a period of spiritual discipline, fasting and moderation in preparation for Holy Week and Easter. It is one of the most important days of the church year. In the Ash Wednesday service, ashes are lightly smeared onto the forehead of a person by the priest or bishop, as a reminder that "dust thou art, and to dust thou shall return." (BCP pp. 264ff).

Candlemas: The Feast of the Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple, February 2nd. The term comes from the tradition of blessing candles on this feast and carrying them in procession as a symbol of the "Light to Lighten the Nations" (see *Nunc Dimittis*).

Christmas: The Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ celebrated on December 25th.

The Christmas Season extends through January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany. Also known as the Twelve Days of Christmas.

Easter: Both the Sunday celebrating the Lord's Resurrection and the season of Fifty Days following. Easter is always the first Sunday after a full moon that falls on or after March 21. It therefore always occurs between March 22 and April 25. The odd dating is based on the Lunar Calendar used by the Jews, which then sets the date for Passover, the meal celebrated at the Last Supper.

Epiphany: The Feast of the Manifestation of Our Lord Jesus Christ (i.e., celebrating the visit of the Wise Men to the infant Jesus). It is observed on January 6th. The Epiphany Season continues until the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday.

Fast: A day of special devotion observed by acts of discipline and self-denial. Fasting Days include Ash Wednesday, other weekdays of Lent and of Holy Week, Good Friday and all other Fridays of the year, except for Fridays in the Christmas and Easter seasons, and any Feasts of our Lord which occur on a Friday.

Feast: A day of celebration associated with the life of Our Lord, of the Saints, or days of thanksgiving (see BCP pp. 15-18). The Principal Feasts are Easter Day, Ascension Day, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, All Saints' Day (Nov. 1), Christmas Day, and the Epiphany. Fifty Days of Easter, The: From the Great Vigil of Easter up to and including the Day of Pentecost.

Great Vigil of Easter: The Great Vigil of Easter is the climax of Holy Week and the beginning of the Fifty Days of Easter celebrating the Resurrection of our Lord. It begins at sunset on Holy Saturday, and runs until dawn on Easter Sunday.

Good Friday: The Friday before Easter Day on which the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ is celebrated (BCP pp. 276ff).

Holy Saturday: The Saturday between Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

Holy Week: The most important period of the church year, from Palm Sunday until Easter

Sunday. There are many special services during this time (BCP pp. 270-283). The week commemorates our Lord's Passion and Death. It is also known as Passion Week. It consists of:

The Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday
Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week
Maundy Thursday
Good Friday
Holy Saturday

Lent: The 40-day period of fasting, sobriety and meditation following Ash Wednesday, recalling the period of Christ's fasting and meditation in the wilderness, and in penitence and preparation for Holy Week. (BCP pp. 264-65).

The term is derived from an old word for "lengthen," which referred to the lengthening days of early spring.

Lessons and Carols: The Festival of Lessons and Carols

Maundy Thursday: Thursday in Holy Week (see BCP p. 274). The name is from Latin *mandatum* ("command"), referring to Christ's commandment concerning foot-washing. It is also the day on which the first Lord's Supper was celebrated.

Palm Sunday: The Sunday of the Passion (BCP pp. 270-73), the Sunday before Easter. In the Episcopal Church, members of the congregation carry real palms during the service.

In some churches, the tradition is that palms from one year are saved, dried and later burned to make the ashes used at the next year's Ash Wednesday service.

Passover: A Jewish festival commemorating the escape of the Jews from Egypt.

Pentecost: The conclusion of the Fifty Days of Easter and the commemoration of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples. Formerly known in the Episcopal Church as Whitsunday.

Also refers, as a season, to the Sundays and Weekdays following the Day of Pentecost and ending on the Saturday before the First Sunday of Advent. During this season the Church especially emphasizes the Holy Spirit's empowerment of all Christians for ministry to each other and the communities and world in which they live.

Whitsunday: The old name for Pentecost Sunday, the day described in Acts 2. As of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, the day became known as Pentecost.

Whitsuntide: A period starting ten days after Ascension Day, ending the Easter season, leading up to Pentecost (Whitsunday).

Items used in services

Many specialized terms are used for the items used in worship services, especially a Eucharist service.

Alms Basin: A large metal plate into which the money offerings (alms) of the people are placed before they are presented to the celebrant. A.k.a., the collection plate.

Altar Book: The large book containing the texts from The Book of Common Prayer and music for the celebrant at the Eucharist and other liturgies. Also known as the Missal.

Altar Cloth: See Fair Linen.

Altar Cross: A crucifix or cross which stands upon the altar or hangs above it.

Aspergillum: A branch, brush, or perforated metal globe, with a handle, used for sprinkling holy water. This is usually done during solemn renewals of baptismal vows, as a reminder of the baptismal font.

Blessed Sacrament: The consecrated bread and wine of the Eucharist which are the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Boat: A small container, with a lid and spoon, in which incense is kept before it is placed in the thurible.

Book of Common Prayer: The primary guide for worship in the Episcopal Church. Most Anglican churches have their own version. Also called "The Prayer Book" or the "BCP". It consists of classic and contemporary prayers, devotions, services and psalms designed to allow the entire Church to worship in common union.

The first Anglican Book of Common Prayer was written in English in 1549 by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, drawing on material from a number of Latin books and manuals then used to conduct services. The current BCP for the Episcopal Church was adopted by the General Convention in 1979, incorporating parts of the 1928 version as Rite I, and updated portions as Rite II.

While the revision of the Prayer Book is often a matter of controversy between conservatives that want things to stay the same and liberals who want things to change, even the preface of the original Anglican BCP noted "it is but reasonable that upon weighty and important considerations, according to the various exigency of times and occasions, such changes and alterations should be made therein, as to those that are in place of Authority should, from time to time, seem either necessary or expedient." (BCP, p. 9) Indeed, it was under that precedent that the first Episcopal BCP was produced.

Other books used in the Episcopal services are the Hymnal, Lesser Feasts and Fasts, and the Book of Occasional Services.

At Good Shepherd, each season (and for special occasions such as Baptisms) we print up a booklet with the extracted text and music from the BCP and Hymnal which we will use at Eucharist during that season. People attending services may either use the booklets or the BCP.

Bread: One of the two elements of communion, signifying to us the Body of Christ. As Scripture reminds us, "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body." (Matthew 26:26)

Burse: From the Greek byrsa ("bag"). A burse is one of the furnishings of the altar for communion, and is a pocket case made from two squares of some rigid material covered in cloth of the seasonal Colour. The burse sits on top of the chalice, paten and veil, and serves to hold a corporal. Often, the burse also serves to hide an extra purificator.

Chalice: From Latin calix ("cup"). A chalice is the cup used to contain the wine (and a little water) used at Communion.

Charcoal: Substance upon which incense is burned in the thurible. There are various types of "self-lighting" charcoals.

Chrism: A mixture of olive oil and balsam, blessed by a bishop, and sometimes used at baptisms, confirmations, ordinations and some blessings of altars and other church fixtures. Chrism is not the same as other holy oils such as those used for the unction of the sick. No balsam is added to oil used for unction.

Ciborium: A cup that resembles a chalice, except that it has a removable lid. A ciborium may be used to hold communion wafers during the Eucharist, or to hold the Reserve Sacrament in the aumbry or tabernacle.

Corporal: From Latin corpus ("body"). A large, square piece of linen laid on top of the altar cloth (or fair linen) at Communion, upon which the chalice and paten are placed. The corporal may be kept in the burse when not in use on the altar.

Cruet: From old French crue ("vial, glass"). A cruet is the vessel (glass or metal) used to hold the water and wine for the Eucharist.

Dust-Cover: A cloth placed over the altar cloth at times when the altar is not in use.

Elements: The bread and wine of Holy Communion. Also sometimes used to refer to the water in Baptism.

Ewer: A pitcher most often used to water at baptisms or for washing feet during Maundy Thursday, but can also be used in place of a cruet or a flagon at Communion.

Fair Linen: A white linen cloth cover for the altar, used during Eucharist. Also known as the Altar Cloth.

Flagon: A large metal or ceramic pitcher that is bigger than a cruet and is used instead of, or in addition to cruets at larger celebrations of Communion.

Frontal: A covering for the altar, usually of the same material as the vestments or of the liturgical Colour of the season or feast. It may either cover all sides of the altar, or only the front. The altar cloth is spread over the frontal.

Gospel Book: The book (usually with an ornamented cover) which contains the Gospel lessons appointed for use at the Eucharist. It is carried in procession (at the entrance) and at the proclamation of the Gospel by the deacon or other reader. "It is desirable that the lessons and Gospel be read from a book or books of appropriate size and dignity" (BCP, p. 406).

Host: Literally, "a sacrificial victim." The consecrated bread part of the Holy Communion. In some Episcopal churches a wafer is used as the host, but an increasing number of churches (such as Good Shepherd) are using actual baked bread. The larger host the priest breaks at the fraction is called a Priest's Host.

Holy Water: Water blessed by a bishop or priest for use in blessing the people, in the setting apart of objects for use in the church, or for other liturgical purposes. Holy Water is often used at the Burial of the Dead, at Baptism, at Weddings, and at other times at the discretion of the priest.

Hymnal: The current version of the Episcopal Hymnal was published in 1982, replacing the 1940 edition. Its goals are:

To present "Christian faith with clarity and integrity."

To "reflect the nature of today's Church."

To extend the ecumenical spirit by including music from other denominations and faiths.

To "embody both practical and esthetic" values.

The Hymnal is provided as a resource for congregations across the Episcopal Church. Many churches also supplement it with other musical material.

Incense: From the Latin *incendere* ("to burn"), incense is the "smell" element in "bells & smells". It is a fragrant (and now usually hypo-allergenic) powder burned in a small dish or pot (thurible) with charcoal. It is used during the service or in the processions as a sign of prayer, honour, and solemnity at liturgical functions.

Some say incense is used to recall one of the three gifts of the Wise Men to the Christ Child. Scripture commends its usage, particularly in Psalm 141 ("Let my prayer be set forth in your sight as incense").

Intinction cup: A small cup or chalice which may be used by those who wish to intinct the Host in wine, rather than drinking from the cup. Some congregations use this in addition to the regular chalices.

Lavabo: Basin used for the ceremonial washing of the hands (also called *lavabo* or *ablutions*) of the celebrant. Also called the *lavabo bowl*.

The *lavabo towel* is a piece of cloth, usually linen, presented to the celebrant by the server at the *lavabo* to dry the fingers. It is presented hung over the server's left arm.

Lenten Array: In some places, the use of sack-cloth or similar fabric in place of purple for vestments, coverings, and hangings during Lent and Holy Week.

Lenten Cross: In some places, a plain wooden processional cross (painted red with black edges) used during Lent and Holy Week.

Lesser Feasts and Fasts: A book containing the collects, lessons, psalms, and short

biographical material for the minor saints' days and observances found in the calendar of The Book of Common Prayer.

Mace: A staff or baton usually embellished with metal used as an insignia of office. It is sometimes carried by a vergers during a procession.

Missal Stand: The stand (or, in some places, a pillow) upon which the Altar Book rests when in use at the altar.

Monstrance: A receptacle for the Blessed Sacrament used at Benediction.

Occasional Services, Book of: A book containing optional services and prayers authorized for use by the Episcopal Church.

Paschal Candle: From the Hebrew Pesach ("Passover"). A very large, white candle in a tall holder. When in use it is placed in a prominent display in the epistle side of the sanctuary.

Pall: A stiffened square of linen (or other) white cloth that is placed over the chalice to keep objects from falling into the wine. The term may refer also to the cloth covering the casket or urn during the Burial of the Dead.

Paten: From Greek patane ("shallow vessel"). The paten is the plate used to contain the consecrated bread during a Communion.

Processional Cross: Large cross carried by the crucifer at the lead of the procession into and recession out of the church during a Eucharist.

Psalter: A collection of the Psalms, a body of liturgical poetry, designed for vocal, congregational use, whether by singing or reading. The Psalter is in the BCP (pp. 581 ff.).

Purificator: From Latin purus (pure) and facere (to make). A purificator is a small piece of white linen used at ablutions to clean the chalice, or during Communion to wipe the chalice rim.

Pyx: A small container used for transporting the Host. Most commonly used by a priest or LEM when taking Communion to a sick person or shut-in. Also called a pyxis

Reserved Sacrament: Consecrated bread and wine kept in the church building after a Communion service, primarily for distribution to the sick.

Sanctus Bell: The actual name for the bell is a "sacring bell," but most refer to it as a "sanctus bell" because it is usually rung at the time of the Sanctus, at elevations, and other important times. In medieval times, when the service was said in Latin and the masses spoke English, the bell was rung at these times as a signal that it was time to pay attention.

In some congregations (such as Good Shepherd), the Sanctus Bell is rung during the Eucharistic Prayer during the Words of Institution: "Do this in remembrance of me."

Shell, Baptismal: The metal or ceramic cup or dish used to pour water during the administration of Holy Baptism.

Taper: A long narrow wax-covered wick that is put into the candle lighter. Also a small candle for use by members of the congregation at vigils and other services.

Thurible: The container in which incense is burned. It is handled by a thurifer.

Veil: From Latin vela ("sail, curtain"). In the Church, the veil refers to the solid cloth, in seasonal colour, that covers the chalice and paten at the Eucharist (also known as the Chalice Veil). The burse (with the corporal inside) rests on top of the veiled chalice.

Votive candle: A devotional candle placed in a church or chapel in some "higher" Episcopal Churches. Votive candles are usually small, short candles in a special glass holder.

Wafer: The bread part of the Lord's Supper signifying to us the Body of Christ, it is often an unleavened, and very thin cracker-like substance. After the wafer is consecrated, it is usually called the Host. Sometimes the wafer is imprinted with a cross, sometimes it is smooth.

Wafers that will serve as priest's hosts are larger than the people's hosts, and can range from one inch to several inches in diameter. The people's host is usually about a

half inch in size. **Wine:** The beverage portion of the Lord's Supper. As Scripture reminds us, "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and he gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." (Matthew 26:27-28) In the Episcopal Church, wine is used at communion (instead of grape juice as in some Protestant sects) and is often a port wine. Wine and vineyards were symbols of happiness and signs of God's blessing in the Promised Land.

During the Eucharist, a little water is mixed with the wine. This has roots in historical practicality and theological insight. Historically, wine carried by the traveller was mixed with the water of the desert to purify it. Theologically, the ordinariness of our lives (water) is mingled with the extraordinariness of the Divine Life (wine). This also serves to remind us of the dual nature of Christ, both God and human being, and that out of his side flowed water and blood.

Clothing and Vestments

Even in a less formal, modern era, Episcopal clergy wear many special articles of clothing, particularly during worship services. This section gives the names of many of these items.

The term vestments is from the Latin *vestis* ("garment"). Late in the third century writers begin to mention special garb for liturgical actions. Sts. Athanasius, Jerome and John Chrysostom all mentioned liturgical garb for clerics. They particularly referred to the oration, a primitive stole. The Council of Laodicea (343-381) often referred to vestments for sacred functions.

Today's vestments have their origins in the ordinary clothes of the later Greco-Roman world.

The alb, a long loose-fitting garment, was worn around the house. The more decorative chasuble was worn over it in public. Attending a service in the fourth century you would have seen the priest vested much as today, but most of the people in the church would dressed much the same.

Between the sixth and ninth century, secular fashion began to reflect the occupation of a person; it was possible to tell what one did by what he or she wore. The Church reflected this change by not changing the style of their garments. Vestments, then, came to us as a result of the clergy being "out of style" when it came to fashion.

Alb: From the Latin for "white". A long, sleeved robe, usually white or undyed, worn by many priests when celebrating communion. It is generally worn over daily clothes and the cassock, but under other vestments. It is derived from the under-tunic worn in Roman times.

Amice: A large square or rectangular piece of white cloth with strings attached. It is worn under the alb as a hood, over the shoulders, or collar. The strings are wound around the neck before being tied around the chest and waist.

Cassock: A black robe worn over street clothes by priests serving at the altar, usually with a white over-garment called a surplice. It buttons in front, and should be long enough to cover the ankles. In more "high" churches, it may also be worn by laity serving during a worship service, such as lectors, vergers, chalice ministers and others.

Bishops' cassocks are usually purple. A Canon may wear a black cassock with red piping, or (with permission) may wear a purple cassock. Deans and archdeacons may wear black cassocks with red or purple piping.

Before 1900, most formal clothes were black and most work clothes were not dyed. Thus the main historic distinction between albs and cassocks is that albs are working clothes and cassocks are formal clothes, so if the alb expresses humility, the cassock expresses respect

Cassock-alb: A more modern variation of the alb, this has become the de facto standard

Eucharistic garment for many, if not most Episcopal, Lutheran and Roman Catholic clergy. A combination of the amice and alb, it is worn in place of cassock and surplice or amice, alb, and cincture. It is normally white and should be long enough to cover the ankles. A cincture around the waist should be worn with this vestment, although it is not essential. A surplice is not worn over the cassock-alb, but a tunic may be.

Chasuble: From the Latin casula ("little house"), and is derived in design from a worker's cloak. A chasuble is a type of vestment worn by the celebrant during Communion. It is a long, wide sleeveless vestment, poncho-like, usually oval when laid out flat, with an opening in the center to accommodate the celebrant's head. It is of the liturgical Colour of the day or season and usually worn over all other vestments.

Chimere: A long, sleeveless coat-like vestment worn by a bishop. Usually black, though sometimes scarlet.

Cincture: A rope, usually white, worn with the alb or cassock-alb, tied with a slip knot at the right side of the waist and allowed to hang down the right side. The ends of the rope may have either knots or tassels. This rope is sometimes called a girdle.

Colours: Colour plays an important part in the designation of seasons and feasts in the Episcopal Church. Each church season has a Colour associated with it, and both vestments and altar cloths usually mirror the seasonal/festive Colour.

Red

To signify the presence of the Holy Spirit:, on Pentecost, Feasts of Martyrs, Ordinations, Confirmations, during Holy Week (particularly Good Friday), during Whitsuntide

White

As the Colours of celebration:

Gold

for weddings, on Feasts of our Lord, Feasts of Saints who were not martyrs, Feasts of the Blessed Virgin Mary and in some places at the Burial of the Dead, Maundy Thursday,, Easter, Ascension and during the Twelve Days of Christmas.

Green

As the Colour of growth:

on the Sundays and Ordinary days of the Year after Epiphany and Pentecost.

Blue

In some places used (in honoUr of Mary) during Advent.

Purple or Violet

As a Colour of penitence or preparation: during Lent, Palm Sunday, Requiems or the Burial of the Dead, Advent

Purple was originally a sign of royalty, as purple dye was rare. Thus, a purple clergy shirt (or some shade of violet) usually indicates that the wearer is a bishop, or else associated with one.

Black

As a Colour of mourning: In some places for the Burial of the Dead and Requiems, Some congregations use this as well for Good Friday.

Collar, clerical: A stiff round shirt collar worn by Roman Catholic, Episcopal, Orthodox, and some Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran and other clergy. It is widely regarded as a sign or identifying mark of clerical status.

Cope: A long cape, worn over the shoulders by the celebrant and others at various liturgies (processions, the Burial of the Dead, etc.), or by a bishop. It is usually of the liturgical Colour of the day or season, has a clasp at the chest and is worn over alb and stole or over cassock and surplice.

Cotta: From Middle English meaning "to cover." A cotta is a short, white robe often worn by choir members and acolytes.

Crozier: The bishop's staff (a shepherd's crook) carried in a procession and held when giving the absolution or blessing. Also known as the Pastoral Staff.

Crucifix: From the Latin crux ("cross"). A crucifix is a cross bearing the likeness of the body of Christ on it.

Dalmatic: Similar to the tunic and worn by the deacon.

Maniple: A band of fabric, matching other vestments, used as a liturgical napkin. The maniple is worn draped over the celebrant's arm. Not used much any more.

Mitre: The tall, pointed liturgical hat worn by a bishop during formal worship. Its shape is said to be symbolic of the tongues of fire which rested on the original bishops at the first Pentecost.

Orphery: An embroidered band on an ecclesiastical vestment or hanging.

Pectoral Cross: Jeweled cross worn by a bishop to indicate his office.

Rochet: A bishop's full-length white vestment similar to a surplice with full, gathered sleeves, and usually worn under a chimere.

Stole: A long strip of cloth (often silk) worn around the neck and allowed to hang down the front of the clerical vestments, over the alb or surplice. Only bishops, priests and deacons are allowed to wear stoles, which are of the liturgical Colour of the day or season.

The priest wears the stole around the neck and hanging down in front (either crossed or straight). The deacon wears the stole over the left shoulder and crossed under the right arm, again either over an alb or surplice.

The stole is usually worn at all eucharistic services, weddings and funerals, but never worn at Morning Prayer services. The stole is said to represent the yoke of obedience to Christ.

Surplice: A white over-garment with broad sleeves, worn over other vestments (usually a cassock). The surplice and cassock are the traditional garments of the Anglican Church. It is somewhat longer and fuller than a cotta.

Tippet: Black scarf worn by clergy during some services other than the Eucharist.

Tunic: Also known as a tunicle. A vestment with ample sleeves worn over an alb or cassock-

alb of the same liturgical Colour as the vestments of the celebrant or some other festive Colour. This vestment is usually worn by the subdeacon, and may be worn by the crucifer on festive occasions.

Architecture

This section deals with parts of the physical church building. For more modern churches such as Good Shepherd, some of the terms are no longer clearly applicable, but you'll still hear some of these being used by people "in the know," or when you go visit the Cathedral.

Aisle: The centre passage of a church building bisecting the pews, extending from the narthex to the chancel. The procession is usually made up the Aisle.

Altar: A table, usually in the sanctuary, on which the bread and wine used in the Communion service are consecrated. Also known as and referred to in the prayer book as the Holy Table.

Altar Rail: The rail or kneelers where the people kneel or stand to receive Communion. Also known as the Communion Rail. Usually separates the nave from the chancel or sanctuary.

Some altar rails have an altar gate which is closed before Communion.

Ambo: From the Greek for "both." Formally speaking, common podium serving as both lectern and pulpit. In practice, the term is used interchangeably for either, even if the church has both.

Ambulatory: A side aisle in a church building, between the pews and the side walls, most often used for special processions.

Aumbry: A box or cupboard in the wall of a church building or in a sacristy where the Reserved Sacrament and/or Holy Oil (such as chrism) is kept.

This is what Good Shepherd uses as a tabernacle.

Bishop's Chair: A chair set apart in cathedrals and some churches, reserved especially for the bishop (sometimes called the Bishop's Throne or Cathedra). Also, a moveable chair or stool ("faldstool") used when the bishop is present and sits for various parts of the liturgy (confirmation, ordinations, etc.).

Carillon: A set of church bells, generally found only in churches large enough to have a tower or steeple strong enough to support the weight of the many bells; some of the bells may weigh a ton or more.

Chancel: From the Latin cancelli ("grating, lattice"). In classic church design, an area of pews, seats, stalls or prayer desks between the nave and the sanctuary, used by the ministers leading services and sometimes used by the choir (thus, it is sometimes known as the choir).

Good Shepherd does not have a chancel.

Chapel: From the Latin cappella ("cape"). When the kings of France went on military campaigns, they would carry the cape of St. Martin with them. The tent or other temporary structure that housed the cappella was called a chapel.

A chapel now often refers to a small building or room set apart for worship and meditation. It may also refer to a place of worship lacking a parish congregation (although chapels may have a permanent clergyman), such as at hospitals, colleges, etc. Chapels may be large or small, private or institutional.

Credence Table: A small table or shelf (as at Good Shepherd) on the epistle side of the altar that holds the bread, wine and water before consecration.

Crossing: The main intersection of aisles at the front of the church building. If viewed from above, these aisles form a large cross (see Transcept).

At Good Shepherd, the area in front of the steps to the altar is considered the crossing.

Epistle side: The side of the building from which the Epistle lesson is read, usually the right-hand side of the church building from the perspective of the congregation facing the altar. The opposite is the Gospel side.

At Good Shepherd, there is only one podium (on the traditional Gospel side), so the term doesn't apply well.

Font: A basin for water to be used in church baptisms, usually in a stand. Also known as the Baptismal Font. Also, a fixed receptacle for holy water at the entrance to the church or in the sacristy.

Gospel side: The Gospel side of the church is on the right-hand side of the priest when he is at the altar celebrating the Eucharist, which in most churches means the left-hand side of the church from the perspective of the congregation facing the altar. The opposite is the Epistle side. The Gospel is generally read from the pulpit on the Gospel side.

At Good Shepherd, there is only a pulpit, no lectern.

Lectern: From the Latin, lectrum, meaning "reading desk". This is a raised platform used for reading prayers or scripture; usually located at the front of the nave, opposite the pulpit, on the epistle side. The actual stand or podium is also referred to as the lectern, as well as being called the ambo.

Good Shepherd does not have a separate lectern, just a pulpit.

Narthex: In Greek, the word literally means "a large fennel" (a tall herb). The narthex is the entrance hall or foyer to the church, the enclosed area between the outside doors and the nave. It's called by some denominations the vestibule.

Nave: The pew area of the church building, where the congregation sits, stands or kneels during public worship. The nave is more than an auditorium, where people listen, because worship in the Episcopal Church involves everyone as participants.

The word probably derives from the Latin navis ("ship"). In older churches the beams of the roof resembled the beams and timbers in the sides of a ship.

In medieval England the derogatory term "knave" (commoner) developed from nave, because the nave is the area of the building where the "common" people sit.

Pace: A small aisle or passage way off the main nave aisle in a church.

Parish Hall/House: A gathering place for a local congregation separate from the church building or sanctuary.

Piscina: A sink for washing the vessels used at the Eucharist and for reverently disposing of wine that has been consecrated. The piscina does not drain into a sewer or disposal system, but directly into the ground.

Prie-dieu; An individual kneeling bench with shelf. Also known as a. prayer desk.

Pulpit: From the Latin pulpitem ("platform"). A raised platform or podium used for the sermon or homily, generally located in the front of the gospel side of the nave. In some Colonial church buildings and in many non-Episcopal churches, the pulpit is in the center, to signify the importance of the sermon.

Reredos: Pronounced, "rear-re-doss", this is any decoration behind or above an altar; it may be in the form of statues, screens, or tapestries.

Retable: Also called a gradine, the retable is a narrow shelf located behind an altar that is placed against the wall. Candles and flowers are sometimes placed on the retable. The retable is also sometimes used to house a tabernacle.

Sacristy: A room where the communion vessels, altar hangings, candlesticks, etc. are kept and cleaned. Often also serves as the room where the clergy don their vestments before a service.

Sanctuary: From the Latin sanctus ("holy"). Strictly speaking, it is the area immediately surrounding the altar, sometimes set apart from the nave by the chancel, and/or enclosed by an altar rail. In some denominations the word refers to the entire worship space.

Because of the openness of the altar area at Good Shepherd, we use this latter definition.

Sanctuary Lamp: A lamp hanging somewhere in the sanctuary, also called a Sacrament Lamp. Sometimes there are three lamps, sometimes seven, but usually (as at Good Shepherd) only one.

The sanctuary lamp is kept lit to indicate the presence of the Reserved Sacrament.

Sedilia: The seats inside the sanctuary, used by clergy and acolytes. There is usually a central chair where the celebrant sits (sometimes called the President's Chair), and flanking chairs for other ministers.

Tabernacle: A small cabinet (sometimes a vessel) designed to contain the Reserved Sacrament.

The tabernacle may be found built into the altar, sitting on the altar, on the retable, or it may be built into another part of the sanctuary (as at Good Shepherd); in the latter case, it is also known as an aumbry.

Transept: The section of a cross-shaped (cruciform) church at right angles to the nave. Where the transept cross the main aisle is known as the crossing.

Transept is also the name for the aisle in front of the first pew that separates the nave from the chancel.

At Good Shepherd, it would be the area in front of the front pews.

Vestibule: The entrance hall, also called the narthex.

Sources:

This vocabulary was put together by Dave Hill. I am indebted to the following on-line resources for the above information.

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"Episcopalian Terminology" -- Holy Cross, Charleston, SC.

"Episcopal Glossary" -- St. Paul's Church, Augusta, GA.

"Church Words" -- Society of Archbishop Justus

"Ken Collins' Web Site" -- Ken Collins

If there are any questions, corrections, or additions), please contact the Web Administrator.