

HOW TO USE THE GOSPEL IMPRINT LITURGIES

Introduction

The completion of the production of Common Worship volumes has given to the Church of England a very wide and rich range of resources. Many clergy and worship leaders are anxious to make full use of this wonderful material, but sometimes simply don't have the time in busy lives to explore thoroughly all that is on offer.

To meet this need, Gospel Imprint is delighted to offer you these orders of service for the Eucharist using the full range of Common Worship material for the seasons of the Christian Year, as well as for many of the festivals.

We hope that these notes on both technological and liturgical issues will help you use the service orders more easily, but if you have any questions please contact Canon Perran Gay at

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Technological Issues

The service orders are available in a Word format compatible with Word 97 –2003. They can be easily edited and customised for your church, or you can simply lift text from them into service orders designed in your house style. If using them in the formats provided, set all your page margins to 1cm, and your headers and footers to 2cm, and the pagination should work properly.

Each service is offered in a form using this Futura font (look for the small 'f' after the service number). You need to have Futura Md BT and Futura Lt BT installed on your computer for the service to print properly. As an alternative, the services are also available in Arial (look for the small 'a' after the service number). If you want to keep the material as it is, but change everything into a different font, select the whole document and then change the font - this will change everything except the headers and footers which will need to be changed separately.

The services are designed to be printed on A4 paper, and this you may find a convenient size for an altar or lectern copy, or for large print editions. Reducing them to A5 should still leave the text large enough for a congregational edition of the service.

Understanding the structure of worship – the Common Worship orders have four distinct parts: The Gathering, the Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of the Sacrament and the Dismissal. Within each major section are several individual subsections e.g. within the Liturgy of the Word: the First Reading, the Second Reading, Gospel Reading. We urge you to differentiate clearly between these smaller titles and the larger section headings, so that the underlying structure of the service can be easily recognised. If using the built-in Stylesheet, 'Liturgy of the Word', for example, is described as a Primary Header, and 'Gospel Reading' as a Secondary Header.

Gaps and spaces - although it may sound obvious, take care that the gaps **before** a new section title are longer than the gaps **between** the section title and the first words of that section. Where a

presidential greeting and congregational response belong together, there should be no extra line space between them. Following a rubric such as 'the president says', if working in 14 point type, an 8 point line space should be inserted.

Please note that for copyright reasons any service orders produced from this material **must** carry the name of your Church on the front cover, and the copyright details as printed. For more information about liturgical copyright please see the relevant page of the Church of England website

**[http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/
commonworship/copyright/](http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/commonworship/copyright/)**

Liturgical Issues

Every Church celebrates the Eucharist differently, and in offering a form of service that may be of use to everyone, we have had to make certain choices in the use of rubrics, ministries and particular texts. These will be self-evident to anyone using the material, but the principal examples, together with a rationale in some cases, are set out in the notes that follows.

General Points

'President' has been used to denote the presiding minister throughout, following the usage of Common Worship.

'Deacon' denotes the liturgical ministry of a deacon, or of an assisting priest, or in some parishes a Reader or other authorised lay person who might fulfil this ministry. We believe that the fullness and variety of Christian ministry is more clearly shown when someone other than the president shares in the liturgical leadership of the rite: where there is no appropriate person, much of the deacon's ministry will be exercised by the president, while the intercessions would appropriately be led by a lay person. In some churches it may be thought appropriate for the reading of the Gospel always to be reserved to someone in priest's or deacon's orders.

'Say or sing' – this rubric has been added at the following points: within the congregational texts for Kyrie Eleison, Gloria in Excelsis, and Agnus Dei. It does not appear at the Sanctus so as not to interrupt the flow of the text at that point. It appears in ministerial texts only at the Collect, the Sursum Corda and the Memorial Acclamations, although in many places the Doxology to the Eucharistic Prayer may also be sung. The orders assume that on Sundays and Principal Feasts four hymns will be sung: at the Entrance of the Ministers; before the Gospel; during the Preparation of the Table; and between the Post-Communion prayers and the Dismissal rite (not at the very end of the service). On other Festivals the last of these four hymns is omitted. Except in a very few cases where hymns are used in a particular way (e.g. the beginning of the Order for

Midnight Mass) no hymns are printed (partly for copyright reasons), nor are Bible readings printed in full except in the case of dismissal Gospels.

Congregational prayers – where a prayer is to be said by everyone, the opening line is usually shown as assigned to the minister, while the congregation joins in from the second line. In practice that is what happens in most places, and it helps to avoid untidy starts in congregational speaking. If, for example, the Gloria is to be sung, the text will obviously need to be adjusted.

Incense – the use of incense is mentioned at the beginning of the rite on all Principal Feasts and Festivals, but not on other Sundays.

Through the Service

'About this service' - at the beginning of each service there is a short liturgical introduction to set the scene which you may want to use or to replace with something of your own! The direction about receiving communion suggests that it is offered to all who receive communion in their own church, except at Christmas and Easter where the invitation is to all baptized Christians. This is obviously a matter for local usage and sensibilities.

Entrance and Greeting – the ministers enter during the opening hymn, and invariably there is the invocation of the Trinity (accompanied in many places by the making of the sign of the cross), and the longer form of the greeting (followed during Easter by 'Alleluia, Christ is risen'). The longer form of greeting is recommended here, partly in order for those listening to 'tune in' to the president's voice. Good practice suggests that any informal greetings should follow rather than precede the formal liturgical greeting, and that notices should be dealt with in some other way rather than interrupting the flow of the liturgy before it has scarcely begun.

Prayers of Penitence – traditionally the introduction and leading of the prayers of penitence has been part of the liturgical ministry of the

deacon. The 'Collect for Purity' has been omitted throughout these services: beautiful though it is, its use can slow up the liturgy at this point and give a kind of false start to the prayers of confession themselves – it is provided at the back of many of the service orders as a private prayer of preparation. Similarly the Commandments have been omitted except during Lent (the Ten Commandments on Lent 1; the Summary of the Law from Lent 2 onwards). For the Prayers of Penitence themselves, kneeling is indicated in the rubrics, except during the festal seasons and on Festivals, where a short Kyrie Confession is provided for which everyone remains standing. The varying forms of the Absolution have been chosen for each service from the provisions made in the President's Edition of Common Worship.

Gloria in Excelsis – in keeping with near universal tradition, this is omitted during Advent and Lent, except on Principal Feasts and Festivals within those seasons.

Collect – the invitation to pray and the silence before the Collect are mandatory parts of the Common Worship provision. The specific forms of the invitation to pray at particular festivals have been omitted in favour of the simple 'Let us pray'. Where the words of the Collect have been provided, it is the Collect as found in the main volume of Common Worship rather than the Alternative Collect which is also authorised for use.

Readings – On Sundays and Principal Feasts, three readings are suggested with a Psalm or Canticle between the first two of them, and a hymn before the Gospel. On other festivals the second reading is omitted and the service moves straight from the Psalm to the 'Gradual Hymn'. For the Gospel Reading a rubric is included inviting everyone to turn to face the Gospel Book, and the traditional greeting is given to the deacon before the reading begins.

Sermon – we have assumed that there is a sermon on all occasions! After the sermon there is an instruction to remain seated until the president stands again: this is one of the moments of the service where a time of silence can enhance the worship.

Creed – in line with the Common Worship rubrics, the Creed is included on all Sundays and Principal Feasts, but not on other Festivals. While the Nicene Creed remains the normative provision, the Apostles' Creed is traditionally used at Baptisms within the Eucharist, and a form of the Athanasian Creed is provided for use on Trinity Sunday.

Intercessions – we have inserted the rubric to kneel at this point, recognising that in some places it will be customary to stand, and in others to sit (although we do not commend this last practice!) The standard structure of this part of the rite is an introduction by the president, the main body of prayers led by the deacon or other minister, either with suggested responses or including a full text (normally either from the Common Worship seasonal or festal provision, or in some cases newly composed for Gospel Imprint), and a conclusion in the form of a collect said by the president (again usually taken either from Times and Seasons or Festivals, or from the provisions of the main volume of Common Worship, and chosen to fit the festival or season as far as possible). We include a form of response at the commemoration of the faithful departed, recognising that many Christians want to offer a distinctive versicle and response at that point, and also the 'Hail Mary' (in its traditional wording) which provides a fitting end to the prayers before the final collect, and helps to remind us that our praying is never done alone but always in the company of the whole Church triumphant.

The Peace – while the Common Worship notes make provision for the Peace to be used at other places within the liturgy, we have invariably included it in this position between the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Sacrament, recognizing that this is the place where it most often occurs in Anglican liturgy, and understanding it within the context of Jesus' command to be reconciled before we offer our gift at the altar. While the exchange of Peace is optional in Common Worship, we have made it a mandatory part of the rite, recognizing it as one of the oldest and most significant of all liturgical acts (from New Testament times). Before we hold out our hands to receive the

Body of Christ in the Sacrament, we need to hold out our hands to receive the Body of Christ that is one another.

Offertory Prayers – while acknowledging the principle that this part of the service should not be allowed to become unnecessarily complicated by the introduction of many preparatory prayers that detract from the importance of the Eucharistic Prayer which follows, we have invariably included at least one ‘offertory prayer’ – either seasonal or general - together with an inclusive version of the ‘Pray, brethren’ immediately before or after it. We especially recommend the use of this last prayer, as it helps to emphasise the sacrificial nature of the Eucharistic mystery, and its offering for the ‘whole Church’ – that is for the whole world understood as the recipient of God’s care and love. This last point may be made even more clearly by substituting the words ‘all creation’ for ‘all his Church’.

The Eucharistic Prayer – Throughout this provision, Eucharistic Prayers A, B and E have been used (and very occasionally Prayer C). In Ordinary Time, the first three of these prayers are provided as alternatives; during the festal period from Christmas to Candlemas, Prayer A is the norm; from Easter to Pentecost, Prayer B has been preferred; while during Advent, Lent and the pre Advent period, as well as on the majority of Saints’ Days, Prayer E is the one provided. These particular prayers have been chosen because they are designed for use with the beautiful Extended Prefaces which bring such a varied treasury of theology and poetry into the rite, and because they follow a traditional Western shape that allows a proper emphasis on the Words of Institution, an emphasis which may be intensified in many places by particular manual acts and the use of bells and incense. While Anglican theology is clear that it is the whole Eucharistic Prayer that consecrates, the spiritual and pastoral reality for many worshippers is that it is the words of Christ at the Last Supper that have a special resonance and significance, and that demand a special liturgical focus. A careful reading of the other prayers available (D, F, G and H), beautiful though they are, will reveal that within them the invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the Eucharistic gifts (and the worshippers) comes exclusively after the Words of Institution have

been spoken (as in the rites of the Eastern Church), and thus any liturgical emphasis (bells etc.) within these prayers should be at this Epiclesis, and/or during the final Doxology, rather than during the Words of Institution themselves. As this is likely to be confusing for many worshippers, the decision has been taken in producing these resources to use exclusively Prayers A, B, C and E, perhaps reserving the use of the other prayers to said weekday celebrations when a difference in practice would cause less confusion.

Whichever prayer is used, Common Worship strongly encourages there to be no change of posture during it. Unlike the Book of Common Prayer with its short separate 'Prayer of Consecration', Common Worship returns us to the older pattern of Eucharistic praying, where there is clearly one single prayer from opening dialogue to closing 'Amen', and where any change of posture would detract from that underlying unity. The most appropriate posture is for everyone to stand throughout (and for the Lord's Prayer which follows) in continuity with the most ancient universal tradition.

The sense of the unity of the prayer can also be emphasised by the use of music throughout it, especially by the singing not only of the Sanctus and Benedictus (and possibly the Sursum Corda), but also of the Memorial Acclamation and the final Amen (and the Doxology that precedes it when appropriate).

The Lord's Prayer – this is given in its modified traditional form throughout. The view has been taken that this may be the only prayer with which non-Churchgoers might be familiar, and there is neither an ecumenical nor an international consensus about the precise wording of a modern alternative. Seasonal introductions, either from Times and Seasons or from Common Worship: Daily Prayer have been added where appropriate.

Breaking of Bread – although the consecrated bread may often be broken in silence or during Agnus Dei, the notes to Common Worship direct that spoken words should accompany the action on Sunday and festivals. We have provided such words, using both alternatives from the main Common Worship text, and also the seasonal words

provided in Times and Seasons. It is regarded as good practice to break bread for the whole congregation to receive (rather than using 'unbroken' individual wafers) and this act of breaking can continue during the Agnus Dei which follows.

Invitation to Communion – we have provided 'Jesus is the Lamb of God' as the normal form, with 'God's holy gifts' during the Incarnation cycle and on Saints' Days, and the prescribed 'Alleluia. Christ our Passover...' from Easter Day to Pentecost. Certain festivals have their own special provision. The 'Prayer of Humble Access' has been provided as a private prayer before receiving communion – beautiful though it is, it sits awkwardly alongside a set of Eucharistic prayers which celebrate how in Christ we have been counted worthy to receive the gift of his life, and it slows up the action at the very moment that we have been invited to share that life.

Words of Distribution – 'The body of Christ' is given as the normal provision. During Lent, we have provided 'The body of Christ, broken for you', and during the pre-Advent season, and for Advent itself, 'the bread of heaven in Christ Jesus' with its eschatological emphasis.

Prayer after Communion – in each case we have provided for the presidential Post Communion prayer, and then a congregational prayer: 'Almighty God, we thank you...' being the default provision, with 'Father of all, we give you thanks and praise' during Eastertide, and alternatives from the appendices and the seasonal provision during other parts of the Christian Year.

The Blessing – in every case, this is preceded by the traditional presidential greeting (with 'Alleluia. Christ is risen' substituted for it during Eastertide). On significant occasions, threefold Solemn Blessings have been given. On certain pivotal days in the liturgical year, the Blessing is preceded by an Acclamation and a Dismissal Gospel.

The Dismissal – in every case, 'Go in the peace of Christ' has been preferred to 'Go in peace to love and serve the Lord': because the former is crisper and more concise; because it can more easily be

followed with 'Alleluia' in Eastertide, or preceded by introductory words in the seasons without becoming overlong; and above all because it sounds once again the final note of Thanksgiving that ought to be a principal characteristic of Eucharistic worship and Eucharistic living: **'Thanks be to God'**.

Perran Gay
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