Confirmation Curriculum

For Jr. High Young People

Episcopal Diocese of Alabama
2005
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“Confirmation is our personal promise to follow Jesus Christ all the days of our life in the community of the church.”

The Right Reverend Henry N. Parsley, Advent 2005

By Baptism we are made full members in the Body of Christ, and in it we are sealed and confirmed as Christ’s own forever. Confirmation is the rite of Re-affirmation of one’s Baptismal vows made in the context of the faith community that includes the laying on of hands by a bishop. Candidates are presented and asked to reaffirm their renunciation of evil and a renewal of their commitment to Jesus Christ. This is a representation of the continuing work of the Holy Spirit in a person’s life and his or her connection to the wider apostolic community. The act of reaffirmation is an acknowledgment that the individual is an ambassador for Christ, having found new meaning, empowerment, recommitting themselves to their life in Christ. Preceding and following such a re-affirmation (whether it is Confirmation, Reception from another denomination into the Episcopal Church or one’s Re-affirmation years after one’s Confirmation), candidates should be engaged in ongoing, faith-forming education for discipleship, service and mission, understanding that Christians continue on a journey of faith within the context of a supportive faith community.

Episcopalian, like all Christians, believe that our life is founded on the life of Jesus Christ, and that as a church we are called to offer the redeeming love of Christ to all people. We publicly state our belief that God calls us to love all God’s children, as Jesus offered his life for all humankind. Confirmation is a person’s commitment to renew these promises made at Baptism. It is an affirmation made publicly in the community of faith, signaling a personal movement into mission and ministry in one’s life. We are all pilgrims on a life-long journey to know Christ and become faith-full communities of the Gospel, no matter our age. Confirmation, Reception and Re-Affirmation are important threads that add strength and individuality to the tapestry of our lives of faith in Christ.

Since Confirmation is making a “mature” commitment to one’s faith, it is recommended that young people 13 years and older enter into a year long preparation process. This curriculum is written for young people in grades 7th, 8th, and 9th grades and spans over a nine month period.
Introduction to and Instructions for using this Curriculum

This curriculum has been a long time in the making and we are pleased to present it to you as a comprehensive curriculum for your youth Confirmation classes. This section is an opportunity to give you some information about who the curriculum is written for, how it is laid out, and how best to implement the information and activities. We have done our best to offer a variety of activities and exercises to fit any size group and to fill the needs of any size parish.

In some cases, there may be more information in the lesson than you have allotted time or discussion on one activity might continue longer than expected. This is okay. The curriculum was designed so you could pick and choose, rearrange the activities, spread them out over a couple of classes or condense them over a shorter period of time. As we are all well aware, no parish is the same and no group is the same so we have tried to develop a flexible curriculum to meet the various needs of our Diocese. Each activity builds on the other but can also stand alone if needed.

We recommend reading the “Teacher Background Information” found at the end of each lesson in preparation for teaching the topic. This section is just that...background information that might be helpful in conveying the overall concept of the lesson or to be used as supplemental information to help prepare the leader for the lesson topic.

In addition to the lessons themselves, a “First Gathering” lesson has been included to assist with group building and begin exploring the Sacrament of Confirmation. In this exercise, a brief ritual of lighting a candle and prayer is suggested to open each meeting of your group to establish continuity.

An instructed Eucharist has been incorporated into the “Confirmation Rehearsal,” however, this exercise can be done as part of the “Worship” segment or as a special event on its own.

On the next few pages, you will find detailed information on how to use the curriculum and a breakdown of its format. We hope you find this to be a comprehensive and easy to use curriculum to aid you in preparing your young people for Confirmation. May the Holy Spirit move through these lessons and into the hearts of your young people. God bless you!
Using This Curriculum

The curriculum has been written to target 7th and 8th grade young people in 19 individual lessons. The lessons have been broken into 3 major categories: The Christian Faith, Episcopal Identity, and Responding to God’s Love, with a separate First Gathering lesson and a Confirmation Rehearsal with an Instructed Eucharist.

These lessons were written to fill a 1 hour span of time; however, we have tried to break down the lessons so they can be manipulated to fit any space of time.

Each lesson is equipped with:
1. A cover page identifying the lesson
2. A Teacher Prep Page, which is a quick glance at the lesson
3. Scripture reference
4. Goals for the lesson
5. Materials needed for each lesson item
6. The lesson itself which is broken into 4 activities
7. Background information to help the teacher prepare for the lesson (located at the end of the lesson)
8. Handouts and materials to be copied and handed out to the students and used in the lesson

The lesson itself is broken down into four parts:

1. **Introduction Activities:** These are activities serve as group building activities, as well as creative ways to introduce the focus and objectives of that particular lesson.

2. **Going Deeper:** An opportunity to explore the lesson focus introduced in the first activity

3. **Reflection:** An organized time for meditation and reflection on scripture or other text appointed for the lesson

4. **Action:** This section allows the principles and ideals of the lesson to be put into action in the lives of the students
**DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS SESSION**

**Confirmation**

**Rehearsal**

**STEWARDSHIP IS ME SHARING ME**

**BECAUSE GOD CREATED ME!**

Do you believe in God the Father? Jesus Christ, the Son of God? God, the Holy Spirit?

Stewardship should always be thought of as generosity – the generosity of God. Throughout the whole of scripture, God is continually and faithfully giving to God’s people. The message is that all we have comes from the Lord! We are to give back to God through our gifts of time, talents, and treasure.

**Intro Activities**

*World Wealth Meal:*

Students will experience a real world exercise about need and poverty.

**Going Deeper**

Discussion about Intro Activity.

**Reflection**

Explore and discuss the previous exercise through an imaginary story, students will consider and write down their blessings.

**Action**

Family talk about Stewardship. Students are encouraged to continue this conversation at home.

**Scripture Reference:** Deuteronomy 8:17-18

Do not say to yourself, “My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.” But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, so that He may confirm His covenant that He swore to your ancestors, as He is doing today.

**World Wealth Meal**

You may need to adjust this exercise for the size of your group. Before class, set up three different sets of tables. If you have a very small group then 3 tables will suffice. If you have a very large group then you will need 3 sets of tables.

On each table will be a different amount and quality of food consistent with the economic status of the country or group of people that country will represent. You will need a meal for each table. Table 1 will only have beans, rice, and water. Table 2 will have a simple meal of meat and potatoes (or something similar) with plenty enough to feed everyone. Table 3 will be a sumptuous feast. Your parish Cursillo group, ECW, Daughters of the King, or Men’s group would be an excellent resource to prepare and serve the meal.

As the young people come in, have them draw a table number randomly from a hat, box, or something similar. They should go to the table, but there should be no expectation of what will follow. This is a poverty meal or a world wealth meal. Each table should be served as described above. The table with beans and rice should be given less than what would reasonably feed that number of people. The object here is for those with much to feed those with little. Allow the meal to happen without interference. Those at the tables with little may beg from those with much. Allow enough time for the dynamics to unfold. If the frustration level rises for those at the table with little, stop the dinner and make suggestions or solicit their feedback on what is going on. This will often help the dinner to go smoothly. At an appropriate point, serve everyone what is served at the tables with plenty to eat and join the table together.

**GOALS:**

For students to see that Stewardship is thanksgiving for my time, talent, and treasure from God.

**Materials needed:**

3 meals of varying substance

The rest of the lesson follows in much the same format with Teacher Background information and Materials and Handouts found at the end of the lesson.
Introduction to the Confirmation Process

First Gathering
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS SESSION

Through a number of creative exercises, students are encouraged to begin building community with their peers with whom they will prepare for Confirmation. They will begin to understand what Confirmation is and begin to explore their faith as we begin to talk about our images of God and the 3-in-1 concept of the Holy Trinity.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
Skittles Game or Guess Who?:
A fun way to get to know a little about each other.

Personal Journals—Have students decorate their personal journals that will be used throughout the course. Handouts can be kept in the journal

Going Deeper
What is Confirmation?
Using the Catechism, students explore the meaning of Confirmation.

Reflection
Exploring our image of God
Students use magazines to explore their image of God.

Action
3-in-1
Students look at the 3 aspects of the Trinity.
Scripture Reference: Matthew 3:11 - I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Intro Activity:

**Get to know you Game**

Skittles Game-
Have each person take a handful of Skittles (or other colored candy). Do not eat the candy. Go around the circle and for each color you have represented in your pile of candy, tell something about yourself according to the following questions. After you have shared, you may eat your Skittles.

Yellow: Where/when were you Baptized?
Green: What is your favorite thing to do after school?
Purple: How many pets do you have?
Red: What is your favorite movie?
Orange: What do you want to do when you grow up?

OR

Guess Who?- 
Give each person an index card and a pencil. Have them write on the card something about themselves that not many people know (e.g. I like to ride horses or I have 5 brothers or I went on a cruise this summer). Do not sign your card! Collect all the cards and redistribute them, making sure no one gets their own card. One by one, have the students read a card aloud and let the rest of the group try and guess who wrote that card. Continue until all the cards have been read.

**Goals:**
- To begin building community
- Identify our images of God
- Explore the concept of the Trinity

**Materials needed:**
- Skittles candies
- Note cards and pencils
Going Deeper...

Explore the Sacrament of Confirmation

Leader: At this point we are going to explore the Sacrament of Confirmation and the elements therein. Sort of a “Why are we here?” and “What is Confirmation?” discussion. Ask your students these two questions and have them briefly spout out answers. Have your students open the Book of Common Prayer to page 860. Read responsively the section of the Catechism about Confirmation.

Talk a little bit about what is required of us, according to this reading, before we can be confirmed:

- BAPTISM
- INSTRUCTION
- CONFESSION OF SINS
- BELIEF IN JESUS AS YOUR SAVIOR

Continue with this exercise:

For a large group, split up into smaller groups or stay in one small group and give each group a sheet of newsprint and a marker. Have your students brainstorm these questions:

1. What does confirmation mean?
2. Why are we here?
3. What do we hope to get out of or have happen during this class?

Reflection

Understand our images of God.

Each time that we gather together we will begin our time remembering from whom we came and for whom we serve.

Take a large bowl and a pitcher of water. Have one of the young people pour the water (¾ full) while another one reads this prayer:

Almighty God, we thank you for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life. Amen.

Next take a large candle (at least 3” in diameter) and place it in the water. Have a young person strike a match and light the candle while another one reads this prayer:

Gracious God, we thank you for the gift of light. By your mighty power you brought light into a world of darkness at the beginning of creation. Through the light of your son Jesus Christ we are filled with your unconditional love. By the light of the Holy Spirit we find direction and strength to become ambassadors for you in an unsteady and confusing world. Amen.
Reflection Cont.....

Everyone has his or her own view or perception of God and for many of us that view often changes as we journey through life. At some point in our life God might have been an old man with a white beard, or a lowly servant. It is important to talk about how you view God and how God operates.

- When you were a small child, what was your image of God?
- How has that image changed?

Exercise: Distribute magazines, scissors and glue. Put confirmands in groups of three. Each group will need a piece of poster board. The task is for each group to discuss the following questions and display their answers by designing a collage. Then share with the entire class.

Where do you see God in the everyday?

Action

Trinity Symbols

From here we segue into an introduction of the Trinity. It is important for you to make the connection from the magazine pictures and the 3 aspects of the Trinity. Point out where you see Creator God, God in the person, Jesus, and God who empowers through the Holy Spirit.

Pass out the handout TRINITY SYMBOL to each confirmand. Begin by filling in the first circle with, CREATOR GOD. You might want to refer to the posters of where we see God as Creator. Circle two, CHRIST OUR SAVIOR. Circle three, the HOLY SPIRIT AND SUSTAINER. They are 3 in 1. All were created together, NOT in succession, first God then Jesus and then the Holy Spirit. Refer to Genesis Chapter 1 ….. the spirit moved across the water…… Identify the purpose of each aspect of the Trinity.

How can 1 person or thing also be 3 separate parts?

Pour a pitcher of water into a bowl. That is one substance. Then bring out a bowl of ice cubes. Ice us a different form but from the same source. Lastly, use a spray bottle to illustrate mist or better yet steam from an iron. All those are from the same source yet take separate forms.

Each week you will want to give the confirmands 5 minutes to ask a question on an index card. It is very important that you be consistent with this exercise. You may not get many questions the first few weeks but if done consistently the payoff will be great. If the confirmand does not have a question then have them write, NO QUESTION, as this will protect the anonymity of the ones who do. You may use some down time to have a few in the group decorate a God Box,, or Question Can and have a central place for questions to be placed. You must explain to the group when and how the questions will be answered, e.g. before the next lesson, the fifth Sunday etc. Consistency is important so make sure you allow time to ask the following question each week.

What questions do you have about God/Faith/Religion? -

Before leaving you need to extinguish the candle. Have a confirmand put out the candle while the other reads:

Be present with us O Lord, as we leave this place. Let the flame of unconditional love burn within us and like your apostles, help us to walk boldly in your footsteps in the days to come. Amen
The Holy Trinity
3 in 1
The Christian Faith
Lesson 1

God the Father
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
OF THIS SESSION

In this session, we want the students to understand that God created human beings in His image, gave them the world as their home, and work to do, so we understand ourselves to be God's children (Genesis 1:27). We relate to God the way children relate to their parents, relying on God to give us wisdom, health, and joy. Jesus taught us that God is our heavenly Father, and when we pray the Lord's Prayer, we call God "our Father." (Matthew 6:9). After reading the background material on three subjects: Creation and Creation's Problem (the Fall); God's Chosen People; Rescue, Gift and Promise (Covenant), lead the students through a brainstorming activity, helping supply details of our relationship with God as Father as the students tell what they know.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
Brainstorming the Story:
Guided by a question from the leader, students offer their knowledge of God's names, Creation, Creation's Problem, God's Chosen People, Rescue, Gift, and Promise (Covenant) on newsprint for each of these subjects. Leaders fill in the gaps by offering their understanding.

Going Deeper
Researching Images of God
Students research passages in the Bible revealing many pictures of God's nature.

Reflection
Discussion Questions
Students talk about parental relationships, the difficulties posed by sin, and what gives us hope.

Action
Images of God
Another look at previously obtained images of God and an opportunity to expand on these
Brainstorming the Story

Leader: share the information about God as Father and our beginnings (found on Teacher Prep Page). Put newsprint on the walls with masking tape (be sure to put a buffer sheet under the sheet on which you write, so markers don't stain your walls).

Title each sheet as follows:
- God the __________. What are some names for God?
- Creation. How did we get here?
- Creation's problem. Why is there suffering and evil?
- God's Chosen People. Who are Abraham and Sarah?
- Rescue. How did God free the Hebrew people from slavery in Egypt?
- Gift. What did God give Moses on Mt. Sinai?
- Promise (Covenant). What is our job? What is God's job?

Rules for brainstorming:
- Participants take turns.
- Each gives one answer to the question on the newsprint (and to any follow-up questions the teacher may ask in the process of brainstorming).
- No one criticizes an answer.
- Leaders, be sure to explain the rules.
- Write all answers on the newsprint.

In the course of the brainstorm, leaders offer the correct information, by underlining correct answers and building on answers that are partially correct or hint at the facts. The teacher may say: "This answer is really close. Here's what the bible teaches" or "This is almost what we're hoping to learn. We just need to remember." The success of this process depends on the teacher's tact and ability to work with the participants' guesswork. Any answer can lead to an opportunity to convey information.

Scripture Reference: Psalm 100:3 Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
Images of God in the Bible
(from The Great Adventure: Exploring Christian Faith with Young People, by Patricia Bays, p.53).

Give participants a passage to research. Ask what it tells us about God.

Psalm 23 (shepherd)
Psalm 8, Job 38., 39, Genesis 1:1 (creator)
Psalm 103:3 (healer)
Psalm 104:5-9; 28:7 (protector)
Deuteronomy 32:18 (mighty Savior)
Matthew 6:9 (Father)
Daniel 2:47 (king of the earth)
Jeremiah 18:1-11 (potter)
Hosea 2:2 (husband)
Isaiah 40:28 (strengthener)
Genesis 18:25, Proverbs 3:11 (judge)
2 Samuel 22:3 (rock)
Luke 15:8-10 (woman seeking coin)
Matthew 13:33 (woman baking bread)

The Old Covenant

Give participants one of the passages below to research.
What are the promises of the Old Covenant?

Genesis 9:8-17 (God makes a covenant with Noah that there will never be another flood)
Genesis 15:1-21 (God’s covenant with Abraham)
Exodus 6:2-8 (God’s covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob)
Exodus 20:1-17, Ex. 34, Deuteronomy 5:6-21 (God’s covenant with Moses and the people of Israel)

Discussion Questions

What is it like to have a parent? What do you like about it? What do you dislike?
Is it possible to avoid sin entirely?
Have you ever known anyone who obeyed God perfectly?
What do we know about God that gives us reason to hope?
Leader: Remember in our first gathering when we created the poster boards with images of God? Let’s look at those again. In light of what we have learned in this lesson, what words or images could we add to this?

Brainstorm other images and characteristics of God. Have the young people explore the church for images. If you have access to Polaroid cameras, have them take pictures of the images of God and present them to the class. Charge the young people to find other examples of God throughout the week and share at the next meeting.

**Materials needed:**
- Posterboard of images of God made at the first gathering
- Polaroid cameras and film (optional)
Background Information

God created human beings in his image, gave them the world as their home, and work to do, so we understand ourselves to be God's children (Genesis 1:27). We relate to God the way children relate to their parents, relying on God to give us wisdom, health, and joy. Jesus taught us that God is our heavenly Father, and when we pray the Lord's Prayer, we call God "our Father." (Matthew 6:9).

Creation and Creation's Problem (the Fall)

The story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden shows us how human beings fail to obey God (Genesis 3). We sin; that is, we fail to do what God wants us to do. Whenever we sin, we hurt ourselves and others, and we hurt our relationship with God. But our heavenly Father heals broken relationships. When we admit that we have done wrong things, and ask God to help us change for the better, God forgives us. The story of God's Son, Jesus, explains how God overcomes the suffering that comes from sin and brings justice, healing, and life.

God's Chosen People

We are God's people. Genesis tells how God called Abraham and Sarah, sending them to a new land and promising them they would begin a great nation that would be a blessing to all the people of the earth (Genesis 12). Abraham and Sarah, their children and their children's children are our forefathers and foremothers. They are the Hebrew people, also called Israel, or God's chosen people. God made a promise to Abraham (made a covenant with him) that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars and would live in the promised land (Genesis 15:1-21).

Rescue, Gift and Promise (Covenant)

Exodus tells the story of God rescuing the Hebrew people when they were slaves in Egypt. God's great prophet, Moses, leads the people to the promised land (Exodus 1-15). On Mount Sinai, God gives Moses and the people the Ten Commandments (BCP pp. 847-8), laws that tell us how to live in right relationship with God and our fellow human beings. This gift, the law, tells us God's will for us, how God wants us to live. With the giving and receiving of this gift, God promises to be present to his people, and the people promise to love and obey God (Exodus 19-24). God's promise to be in relationship with his people is shown in the events recorded in the Old Testament and is known as The Old Covenant (BCP p. 846). The Hebrew people promise to obey God's law, but they fail again and again. Old Testament stories show how God's people stray from the path God asks them to follow and God calls them back through the work of prophets, judges, and kings. Though the people break their promise to obey God, God remains faithful to his people. God made a covenant with his people in order to save them and keep them in relationship with him. The people respond to God's gift and promise with faith.
The Christian Faith
Lesson 2

God the Son
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
OF THIS SESSION

With this lesson, students learn about Jesus’ identity as Son of God and how he accomplishes reconciliation between humanity and God.

The ministry of Jesus of Nazareth made God’s love visible, touchable, and real to all he encountered. His death on the cross shows how God will go to any lengths to save us. His rising to new life is our hope for eternal life with God.

Students draw on their knowledge of God’s Son, remembering events in his life, and role-play events and television newscast. The story of Harry Potter’s parents’ protecting him with their love illustrates a human likeness to the love of Christ. The reflection encourages thought about how Jesus is present to us now. The Outline of the Faith in the Prayer Book summarizes our sinful nature and Jesus’ saving grace.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
Interviews and Television News
Students talk with each other about events in Jesus’ life they wish they could have witnessed with their own eyes and then re-enact that event. Students plan and enact a television broadcast telling the world about Jesus.

Going Deeper
Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone
Using a scene from the book (or video), the class will discuss the following: why was Voldemort unable to touch/hurt Harry, and how does this relate to our Christian Faith?

Reflection
Discussion Questions
Students talk about the ways in which Jesus is a reality in their lives.

Action
The Book of Common Prayer on Sin and Jesus’ Ministry
Students read and interpret the Outline of Faith and what it says about the Ten Commandments, Sin and Jesus
**God the Son**

**Scripture Reference:** John 3:16: For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

**Intro Activity:**

4 corners

Have the students go to one of the 4 corners in the room according to what they would like to have witnessed in Jesus' life. 1. Jesus feeds the 5000 2. Jesus walks on water 3. Jesus appears to the women in the garden after the crucifixion 4. Jesus raises friend Lasazrus from the dead. After moving to one of the four corners, have them talk about why they chose that event in Jesus' ministry.

*OR*

Interviews

Ask students to pair up and ask each other the following questions:

- If you could go back in time and be present at any of the events in Jesus' life, which one would you like to observe first hand?
- What do you think it would have been like to be there?
- If you could have 2 minutes on television to tell the world about Jesus Christ, what would you want the world to know?

Divide the class into two groups.

Group 1, re-enact an event in Jesus' life for Group 2 without using words

Group 2, come up with a 2 minute television broadcast to tell the world about Jesus Christ and try it out on Group 1.

**GOALS:**

- Students recall Jesus’ life.
- Their message to the world is an opportunity to articulate Jesus’ ministry to us

**Materials needed:**

- Simple costumes and props can add to the fun.
- Examples are material to drape over actors, and poster board to create props, such as a dove to descend on Jesus at his baptism. But the activity can be successful without costumes and props.
- Harry Potter movie or book

**Going Deeper...**

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone  by JK Rowling

I would open the class with an expressive oration from the book – or better yet, show the video or DVD – of the part near the end when Harry is waking up in the infirmary and Dumbledore is at his bedside. Dumbledore asks Harry, “Why do you think Valdemort was unable to touch you?” Harry is unsure and Dumbledore explains that the love of his parents, and their sacrifice for him, was so very strong that even Valdemort could not overcome it. Have the class discuss how this compares to Jesus’ love and his sacrifice for us. After discussion, read the excerpt or show the DVD again.
Discussion Questions

- When we know Jesus we begin to understand the fullness of who God is. What does the life, death and resurrection of Jesus say about God’s relationship to you?
- What is one quality of Jesus that you admire and would like to possess? Explain.
- When or where do you sense Jesus’ presence?
- How does one develop a relationship with Jesus? List in personal journal

Action

Read pages 847-849 of the Book of Common Prayer.

Be sure everyone understands what each of the ten commandments mean.

1. What are the consequences of sin in our lives, the church, and the world?

2. How does knowing that Christ reconciles us with God help us cope with the reality of sin in our world?

3. Have each student write a letter to Jesus. These letters can be kept in a personal journal or taken up and mailed back after their confirmation.
Background Information

The New Covenant

Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection bring forth a New Covenant, a new relationship between God and humanity. In Christ, God promises to forgive our sins and grant us eternal life with him. Our response is to believe in Jesus as the Lord and giver of life, and to obey the commandments to love God and our neighbor. Jesus’ new commandment is that we love one another as he loved us.

The Need for a Savior

Most of us have no trouble admitting that we think and do wrong things. We’re probably aware that we can’t seem to keep ourselves from sinning, at least not completely. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus talked about condition of our hearts. He said that it wasn’t only our actions, such as killing or adultery, that were sinful, but our thoughts as well (Matthew 5:21-30). We fail to love God as he loves us, often focusing our attention and loyalty on what we imagine gives us life, rather than on God, the source of all we are and all we have. Sin creates the sorrow and brokenness we see in the world around us. Sin painfully separates us from God and from each other. Jesus’ offering himself on the cross frees us from the bondage of sin (Romans 6:18-22; Galatians 5:1,13). More discussion about salvation through the gift of God’s Son appears in the section on Crucifixion and in The Christian Hope.

The Story of Jesus

Matthew’s and Luke’s gospels tell stories of Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem. Young people are probably familiar with these from Christmas pageants. John’s gospel says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). At his baptism, a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son." (Matthew 3:1; see also Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22). From these accounts we understand Jesus is God’s Son, who has come among us as a human being. He is both divine and human at the same time. His divinity assures us that he can save us; our reconciliation with God is a gift only God can give. His humanity tells us he understands being human, our difficulties and joys, our strengths and weaknesses, and that God is willing to adopt us as his children.

The four gospels tell the stories of Jesus’ ministry, his teaching, healing, and feeding people, and calling disciples to follow him. Jesus was an unusual minister, who talked with women who weren’t members of his family, such as Martha and her sister Mary (John 11:17-45) and the woman at the well (John 4:7-30). He healed on the Sabbath (Luke 6:6-10), touched the unclean (Luke 8:43-48), and ate with sinners (Matthew 9:10-13), going against Hebrew law. He taught his disciples that they must take up their own cross and follow him (Luke 9:23), that they must believe in him (John 14:12) and they must love one another as he has loved them (John 15:12). Jesus also instructed his disciples to pray to God as their Father, with an intimacy and familiarity like that found in close, loving relationships between parents and their children (Matthew 6:7-13, 31-33; Luke 11:2-4, 11-13).

Jesus illustrated the nature of God and the Kingdom of God in short stories called parables. Rejoicing over finding a lost sheep (Luke 15:3-6), a lost coin (Luke 15:8-10), a lost child (Luke 15:11-24) shows God’s delight in bringing his wayward children home. A tiny mustard seed growing to be a great bush, sheltering birds and a little bit of yeast making bread dough rise show how God’s Kingdom becomes real, mysteriously and powerfully, in our world (Matthew 13:31-35).
His Crucifixion and Resurrection

All four gospels tell in great and careful detail how Jesus spent his final hours, from the last supper with his friends to his burial. Each account is very moving and records some of the things Jesus said while on the cross (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34; Luke 23:34, 43, 46; John 19:26-27, 28, 30). That God's Son would die for us is a wonderful and terrible mystery. Jesus humbles himself to the point of death on a cross so that we might have eternal life with God (Philippians 2:5-8; John 3:16). He takes our sins on himself (2 Corinthians 5:21), repairing our damaged relationship with God (2 Corinthians 5:18; Galatians 3:13-14). Though we deserve God's judgment against us because of our sin, Jesus' death gives us the gift of his righteousness (Romans 5:6-11, 18). Jesus offers himself as a sacrifice for our salvation (Hebrews 10:11-23).

Early Christians recognized the risen Lord as alive and present to them in a new and powerful way (Luke 24:13-48; John 21:19-29; Acts 9:3-22). The resurrected Jesus told his disciples that he would empower them to carry on his ministry (Matthew 28:16-20; Luke 24:49-52). They confessed him as Lord and Savior and looked for him to come again to bring God's kingdom to completion (Matthew 16:27-28; Romans 14:7-12; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).
The Christian Faith
Lesson 3

God the Holy Spirit
The students will learn about the Holy Spirit who is present in the Triune God and some of the ways the Spirit acts in our lives. The Bible pictures the Holy Spirit with images of breath, wind, a dove, and fire. The Holy Spirit continues Jesus' work among us, giving us gifts, teaching us the truth, and building up the community of believers in fellowship and unity. We think and talk of the Holy Spirit as one of the three persons of God. At his ascension, Jesus told his followers to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:20). In a very active, noisy way, students "discover" some gifts of the Spirit and discuss how they appear in our lives. Interviews of church members provide more information and perspective about the Spirit's action. Reflecting on their understanding of the Spirit's work, students acknowledge the mysterious nature of the Spirit.

**Summary of Activities**

**Intro Activities**
- **Balloon Stomp**
  Students enjoy a noisy delivery of information about the gifts of the Spirit. They imagine how the gifts might be put into practice in their own lives and the life of their church.

**Going Deeper**
- **Discovering our gifts of the Spirit**
  Students begin to recognize their gifts and how they can use those gifts to glorify God.

**Reflection**
- **Discussion Questions**
  Students discuss how they know the Spirit is at work and where they see the Spirit working.

**Action**
- **Reach out and touch someone (and ask them about the Holy Spirit)**
  Students contact adults and talk with them about how they see the Spirit at work.
God the Holy Spirit

Scripture Reference: Acts 2:17: In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

Intro Activity:

Balloon Stomp

Write the name of one of the Spirit's gifts and fruits on a small piece of paper. Put the paper inside a red balloon and then blow the balloon up and tie it. Make as many balloons as people in the class. Explain that on the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit's entrance sounded like the rush of a mighty wind. Today the Spirit comes like firecrackers as each person stomps a balloon and finds the gift or fruit inside.

Working in groups of three, think of ways the gifts from the Spirit can be experienced in an individual's life, the life of our church or of our community. Make notes on newsprint and share your ideas with the rest of the class.

Going Deeper...

Discovering our own gifts

Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-31. Have the young people explain in their own words what this passage is saying.

Leader: We are all blessed with God-given talents that make us unique and different but we are all guided by the same Spirit. That Spirit helps us to use those talents to help and care for each other and to combine all of our individual talents to achieve the common good and to glorify God.

Continued on next page....
Going Deeper Cont..

Have the young people sit in silence for a couple of minutes thinking about what God-given gifts they personally have. Give them some examples to help them, such as: good listener, good at sports, smart, helpful, kind, good handwriting etc..

Since we are all of one body, have them write or draw a picture in their personal journal of their talent.

Ask the young people: How can I use this unique talent to glorify God and achieve the “Common Good?”

Materials needed:
- Large outline of a person
- Markers
- Personal journals

Reflection

Discussion Questions

- How can we tell if the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives?
- Can you name a spiritual gift you noticed in yourself or someone else?
- Where do we see the Spirit at work in our church?
- How do you experience the presence of the Holy Spirit?
- In what ways is the Holy Spirit mysterious to us?
- Has the power of the Holy Spirit ever surprised you?

Action

Give each student the name and phone number of a lay leader in your church community. Ask the leaders how they see the Holy Spirit at work in their lives, or church, or community. Report the findings to the class.

Or

Have students interview people at coffee hour by asking the following question: Where have you experienced the Holy Spirit? Record in personal journal.

Materials needed:
- Names and phone numbers of likely candidates for a discussion about the Spirit at work
Present Since the Beginning of Creation
Genesis 1:1,2 tells us "a wind from God swept over the face of the waters" at the creation of the earth and the "breath of God" gave life to the first living being (Genesis 2:7). The Spirit of the Lord comes upon Isaiah, telling him to bring good news of God's help for the poor, the oppressed and brokenhearted (Isaiah 61:1), and on Ezekiel, enabling him to prophesy that Israel would be restored (Ezekiel 11). The Holy Spirit participates in Jesus' conception (Luke1:35) and appears at his baptism in the shape of a dove (Luke 3:22).

Pentecost
Jesus told his disciples that he would not leave them without divine help from the Spirit (John 14:18), that the Father would send the Holy Spirit to teach them and remind them of everything Jesus said (John 14:25-26). On the day of Pentecost (a Jewish festival when many gathered in Jerusalem to worship), the Spirit, sounding like a violent wind and looking like flames, entered the place where the disciples were praying. Enabled by the Spirit, the disciples told others, in their own language, "about God's deeds of power" (Acts 2:1-13). Peter tells the crowd that God promised to pour out his Spirit on everyone (Acts 2:17-18).

According to Paul, the Spirit of God makes us God's sons and daughters, fellow heirs with Jesus Christ, so we can trust God to care for us as his children (Romans 8:14-17). The Spirit helps us to communicate with God too (Romans 8:26). Jesus assured his followers that the Spirit would teach them the truth about God and God's plans (John 16:13).

Gifts and Fruits of the Spirit
In his letter to the Galatians, Paul encourages his readers to live by the Spirit and enjoy the consequences (the "fruits") of such a life: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23). His correspondence with the Corinthians details nine spiritual gifts: "wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophesy, discernment of spirits, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues." All are given "for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:7-10), and their purpose is "building up" the church (1 Corinthians 14:12). The Spirit unifies us, building us up in the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:2-13).

The Holy Spirit Is a Gift to Us
God the Holy Spirit continues working in us, making Jesus present to us and building up the church as one body and one faith under one Lord. The Holy Spirit convinces us of our sin and our need for Christ's help (John 16: 7-15). By means of a process the church calls, "sanctification," the Holy Spirit assists us in growing into the likeness of Jesus Christ. We hope that just as we share in the difficulties Christ faced, so too, we will one day share in his glory (Romans 8:17).
The Christian Faith
Lesson 4

The Bible as Holy Scripture
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS SESSION

In this session, we want the student to understand how the Bible came to be written, its general and specific composition, its essence as revealed truth of the story of God and his people and how we, as Episcopalians, use and understand the Bible today.

The broad subject of the Bible will be covered in three distinct lessons: (1) Overview of the Bible, (2) The Old Testament, and (3) The New Testament. This approach will build on the students’ current knowledge of Biblical people and events in addition to giving them a broader perspective of the Bible as Holy Scripture. Hopefully this deeper look at scripture will serve as a beginning “set of tools” in their lifetime journey of faith.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
The Golden Thread: Connecting the Dots
Students will locate selected Biblical passages that convey that “golden thread” of God’s love.

Going Deeper
How the Bible came to be
An opportunity to hear about and discuss the origins and composition of the Bible and how it became Holy Scripture; first use of the class Time Line

Reflection
Episcopalian and the Bible
Using the Book of Common Prayer Catechism, discuss the Episcopalian perspective of Holy Scripture as God’s Word.

Action
And which translation speaks your language?
Compare similar biblical passages from different translations.
Scripture Reference: Proper 28: Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen

The Bible as Holy Scripture

The Golden Thread: Connecting the Dots
Students locate Biblical passages with the message of God’s abiding and steadfast love for his creation.

The Bible, written by several authors over a period of 1000 years, is essentially a love story, the story of God’s love for his people and their (our) response to that love as depicted through history, law, poetry, letters and other writings. The stories of creation, the patriarchs, Moses, the Exodus and the beginnings of the Kingdom of Israel were at first handed down from generation to generation through the spoken word (oral tradition). It was not until around 850 BCE (before the Common Era) that various writers who we believe were inspired by the Holy Spirit began to write down these stories. These writings, later collected and made “canon” (e.g. authoritative), became for us Holy Scripture. Presently there are numerous translations available for our use, e.g. Revised Standard, New Revised Standard, King James, Good News, New International and several “study” Bibles.

The Bible is divided into two major divisions, the Old Testament (39 books) and the New Testament (27 books). There is also a small section called the Apocrypha. Each testament has its own specific types of writing (described in sections 2 and 3). The writings are collected in books, which are divided into chapters and verses. As Episcopalians, we affirm the Bible as the “Word of God” as told by “fallible human authors,” (Carlozzi) who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Likewise, we read scripture and learn its truth for us also by the “help of the Holy Spirit” (BCP pp. 853-854). Our seeking to understand God’s word is “corrected and tested by tradition and reason” (Carlozzi). The “golden thread” that ties Old Testament to New Testament to our own life experience is God’s ever present love and yearning for us to be in relationship with him. This then makes his word a “living word,” constantly calling us into love for God, others, and creation.

Create Biblical passage cards (Book, Chapter, Verse). Use the following selected passages or ones of your own choosing.
- Genesis 1:27-31 (It was very good)
- Genesis 12:2 (a nation blessed)
- Exodus 30:15-20 (choose life)
- Psalms 1:2-3, Psalms 42:1-2 (streams of life)
- Isaiah 12:2-6 (God is my salvation)
- Micah 6:8 (what God requires)
- Mark 10:13-16 (acceptance and blessing)
- John 15:12-17 (commandment to love)
- Ephesians 2:8-10 (the gift of grace)

GOALS:
- Understand how the Bible is used and has meaning for us as Christians and Episcopalians
- Appreciate the origin, composition and history of the Bible
- Recognize the Bible as a worthy place to meet God
- Appreciate the place of the Bible in Episcopal worship as well as its place in discerning God’s will and truth.

Materials needed:
- Biblical passage cards
- Bibles

Intro Activity:

The Christian Faith Lesson 4
Leader: Contrary to the views of some fearsome Old Testament stories, there is not a stern God of the Old Testament and a loving God of the New Testament. God is God and He is love and has been from creation. He sends forth His love and we (His people) are called to respond in love for Him and all His creation.

Instructions
Distribute the card to individuals, or preferably to “teams.” As needed, assist them in locating the passage. (It may prove necessary to orient them to book, chapter, and verse beforehand). Invite them to share with the group what they have found. Draw the students into a discussion by “connecting the dots.” e.g. the message these passages convey about our Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and about us. You may ask what do all these passages say about God and our relationship to God.

Going Deeper...
How the Bible Came to Be
Through questions, answers and discussion and adding to a Time Line, students learn how the Bible came to be.

Teacher Preparation
Preparation of subject matter: Become familiar with the Overview/Teacher Preparation Narrative. Refer to Background information for more details.

Preparation of materials: Create a long time line (6-8 feet long). Cut a poster board into 5-inch wide strips. Tape them end to end to form a continuous strip 6-8 feet long. Mark off by equal intervals every 500 years with “Prehistory/2000 BCE” on the left and “21st Century CE/2000” on the right. Use the Time Line People/Events handout to guide you. This Timeline will be used for several succeeding lessons.

Use white or colored index cards (cut in 1 1/2”x 4” cards) to create “Timeline Event Cards.” Events on cards (4) should be:
• Oral tradition (prehistory – 850 BCE)
• Beginning of written scripture – 850 BCE
• Old Testament made canon - 90 CE
• New Testament made canon - 370 CE

Instructions
Distribute to each student the Bible Books handout. Pose the following questions as a means of drawing out what the students already know while adding to their understanding with material from the narrative. As a timeline event is mentioned, place it (or have a student place it) on the timeline.

a. By whom and when was the Bible written?
b. What do we mean by oral tradition?
c. What are the two major divisions of the bible?
d. Find a designated Bible verse (Introduce them to the Bible Books handout.) This is an opportunity to use the Bible and concretely understand what is meant by book, chapter, verse.
e. When we say the Bible is “Holy Scripture”, what do we mean?
f. Do you know when the Old Testament and New Testament were considered “authoritative” as “Holy Scripture”? 

Materials needed:
• Time Line
• Timeline Event cards (4)
• Bible Books handout for each student
• Timeline People/Events handout
• Tape
• Bibles
**Leader:** As Episcopalians, we affirm that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Prepare for this activity by reading the Catechism on Holy Scripture (BCP 853-854), the article by Carrozzi, “Episcopalians and the Bible,” and the exercise of reading scripture in Christian community which follows.

**Instructions**

1. Select a student to read from the BCP Catechism on Holy Scripture (BCP 853-854). Point out the role of the Holy Spirit in the writing of the scriptures as well as the understanding of the scriptures.

2. Read to the class Genesis 1:1 – 2:3 (have the students read along with you. Use a common translation). Begin with a simple prayer: Lord, be with us as we read your holy Word.

3. Discussions Questions:
   - The writers (as we learned from the Catechism) were inspired by the Holy Spirit. What are they saying in this passage? Is it a scientific description of creation or perhaps something more?
   - What do we learn here of God’s nature and will? (God is creator; God created in love; God's creation is good and he blessed it; God created order and meaning out of chaos; God created humankind in relationship and in God’s image; God created us as stewards of his creation; God created the Sabbath, the 7th day, a day of rest).
   - If God is (has done) all these things, what does that say to us right here, now? What does the Holy Spirit lead you to think about? (possible ideas: Thankfulness – for God, creation, his love and care for us; God continues to create and love us and give us responsibilities; we mess up God’s creation by destructive acts (thought, word, deed)
     Note: this passage does not address sin, judgment, forgiveness or redemption)
   - What can we conclude about our reading of the Bible? (Possible ideas: Relying on the Holy Spirit to direct us, it is helpful to read it within a faith community; this story in the Bible helps us to understand God now and it calls for a response from us as faithful people; we used our faith background and thinking together (also gifts of the Spirit) to come to some conclusions that will help our faith continue to grow as we learn to recognize God’s presence in our lives; the actions of the Holy Spirit are mysterious and powerful. If we put ourselves in the presence of scripture and other faithful people, God will be with us).
   - How else can we understand God and what he is calling us to do (besides reading scripture, participate in worship, pray, study, be in service to others)?

**Materials needed:**
- Book of Common Prayer for each student
- Bible

**Reflection**

A Bible Study within a Christian Community
An experience in reading and studying the Bible as a faith-enhancing adventure.
Action

Ways to “tackle” the Bible
An opportunity to compare translations and reflect on which one speaks most faithfully and in useable language for young teens.

Leader: There are several translations of the Bible. By comparing texts from various translations, the students can identify which ones “speak” in the language that is best for them at this point in their lives.

Instructions
Below are a variety of scriptural texts. Choose 2 or 3 (or any of your own choosing). Give the students an opportunity to read those texts out loud in different translations. (ex: King James, New Revised Standard, The Good News Bible, a study Bible)
- Psalm 4
- Job 38: 1-7
- Matthew 5:1-12
- 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22

Questions to pose:
1. What are the differences you hear in the translations we have read?
2. Why do you suppose there are different translations?
3. Which is the hardest to understand? The easiest?
4. Which translation would you most likely choose?
5. Which translation do we use during worship?

Extra… An alternative choice for Activity 4 is to introduce the students to a concordance and show them how it can be used to find scriptural passages or introduce them to the availability and usefulness of a Bible commentary.

Materials needed:
- Bibles of different translations e.g. King James, NRSV, etc.
A Brief History of the Bible

BIBLE NARRATIVE

Bible. In Greek, “biblios” means book. This holy book is actually a collection of many books written by several authors over a period of nearly one thousand years. We call it the Holy Bible, our Sacred Scripture, because we believe it reveals the God we worship, as he was experienced by the nation of Israel and by those of the Church through the times of St. Paul. In order to understand the Bible and its place in the Christian Church, and specifically in the Episcopal Church, read it, study it, digest it, meditate on it and pray it. A lifelong study of scripture will be rewarded by a more vibrant faith and a more confident sense of one’s place as a child of God in the Body of Christ.

The Bible is divided into two major divisions, the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) and the New Testament. The current books included in the Bible were made the official canon (i.e. felt to be inspired writings and thus authoritative in the life of the church) in 90 CE at the Council of Jamnia for the 39 books of the Old Testament canon and around 370 CE at the Council of Carthage for the 27 books of the New Testament canon. The Bible used by our Jewish brothers and sisters (the Hebrew Bible) contains the same writing as that used by Christians everywhere, although the order of the books is somewhat different. There is, however, a section not found in all Bibles. It is called the Apocrypha. Usually placed between the Old Testament and the New Testament, it is composed of extra books written during the intertestamental period, a time during which Jews believed God no longer inspired His people. They are, therefore, not a part of the Jewish canon, nor are they accepted by the majority of Protestant denominations. They are accepted within the Roman Catholic canon. The Episcopal and Anglican Churches use readings from the Apocrypha in worship, but it is not accorded the same level of authority as the OT and NT.

By the time the first of the OT was put into written form (around 850 BCE), the stories of creation, the patriarchs, Moses, the Exodus and the settlement of Israel had already been handed down by generations of Hebrews through the process of oral tradition. These stories reveal how the people of Israel understood themselves, their nation and their relationship to God. They reveal the God who was experienced and understood as Creator and judge - Almighty, faithful and full of mercy for His people, Israel. The promises made to Abraham, and in turn, Abraham's faithfulness (the Old Covenant), sustained and guided and continue to guide the Jewish people to this day. God's saving acts of bringing His people back from sin and disobedience to abide in God's presence and majesty (called salvation history) are depicted from Genesis to Malachi in the OT and in the gospels, Acts and letters of the NT. To Christians, God's greatest act of salvation is the incarnation of Jesus Christ, His resurrection and the sending of the Holy Spirit. We understand the New Covenant as the promise of God's forgiveness as we repent and follow Christ as Lord, loving God and our neighbor and serving Him in all things.
Bible Narrative Cont.

Since the canonization of Holy Scripture in the 4th century, the Bible underwent translation into Latin from the original Greek (which was a translation from the original Hebrew). It was during the Reformation of the 1500's, with the advent of the printing press, that the Bible was printed in the common, spoken language of each country, i.e. into the language of the people. There are many translations now in use by many Protestant denominations and Anglicans. Among these are the Revised Standard Version (RSV), the King James, the New RSV, the Good News Bible, the Living Bible, the International Bible, etc.

Within the Episcopal Church of the United States, the RSV, New RSV and the King James are used most commonly, the latter in more traditional settings. During the Episcopal worship service, in fact in all the Anglican Communion, we have the opportunity to hear nearly the entire Bible read during the "readings" of the lectionary every three years. These readings are outlined in the Book of Common Prayer and are arranged, based on the Gospel reading, into certain thematic groupings. By exposing ourselves weekly to readings from the Old Testament, the Psalms, the Epistles and Gospels, we open ourselves up to the purposes and Personhood of God. As faithful Episcopalians, we read Holy Scripture as the inspired Word of God. We also affirm that the Holy Spirit is active as it guides us, in community, to the true interpretation of the Scripture. We also recognize through the gift of reason, that our tradition and experience add to our discernment of God’s will in our lives.

The Bible is rich in history, poetry, and heroic and flawed persons trying to do God's will, oftentimes failing miserably. However, this marvelous book, handed down through the ages, is, taken in totality, a love story of God for his people and his people for their God. We are those people. His Word speaks to us today. Embrace its truth and let it guide you in your life today and your many tomorrows.
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<th>Biblical Time Line</th>
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<td>Prehistory</td>
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<td>Noah – Flood</td>
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<td>Paul- Conversion, Journeys, Letters</td>
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In answer to the question, there is no evidence from Scripture or other sources that indicates a direct relationship between confirmation and the presence of the Holy Spirit. Confirmation, in the context of the Episcopal Church, is more aligned with the idea of the Holy Spirit empowering and strengthening the recipient rather than engendering the Holy Spirit through the rite itself. The presence of the Holy Spirit is considered to be a gift given at baptism, and the laying on of hands is viewed as a means of imparting the gifts of the Spirit, rather than as a means of directly activating the Holy Spirit in an individual. Therefore, the focus of confirmation is on the ongoing spiritual formation and growth in the faith, rather than on the physical manifestation of the Holy Spirit in a literal sense.
Lesson 5

Holy Scripture: Old Testament
The Old Testament is the story of God and his chosen people. It is a story told through historical events and people, law, songs and prophetic writings. Woven through this body of writings is that “golden thread” of God’s steadfast love where we see the continual message of God’s call to his people. They sin, they are judged, they are forgiven and they are loved. This love survives even in the face of faithlessness and sinful behavior (separation from God) on the part of this “holy nation.” Even those people who were chosen by God as primary to his purposes (Abraham, Moses, David) were frail and not perfect, but God chose them anyway. His continual reaching out and calling them back into relationship with him is the salvation theme of the Old Testament. Indeed, the ultimate act of salvation occurs in the New Testament in the birth, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. To understand the incredible gift of Christ, an appreciation of the broad reach of God’s love as reflected in our Hebrew heritage is essential to today’s Christian.

Summary of Activities

**Intro Activities**

Who’s Who in the Bible

A warm-up activity that spurs the students to recollect Bible figures and events of the Old Testament

**Going Deeper**

Working the Time Line

A combination lecture/student participation activity focusing on the historical context of people, events, and types of writing in the Old Testament

**Reflection**

Ten Commandments Bible Study

A study and reflection of the Ten Commandments as a guide to our duty to God and our neighbor

**Action**

Our Hebrew Heritage Up Close

Take a trip to a local synagogue.
Scripture Reference: Psalms: 8: 3-4 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established, what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?

**GOALS:**
- Recognize the different types of writing in the Old Testament
- Understand “salvation history” as lived out in the relationship of God to the Hebrew people.
- Appreciate the Hebrew heritage of our Christian faith.

**Intro Activity:**

**Who’s Who in the Bible**
Students fill in the blanks on the Old Testament “Who’s Who” sheet and share their findings.

**Leader:** The Old Testament is filled with stories and events of the Hebrew people. The Hebrew understanding of God is derived from these events/stories. Through good and bad circumstances the faithfulness of God is experienced.

**Instructions**
Hand out the Who’s Who sheets to each student. Divide the students into groups of four. Give the teams about 2-3 minutes to "remember" and fill in the blanks. Review the correct responses with the entire class. Share with the students the perspective of Hebrew Biblical understanding (that God was experienced through their life as a chosen nation) and invite their response to these “points to ponder.”

- Why do you think God chose these people? (they were available, worthy, and not powerful we cannot really know)
- What do we learn about God through these events/stories? that he constantly calls his people into a faithful relationship with him,
- What do we learn about these Hebrew characters/ourselves? what little they had, God used it for good and blessed it.
Going Deeper...

Time Line
The students will place time line cards for the Old Testament on the Time Line and will become familiar with the types of writing seen in the Old Testament.

Leader: Certain people and events of the Old Testament are critical to the Hebrew sense of God’s relationship with them. The different types of writing (law, history, poetry, prophetic writings) tell these stories and reveal the mind of the people of Israel from several perspectives, thus adding to the richness of this scriptural heritage.

Instructions
1. Become familiar with the contents of the Old Testament Narrative located in the background information section and the leader comments in the Old Testament lessons.

   Create nine (9) Time Line Cards
   - Creation/Adam and Eve/Noah (prehistory)
   - The Patriarchs – Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph - (2000 BCE)
   - Sojourn in Egypt (1700 BCE)
   - Moses, The Exodus, The Ten Commandments (1200 BCE)
   - King David and the United Kingdom (1000 BCE)
   - The Prophets (750-400 BCE)
   - Babylonian Captivity (500 BCE)
   - Return to Jerusalem (400 BCE)
   - Intertestamental Period (approx. 250-1 BCE) (considered a time of silence in God’s revelation to the Jewish people)

2. Place the poster of Four Types of Old Testament Writings on the wall. Distribute the Four Types of Writings sheets and the Bible Books sheet to each student. Explain that the history of the Hebrew nation and their understanding of God is found in the Old Testament, in four distinct types of writings. Using your poster, name and describe these four types of writings and point them out on the two sheets which each student should have. Emphasize that each type of writing has a “perspective” on events, people, law and worship.

3. Distribute the time line cards to 9 individuals. As the leader retells the flow of events of the Old Testament, ask the students to place (in chronological order) the cards on the appropriate location on the Time Line. Emphasize that:
   - The stories of the Old Testament describe the relationship of God to his chosen people.
   - Individuals and this holy nation, though chosen by God, were fallible human beings. As they sinned and turned away from God, God judged, forgave them and more importantly, he continually called them back into relationship with him. It was a continuous act of “saving” on God’s part, what we call “salvation history.”

Materials needed:
- Time Line
- Old Testament Time-Line Cards (9)
- Bible Book Sheet – one for each student
- Poster Board – Four Types of Old Testament Writings
- Individual sheets – Four Types of Old Testament Writings (one for each student)
Ten Commandments Bible Study
Students will have an opportunity to study and reflect on the Ten Commandments

Leader: The Ten Commandments most clearly demonstrate God’s will for us in the Old Testament (see BCP pp. 846-848: The Old Covenant and the Ten Commandments). Learning and reflecting on these commandments will give the students a chance to reflect on our relationship with God and with others, and on how this Old Testament “law” dovetails with Jesus’ Great Commandment.

Instructions
Distribute the Ten Commandments sheet to the students. Let them locate the text in their Bibles. (Exodus 20:1-17 or Deuteronomy 5:6-21) Have one or two students read the text. Invite the students to respond to the following:

- How were the Ten Commandments received by Moses? (on Mt. Sinai)
- Why do you suppose these commandments were given to the Israelites? (guide to God’s will for his chosen people)
- Look at commandments 1-4 and 5-10. How are they different? How are they alike? Do you see a pattern? (1-4: relationship to God; 5-10: relationship to others)
- What might these commandments have said to the people 2500-3500 years ago? (learn to live in a believing and obedient community)
- What do they mean to us now? Go through each commandment and encourage them to restate them in their own words (ex: #9 – does this include gossip?)
- Why are laws (rules) important in our lives together? (we learn to honor one another and live a life God desires for us)
- How did Jesus summarize the Law? (see Matthew 22:36-40) Do you think his summary is a good restatement of the Ten Commandments? Why or why not?

Other points to ponder:
1. What one new thing did you learn from this exercise?
2. Do you think study as a group helps or hinders your understanding of scripture?
3. Is there always one right answer to the questions that are raised?

Emphasize that as we grow in knowledge of the Bible and let it speak to us, we open ourselves to God’s transforming word and grow as faithful Christians. Therefore, participating in a Bible Study group needs to be encouraged.

Materials needed:
- Ten Commandments sheet
- Bibles

Reflection

Trip to the local synagogue
Take a trip to a local synagogue. Speak with the rabbi and let the children understand that we have the chosen people in our midst and that they are our heritage.
The Old Testament Narrative

The 39 books of the Old Testament tell the story of the Hebrew people told through story, history, the law, prophetic writings and other writings. The Old Testament gives testimony to these people (referred to throughout the Bible by various names - Hebrews, Israelites, God's Chosen people, a holy nation, the people of Israel, people of the Covenant, Jews, Israel or Judah) and their understanding and relationship with God.

Where in the world do all these stories take place? By using a world map or Bible map, one can see that all activity took place in what we now call the Middle East, and in particular, the modern state of Israel. In ancient times, this area was at the crossroads of trade and an area in constant political flux depending on the civilization in power (Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians or Persians). As a consequence, this small nation, believing in one God, as opposed to surrounding polytheistic nations, had an enormous influence and enormous internal struggles in dealing with these other cultures. Even as they attempted to remain faithful to their God, the powerful draw of other groups who worshipped the baals was significant in their history. We find that God is constantly drawing them back unto himself and thus saving them from their sins, themselves and their lack of faith. Thus, the term "salvation history" refers to God's merciful grace that, even as they behave faithlessly in their relationship with God and are judged accordingly, God's faithfulness (sticking with them despite their ways) is victorious and he forgives them and "saves" them time and again.

The first five books of the Bible include: 1) the stories of creation (creation, Adam and Eve, the Fall, Cain and Able, the Tower of Babel and Noah); 2) the stories of the Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel), and Joseph); 3) the story of Moses and the Exodus (the departure of the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt, 40 years in the wilderness, the Ten Commandments and the sighting of the Promised Land of Canaan). Inherent in these stories is the establishment of the Old Covenant between God and his people, a covenant first established through Abraham and carried to later generations. Also included in these first five books are all the religious law practiced by faithful Jewish people. These five books are referred to as 1) the Books of Moses (at one time it was believed that Moses actually authored them), 2) The Pentateuch (penta-for five) or 3) the Torah, or Law. They are, in order: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

The next section of books deals with the history of the Hebrew nation from the crossing of the Jordan into the Promised Land (present day Israel), the rule of the Judges, the Kingdom of Israel under Saul, David and Solomon, and the remaining kings who ruled over the divided kingdom of Israel (north) and Judah (south). The exile to Babylon and the return to Israel are also addressed. There is duplication of the history in Samuel I and II, Kings I and II and Chronicles I and II, as different writers interpret history from their own perspectives.

The books of poetry and wisdom literature - Job, the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon demonstrate the depths of faith, doubt, joy, and sorrow that have filtered through the Jewish consciousness and their religious observances. The prophets, both major and minor, can be read in context with the historical events that were taking place at the time in which they were written. A prophet of the Old Testament is not necessarily one who sees into the future, but rather is a holy person who not only reminds the people of their sinful behavior and faithlessness, but also reminds them of God's judgment and mercy. Through his words, the people come to see what God's will is and their departure from that. Although one is tempted to view the God of the OT as a fierce and demanding Being, if read fully with understanding, we can see that God is God, creator, all powerful, holy and full of mercy and love for His people. This is a God who demands justice and mercy, a God who desires that we "do justice and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8) He is the God who requires our relations with others to reflect His relations with us, the God whom we honor and know as Lord.
Who’s Who in the Old Testament

WORD BANK:
Abraham  David  Jacob  Job
Micah  Moses  Psalms  Solomon

1. ____________________ Nearly sacrificed his son, Isaac, on an altar.
   His obedience to God’s command led to the covenant between God and
   His people. (Genesis 17:1-8)

2. ____________________ He married Rachel. He wrestled with God in a
   dream and saw a ladder going from earth to heaven. He had 12 sons and
   God renamed him Israel.
   (Genesis 28: 10-17; 32:22-32)

3. ____________________ Called to God’s service through a burning
   bush. He defied Pharaoh and led his people out of slavery in Egypt. He
   climbed Mt. Sinai and delivered God’s Ten Commandments to the Israel-
   ites. (Exodus 3-20)

4. ____________________ A book of songs of praise, joy, hope and sorrow, some of which were
   written by King David. This book is found in the middle of the Bible.

5. ____________________ A prophet who condemned Israel’s moving away from God’s command-
   ment to be God’s people and to “do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God. A
   prophet reminds the people of their covenant with God as first established through Abraham.

6. ____________________ Son of King David. He is known for his wise decisions. He built the
   first Temple in Jerusalem. (1 Kings 1-3)

7. ____________________ A man of God who was afflicted by great calamities but retained his
   faith.

8. ____________________ As a boy, he slew Goliath. He was the first king of the United King-
   dom of Israel. (1 Samuel 41-49)
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<td>Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon</td>
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<td>(a prophet reminds the people of</td>
<td>Ezekiel, Micah and others</td>
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<td>their covenant with God)</td>
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Ten Commandments
(In Hebrew – Ten Words)

Found in Exodus 20:1-17 and Deuteronomy 5: 6-21 (New Revised Standard Version)

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make for yourself an idol.
3. You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God.
4. Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy.
5. Honor your father and your mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
10. You shall not covet.

Restate the Ten Commandments in your own words as they relate to your life.

I.
II.
III.
IV.
V.
VI.
VII.
VIII.
IX.
X.
The Christian Faith
Lesson 6

Holy Scripture:
New Testament
The New Testament is closely bound to the Old Testament. The salvation story continues and is fulfilled in the incarnation – God made flesh in Jesus Christ. For us in the 21st century, scripture is the source of all we know of Jesus’ earthly life and it guides those who seek to the one true God and the depth of his love. In the New Testament, Jesus’ ministry is described through events, actions, parables, and miracles and it paints a picture of the tangible height, depth and width of that love. Those who lived with Jesus saw, heard, felt and breathed in that love. For other believers like Paul who never met Jesus, the Holy Spirit revealed to them that same love.

The full measure of the Trinity is revealed in the New Testament passages, but the focus is on Jesus. It is through him we see God the Father and it is through the Holy Spirit we see and know him today.

The main goal in presenting the New Testament to the students is to gain an appreciation for the writing and content of the New Testament, but more importantly, to accept that through scripture they can meet God in Christ and experience his love as it guides, comforts and sustains them in their lives.

Summary of Activities

**Intro Activities**

Experiencing Grace

Students will receive a small gift from the teacher and will reflect on what grace is.

**Going Deeper**

The Time Line

A combination lecture/student participation activity focusing on the time frame and key persons in the New Testament and types of writing in the New Testament

**Reflection**

A New Testament Bible Study

A short Bible study reflection on God in Christ, and “feeding sheep”

**Action**

An artistic experience depicting grace
Students will receive a small token gift and reflect on the meaning of grace.

Grace is an unmerited gift, given in love. God’s grace in our lives often goes unrecognized. By receiving this small gift, the students will “experience” a small measure of that grace and begin to learn how to be aware of the grace-filled moments in their lives.

Make or buy a gift (suggestions as noted in materials).

As you welcome each student to class that day, gather them together. Indicate that you want to give them something because they were created by God. As you distribute the gifts, look each student in the eye and say “you are a beloved child of God.” Wait a few moments in silence before beginning the discussion.

Use the following questions as guideposts to elicit conversation:

1. Why did you receive this gift?

2. How did you feel/what did you think about my giving them to you? Were you pleased, confused, questioning, cautious?

3. When else have you received an unexpected gift?

4. What did you do when you received this gift? (heard my words, opened your hands, saw the gift (you were attentive) and you thanked me)

5. What are some gifts you can give that cost you nothing? Record in journal.

Points to ponder:

1. In the New Testament, we read about God’s greatest gift to mankind, Jesus. Knowing what you know about the people of the Old Testament, why do you suppose God sent Jesus? (a continuation of his “saving” his people; we could truly understand God’s love and will for us; we could begin to live a life of love for God and neighbor because we saw it in Jesus.)

2. Besides Jesus’ coming 2000 years ago, how do we experience God’s love now? What are times you have experienced surprising love? (through the power of the Holy Spirit, with and through other people – family, friends and strangers, through nature, through prayer, through reading/hearing scripture, through worship and the Eucharist)

3. What can we do to recognize and acknowledge the gift of grace?
   - Open our eyes (be attentive to the “little things” in life)
   - Open our hands (we have to be ready to receive and to serve)
   - Open our ears (we have to be ready to hear God’s words of love)
   - Open our mouth (in thanks)
**Going Deeper...**

**Events, People and Writings:** Students continue to add cards to the Time Line and hear about the types of writing contained in the New Testament.

**Leader:** The New Testament, like the Old Testament, was written by several spirit-inspired authors over the course of the first century. In it we hear the divine and human story of Jesus as proclaimed in the Gospels, the beginnings of the Christian church in Acts and the foundations of theology and our common life together in Christian community in the Epistles. (for more detailed information, read the New Testament Narrative found in background information.)

The Gospels are each written for a particular audience of the early church. Though they share commonalities, each offers a unique slant on the birth, life/ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus. The Gospel of John in particular offers more to the reader regarding Jesus’ divinity.

The Acts of the Apostles recounts in action-packed form, the early efforts to spread the Good News. Pentecost marks the birthday of the church and the coming of the Holy Spirit with gifts to build up the church.

In Paul’s letters and the other letters, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is shared with the Gentile (the newly Christian) community and a new way of living, with God in Christ as its source.

The book of Revelation reminds us that despite the difficulties of life, God’s purposes will, in the end, come to pass and he will “reign forever and ever.”

1. Prepare five (5) time line cards
   - John the Baptist
   - Jesus – Birth, Life/Ministry (4BCE-30CE)
   - Jesus – Death and Resurrection (30 CE)
   - Pentecost (30CE)
   - Paul’s Conversion, journeys and letters (34CE-70CE)

2. Become familiar with the “leader” section above and the New Testament narrative in Background information.

3. Distribute the New Testament Writing sheet to each student. Using the poster at the board, describe the five types of writing in the New Testament.
   - Synoptic Gospels
   - Gospel of John
   - Acts – the history of the early Christian Church and the missionary travels of Paul and others
   - Epistles – letters of Paul and others
   - Revelation– apocalyptic writings which describe the end time of God’s victory over evil.

Emphasize that each type of writing had a different audience and unique perspective and unique missions, but point out the unity of Christ in God incarnate and that it is He who is proclaimed.

4. Succinctly summarize the historical facts as recounted in the New Testament (using the time line cards).
   - If possible, use a Biblical map to geographically locate places named in the New Testament., e.g. Sea of Galilee, Jerusalem, Nazareth, Rome, Bethlehem, Corinth, Ephesus

**Materials needed:**
- Time Line
- Time Line cards
- Bible Book sheet (previously used)
- Bibles
- Biblical Map
- New Testament Writings Poster
- New Testament Writing sheet (one for each student)

**Points to ponder/questions to pose:**
1. What parts of the Bible are read during our worship service? (OT, Psalms, NT, Gospel)
2. Why do we stand when the Gospel is read? (To honor it as the scripture that proclaims Jesus as the Christ)
3. Reading the Bible is not easy. It all can be confusing. What would be helpful, what guidance would you like to get started reading the Bible? Let the students think about this. Whatever their answer, follow up and give them the help they desire.
4. Since we understand the Holy Spirit helps us as we read the Bible, pray a prayer before reading. (ex: Lord, help me to understand your Holy Word. Be with me and open my eyes to your truth.)
Bible study: Love, Lambs and Grace. The students will use three Biblical passages to connect a) God’s love in Christ to b) our response to serve to 3) the grace God gives us to complete it.

Scripture References
- John 17:20-23
- John 21:15-17
- Romans 12:6-8

Leader: The Bible is a book to be used not simply heard in worship. Opening the Bible and becoming intimate with its contents and underlying themes will hopefully create a desire to open it again and again. In this we can hope that our faith will grow through the asking of questions and in community the answers will come.

Instructions
Ask three students to read the passages out loud to the class as the class follows along. After each reading, ask the questions which follow.

John 17:20-23
1. What is Jesus doing? (praying; that those who follow his disciples will know him)
2. What is Jesus claiming (he and God are one; God’s love extends to the whole world)
3. What is Jesus praying for? (that his disciples will “be in God and Christ.” that the world may know the truth of God in Christ)

John 21:15-17
1. Who are the lambs and sheep?
2. Why is Jesus asking Peter to take care of them?
3. What does it mean to “feed” and “tend?”
4. How do we “feed” and “tend” others?

Romans 12:6-8
1. What is grace? (unconditional, unexpected)
2. What “grace” is Paul talking about here? (God’s gift to us)
3. Where is it from? (God)
4. What form does it take? (sharing the Good News, ministry, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, working, compassion, cheerfulness)
5. What are your gifts? What do you offer to the “community” or your “family” that is pleasing to God?
6. How can you bestow grace, by using the gifts God has given you for the spread of his kingdom in the world?

Putting it all together:
As we read scripture, especially the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament, we can better understand who we are as God’s precious children, what he has given us and what we are called to do (love the Lord your God… and your neighbor as yourself) and how God equips us for ministry.

Trace the passages from first to last.
- John 17: God loves us and yearns for our being in Him and He in us
- John 21: God calls us to live out that love with others
- Romans 12: God equips us with gifts to carry out his will.
Action

Artistic Expression of Grace

Encourage the students to depict scripture and its message of grace through poetry, art or song. This is a project they can do on their own, in a group, in or out of class. Record in personal journal.

Materials needed:
- Props for creative expression
- Personal journal
The New Testament Narrative

The New Testament is comprised of 27 books, which tell the story of Jesus, his teachings and the spread of those teachings to his earliest followers. In the New Testament, we come to understand the New Covenant that Jesus brings (BCP p. 851). We also come to understand the incarnation of Jesus as the perfect revelation of God's nature and desire for mankind. While the Old Testament was written over a period of several hundred years, the New Testament was most likely completed within the first hundred years following Jesus' death and resurrection. Within the New Testament, we find five distinct types of writing: the Synoptic Gospels, the Gospel of John, The Acts of the Apostles (history), the epistles (letters) and Revelation (an apocalyptic style of writing).

The first four books, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are called the Gospels, or Good News. In them we learn about the events of Jesus' life, the healing and nature miracles he performed, and the parables of the Kingdom of God which he taught. As we recall these event, miracles and parables, we ask again, who is this Jesus who we see through the lens of scripture?

The first three Gospels, the so-called Synoptic Gospels, tell the earthly story of Jesus as seen by participants and observers of the time. Each writer had a specific group for whom the "book" was written. (Matthew: the Jews in Syria, Mark: non-Christian Romans, Luke: non-Christians- Gentiles). As a result, each offers unique perspectives with emphases on Jesus as fulfillment of scripture, Jesus as servant of God, and Jesus as the compassionate Son of Man.

The Gospel of John differs from the first three in that it emphasizes Jesus as the Son of God. Whereas the Synoptics seem rather factual, as if one were reading the news in the newspaper, The Gospel of John is full of interpretation on the meaning of Jesus’ life, somewhat like an editorial. In John, we see much of the symbolic language we associate with Jesus, such as The Word, Shepherd, the Lamb of God, Light, Vine, Bread of Life, Bread of Heaven, Gate, Path, Living Water.

In the Episcopal lectionary Gospel reading, we read each of the Synoptic Gospels for one year of the three-year cycle. The Gospel of John is interspersed throughout all three years. In this way, we learn the "facts" from a different perspective each year, but have opportunity for "commentary and interpretation" every year.

The book of the Acts of the Apostles is a lively book, written by the same author who wrote Luke. (See Luke 1: 1-4 and Acts 1: 1) In Acts, we follow the apostles and Paul in their lives, travels and teachings as they spread the news of Christ to the Jews and Gentiles. From the moment the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) to the conversions of Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9), to the arrival of Paul in Rome (Acts 27,28), the trials, joys and tribulations of the early church are described and made real through this action-packed narrative. To understand that the Christian faith grew from such a humble origin is to know a miracle from God took place. As we travel our own journeys of faith, the faith of those early church leaders can't help but inspire us.

The letters, or epistles, make up the majority of the books of the New Testament. Paul and others wrote these letters to individuals or groups within the early church. (Ex: Corinthians to those in Corinth, Romans to those in Rome, and Ephesians to those in Ephesus). While the letters reflect specific issues that the recipients were experiencing in their newly found faith, they also lay out matters of Christian doctrine and conduct applicable to all who read them. It chronicles the beginnings of a theology and life in Christian community.

The final book, The Revelation to John, is a special type of writing called apocalyptic writing. This type of writing, through symbolism and images, depicts the battle of good and evil, the forces for and against God. It was written to encourage the oppressed Christians at a time when the Romans were persecuting them. It creates a vision of God's final victory over evil and the redemption of His purposes in the world. The book of Revelation contains both glorious and disturbing images. Rather than use it as a prophetic vision of what is to happen in the modern world or the future, it is more appropriate to regard it as literature which builds up belief that, despite mankind's tendency towards destruction, God's ultimate purposes of peace, justice and love will be the final word.

Taken as a whole, the New Testament defines and directs our faith as Christians. Whereas in the Old Testament we become acquainted with our faith roots and the personalities that carried on that faith through the centuries, in the New Testament we come to know Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Lord, Savior and Redeemer. We gain a more perfect understanding of God, His care, love and requirements for us. We come to understand His magnificent grace (a gift we
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<tr>
<td>SYNOPTIC GOSPELS (Matthew, Mark, Luke)</td>
<td>Life of Jesus, Parables, Miracles, Death and Resurrection</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOSPEL OF JOHN</td>
<td>Same as above, with more symbolism and emphasis on Jesus’ divinity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPISTLES</td>
<td>Letters from Paul and others to individuals and to the new Christian communities in Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REVELATION</td>
<td>Apocalyptic writing: Vision of the end time; a book that builds up hope and belief for those persecuted for their faith</td>
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The Christian Faith
Lesson 7

Christian Hope and Salvation
Students will learn about the promise of Jesus’ return and eternal life with God and how we experience a foretaste of the Kingdom in our lives now. By means of a simple Bible study, students talk about our hope of eternal life. Their confusion or lack of understanding about the future take the form of questions for God in prayer. Students use their imagination to make simple renderings of their idea of heaven on "Paradise Plates." Reflection on the lesson encourages students to articulate their concerns and hopes for the coming of the Kingdom of God as well as how we experience a foretaste of the Kingdom in the present.

**Intro Activities**
Paradise Plates/blank CD’s

Students let their imaginations run wild, drawing pictures of heaven on paper plates or blank cd’s.

**Going Deeper**
Simple Bible Study

The Leader guides the students in contemplating a passage about eternal life by asking questions and recording answers on newsprint. The final result is a prayer telling God what has been learned and what questions remain.

**Reflection**
Sin and Salvation

A look at the definitions of these words and what these words mean to us as Christians

**Action**
Footprints and a taste of the Kingdom

Students make a bookmark with a “footprint” as a gift to someone who has been instrumental in their lives.
Paradise plates.

Give each student a large, thick paper plate or blank CDs and ask them to draw a picture of heaven on it with magic markers (or whatever they choose), remembering that it's all we could ever hope for and it centers on the presence of God. Present them to the class and share what's behind the drawings.

Mount the pictures on the wall with masking tape, or with clothes pins on a string.

Simple bible study of 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1

The Leader asks one person to read the passage aloud.
Leader: Think for a few minutes in silence about the passage. What word or phrase floats up in your mind?

The Leader writes them on newsprint.
Leader: Read the passage aloud again. What emotion or feeling comes with the words? Let's think about those feelings in silence for a minute before sharing them out loud. After some quiet What feelings did you have?

The Leader writes them on newsprint.
Leader: Read the passage again. What questions would you like to ask God about what has been read and shared? "Let's be quiet for a minute and think about our questions." After some quiet, "What are your questions for God?" The Leader writes them on newsprint. Finally, help the class write a brief prayer, telling God what you've learned and what you need.
**Reflection**

Discussion Questions
Write these definitions on a black board or large piece of paper for everyone to see:

**SIN:**
- a transgression of a religious or moral law
- a separation from God

**SALVATION:**
- deliverance from evil or difficulty
- A deliverance of man or his soul from the power or penalty of sin

Questions help uncover students’ concerns and hopes for the Kingdom of God and how we experience a foretaste of God's Kingdom in the present.

Read Psalm 27:1-5
- What was David thinking about here?
- How does this relate to us now?
- What helps us trust God's love and care for us, now and forever?
- In what ways have we had a glimpse of God's kingdom in our everyday lives?

**Action**

Footprints and a taste of the Kingdom

Read Micah 6:8
- How does this verse compare with the 10 commandments?
- How does this verse compare with Jesus’ new commandments?
- We get glimpses of Heaven (or salvation, or the Kingdom of God) everyday. Can you think of a time when you felt close to God?
- What can help us be more aware of these moments?

Have students press the pinkie side of their fist onto an ink pad and then onto a bookmark. Then, by dipping their little finger in the ink, make “toes” above the fist/foot. Have them give this as a gift to someone who has been instrumental in their lives with a favorite verse on it.
Background Information

Jesus' Return
We don't know when it will happen, or exactly what it will look like, but we hope and believe that Jesus will come again. The Creeds and our Catechism affirm in a few words what the New Testament tells us often and with mysterious imagery that Jesus will return. Mark 13:32 says we don't know the day or the hour, but only the Father knows when the Son of Man will return. Mark's chapter 13, Luke's chapter 21 and Matthew's chapter 24 tell about dramatic events that come before Jesus' coming again. Many see Revelation as providing evidence of what the end time will look like. But all these pictures are mysterious and not meant to be read like a code revealing what we can't know. John 5, and of course John 3:16, assure us that believing in Jesus means we'll have eternal life with God, and we needn't fear God's judgment.

Eternal Life with God
God has given us a "living hope" through Jesus' resurrection from the dead and that includes ultimate salvation waiting for us in heaven (1Peter 1:3-5). Paul explains that we must die in order to be raised to eternal life (1 Corinthians 50-57). No one knows what heaven is like, but we trust that we'll be with our Lord and Savior (John 14:1-3; 2 Corinthians 5:8), and best of all, that we'll become like him (1 John 3:2-3). We're confident that being with Jesus will be living in paradise (Luke 23:43). The gift of salvation is more than forgiveness of sin and assurance of eternal life with God after death. Christians experience salvation in the present. Christians are confident, having boldness in the face of opposition (Acts 4:13), peaceful (Ephesians 2:13-14), and joyful in the midst of suffering (1 Thessalonians 3:6-9). Christians have the power to work wonders such as healing (Acts 4:30). In Christ we are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17-22), and the focus of our lives changes from selfishness to service (Romans 12:9-21). Whenever we experience salvation in our lives now, we're experiencing a hint or glimpse of eternal life with God when his Kingdom comes in fullness.
Episcopal Identity
Lesson 1

The History of the Church
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
OF THIS SESSION

As young Episcopalians about to be confirmed, it is important for them to have an understanding of the historical roots of their church and tradition. By knowing “who they are” they will be better equipped to profess their faith in a culture that is increasingly both secular and dogmatic. This, hopefully, will give them (as a recent theme of the Diocesan Youth Department states) “A Place to Stand”.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
Unity in Diversity
A creative exercise designed to experience unity and diversity

Going Deeper
Episcopal History
An opportunity to hear about and discuss the growth of the early Christian church and the Anglican/Episcopal Church in particular. Continued use of the Time Line

Reflection
Why Episcopalian?
An opportunity to investigate what makes the Episcopal tradition unique and meaningful to them

Action
Working it out
A service project to support an national, diocesan or parish outreach program with reflection
The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ…But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.

Unity in Diversity:

Students will work in teams with set “perspectives.” Each team describes a selected item from their assigned “perspective.”

Leader: As the church, we proclaim ourselves to be One Body, the Body of Christ. Yet in reality, we come to the truth of God molded by our personalities, our life history, our prejudices and our culture. Finding unity in our diversity is the challenge of our times. This exercise will provide the students an opportunity to sense the “one” in “many voices.” Students view the same object but see it differently.

1. Select one item or picture of an item (suggestions: a colorful diagram of a double helix, www.genome.gov/11006909; a panoramic view of Mars from the Mars Rover, nssdc.gsfc.nasa.gov/photo_gallery/photo-gallery-mars; the Washington Monument, a mountain, a humpback whale, a picture of your church).
2. Divide the class into groups. Each group will be labeled as one of the following: artists, scientists, mothers and fathers, news reporters, 8 year olds.
3. Ask each group to spend 5 minutes writing down words or phrases which describe or in some way convey what they see in the object and what it means to them. They must keep their comments consistent with the perspective of the group “label.”
4. Ask a spokesperson from each group to select 3 words or phrases they have written down that describes what they “see” or “has meaning for them.” Write the responses on the board.

Materials needed:
- Item chosen by the leader (suggestion under the instructions)

POINTS TO PONDER:
1. Questions to pose:
   - What do you notice about the responses? (each is different)
   - What reasons could you give that would explain the different things “seen?” (come from a different point of view, perspective; reality that is observed is a reflection of our past experiences)
   - Draw the students’ attention to the Church. We all are the Body of Christ. Christ calls us to be “one, holy, catholic, apostolic.” We all look to Christ and God’s truth, but often we come up with divergent views (look at the number of Christian denominations and traditions).
   - Solicit comments on what might or might not be God’s “perspective” on our multitude of church communities.
Students continue to add to the classroom Time Line while learning of the history of the church from the first century to the twenty-first century.

**Time line cards needed:**
- Pentecost – 30 CE
- Christianity becomes official religion of the Roman Empire – 312 CE
- Great Schism of the eastern and western church – 1054
- Protestant Reformation – Martin Luther – 1517-1560
- Henry VIII breaks ties with Rome 1554
- First prayerbook by Thomas Cranmer – 1549
- Queen Elizabeth I completes the establishment of the Church of England – 1570
- First American bishop, Samuel Seabury consecrated – 1784
- First General Convention of the Episcopal Church USA and first American Episcopal prayerbook authorized-1789
- Full communion of the Episcopal Church with the Evangelical Lutheran Church – 2000

**Leader:** From the day of Pentecost to the present day, the church has grown from a small band of followers to a worldwide church of many Christian traditions. This church grew in influence over the centuries through man-made institutions and political power. It grew despite great disagreements (Council of Nicaea, the Great Schism and the Reformation), for as one Body, it whatever manner chosen, the church universal proclaims Jesus as Lord, the unifier in the midst of divergent paths.

The sheet labeled Time Line – Church History and the church history Appendix D fully describes and lays out the progression of that history, with particular attention to the establishment of the Anglican church and the Episcopal Church. As you proceed with this Going Deeper exercise, be prepared to lay out this history as God’s continuing guidance of his church into all truth.

**A Closer look at the Time Line of our Church History**

Distribute the ten Time line cards to the students. W GOD-TV is coming to get an interview with the students about this amazing “thing” called the Christian Church. Put the students in groups and have them tell the story of how the church started and its history. (from Pentecost to the 21st century -use the narratives and time line sheet for guidance). Video the interviews and playback to class!

**POINTS TO PONDER:**
- Put students in groups and explain the following: You have been hired by an AD Agency to come up with a strategy for growing a church. What would you focus on? Each group should have at least 8 points. Present to class.
- How do you suppose the church grew so rapidly in size and influence in the first 1500 years after Christ (genuine work of the Holy Spirit, state sponsorship, establishment of church institutions, power and hierarchy, missionary activity, growth of monasteries and church academia)?
- The Anglican Church is viewed as the “via media,” the bridge between Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. What characteristics do we have which are similar to each of these traditions? (Catholic: liturgy, creeds, apostolic succession, Protestant: individual revelation of scripture with the help of the Holy Spirit, no Papal authority.)
- In 1620 a Rev. Robinson, quoted here, said to the Pilgrims who were setting sail for America, “Remember God has yet new light and truth to break forth from his holy word.” What can you say about the developments of “the church” in light of this statement, which clearly declares that the Holy Spirit is still active and leading us to the truth? (Men of good, and sometimes bad will, seek God’s truth. Some have searched solely in scripture, some rely on their own experience and many in service to others. Past experiences and personality influence what we comprehend as truth. **Anglican history emphasizes the unity of the church as we live in the tension of the “not yet understood.” Learning to wait on God’s revelation is what Anglicans over the centuries have shown to be a valuable strength.**)
Reflexion

Why Episcopalian?
Through discussion, students will reflect on their own experience in the church, what makes it unique and why they choose to worship in the Episcopal Church.

Leader: Living in the deep South, our youth are exposed to many different worship traditions through their friends, youth groups and family members. Living in the increasingly dogmatic and yet secular society of the United States makes finding where they stand in faith perhaps more difficult in this new century. It is important for them to recognize that despite cultural pressures and a variety of Christian traditions, there is the belief that unifies – Jesus Christ. It will be helpful in their journey if they can articulate what it is that makes their Episcopal experience meaningful and central to their lives.

Instructions
Enter into the discussion of their life in the church by posing these questions:

- How long have you been a communicant in the Episcopal Church?
- What is important to you in this church? (possible answers: youth group, weekly Eucharist, singing, the people, what the church looks like, it is close to home, my friends come here, my parents bring me, the prayerbook, it’s like a big production; we are always moving around during the worship service, potluck suppers, Sunday School, acolyting, the bishops, it’s quiet at the beginning of the service, baptisms, confirmations, opportunities to help others, special events such as the blessing of the animals, etc.)
- Do you know about or have you attended other churches other than the Episcopal Church? How were they alike, how were they different? What did you like?
- Do you think being a Christian is hard in our society?
- In what ways can you enter into the life of the church more? (participate in EYC, go to Sunday School more regularly, ask a friend to come to church, help with a church project, be an acolyte, be a good friend, attend Camp McDowell, learn more about the Bible, pray, read about Jesus, etc.)

Action

Working it Out
Present the class with information about Episcopal Relief and Development www.er-d.org, the Bishops’ Easter Fund www.dioala.org, the Sawyerville Work Project, www.sawyervilleworkproject.org or other ministries of the diocese or your own parish. Have them select one area and carry out a project to “serve” that agency or ministry.

Take time to have discussion before and after the project to answer:

- Why does the church “do” outreach?
- What are our expectations for ourselves when we participate in outreach?
- What do we expect the recipients to gain by our outreach activities?

End by saying a prayer:

Lord, thank you for being at my side. Thank you for loving me. Thank you for this church home where I can know you more and more. Amen

Materials needed:
- Openness
- Honesty
- Respect for others
A Brief History of the Church

Just what is the church? Is it the building, the clergy, and our liturgical style of worship? Is it the committees, the youth group, the visits to those who live alone? The catechism in the prayerbook notes that we, drawn together in the Body of Christ, are called to be one, holy, catholic and apostolic church. We are to worship, pray, and minister to others with love. And who is to do this? All ministers, both lay and ordained.

This call to those who would call themselves Episcopalians is centuries old. To understand the church’s place in the world and one’s place in the church, we can trace our roots; they may point to where we are going.

Following the Day of Pentecost, the church began to grow. Begun simply with the apostles and other believers meeting in one another’s homes to share the holy meal, belief in Jesus Christ quickly spread throughout the Roman Empire. In 312 CE, the Emperor Constantine proclaimed Christianity to be the state religion of the Empire. In 458 CE, after one and one-half centuries of debate, the Nicene Creed was approved as the unifying statement of belief of the Christian church. A church hierarchy developed, missionaries were sent to outlying areas (such as Britain) and authority was firmly established in the Papal Seat at Rome. Life in Europe was centered on the church for hundreds of years. In 1054 the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches broke off relations. This was termed the Great Schism. The Catholic Church, however, continued to grow in size and influence.

By 1517 Martin Luther in Germany, disillusioned with what he felt to be corruption of the church, instigated the Reformation (the reforming of the Catholic Church) by posting his 95 Theses on the church door in Wittenburg. Dramatic changes in Europe led by Zwingli, Calvin and others soon led to a church divided over matters of doctrine, structure and authority, all in the name of searching for God’s truth. Soon afterwards, King Henry VIII threw off the authority of the Pope in England because of a dispute concerning a divorce from his first wife. With the help of Parliament, Henry was declared supreme head of both church and state. Church leaders in England were deeply influenced by the theological ideas of Luther and the English Reformation began, led by Thomas Cramner and other bishops. It was Queen Elizabeth I, Henry’s third child to occupy the British throne, who firmly established the Church of England (Anglican). This church, with its own prayerbook originally written by Thomas Cramner in 1549, was independent of Rome with the monarch as its head. Continuing in the essentials of the early church and ridding itself of some of the doctrinal and practical innovations of the Middle Ages, (Holloway, p. 40) the Anglican Church is sometimes referred to as the “bridge” church, the “middle way” or the “via media”. It is neither fully Protestant nor fully Catholic. While it maintains the episcopate (bishops) as in the Roman church, it does not subscribe to Papal authority. While adhering to core beliefs, it makes room for individual revelation of God’s truth with the help of the Holy Spirit. In addition, Anglican belief suggests that tradition/experience and reason serve as methods by which individual interpretation can be tested and corrected.
During Queen Elizabeth's reign, colonial exploration began in the Americas. The first Anglican settlement was in Jamestown, VA in 1607. As the colonies blossomed, so too did the Anglican Church, but authority rested in the mother country. All ordinations took place in England and the colonies had no bishops of their own. With the end of the American Revolution, change came. Once freed of British rule, the American churches had no way to ordain their bishops, as the British bishops refused to ordain American bishops because they (the Americans) would not make an oath of allegiance to the King. Therefore, in 1784, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Seabury of Connecticut traveled to Scotland where he was ordained by Scottish bishops who were not bound by the laws of the Church of England. Apostolic succession survived and America had a bishop. Note: the flag of the Episcopal Church of the United States recognizes by colors and symbols both its English and Scottish connections.

By 1789, the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States was established at the National Convention held in Philadelphia, the first American prayerbook was authorized.

The 19th century saw great growth in missionary work, Christian education, the establishment of church-affiliated colleges and universities, and intense work on the social issues of the day. During the Civil War, the Episcopal Church divided into North and South, but reunited at the end of the conflict.

The 20th century has seen the re-writing of the prayerbook (1928 and 1979) and the ordination of women in 1976. Social activism and mission work have been main activities of church outreach. Ecumenicalism, the reaching across to other Christian traditions, has just recently seen success in the full communion of the Episcopal Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America in 2000.

We are a church of 2.5 million. We have a common history and liturgy. Our membership is diverse, representing a multitude of racial groups and opinions, but we are united in tradition and our belief in Jesus Christ as Lord. Guided by the Holy Spirit, our church and its members will continue to seek out God's will and work towards His purposes, so that we can truly say we are accomplishing the mission of the church in "restoring all people to unity with God and each other in Christ." (BCP pg. 855)
## Time Line—Church History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30CE</td>
<td>Christ’s Death and resurrection/Pentecost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>312</td>
<td>Early church fathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600</td>
<td>Christianity becomes official religion of Roman Empire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1054</td>
<td>Great Schism (break between Eastern and Western churches)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1517</td>
<td>Martin Luther (beginning of Protestant Reformation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1534</td>
<td>Henry VIII breaks ties with Rome (no Papal authority)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1549</td>
<td>1st prayerbook by Thomas Cranmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1570</td>
<td>Complete and autonomous Establishment of Church of England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1607</td>
<td>1st permanent settlement in America, Jamestown, Virginia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1775-1781</td>
<td>American Revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1784</td>
<td>Rev. Dr. Samuel consecrated America’s first bishop by Scottish bishops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1789</td>
<td>First General Convention of the Episcopal Church in the US established church Constitution and Authorized 1st prayerbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800’s (19th century)</td>
<td>Work in mission overseas and nationally, establishment of strong Christian Education and church-affiliated colleges and universities and attention to personal spirituality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900’s (20th century)</td>
<td>Social mission Women in the ordained clergy Ecumenical efforts (ELCA) Revised prayerbooks Interest in personal spirituality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Episcopal Identity
Lesson 2

The Book of Common Prayer
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS SESSION

In this session the class will be introduced to some of the history of common worship, as well as the history of the Book of Common Prayer. They will be given opportunity to explore the prayer book and thus become familiar with many of its parts.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
A taste of 15th century worship in England
This activity will give the class a chance to experience what it was like to be “in church” in the 15th Century. The teacher reads the text provided (in Latin) while students see, feel, and hear what was a typical service.

Going Deeper
Timeline:
Events are added as dates to the Timeline.

Reflection
A look inside our Book of Common Prayer
In this activity, students draw question cards out of a hat. The class can work together to find the answer to each question. These cards can be cut as puzzle pieces that then fit into a large outline of a prayer book. Reflection can be accomplished as the class writes its own collect for a specific event or purpose.

Action
To go further, the class can raise money (car wash, bake sale...) to buy and dedicate a BCP for the parish.

Or, design a cover for a “new” BCP.
GOALS:
- To be introduced to the history of worship and our Book of Common Prayer.
- To be able to find things inside the BCP, and use it in worship.

Materials needed:
- room set-up
- copy of prayer
- bell

Intro Activity:
The students experience what is was like to participate in part of a service in the 15th Century.

The students should sit (in rows of uncomfortable chairs, if possible) while the teacher stands as far away as possible (down the hall, or at least turn your back), and mumbles the creed provided in handouts and materials. A bell is rung after the prayer, which indicates the people are to respond, “AMEN.” In this activity, be sure the students understand that the priest is acting as an agent FOR the people, TO God. The bell is to assure that the people stay awake, and aware of the place in the service. It would be hard to do so with no understanding of the language (Latin), and no ability to read. Time allotted for this activity depends on interest and discussion that follows.

POINTS TO PONDER:
1. What was it like to experience Worship in this way?
2. What did you like/dislike?
3. How much did you learn from this experience?
Going Deeper...

Continue with a deeper look at how several things happened in history to change the way people worshiped. Add these events to the timeline in the classroom that was started last class.

1. The printing press was invented in 1470.
   It took a while to get into use everywhere, but it enabled the every-day man to have books available, and many people learned to read.

2. The Protestant Reformation occurred in 1517.
   Martin Luther denied the authority of the Pope and emphasized the principle that every person was equally loved by God, and that works were not as important as faith actions, which were not as important as a personal relationship with God. The every-day man became/felt himself capable of his own personal faith and wanted to participate in worship.

3. The Church of England was established in 1534.

4. The Book of Common Prayer was written in 1539 by Thomas Cramner for King Edward the 7th. It was revised in 1552, and again in 1559. The revision in 1662 is still used in England today.

A look inside our Book of Common Prayer

The Book of Common Prayer defines us as Episcopalians. It is our link with the church in the past. It embodies our faith, our ministry, and our way of worship. It is also a living link with Scripture.

Let’s take a look inside. Each student draws a card (or puzzle piece) from a “hat.” On each card is written a question found in handouts and materials. The class works together to find the answer and write it on the card. The cards are displayed on the wall, or can be pieced together to make a picture of a Prayer Book.

Materials needed:
- index cards or cards cut into puzzle shapes
- if doing a puzzle, you will need a large outline of a Prayer Book
- Prayer Books
- Dictionary
- tape or glue
- pencils

Materials
- cards or symbols of each event/date.
- tape or clothes pins

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Reflection

Write your own collect to be used in a worship service.

Tell the class they have been asked to write a Collect. Choose an event or purpose such as Prayer for Confirmands, or Prayer for Peace in the World.... Have the class discuss what they want to be included and why. Have someone take notes and then have the class put the ideas together into a prayer. This prayer could be used in a worship service at a particular time.

Action

An opportunity to donate a Book of Common Prayer

Perhaps the class would enjoy hosting a bake sale, car wash, or something else in order to raise money so that you could buy a new Book of Common Prayer for your parish, dedicated by the class.

Extra... Perhaps your class would enjoy designing a cover for a “new” BCP. What kinds of pictures, words, colors....do you want to include, and why?

Materials needed:
- black board or flip chart
- chalk or markers
- Prayer Books for reference

Did you know that Jefferson Davis went to church at St. John's in Montgomery and the pew he sat on is still there?
The history of the Episcopal Church and its Book of Common Prayer (BCP) is closely related to the history of the United States of America and its government. After achieving freedom from England in 1783, our ancestors set out to establish a new country and a new church. They did not want to be a part of the Church of England any more than they wanted to be a part of the government of England. (They did not want to pray for the Queen anymore, but instead, they would pray for whom?...the President of the US.)

There had never been any colonial Bishops, but churches in America relied on a strong laity, and each new state seemed to have its own church organization and leadership. The Connecticut Episcopalians wanted a bishop, and nominated Samuel Seabury in 1783. In order to be ordained a Bishop, a priest must have three (3) Bishops lay their hands on him.

Seabury was denied consecration in England, so he went to Scotland. (That is why our Episcopal flag looks a lot like the flag of Scotland, and we have many Scottish prayers in the BCP.) There he was consecrated the first Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the USA. Now the church began to get more organized, and had a convention on September 27, 1785. At this convention, the constitution and the prayer book were begun. By Convention of 1789, the church had organized itself into two houses (clergy and lay) like Congress with its Senate and House of Representatives. The American environment challenged Episcopalians to be religiously inclusive. After all, we were first colonized by people in search of religious freedom. Leaders sought to make it a place where diverse and even antagonistic interests could still make common prayer. Here, the word common does not mean ordinary, or mundane, nor does it mean frequent or often. It means together, as one, in common.
Questions needed for Going Deeper Activity

What is the Psalter?
( the Books of Psalms from the Bible; A body of liturgical poetry....pg 582).

In our church calendar there are 2 kinds of feast and holy days. How are they determined?
(BCP page 15)

What are some of the Principal Feasts observed in the Church?
(BCP page 15)

What are some Movable Feasts observed in the church?
(BCP page 15)

What is the formula for finding Easter Day?
(BCP page 880)

On what day will Easter fall in the year 2045?
(BCP PAGE 881)

What is the Lectionary?
(BCP page 888)

What are the Lectionary readings for Epiphany in Year C?
(BCP page 912)

What is a collect?
You’ll need a good dictionary for this. (It is a prayer for the whole congregation, “collectively,” which has gathered (“collected”) on a specific day.
Page 158)

What does Liturgy mean?
( the work of the people).

On what page does the Service for Holy Baptism begin?
(BCP page 299)

On what page does the Service for Confirmation begin?
(BCP page 413)

What questions will the Bishop ask you during the Confirmation service?
(BCP 415)

You may need to add more if you have a large class, or select a few for a smaller class.
Feel free to add any questions that may pertain to your parish, or have significance to class members.
Nicene Creed in Latin needed for the Intro Activity

The Nicene Creed – in Latin

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentum, factorem caeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium.

Et in unum Dominum Iesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula. Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero, genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri; per quem omnia facta sunt. Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de caelis. Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est. Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato, passus et sepultus est, et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas, et ascendit in caelum, sedet ad dexteram Patris. Et iterum venturus est cum gloria, indicare vivos et mortuos, cuius regni non erit finis.


From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.
Episcopal Identity
Lesson 3

The Episcopal Church in the United States
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
OF THIS SESSION

In this session we want to be sure the students understand
the hierarchy within the Episcopal Church (Including the
Anglican Communion) from the level of the laity to the
Archbishop of Canterbury. We hope they will gain a bet-
ter understanding of The Episcopal Church Structure and
realize the many faces and voices with our church and how
we are connected in the Body of Christ. At the same time
our church was being formed, so was our country, and a
lot of our forefathers were Episcopalian. Because of this,
our government and our church are very similar in
structure and in function. The Episcopal Church is very
similar to our government in that we also have a hierarchy
of power and structure.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
Flash Card Activity: US Government vs. the Episcopal Church

In this game students will visually see the parallels between our governmental structure
and the structure of the Episcopal church. Large Flash Cards allow the students to
match up the corresponding positions.

Going Deeper
Explore the definition and responsibilities of these positions within the church

This is an opportunity to talk in depth about these positions and duties and use fruit to
explain the different denominations.

Reflection
Reflection about the make-up of our Episcopal Community throughout the world

During this activities, student will be given a hypothetical colony of 100 people and a
map of the Anglican Communion and be challenged to make the colony of 100 reflect
our diversity as a church as a whole.

Action
Put the Church structure into Action

Have students investigate who within their diocese and parish holds these positions
and maybe even have them interview a member of their church structure.
Episcopal Diocese of Alabama

US Government vs. the Episcopal Church

Students match up flash cards that parallel our government structure and Episcopal structure

Create flash cards using the following words, one word per sheet:

The World
USA
President
Congress
Senate
House of Representatives
State
Governor
State Legislator
City
Mayor
City Council

Anglican Communion
Episcopal Church
Presiding Bishop
General Convention
House of Bishops
House of Deputies
Diocese
Bishop
Diocesan Convention
Parish
Rector & Associate rectors
Vestry

Starting with our government structure, have the students place the sheets in order of power and authority.

LEADER: At the same time our church was being formed, so was our country, and a lot of our forefathers were Episcopalian. Because of this, our government and our church are very similar in structure and in function. The Episcopal Church is very similar to our government in that we also have a hierarchy of power and structure.

Take out the other sheets of paper containing the words of the Episcopal church structure (one word per sheet). Have the students “match up” which of these words parallels our government structure. After each match is made, you may want to explain and talk about each level of the Episcopal Church (defined below) and then continue on to the next word. Tape these side-by-side on the wall. To continue this activity further, on separate pieces of paper, print the names of the people who hold these positions within your Diocese and parish and see if your students can match the name with the corresponding position.

Scripture Reference: Galatians 3:24-29: So that the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

GOALS:
- To better understand Church Structure
- To realize we are many faces and voices but are connected in the Body of Christ

Materials needed:
- Flashcards
- Copies of handout
- Tape

ACTIVITY:

US Government vs. the Episcopal Church

Students match up flash cards that parallel our government structure and Episcopal structure

Create flash cards using the following words, one word per sheet:

The World
USA
President
Congress
Senate
House of Representatives
State
Governor
State Legislator
City
Mayor
City Council

Anglican Communion
Episcopal Church
Presiding Bishop
General Convention
House of Bishops
House of Deputies
Diocese
Bishop
Diocesan Convention
Parish
Rector & Associate rectors
Vestry
Going Deeper...

Continue with a deeper look at the definition, responsibilities and make-up of each of the levels of the Episcopal Church.

In the handouts section of this lesson, you will find more detailed information about these levels of our church. Use this as a parallel to our government structure to help the students understand the structure of the Episcopal Church in the USA.

NEXT:
- Take a bowl of fruit and use the following examples to illustrate the point:

  **The Roman Catholic church is like an apple.** There is a central core of doctrine (the Magisterium) and one central authority (the Pope and curia) around which the church is formed. There is one inclusive skin around the apple; you are either in or out.

  **The Orthodox Churches (Greek, Bulgarian, Russian, etc..) are like an orange.** Each segment is individual from the others but there is a skin of tradition and theology which envelopes each section and holds its unity. If you are not in the skin, you are not in the orange. Each section can have its own seed (bishop/metropolitan) and there can be great variety in pulp, but it is still an orange.

  **The Anglican Communion is like a bunch of grapes.** Our 38 provinces are bound together in mutual affection and mission but are autonomous and self-governing. Like a bunch of grapes, we hang loosely together connected to the central branch through the Archbishop of Canterbury. But, each individual grape has its own skin (essential unity) and seed (essential identity-bishop). They can be separated from each other and still maintain their structural integrity— they are autonomous and individual.

  **Protestant Churches are like strawberries.** For the most part, they were their essential identity (seed) as a doctrine label on the outside. Presbyterians are Presbyterians because they insist on Presbyterian government. Baptists are Baptists because they insist on a certain kind of baptism. Methodists are Methodists because their beginnings were based in the same methodical study of scripture and daily prayer that still is taught in those churches. Like strawberries, when the clump gets crowded for space, or when there is stress in the environment, they send out shoots or runners and begin a different plant, which can, oddly enough, bear a slightly different shape and color or berry than the parent plant.

  *Throw in Some honey (the Word of God) and some cinnamon (Holy Spirit) and enjoy the fruit!*

Materials needed:
- Copies of handout
- An apple, orange, bunch of grapes, strawberries, honey, cinnamon
We are many faces and voices. Native American, Latino, African American, and others with different ideas and beliefs, but we are all connected in the Body of Christ.

Here is a list of all the members in the worldwide Anglican Communion. Look at the list of the different countries. What does this list tell you about the diversity of our church?

Each group is given a piece of paper and asked to make a “pie chart” indicating the diversity of the Anglican Communion.

**Reflection**

**Action**

An opportunity to discover the hierarchy in your church

Have the students go out and find out who in their parish/diocese holds the positions discussed in the Introduction activity and Going Deeper.

Extra... Have the students choose one of these positions and interview the person within the church who holds the position selected and report on it next week.

Members of the Anglican Communion

- Australia
- Bangladesh
- Bermuda
- Brazil
- Burma
- Burundi
- Canada
- Central Africa
- Central de America
- Congo
- Cuba
- England
- Falkland Islands
- Hong Kong
- Ireland
- Japan
- Jerusalem & The Middle East
- Kenya
- Korea
- Melanesia
- Mexico
- New Guinea
- New Zealand
- Nigeria
- North India (United)
- Pakistan
- Philippines
- Polynesia
- Rwanda
- The Scottish Episcopal Church
- Spain
- South East Asia
- South India (United)
- Southern Africa
- Sudan
- Tanzania
- Uganda
- USA
- Wales
- West Africa
- West Indies
Information needed for Going Deeper

Anglican Communion:
The Episcopal Church is a province of the Anglican Communion, which means we are in fellowship with other churches who recognize and are under the spiritual oversight of the Archbishop of Canterbury in the Church of England. Every ten years, each member of the Anglican Communion sends a representative to the Lambeth Conference where they discuss matters affecting the world.

Episcopal Church:
During the Reformation, the Church in England became the Church of England, stating their independence from the authority of the Pope. In 1607, settlers brought the practices of the Church of England to Virginia, and this form of religion spread through the thirteen colonies. Later, after the American Revolutionary War, the church was forced to reorganize because we had cut all ties with England. In 1784, Samuel Seabury was consecrated as our first American Bishop and in 1789 a new denomination was formed called the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, or the Episcopal Church for short. Note: The word Episcopal means “overseer” which we use to recognize the authority of our Bishops.

Presiding Bishop:
Also called the primate of the Episcopal Church, this person is elected at General Convention and serves a 9 year term. The Episcopal Church does not refer to its head bishop as an archbishop, and his offices are in New York City at the national headquarters of the Episcopal Church. He/she is the chief administrator and spiritual head of the Episcopal Church, and his responsibilities include: Ordination of Bishops, oversee the entire church, lead meetings of the House of Bishops, and represent the Episcopal Church to other members of the Anglican Communion.

General Convention:
National Legislative assembly of the Episcopal Church that meets every three years to set church-wide policy and budget. It is made up of two legislative bodies: the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies. Each Diocese elects representatives to be present at General Convention.

House of Bishops:
All Diocesan, Suffragan, Coadjutor, assisting, and retired bishops are members of this body which makes up one of the two legislative bodies at General Convention. Sometimes this body meets in between conventions.

House of Deputies:
At Diocesan Convention, four lay people and four clergy are elected in each diocese. These eight people are sent to General Convention and, combined with the eight representatives from all the other dioceses, they make up the second legislative body at General Convention.

Diocese:
The Episcopal Church is split into many areas geographically. Each area is called a Diocese and is overseen by a Bishop.

Bishop:
The chief spiritual and administrative person of the Diocese. Bishops preside at Diocesan Convention, ordination of priests, and Confirmation. They are required to visit every parish in their Diocese.

Diocesan Convention:
This event takes place every year. Each parish elects lay representatives to be present at Diocesan Convention with their clergy members. This is where most business, policy-making and other diocesan-wide issues are addressed, decided and conducted. Diocesan Committee members and Deputies to General Convention are elected here.
Parish:
The group of people of a certain area who are organized into a local church who gather weekly to worship together and celebrate the Eucharist. Usually led by one or more clergy, parishes are self-supporting and have their own legislative body called the vestry.

Rector:
As head of the parish, this is an ordained person whose chief responsibility is to conduct sacramental and liturgical practices for their parish. This person is elected by the vestry.

Vestry:
This is a group of men and women from within the parish, elected by the congregation of that parish. The vestry is the decision-making body of the parish and is responsible for calling the rector, setting the budget, and deciding other policies of the parish. Each vestry has a Senior and Junior warden who serve as the chair and vice-chair of the vestry.
Draw a line between the position within the Episcopal Church and its corresponding governmental structure position.

Or

Make separate cards for each word: put the U.S. Government in order first and then have students place the church cards in corresponding places.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S. GOVERNMENT</th>
<th>EPISCOPAL CHURCH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Diocesan Convention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>Vestry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House of Representatives</td>
<td>Anglican Communion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The World</td>
<td>General Convention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Rector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>House of Bishops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayor</td>
<td>Episcopal Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>Presiding Bishop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Legislature</td>
<td>Diocese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City</td>
<td>House of Deputies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Council</td>
<td>Bishop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Episcopal Identity
Lesson 4

Worship
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS SESSION

The Book of Common Prayer offers us a guide, framework, outline, etc., for worship. We worship not only with the members of our parish, but with Anglicans throughout the world. When we celebrate the Holy Eucharist on a Sunday morning, we do so with the Anglicans in Indonesia, Australia, Japan and many other places throughout the world. If you walk into the tiny parish of Santa Rosita in Chasniqua, Honduras, you won’t need to understand Spanish to keep up with the liturgy. It follows the same exact sequence and flow as we use on Sunday mornings in Alabama. Anglicans are a people of worship who use a book of Common prayer.

We will explore what we do when we worship and why we do it and how we can experience worship as both an individual and community encounter with God.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
Book of Common Prayer “Quiz”
Students will answer a few questions about our common worship.

Going Deeper
Discovering our Common Worship
Go over the answers of the quiz in depth.

Reflection
Stained Glass Window Project
Students will make a stained glass window out of tissue paper illustrating the Sacraments and the seasons of the church year.

Action
Liturgical Charades
I. This quick activity is a fun way to introduce why we do what we do in worship. It is called Pew Aerobics.

Make a card for each word. Put cards in the order indicated. Flash the cards fast in front of the students and have them do what is on the card. Initiates lots of laughs.

Kneel – before the service
Stand – sing the processional hymn
Stand – for the opening prayer
Sit – to hear the lessons read
Stand – for the hymn before the gospel
Turn right or left and face the center – for the gospel procession
Turn back to front and sit – for the sermon
Stand – for the Nicene Creed
Kneel or stand – for the prayers of the people
Kneel – for the confession
Stand and shake hands – at the peace
Sit – for the offertory hymn
Stand – for the Great Thanksgiving prayers
Kneel or stand – for the prayers of consecration
Sit – while you wait to take communion
Stand – to go to the altar
Kneel – to take communion
Stand – return to pew
Kneel – to offer prayers after receiving communion
Sit – to sing communion hymns
Stand or kneel – for the post communion prayer
Stand – for the closing hymn and blessing

Intro Activity:

GOALS:
- Explore what we do when we worship and why we do it
- Experience worship as both an individual and community experience with God
- To connect how we worship with the various parts of our liturgy

Materials needed:
- Cards with words
- Copies of the questions for the quiz
- Pencils
- Book of Common Prayer for each student
- Copy of last week’s service sheet
II. Students will explore our common worship through a brief “quiz”

Let’s start this off with a “quiz” about worship in the Episcopal Church. No, you won’t have to mail it in to the Bishop to be graded and the young people you are working with will never know if you passed unless you choose to tell them. The first five questions are straight out of the Book of Common Prayer. You use it every Sunday and have probably flipped through the pages more than once during the sermon. Try these from memory (no looking in your BCP or looking ahead for the answers). Here goes…..

As the students arrive pass out copies of the quiz with the following questions:

1. On what page in the BCP does the usual Sunday morning worship begin?
2. How many scripture readings do we have during the Eucharist?
3. What are the seven Sacraments?
4. Which services in the BCP celebrate each of these Sacraments?
5. Which service begins with the words, “The Lord Almighty grant us a peaceful night and a perfect end. Amen.”

BONUS QUESTIONS
1. What is a rubric?
2. How many people does it take to have worship?
3. SUPER BONUS: Where in the BCP does it recommend that all persons have a valid will?

Materials needed:
- Answers and information found in Teacher Background Information
- Liturgical Calendar large enough for everyone to see
- Seasons of the Church Handout
- Personal journals

Going Deeper…

This is an opportunity to discuss the answers to the quiz in detail.

- Use the unanswered bonus question as an opportunity to talk about worship as we did in the introduction. Emphasize the Sacraments and the liturgies we use to celebrate each.
- Using the liturgical calendar, walk them through the seasons and the purpose of each. Have them spend time journaling about how they are applied to their everyday life.

Reflection

Stained Glass Window project

The purpose behind the stained glass window project is to illustrate that liturgy, the sacraments, the seasons of the year, and everything else about our worship can be seen as a “window” to God’s grace. God’s grace is always poured out upon us and worship helps us see the beauty of God’s love.

Follow the instructions found in “Handouts and Materials” to create a stained glass window illustrating the Sacraments. Display the window somewhere in your church.
Liturgical Charades

Write the following words on a set of note cards. If you have a large group, you will need several sets of cards:

- Prayer
- Praise
- Sing
- Communion
- Thanksgiving
- Listen
- Baptism
- Ordination
- Healing
- Bishop

- Book of Common Prayer
- Hymnbook
- Bible
- Psalm
- Scripture
- Communion
- Confirmation
- Confession
- Marriage
- Priest

- Form everyone into small groups, 2 groups if you have a small group of young folks, an even number of small groups if you have a larger group. The cards should be placed in a hat, basket, or box so they can be drawn at random.
- In turn, a member of the group will draw a card and the rest of the group will attempt to guess what is on the card as in a normal game of Charades.
- The group must also find an example of the subject in the BCP.
- Time limit is 3 minutes for each card drawn.

OR...

If your priest is able to be with you, close with a simple Eucharist. Your priest can help you plan it. If he/she cannot be with you, have one of the young people lead the group in Evening Prayer. You could also split up the liturgy between several young people. This will require some advanced preparation on your part.

One Step Further:

Point out, the section for daily devotions in the BCP. Encourage your young people to use these devotions throughout the week.
Answers to the quiz and information for “Going Deeper”

1. The Holy Eucharist Rite I begins on page 323 in the BCP and Rite II on page 355. There are options that would change the beginning page number and if worship in your parish begins on a different page, ask your priest about it.

2. There are usually up to 4 scripture lessons in the Eucharist. The first reading is from the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, or the Acts of the Apostles. The second lesson is from the Psalms. The third is from the Epistles, the Acts of the Apostles, or Revelation. The fourth is from one of the Gospels. Not every parish uses all four so your worship may be a bit different.

3. Baptism, Holy Eucharist, Confirmation, Unction, Reconciliation of a Penitent (sometimes called Confession), Holy Matrimony, and Ordination

4. You will find liturgies by the same name for each in the BCP.

5. Compline, BCP page 127

6. Bonus Question #1: A Rubric is a direction in the BCP and usually is printed in italics.

7. Super Bonus Question: In the rubrics at the end of the liturgy for A Thanksgiving for the Birth or Adoption of a Child

You are probably wondering why I didn’t answer Bonus Question #2. Mainly, it is because that is sort of what the rest of this lesson is about. If we think that Episcopal worship is about the Book of Common Prayer, well then we may need to rethink our understanding. Worship is about you and me and God. The answer to our as yet unanswered bonus question is one person to however many you can imagine worshipping together plus God. You can worship with many others. You can worship as one and God will always be there.

Now someone will likely point out that the scriptures tell us in Matthew 18:20 that it takes two or three gathered for God to show up. Not quite! Go back and read the whole chapter. It won’t hurt to read all of Matthew while you are at it. It won’t take long. Time and time again you will find where Jesus addresses one person’s faith. So, take faith – add God’s promised presence – and you have worship. Add a few more folks up to that already mentioned - as many as you can imagine - and you have the Community of Faith worshipping.

The Book of Common Prayer offers us a guide, framework, outline, etc., for worship. We worship not only with the members of our parish, but with Anglicans throughout the world. When we celebrate the Holy Eucharist on a Sunday morning, we do so with the Anglicans in Indonesia, Australia, Japan and many other places throughout the world. If you walk into the tiny parish of Santa Rosita in Chasniqua, Honduras, you won’t need to understand Spanish to keep up with the liturgy. It follows the same exact sequence and flow as we use on Sunday mornings in Alabama. Anglicans are a people of worship who use a book of Common prayer.
There is, of course, more than one way to worship. Each of the sacraments is celebrated with a different liturgy. Many parishes have Morning and Evening Prayer during the week. Compline is a favorite evening form of worship at Camp McDowell. There are devotions for use at home and liturgies for particular days and seasons of the Church year. Take a few moments and thumb through the BCP to discover the many forms of worship we use in the Episcopal Church.

However, worship is not just about reading and listening. To put it another way, worship involves active participants, not passive spectators. The word "worship" comes from Old English and Middle English words meaning to offer worth or honor. If we consider the different parts of our Anglican liturgy, this makes sense. Each worship service in our BCP includes prayers of praise, adoration, petition, and confession. We always read scripture when we worship. There are creeds which put into words the beliefs we hold as Christians. Lest we forget, we are both a people of words and music. From hymns to psalms, Alleluias to anthems, our music echoes the words we offer in our common worship of God.

I could go on and on about our worship, and volumes have been written, but hopefully you are beginning to get the idea. In this session, we will be exploring our Episcopal worship through the BCP. Remember, worship is about God and us and the prayer book can be our guide.
How to make a temporary Stained Glass Window from tissue paper

Stained-glass windows permit colorful light to play on your walls and floors. Here is an easy way to create the same look using tissue paper and laundry starch. This is a great, temporary way to illustrate the Sacraments and the Seasons of the Church year. If you do not have a window available at the parish for this project, use a glass door or even a sliding glass door at a parishioners house.

1. Draw a pattern for your "stained-glass" window. It should be the same size as the actual window. Use butcher paper or newsprint to draft your design. Use the symbols of the sacraments such as a baptismal font, wedding rings, the Bishop’s hands for confirmation and ordination, etc.

2. Purchase tissue paper in a variety of colors. Use lighter colors for the background of your design, with darker colors in the foreground to make your creation stand out.

3. Tear or cut the tissue paper into pieces. The pieces will fit into your design like a mosaic.

4. Begin by placing the background pieces of tissue onto the pattern. Use different colors of the same hue for a dramatic effect. For example, you might use light green, lime green, yellow green and blue green for the background.

5. Tear more pieces of tissue to form the main body of the design. If your design is light-colored, such as a yellow bell, leave a void in the background so that the color can shine through clearly.

6. Fit the pieces together loosely. Overlapping is good - it will create a beautiful effect.

7. Paint a small section of the window with liquid laundry starch.

8. Place the torn tissue directly on to the prepared area of the window, smoothing it into the wet starch.

9. Work small areas of the window at a time, painting on the starch and laying in the tissue. Mistakes make for interesting designs!

10. Continue to paint the starch and lay the tissue until the design is complete.

Tips:
A small piece of cardboard makes a perfect squeegee to press out the major wrinkles.

Leave areas of clear glass so that you can see outside and allow a bright beam of light to shine through.
**SEASONS OF THE CHURCH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEASON</th>
<th>COLOR</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advent</td>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>Four weeks of solemn preparation for Christmas. The word Advent means “to come.” We are celebrating the coming of Christ into the world and into our hearts.</td>
<td>Think of a time when it was hard for you to “wait” for something you wanted. What was that like?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>12 days beginning December 25th; the birth of Jesus Christ; God’s gift to the world.</td>
<td>What is the best gift you have received? What made it so special?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epiphany</td>
<td>White &amp; Green</td>
<td>This is when we celebrate the coming of the wise men to Jesus’ birthplace. Emphasis on the missionary work of the church for the whole world.</td>
<td>Think of a time when your help made a difference in another’s life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lent</td>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>Represents the forty days of temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. It is a time to think about the ultimate sacrifice Jesus made for us.</td>
<td>What is your greatest temptation? How do you deal with your temptation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Week</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>The week from Palm Sunday to Easter; the last week of Jesus’ human life.</td>
<td>Name someone who has been influential in your faith journey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Friday</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>The Friday of Holy Week; the day Jesus died on the cross</td>
<td>When was a dark time in your life?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter</td>
<td>White</td>
<td>The resurrection of Jesus and his ascent into heaven, fifty days of Jesus’ appearance to the Apostles after his death.</td>
<td>Think of a time when you had a surprise visitor? What was that experience like?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecost</td>
<td>Red</td>
<td>The birthday of the Church; represents the time when the Holy Spirit was sent to empower those who believed in Jesus Christ.</td>
<td>Think of a time when you wanted to give up but found the strength to continue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundays After Pentecost</td>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Celebrates the idea of God as Trinity. We think about the teachings of Jesus and the events of his life on Earth.</td>
<td>Journal about an “aha” moment that was significant to you.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DID YOU KNOW?**

There are 4 colors that we use to represent the Seasons of the Church. Each color has a meaning that matches the mood of that season or day.

**GREEN:** Represents growth, learning and hope

**WHITE:** Represents celebrations

**PURPLE:** Represents a time for preparation, to get ready for something big to happen

**RED:** Represents blood, sacrifice and the fire of the Spirit.
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS SESSION

The goal of this lesson is to introduce the 7 Sacraments of the church, and the meaning of an “outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.” The students will learn why we do some of the things we do, and begin to put a level of understanding with the symbols we use.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
The Name Game and sacrament handouts
Each student shares their name and where it came from. An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace: a deeper look into the Sacraments and their symbols and meaning

Going Deeper
A deeper look at the Great Sacraments
A deeper look into the Eucharist and Baptism

Reflection
Write Invitations
Each student writes an invitation to send to family members to come share in their Confirmation.

Action
Bake bread
For use in a Eucharist service. (Eucharist)
Design and make a chasuble for your priest to wear. (Ordination)
Leader: We were all given our names at Baptism, often when we were babies and given as a child of God. Let's share when and where we were baptized (if you know) and tell us your full name and how you got your name (if you were named after anyone, etc).

Continue this exercise until all have shared.

Continue this exercise by reading the section in the Catechism in the Book of Common Prayer (pg. 857) about Sacraments.

Leader: A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given by Christ as a sure and certain means by which we receive Grace.

What does this mean?

After a few minutes of discussion, pass out the handouts and have them work on them in groups. Go over the answers and have groups share.
Going Deeper…

Leader: Which two of the Sacraments are known as the The Great Sacraments?

- Why do you think Jesus chose a simple meal, a common Jewish celebration, in memory of Himself?
- What are the implications of His choosing the “family” meal with bread and wine, which involve man’s work and the gifts of God’s creation?

List some of the healing miracles of Jesus. Which ones were physical healing and which ones were spiritual?

Reflection

Have the young people create invitations to their upcoming Confirmation, that they can send to loved ones whom they would like as witnesses to this sacrament.

Action

- Bake bread to be used in next Sunday’s Eucharist (Eucharist).

OR

- Design and make a chasuble for your priest to wear. (Ordination)

Materials needed:
- Paper and pens
- Construction paper
- Markers
- Ingredients to bake bread
- Muslin cloth
- Paints
Brief Information about the Sacraments

Look on page 857 of the BCP to see our definition of Sacraments. It is important that you and the students know what these words mean. It is recommended, also, that the class memorize this definition and be able to say it easily. “Outward and visible sign” indicates something that we can touch and see. “Inward and spiritual grace” indicates something that is an undeserved gift from God, that we can only feel inside.

The Episcopal Church recognizes 7 sacraments. Two of these we know as The Great Sacraments. These are Baptism and Holy Eucharist. They are instituted by Christ they were performed by Him, and we are instructed to “do this” by Him). and are necessary for salvation.

Baptism comes from the Greek “baptizo”, meaning to dip or to wash. Water is the outward and visible sign, and the inward and spiritual grace is the gift of initiation into God’s family. Water, present at creation, represents our new birth. At the crossing of the Red Sea, the Israelites were freed from their bondage in Egypt, and given a new life in the promised land. In the same way, we are washed of our sins, forgiven, and given new life. At Jesus’ baptism, he was empowered with the Holy Spirit and given the strength to begin His new life and ministry. At our Baptism, we are also given the gift of the Holy Spirit, and given strength to begin our life and ministries within the church family. We are also given our name at Baptism.

Holy Eucharist, also known as The Lord’s Supper, Holy Communion, and The Great Thanksgiving, is the central act of worship in the Episcopal Church. The bread and the wine are the outward and visible signs, and the grace to live up to our responsibilities is the inward and spiritual grace. The sharing of a meal was a powerful Jewish tradition remembering the Passover – the occasion in which the Angel of Death passed over the homes of the Israelites as it plagued the Egyptian homes with the death of the first-born child in each home. This was the last and most horrible plague that the Egyptians bore as Moses pleaded with the Pharaoh to “let his people go.” (Exodus 12:1-30).

The other 5 Sacraments are derived from church practice and are not considered necessary for salvation. They are Confirmation, Ordination, Holy Matrimony, Reconciliation of a Penitent, and Unction.

At Confirmation, the outward and visible sign in the laying on of hands by the Bishop. The inward and spiritual grace is the renewing of the covenant of Baptism. In this rite, we express a mature commitment to Christ, renew our Baptismal vows, and make a public and personal promise to follow Christ. Bishops used to baptize, confirm, and celebrate Holy Communion all in one service. But, as the number of Christians grew, Bishops could not be in all the places they needed to be. So, now we allow ordained priests to baptize their parishioners and to celebrate the Eucharist. Bishops are still required to lay their hands on each confirmand in the Confirmation service. Confirmation used to precede “admission” to the Eucharist, but today most churches let any baptized Christian share the bread and wine.

The outward and visible sign of Ordination is, again, the laying on of hands by the Bishop. You can be either ordained as a deacon or priest. A priest can be ordained by one Bishop, after meeting all the requirements of our canons. A Bishop must be consecrated by having at least three other Bishops lay their hands on his/her head, after being duly elected. Bishops can do all of the duties of a deacon and a priest plus he/she is the priest of a diocese, and can confirm and ordain deacons, priests, and other Bishops. The inward and spiritual grace is that the person is given the authority to perform certain duties in the church.
Brief Information about the Sacraments

A priest can do all of the duties of a deacon plus celebrate communion, absolve sins, and baptize, and is the spiritual leader of a church or parish.

There are two kinds of deacons; transitional and permanent. A transitional deacon is one who is ordained first to the diaconate and approximately six months later ordained to the priesthood. A permanent deacon is just that, permanent and is not on the ordination track.

In the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, the prayers and vows and rings are the outward and visible signs of the inward and spiritual grace to live up to those vows. It is a lifelong union between a man and a woman in which the vows they make are a covenant with God and with each other. The church is a witness to these vows. (Do all of you ……:"We will")

In the Reconciliation (making things right) of a Penitent (one who is truly sorry and changes his behavior), confession is the outward and visible sign, and forgiveness is the inward and spiritual grace. It is the Sacrament that embodies the story of The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-31). Penitence is more than being sorry. It is being sorry plus changing our behavior. Forgiveness is unconditional and does not require that we be perfect.

Unction is the sacrament that uses oil and touch as the outward and visible sign for the inward and spiritual grace of healing. It is the healing of the whole person – mind, body, and spirit – as in Jesus’ miracles.
Sacraments

A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given by Christ as a sure and certain means by which we receive Grace.

**BAPTISM**
The outward and visible sign is:

The inward and spiritual Grace is:

**HOLY EUCHARIST**
The outward and visible sign is:

The inward and spiritual Grace is:

**CONFIRMATION**
The outward and visible sign is:

The inward and spiritual Grace is:

**ORDINATION**
The outward and visible sign is:

The inward and spiritual Grace is:

**HOLY MATRIMONY**
The outward and visible sign is:

The inward and spiritual Grace is:

**RECONCILIATION OF A PENITENT**
The outward and visible sign is:

The inward and spiritual Grace is:

**UNCTION**
The outward and visible sign is:

The inward and spiritual Grace is:
## Sacraments

Draw a line from each word or statement on the left to the Sacrament it is part of.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word / Statement</th>
<th>Sacrament</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Ring</td>
<td>BAPTISM</td>
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<td>Water</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laying on of Hands</td>
<td>HOLY MATRIMONY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Making the Sign of the Cross</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forgiveness</td>
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<td>New Life</td>
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<td>Healing</td>
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<td>Renewal of Promises</td>
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<td>Confession</td>
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<td>Christ’s Body and Blood</td>
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<td>Authority to Absolve Sins</td>
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<td>Grace</td>
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<td>Wine</td>
<td>UNCTION</td>
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Episcopal Identity
Lesson 6

What is the Church?
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS SESSION

The goal of this lesson is to introduce the various definitions of the word “church.” and have the students discover that they are a part of something that is world-wide, historical, inclusive, and changing.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
Scavenger hunt
This lesson has the class searching for puzzle pieces placed about the parish, bringing these back to the classroom, and fitting them onto an outline of the church. The pieces involve a definition of “church” that is found either in the Bible, the BCP, or the Hymnal.

Going Deeper
Tinker Toy Construction
Small groups use a set of Tinker Toys to construct their concept of “the church”.

Reflection
Definition Match-up
Handout is completed by the class in groups of 2, 3 or as a whole. Please discuss the definitions with the class to be sure they understand them.

Action
Fix up your parish
How about a class service project making improvements in or around your parish building?
Scavenger Hunt

On one sheet of poster board, draw and color a large picture of a church – include doors, stained glass windows, steeple) Cut this picture out. Place this cut-out shape on top of another sheet of poster board, and trace the outline of it. Do nothing with this second sheet until later. Now, take the cut-out picture of the church, and on the back draw puzzle-shaped pieces within it. Eleven shapes are suggested, but read the entire directions and decide how many is best for your group. Cut these out. On the back of each puzzle piece, write one of the following references:

- Romans 12:4-5
- Matthew 16:18
- Mark 16:15
- Nicene Creed (one)
- Nicene Creed (holy)
- Nicene Creed (catholic)
- Nicene Creed (apostolic)
- BCP page 308 – We receive you…
- BCP page 365 – Send us out…
- Hymnal page 528
- Hymnal page 529

Before class, tape the puzzle pieces conspicuously in places throughout your parish/church that are places of ministry. (These places should be accessible to the students during your class time, and not in places where they will interrupt others.) Include the Nursery, the Choir Room, the office, the pulpit, the Baptismal Font… Be sure to plan the number of cards to support the places of ministry and the number of class members. When you decide where you will place or tape the puzzle pieces, write on a 3X5 card a clue that will send the students to the various places where you have hidden a puzzle piece. (Where babies are tended = the Nursery, Where the Word of God is taught each Sunday = the pulpit).

In class give each student (or group of students) a clue card, make sure they know where to go, and send them off on the Scavenger Hunt to bring the puzzle piece back to the classroom. This part of the activity gives the students an idea of their church as a building, housing many ministries. When the students have returned, have each one read the reference on the back of his/her piece. As a group, find the references using Bibles, BCPs or Hymnals. The students bring their puzzle pieces up to the front of the room where the poster or the outline is featured. (It can be taped to the wall, or resting on a chalk tray…) On the outside of the drawing, alongside each puzzle piece, write a few words that indicate the definition of “the church” that has been referenced. Continue to do this until all pieces are in place and the perimeter of the drawing has been emphasized with phrases of definition. There will be some empty place at the top of the poster that is to one side of the steeple. In this space write the following: The C H _ _ C H

Is not The C H _ _ C H

Unless _ _ in it!!!

The students will discover that the letters “U” and “R” have been left out. Be sure that they understand that they, indeed, are vital members of the family of God, the Episcopal family, and the family of the parish.

Scripture Reference: Romans 12:4-5 For just as we have many members in one body, and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
**Going Deeper...**

Tinker Toy Construction Crew

Divide the class into two groups. Give each group a set of Tinker Toys. The directions are, “Make the church using what’s in this set.” The groups will come up with various ideas of what the church looks like – some interpretations will be replicas, some will be less representational. Discussion should include the reasoning behind the design of each group’s “church.”

OR

Have the students draw it on butcher paper

OR

Have the students use themselves or other convenient material

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**Reflection**

**CHURCH DEFINITION MATCH-UP**

Match the following sentences with these definitions of “church.”

1. The body of all Christians throughout the world
2. A building for public worship
3. A congregation
4. A religious service
5. A specific denomination
6. Ecclesiastical power as distinguished from secular power
7. The clergy

The Christian church is active in many countries.

(this would fall under #1 – or you may have discussion)

Our church is on Elm Street.

(#2)

I belong to All Saints’ Episcopal Church.

(#3)

I go to church on Sunday mornings.

(#4)

I belong to the Episcopal Church.

(#5)

The church has a powerful lobby in Congress.

(#6)

The church was represented at the meeting by Rev. Jones.

(#7)

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**Materials needed:**

- 2 Tinker Toy sets or Legos

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**Materials needed:**

- List of the 7 sentences posted where all can see it
**Action**

Take the class into your church sanctuary. Have them each draw everything they see in the room. (It does not need to be exact, but you do want to emphasize details and "everything." After an ample amount of time, bring the class together either there in the sanctuary or back in the classroom. Look at what everyone included in their picture, and discuss whether it is an important piece in our worship, and why (or why not), and if it falls into one or more of the definitions of “church” given in the Reflection Activity.

**Materials needed:**
- Drawing paper
- Pencils
Episcopal Identity
Lesson 7

The Unique Episcopal Church
Continuing with the theme of “A Place to Stand”, the goal of this lesson is to provide young Episcopalians an understanding of the differences between their denomination and others. This is especially important in a religious culture that is dominated by other traditions. In school the students are likely to hear comments about the Episcopal Church that are unflattering and, usually, far from accurate. As a denomination, we tend not to “toot our own horn” much or loudly. It is rare to see an Episcopal service on television. Therefore, it is important for the students to understand that our tradition is unique in many important respects and has much to offer. However, keeping in mind the unity of all Christians in Jesus Christ, the discussion must not become an exercise in “we’re right, they’re wrong.”

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
Discussion Activity
A discussion activity to explore experiences with other denominations.

Going Deeper
At look at other traditions
A more detailed examination of the differences between the Episcopal, Roman Catholic, and other Protestant denominations.

Reflection
What does being an Episcopalian mean to you?
What aspects of our tradition are positive or troubling?
What does it mean to be an Episcopalian?

Action
Experience other traditions
Schedule visits to churches or synagogues founded in other traditions.
Discussion Exercise

Leader: Bishop Parsley, in his address to the 2005 Diocesan Convention, quoted a former Bishop of Mississippi in saying about the Episcopal Church “these times were made for us and we were made for these times.” Our approach to dealing with controversial issues in a manner that is focuses on the community and on our ministry to the community is grounded in our Anglican tradition. As a church that places more emphasis on sharing Christ’s love than in expounded the “right” doctrine, worship, or theology, we have much to offer a troubled world.

In this exercise, the student’s will identify aspects of our tradition that differ from other denominations and begin to understand how those differences can enhance the ministry of the Episcopal Church and its members.

1. Ask the students who have attended other churches what differences they noticed between the other churches and theirs. The leader should participate by sharing his or her experiences. Record responses on newsprint.

2. Ask the students what brought them, their parents, or grandparents to the Episcopal Church, or why they stay. Record responses on newsprint.

3. Ask what the students have heard from non-Episcopalians about the Episcopal Church. Record responses on newsprint.

POINTS TO PONDER:
1. What are possible reasons for the differences? What did you learn from the History of the Church lesson that may shed light on the reasons?
2. What about other traditions seems good to you? What would trouble you?
3. Ours is not the largest denomination in the South. What attracts people to other denominations?
Further exploration into different traditions

Using the information in the Teacher background information, facilitate conversations about differences between other traditions and the Episcopal church.

Points to Ponder:

- So what are the essentials of the Episcopal Church’s faith? (The Chicago/Lambeth Quadrilateral from 1886 identified four things: Holy Scripture, the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, the Nicene Creed, and the historic episcopate – that is the apostolic succession of bishops. This intentionally leaves a lot of room for other beliefs, interpretations, and practices. The leader might wish to look at p. 876 in the BCP for a further discussion of the Quadrilateral. Other answers to what is essential might be sharing Christ’s love, understanding of ministry, community worship, etc. It will be interesting to learn what the students see as the essential characteristics of the Episcopal Church.)

Reflection

What does being an Episcopalian mean to you?

Richard Hooker was an influential Anglican priest during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. He is credited with developing or defining much of the via media, or the Anglican approach. One quotation attributed to Hooker is:

“Pray that none will be offended if I seek to make the Christian Religion an inn where all are received joyously, rather than a cottage where some few friends of the family are to be received.”

Leader: It will probably be clear to the students that large numbers of people are drawn to denominations that are more willing to tell their members what to believe. Explore with the students the advantages and disadvantages of the Episcopal Church’s approach, and what it means in terms of the individual’s responsibility. Emphasize the importance of study, prayer, thought, and ministry, as a community and as individuals. It might be helpful to review the Catechism questions on ministry and mission.

Since we are not a denomination that tends to enforce a specific doctrine or understanding of our faith, we allow a wide diversity of opinion. How is this helpful? How might it interfere with the growth and work of the church? What does it mean to you? What responsibilities does this place on you?
Leader: The ultimate goal of this lesson, in conjunction with the other Episcopal Identity lessons, is a student that can articulate what it means to be an Episcopalian. The following actions are designed to assist the student in developing an understanding of our similarities and differences with other traditions and an understanding of why the student would want to be confirmed in the Episcopal Church.

1. If possible, attend services as a class at churches in other denominations. Make note of differences and similarities. Possibly with your Rector’s assistance, try to arrange an interview with clergy or lay leadership at these churches to ask about their understanding of worship and ministry.

2. Ask each student to imagine that they are explaining the Episcopal Church to a non-Episcopal friend. On paper or note cards, ask them to write down the points they would make. Share their explanations with the rest of the class.

Concluding Prayer

O God, who created all peoples in your image, we thank you for the wonderful diversity of races and cultures in this world. Enrich our lives by ever-widening circles of fellowship, and show us your presence in those who differ most from us, until our knowledge of your love is made perfect in our love for all your children; through Jesus Christ our Lord. (BCP p. 840)
You’ve learned that the founders of the Anglican Church sought a middle-way or via media between the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant churches. What do we seem to share with the Roman Catholic Church that is different from most Protestant Churches? Answers might include:

- Bishops in an apostolic succession
- Recognition of Christ’s presence in the sacrament of the bread and wine
- Liturgical similarities. For most (Lutherans, Methodists, some Presbyterians are exceptions) Protestant denominations preaching is the centerpiece of the worship service. This is reflected in church architecture, where the pulpit is the primary focus in the Protestant churches and the altar is the primary focus in Roman Catholic and Episcopal churches.
- Nicene and Apostles’ Creeds
- Use of the Apocrypha
- Acknowledging the importance of early Christian theologians in developing an understanding of Christianity.
- Allowance of infant Baptism. In most (not all) Protestant churches, adult or teenage Baptism is the norm.

Our traditions, and our understanding of the importance of the historic Christian tradition, are so closely bound that Roman Catholics do not have to be confirmed when they join the Episcopal Church; they are received instead.

What differences from the Roman Catholic Church do we share with other Protestant denominations?

- We do not recognize the authority of the Pope.
- Our understanding of the role of the clergy differs. In the Roman Catholic tradition, clergy are seen, to a large extent, as intermediaries between God and the people, and the primary interpreters of scripture. This is one source of the rules about celibacy. In the Episcopal Church, the ministry of a priest or bishop has well-defined responsibilities, but is not viewed as higher as or lower than that of lay persons. Furthermore, we believe that the Holy Spirit aids all people in interpretation of Scripture.
- We are not required to believe that the bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Christ, with their physical appearance as bread and wine only an “accident”.
- Lay persons share authority in the Episcopal Church. In the Roman Catholic Church, ultimate authority rests with Bishops and the Pope.
- Clergy leaders are elected in the Episcopal Church, bishops by their dioceses and rectors by vestries. They are appointed in the Roman Catholic Church.

How are we neither Protestant nor Roman Catholic?

- The Episcopal Church tends to be less doctrinal than either the Roman Catholic or other Protestant denominations. As a result, we tolerate a diversity of opinions and beliefs about our faith. Disagreements are prayed about, studied, and discussed in love and charity, not decided by an arbitrary authority. All parties in the disagreement are encouraged to remain in the community, instead of expelling the losing party.
Brief Information about the Sacraments

- Our understanding of the bread and wine are different from the Roman Catholic Church, as described above, but also different from Protestant Churches, in that we acknowledge Christ's presence in the bread and wine, even though the materials are still bread and wine. Most Protestant Churches view Communion as a remembrance of Christ's sacrifice, without Christ's presence in the bread and wine (or grape juice).

- Authority in the church is shared between clergy and laity. As described above, ultimate authority in the Roman Catholic Church rests with bishops and the Pope. In most Protestant denominations, ultimate authority rests with the lay congregation or with councils of lay persons. In the Episcopal Church, authority is shared. At the national level, legislation must be approved by both the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies (lay persons and priests). The Presiding Bishop answers to the House of Bishops, instead of being like a Pope or Archbishop that supervises the other bishops. The Presiding Bishop is elected by the House of Bishops, but the election must be approved by the House of Deputies. At a local level, vestries (elected lay persons) select the Rector and can ask a Rector to leave. However, the Bishop has a say in the selection of a Rector and must be involved in a serious dispute between the Rector and vestry.

- Our understanding of the one catholic church as the Body of Christ means that we accept all Baptisms. Someone coming from another denomination does not have to be “re-Baptized” in the Episcopal Church.

- As with the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches, Scripture is central to our worship and our understanding of God and Jesus Christ. In fact, most of Holy Communion service comes directly from scripture. However, the Episcopal Church and our Anglican tradition stress the importance of human understanding, guided by the Holy Spirit, and experience in the interpretation of scripture. (This emphasis on human understanding and experience is what Richard Hooker described as "reason," in describing our faith as based on scripture, tradition, and reason.) Most Protestant churches view a more or less literal reading of scripture as the primary source of understanding of God’s will. The Roman Catholic Church relies heavily on a tradition of Church teachings. We place a responsibility for reading, studying, and thinking on each member, with the expectation that they will be guided by the Holy Spirit. (From the Baptism service: Give them an inquiring and discerning heart … BCB p. 308).

- Ministry is not just a clergy function. In fact, in the Episcopal Church all lay persons are considered ministers, and the lay person’s work outside the church is considered just as valuable and holy as the priest’s work inside the church. Our church’s canons (laws) on ministry state that “Each diocese shall make provision for the affirmation and development of the ministry of all Baptized persons.”
Responding to God’s Love
Lesson 1

Prayer
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS SESSION

PRAYER IS LISTENING FOR THE HEARTBEAT OF GOD
Will you continue in the Apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
I will, with God’s help.

Do you remember your last good conversation? Consider all that made it an enjoyable experience. A conversation worth remembering includes both speaking and listening. You share important parts of your lives. You may laugh, cry, and even feel your blood pressure rise a bit. Good conversation values those who take part and their thoughts, feelings, ideas, and opinions. Prayer is not all that different. In fact, Alan Richardson calls prayer a conversation with God.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
Conversation Is not just talking
Students will explore the different types of prayer through conversation.

Going Deeper
Anglican Prayer Beads
Continue the exploration of prayer by making prayer beads.

Reflection
Compose the Prayers of the People
Using the instruction in the Book of Common Prayer, students will write their own version to be used in a worship service.

Action
Parish Prayer list
Students write notes to those on the prayer list.
And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by men. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. "And in praying do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

A Conversation with God
Students will explore different forms of prayer.

Much of this lesson will be a time for prayer, so you will need a quiet place.

- You will need enough candles to spread throughout the place you have chosen for prayer. Many altar guilds keep a supply of old candles that are too short for use in worship, but can be used for other church events. These candles should be able to sit on the floor with a piece of wax paper underneath each one to catch any wax. I would not recommend using candles that the young people hold, such as the candles used at vigils or on Christmas Eve. Votive candles work particularly well.
- Bring as many religious symbols, crosses, icons, etc. as you can find.
- Bring a CD or cassette player and meditative music.
- If you have a small, desktop fountain for the sound of water, that can be a good addition to the prayer time.
- If you choose, come up with a “God” costume. It can be just about anything you think the Almighty might actually wear.

1. As the young people arrive, have them place the candles and religious symbols throughout your worship area. Do not light the candles. Remember, the more candles the better. Have them write a question they have for God on an index card and then have everyone sit on the floor. It is okay for them to visit while others are still arriving. Have music playing, the fountain running, and the lights high enough to read, but low enough for a prayerful atmosphere.

2. When everyone has arrived and is seated, ask one of the students to sit in the middle. Take up all the cards and redistribute them. It works best if everyone is seated on the floor, however if you need a chair that’s okay. From the handout, talk about the different forms of prayer in section 2. Do not give out the sheets until the end of class. This will encourage listening and discourage trying to light the paper once the candles are lit.
a. Have the students around the circle ask the question to the person inside the circle. Have them talk about the question. (right answers are not the point here—conversation is the point) Invite them to have a conversation. Let the conversation continue for as long as seems best. Switch out the person in the middle and proceed with another question.
b. Point out that prayer has been defined as a “conversation with God” and get their thoughts.
c. Talk about the forms of prayer with which we are most familiar.
d. Talk about the forms of prayer such as meditation, praying with scripture, prayer beads, etc.
e. Have everyone come up with a word, verse or short phrase that reminds them of God. You might want to share yours or examples from several others to help the young people who might be having difficulty. Explain that they will be sitting in the presence of God for a few moments and each person is to think about God being right there with them. The word, verse or phrase is to help each one connect with God.
f. At this point, light a taper or long thin candle and pass it throughout the room to light the candles. Set the lights at an appropriate level. Make sure the music is soft enough for prayer, but loud enough to be heard.
g. Spend about 3 or 4 minutes in silence.
h. After that time, ask the young people if they were able to feel God present with them. Ask what that felt like and what they said in their hearts to God.
i. Spend another 2 or 3 minutes in silence.
j. Ask them once more what it was like.
k. Blow out the candles. Turn up the lights.

Going Deeper...

Different Forms of Prayer and Anglican Prayer Beads

Anglican Prayer Beads. This is the Anglican version of the Rosary. For centuries people have found it beneficial to pray with beads. You can find a good selection of Anglican Prayer Beads at the Cathedral Bookstore in Birmingham or on the internet. They come with directions and prayers.

Think for a minute of how many different ways you know of to pray. List them on a piece of paper. Some of the common forms of prayer that you may be familiar with are found in the Background information and on the handout.

Give out the handouts, beads, and string. It helps speed things up if you have all of it together ahead of time. The string should be long enough and a durable cotton cord. Don’t use nylon cord, as it unravels too easily. Have each one make his/her own set of Anglican Prayer Beads as shown on the handout.
Compose the Prayers of the People.

Either individually or in small groups, have the group compose the Prayers of the People according to the instructions in the Book of Common Prayer, page 383.

Talk with the Rector ahead of time for any special requests or instructions. These prayers may be used at a Sunday celebration of the Eucharist or at another time suggested by the Rector.

**Materials needed:**
- Book of Common Prayer for each student or group
- Pens
- Paper

**Reflection**

Bring a copy of the parish prayer list. Have the group write notes to the people on the prayer list letting them know that they are praying for them.

**Action**

**Before the Next Class:** The young people should try out several different kinds of prayer before the next class. Some may feel okay to share what it was like to sit in silence at home or in the church when no one else but God was around.

**EXTRA....** An alternative choice for this activity is to walk a labyrinth. Have you ever walked and thought about things? A labyrinth is a circular path that takes you through your spiritual journey. Several parishes in the diocese have labyrinths, as well as Camp McDowell. It is not a maze, for there is one way in and out, but no dead ends. You walk and pray as you journey to the center of the labyrinth and your spirit. You then retrace your steps into your own world. Again, the Cathedral Bookstore in Birmingham is a good source of information, as is the internet.
Think for a minute of how many different ways you know of to pray. List them on a piece of paper. Some of the common forms of prayer that you may be familiar with are:

1. **Corporate Prayer:** A celebration of the Eucharist is a good example of corporate prayer. We are praying together. Sometimes, the entire congregation will pray aloud together such as when we offer the post-communion prayer at the end of the Eucharist. Other times, one voice offers our collected offering of prayer like when the celebrant offers the Collect of the Day.

2. **Intercessory Prayer:** This is prayer offered for others.

3. **Prayers of Petition:** As the name implies, this is a prayer where we are asking for something.

4. **Confession:** This is a prayer of offering our sins to God with the intent of amending our lives.

5. **Adoration or Praise:** This is a prayer offered in praise to God. Many of the psalms are prayers of adoration and praise. A good example of this kind of prayer is Psalm 113. Another good example found in the BCP is the Exultant in the Easter Vigil on page 286.

6. **Thanksgiving:** Again, the name tells us the kind of prayer.

The collects, prayers, and litanies of the BCP will often contain several different types of prayers all rolled into one. A good example is the General Thanksgiving at the end of Morning Prayer.

Now consider how many of those ways are more about talking to God than listening. We tend to know how to talk to God and that is an important part of prayer. However, we also need to spend some time listening and that takes some work. Much of this lesson will focus on listening to God. You may think that young people will never sit still long enough to listen to anyone, much less God who speaks in some rather silent ways. Rest assured, the activities in this lesson have been tried and they even worked.

You will hopefully find it beneficial to spend a little time exploring several different methods of prayer. Some of these may work for you and some may not. It will be the same way with the young people. Give them all a try. Many parishes have a group that explores different methods of prayer and you will find them a valuable resource. Talk with several members of the group who will probably be quite happy to help you explore some of these prayer forms.

**Meditation:** Find a comfortable quiet place to sit. If you have a CD player or cassette deck, put on some quiet, “meditative” music. Light a candle. Put a cross, the Bible, a piece of religious artwork or sculpture where you can see it. Promise yourself that you will try this for at least 10 minutes. As you sit in the quiet, think about Christ’s presence with you at this moment. You might pick a word or phrase that has a special spiritual meaning for you. If your mind wanders, bring yourself back to the presence of Christ with that word or phrase. The idea here is to listen to what God is saying to you. This form of prayer is called Centering Prayer, for it centers us in Christ.

**Praying with Scripture:** Again, sit in a quiet place. Select a favorite passage of scripture. Perhaps it will be a verse that you remember from childhood. Maybe one of the parables speaks to you. As you sit, read or say the passage very slowly in your mind and let the words speak to you. Consider what is being said. Consider what they mean to you. Find comfort and peace in the scripture. A form of this kind of praying is called Lectio Divina.

**Prayer Crosses:** Carry a cross that will fit in the palm of your hand with you throughout your day. Resolve to not put it down. Yes, it will seem a bit awkward at first, but soon it will feel less so. As you are aware of the cross in your hand, you will find yourself more aware of God’s presence with you.

There are several good books that are relatively short, and excellent resources for prayer. They can be found in the Cathedral Bookstore or from Amazon.com. Your priest can also offer other suggestions.

- **The Practice of the Presence of God** by Brother Lawrence
- **Praying with our Hands** by Jon Sweeney
- **Beginning Prayer** by John Killinger
A Prayer for Peace for Anglican Prayer Beads

**Cross**

In the Name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Invitatory Bead**

O God, make speed to save us.  
O Lord, make haste to help us.  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

**Cruciform Beads**

The peace of God be with us, the peace of Christ be with us, the peace of the spirit be with us, and with our children, with us and our children.

**Week Beads**

The peace of God, that surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds.

(After each week)  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

(When you have completed the circle and are once again at the first cruciform bead)  
The Lord’s Prayer

**Invitatory (Collect)**

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen. (BCP page 833)

**Cross**

Let us bless the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.
PRAYER IS LISTENING FOR THE HEARTBEAT OF GOD
Will you continue in the Apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers? I will with God’s help.

**Objective:** To listen and respond to God using different approaches to prayer.

**Prayer is conversation with God**

Different types of Prayer when we talk to God are:
- Corporate Prayer
- Intercessory Prayer
- Confession
- Prayers of Petition
- Adoration and Praise
- Thanksgiving

Prayers which help us listen to God are:
- Meditation
- Praying with Scripture
- Anglican Prayer Beads
- Labyrinths
- Prayer crosses

Anglican Prayer Beads are divided into four groups of seven beads that are the **Weeks**. Seven reminds us of Creation, the days of the week, seasons of the Church Year, and in the Hebrew tradition seven signifies wholeness and perfection. Four **Cruciform Beads** are aligned in the shape of a cross, the central symbol of our faith. It also suggests the four seasons, points of the compass, and the Gospels. Just as the Invitatory begins the Daily Office by inviting us to praise and worship, the **Invitatory Bead**, the bead just above the cross, invites us into the circle of prayer and contemplation.

The **Cross**, stone, or other symbol is the beginning and ending of our Rosary. As the cross is the memorial to Our Lord’s suffering and death so too is it a symbol of our redemption and a reminder to “live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.” Eph. 5:2.
Responding to God’s Love

Lesson 2

Ministry in the World
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
OF THIS SESSION

Ministry is putting Faith to Work

It has been said that Christianity is not a spectator event. We are called to active participation as a member of the Body of Christ, and the Baptismal Covenant is our call to ministry. Read through the Baptismal Covenant on page 304 in the BCP. There are no passive verbs here. Rather, we declare, “I believe.” The questions challenge us to continue in the Apostles’ teaching, to preserve, to proclaim, to seek, and to strive. Our response is, “I will, with God’s help.”

“Praxis” is the theological term to describe our faith put into action. Literally, it is the practice of the faith. This section will explore some of the ways we live out our call to be Christ in the world. Much of the emphasis is on “doing” rather than simply reading or listening to information about the topics. When young people experience their faith through ministry, connections are made with the core message of the Gospel in their own lives. Living Christ becomes much more practical rather than just a good idea.

Summary of Activities

**Intro Activities**
Role Play Eucharist
Students will explore the different roles, responsibilities, and symbols pertaining to the Eucharist.

**Going Deeper**
Discerning your personal gifts
Students discern their gifts and opportunities for serving God.

**Reflection**
We are all members of the same body
A look-deeper into 1 Corinthians

**Action**
Looking for Christ in others
Through a short meditation, students are challenged to “seek and serve Christ in all people.”
Intro Activity:

Role-Play Eucharist.

This lesson is best taught in the narthex, nave, and sanctuary.

- Gather an assortment of vestments, symbols, and other items used by different lay and ordained participants in a Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. Remember to include those things used by the Altar Guild, ushers, sextons, and anyone else you can think of who contributes before, during, and after the worship service. Decide on a symbol that will point to the folks in the pew for this will be a challenging symbol for the young people. You will also need poster paper and markers.

- On a piece of poster paper, list the participants in a celebration of the Eucharist (don’t forget the congregation). List the symbols you have collected in a different order from the ministers they are associated with. Leave room for additional entries.

- On another piece of poster paper, list just the titles of the different participants (before, during, and after) in a Eucharistic celebration.

As the young people arrive, have them select one of the symbols, vestments, etc. They should draw a line between the title of the minister and the associated symbol. Tell them not to be worried if they don’t get the one they want, that opportunity will come. They are to stand where this person serves before, during, and after the Eucharist. As they are waiting for others to arrive, they should be practicing what that minister does in or in preparation for the Eucharist.

When everyone has arrived, recreate the preparation, celebration, and cleanup from a celebration of the Eucharist.

- The young people should handle all the responsibilities they think go with their particular ministry. Give them several minutes to get into their task. There will probably be quite a bit of commotion and interaction.

- When an appropriate amount of time has passed, call out “Switch.” Tell the young people to trade places with someone else including vestments, symbols, etc. They are to now get ready for the procession.

- In their new ministries, stage a procession.

- At an appropriate time, call for a switch again.

- You can actually recreate as much or as little of the Eucharist as time allows. Fast forward to after the service and call for a final “Switch.” Take care of all the responsibilities that happen after a celebration of the Eucharist. Don’t forget things like putting up the vestments, taking care of the offering, and locking the doors.
Discerning your Personal Gifts: identify your ministry, your gifts, and your opportunities for serving God.

In the early Church, every member, from the youngest to the oldest, had a job. You didn’t just come and sit in a pew. The responsibilities were much the same as we see today in our parishes: reading the scriptures, setting up the altar, collecting the offerings, teaching children and adults, and so forth. Others took food to the hungry and sick of their community. The Church was a busy and active place of ministry. Acts 4:32-35 describes the first community of faith in Jerusalem and the importance of everyone working for the good of the whole. It is the same in our parishes today. A common mistake is to think that the clergy are the ministers and separate from the people of the Church who are only the ones ministered to.

Yet, the Outline of the Faith on page 855 in the Book of Common Prayer asks the question:

Q. Who are the ministers of the Church?
A. The ministers of the Church are lay persons, bishops, priests, and deacons.

In each of the ministry descriptions which follow all of us are called to represent Christ and his Church. Bishops, priests, and deacons are no different from lay people. Rather they are called to a special ministry within the Body of Christ. Think of the ministry as illustrated in the handouts found at the end of this lesson.

The idea behind the two triangles is that each order of the ministry is the foundation and the apex of the Church. No one order is higher or lower than another. Our bishop’s are no higher or lower than any other member of the diocese. The same is true for priests and deacons. We are all called to the ministry of Christ.

There are a variety ministries and everyone is needed, from the youngest to the oldest. The apostle Paul makes this very point in chapter 12 of his first letter to the Corinthians.

Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. (1 Cor. 12:27-31 NRSV)

All of us are needed and all of us are given gifts for ministry by God. Yet, often in the Church we make the mistake of looking for anyone who will volunteer and forget (or fail) to consider if this is a person with the spiritual gifts to minister effectively. Likewise, there are many people with gifts for a particular ministry, but either we don’t encourage them to develop and use those gifts, or worse, fail to respond when they offer themselves to the ministry of the Church. Finally, nurturing our spiritual lives is essential to utilizing the spiritual gifts God has blessed us with. As Bishop Parsley has often reminded us, we give out of our overflow and when our spiritual lives are empty, then we have nothing to give and burnout follows.

Identifying our spiritual gifts involves prayer and an opportunity to explore our different strengths and weaknesses. Spiritual gift inventories are a tool to help us discern our gifts for ministry in the Church. If you have access to the internet, you may find it a valuable exercise to take an inventory developed by the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Go to the ELCA website at:

Reflection

A deeper look into 1 Corinthians.

Gather everyone into a circle around the altar, in the nave, or wherever is best.
Read 1 Corinthians 12:14-26. Have the young people reflect on how each ministry is dependent on the other.
• Which do they think would be the hardest?
• Which would be the easiest?
• Which does each one think they would enjoy?
• Talk about the responsibilities of the ministries. What ministries might have been forgotten and what symbol could designate that ministry?

Consider the spiritual gifts you identified in the inventory from the Lutheran website if you had the opportunity to make use of this tool. Consider your gifts in light of your areas of ministry within your parish.
• Are there gifts you are currently using?
• Are there gifts you need to cultivate and nurture?
• Are there ministries you may be involved in that you don’t feel particularly suited for and why?

Action

Then read the following meditation:

An older woman sat on a park bench feeding the birds at her feet. Each day she walked to the park from her son’s home where she had lived since the death of her husband. It seemed that life had little meaning or purpose any more. Rarely did she smile. Her son worried about his mother and encouraged her to get out more. Her daughter-in-law no longer seemed as ready for her to be a permanent part of their lives. So, the woman would walk the short distance each morning to scatter birdseed.

On this day, a young boy joined her on the park bench. At first neither spoke. The woman held out her paper bag. Tommy took a handful of the birdseed and smiled. For the next hour they fed the birds. They talked about things they liked. She bought hot dogs and cokes for lunch from a vendor. For the rest of the afternoon, their lives were shared with the birds in the park.

As 4:00 p.m. came they said goodbye. The woman arrived at her son’s house just as he pulled into the driveway from work. He was amazed at how happy his mother looked. “What happened to you today?” She beamed, “I met Jesus in the park. He is much younger than I expected.”

Tommy came running through the front door and almost knocked his mother down. She caught him on the run. “Where have you been all day?” “I was in the park. I met Jesus. She likes hot dogs.”

Spend a moment, an hour, a day looking for Christ in other people. From that experience, what does Christ look like? What does Christ look like when others see you? Challenge the young people to look for Christ in all people.

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated to you; and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen. (A Prayer of Self-Dedication, BCP 832)
MINISTRY IS PUTTING FAITH TO WORK
Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
I will, with God’s help.

Objective: Identify your ministry, your gifts, and your opportunities for serving God.

This week we are talking about the ministry of everyone in the parish. What are you good at doing? What is something you don’t think you would be particularly good at accomplishing? This is one way to identify your ministry in the Church. All of us are needed and all of us are just as important as everyone else. The diagram below shows a good example of how the Church is set up:

How does this diagram make sense from your point of view? Think of it as showing that we are all the foundation and the apex of the Church. We are all important.

In the space below, list some of the ministries you can remember from today’s class and the names of some folks who are serving God in those ministries.

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Responding to God’s Love
Lesson 3

Stewardship
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS SESSION

STEWARDSHIP IS ME SHARING ME BECAUSE GOD CREATED ME!
Do you believe in God the Father?
Jesus Christ, the Son of God?
God, the Holy Spirit?

Stewardship should always be thought of as generosity – the generosity of God. Throughout the whole of scripture, God is continually and faithfully giving to God’s people. The message is that all we have comes from the God who gives us our very life. We have been entrusted with all that God gives us. We have been called to be stewards.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
World Wealth Meal
Students will experience a real world exercise about need and poverty.

Going Deeper
Discussion about Intro Activity
Explore and discuss the previous exercise.

Reflection
Read and discuss a story
Through an imaginary story, students will consider and write down their blessings.

Action
Family talk about stewardship
Students are encouraged to continue this conversation at home.
Scripture Reference: Deuteronomy 8:17-18
Do not say to yourself, “My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.” But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, so that He may confirm His covenant that He swore to your ancestors, as He is doing today.

Intro Activity:

World Wealth Meal

You may need to adjust this exercise for the size of your group.

Before class, set up three different sets of tables. If you have a very small group then 3 tables will suffice. If you have a very large group then you will need 3 sets of tables. On each table will be a different amount and quality of food consistent with the economic status of the country or group of people that country will represent. You will need a meal for each table. Table 1 will only have bread and water. Table 2 will have a simple meal of meat and rice (or something similar) with barely enough to feed everyone. Table 3 will have a sumptuous feast, burgers, fries, shakes.

As the young people come in, have them draw a table number randomly from a hat, box, or something similar. They should go to the table, but there should be no expectation of what will follow.

This is a poverty meal or a world wealth meal. Each table should be served as described above. The table with bread and water should be given less than what would reasonably feed that number of people. The object here is for those with much to feed those with little. Allow the meal to happen without interference. Those at the tables with little may beg from those with much. Allow enough time for the dynamics to unfold. If the frustration level rises for those at the table with little, stop the dinner and make suggestions or solicit their feedback on what is going on. This will often help the dinner to go smoothly. At an appropriate point, serve everyone what is served at the tables with plenty to eat and join the table together.

GOALS:

- For students to see that stewardship is thanksgiving for our time, talent, and treasure from God.

Materials needed:

- 3 meals of varying substance
Discussion about Poverty Meal

Read Luke 12:13-31. Have each person name a talent they have, then a time in the week when they have nothing to do, and finally how much money they currently have in their possession. Ask the young people to reflect on the dinner that evening.

- What did it feel like to have too little to eat or more than enough?
- Did they want to share?
- Did they want to ask for more for a group that had more than they needed?
- Pause for a moment and then ask the group when they have seen others in need or things that needed to be done to help another.

In students personal journals have them make lists of all their blessings. Invite them to share with one another. Give them the opportunity to add more to their list. Have them draw a diagram showing how one or more of their blessings came from God. Take the lists when time is finished and nail them to the wooden cross as a reminder that all blessings came from the one who was crucified for us.

Reflection

Read and discuss story.

Pass out the handouts of the story and read it together.

What are your thoughts about the story?
Have you ever seen the face of Christ in another? Explain

Stewardship should always be thought of as generosity – the generosity of God. Throughout the whole of scripture, God is continually and faithfully giving to God’s people. The message is that all we have comes from the God who gives us our very life. We have been entrusted with all that God gives us. We have been called to be stewards.

What does the above statement mean to you?
What are some ways we can be good stewards?
How do you use your gifts to glorify God?
Action

Encourage the young people to sit down with their family and talk about what the family offers to God. Have them share the story in the handout as a way to get started. This may be somewhat of an uneasy assignment and some may not do it. However, offer the opportunity. A letter home to the parents can help ease the tension of talking about stewardship at home.

Look at all your blessings and gifts. What can you offer back to God? Congratulations! You are now a steward.

Materials needed:
- Handout
Have you seen the movie “My Big Fat Greek Wedding?” Gus Portokalos is the father of the family and he regularly embarrasses everyone with his claim that any word can be traced to the Greek language. He even manages to show one of his daughter’s friends that “kimono” comes from a Greek root. The word “stewardship” actually comes from the Greek word oikonomos; oikos means dwelling and nomos translates roughly to mean distributor. The word as a whole means house-distributor, manager, or overseer. Therefore, stewardship means that we have been entrusted to make good use of what we have been given.

Take any blessing, any gift, any talent, any treasure, any part of your life. God is “the root.”

Stewardship in the Diocese of Alabama has been an important ministry for many years. The Alabama Plan is a model for dioceses throughout the Episcopal Church. The emphasis is not on building a budget or giving to support your parish. If that were the case then we would be giving to just another charity. Stewardship is about giving thanks for God’s generosity in our lives. If we have received, we have been given. The amazing thing is that we are only asked for a small portion in return for these many blessings. The tithe, 10% of all that we have, is the standard, and God asks only 10% from us as stewards. Stewardship is about commitment and offering to God what God has already given us ten fold.

However, we don’t need to think it is only about money. God has given us time, talent, and treasure and we are to return each to God. Think about it, 10% of our time each day is only 2.4 hours. Likewise, maybe you can give 10% of your talent. Finally we strive for 10% of our giving from our abundance knowing that we will be blessed 10 times over. It is about our love for God and the richness of our abundance. Now, your ministry begins as you teach those in your confirmation class about the richness of stewardship.

Almighty God, whose loving hand hath given us all that we possess: grant us grace that we may honor thee with our substance, and, remembering the account which we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of thy bounty, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**(the Collect for the Right Use of God’s Gifts, BCP 827)**
A Story of Stewardship

Once upon a time, there lived a sister and brother in a beautiful valley between two snow-covered mountains. Their parents had lived in this valley, as had their grandparents. In fact, for centuries the valley had been passed from one generation to the next. The sister lived in a large house with her husband, two children, and the dog. Her brother lived in a lovely cottage on the other side of a brook with his horses and a beautiful peacock. Together, they farmed the valley and were blessed with a fine harvest year after year. Each autumn, after selling their crops at the market, the brother and sister would celebrate with a grand feast and invite everyone from miles around. It was truly a blessed life.

One evening, after the annual harvest feast, the sister’s husband noticed that she looked troubled and so he inquired after the reason. It seems she was worried about her brother, “He lives all alone in the cottage while we enjoy a wonderful family life. He never complains and works just as hard or even harder than our whole family put together. He is always so cheerful and never hesitates to divide equally the fruits of our harvest. However, there are five of us to farm the land and he is all alone. I think he should get more.” Knowing that her brother would never accept a larger share of the market profits, the sister and her husband began to plan how they could repay the brother. After several nights of thoughtful prayer, discussion, and preparation they quietly crossed the bridge over the brook. They silently tiptoed to the barn. Without a single noise that might disturb her brother, his horses, or the peacock, his sister and her husband opened the barn door and placed a brand new saddle, made of the finest leather, at the foot of the stall where they knew her brother stabled his favorite horse. Then they headed for home full of the joy which comes with giving a special gift to someone you love.

The next morning the sister and her husband awoke to shouts of joy and laughter from their children. Outside the house stood a bright red buggy, with fringe on the canopy, and a beautiful, golden pony with a big bow tied around its neck. “Where did it come from?” There was no note or even a hint of who might have left it. At almost the same moment, the brother arrived at his sister’s house on his favorite steed with the new saddle. “Where did this come from?” he cried with amazement. “I guess from the same place as our horse and buggy!” his sister cried with a smile in her heart.

Month after month, year after year, gifts would arrive at the brother’s or the sister’s home. When harvests were plentiful there were new tractors or maybe even tickets for a trip to some exotic land. In years when the harvest was adequate, but not the best, there would still be gifts left at one door step and the other. Neither ever spoke a word of where or when or why. It was a blessing given and a blessing received for and by a brother and sister offering their thanksgiving.

Stewardship should always be thought of as generosity – the generosity of God. Throughout the whole of scripture, God is continually and faithfully giving to God’s people. The message is that all we have comes from the God who gives us our very life. We have been entrusted with all that God gives us. We have been called to be stewards.
Responding to God’s Love
Lesson 4

Evangelism
DETAILED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS SESSION

EVANGELISM IS SHARING WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW

When was the last time you shared something you enjoyed with a friend? Maybe it was an exciting movie, a new CD, or a really great website. We like to share good things with other people. The Church should be the same.

Evangelism is sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with others.

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities
Church advertisements
   Search the newspaper for Church ads.

Going Deeper
Create an ad for your church
   Using whatever medium you have access to, create an ad for your church.

Reflection
The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost
   A closer look at Luke, and the story of Father Damien

Action
Commercials
   Create and act out a commercial for your church.
And behold, men were bringing on a bed a man who was paralyzed, and they sought to bring him in and lay him before Jesus; but finding no way to bring him in, because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the midst before Jesus. And when He saw their faith He said, "Man, your sins are forgiven you."

**Intro Activity:**

**GOALS:**
- Help the students discover that evangelism is about sharing something good.

**Materials needed:**
- A variety of newspapers, city magazines etc.
- Poster board or newsprint

**Finding Church ads in the newspaper**

Much of your preparation will depend on the size of your confirmation group. Some of the activities may need to be altered somewhat according to the resources available to you. Decide ahead of time which of the suggested activities you will be doing and prepare accordingly.

As the young people arrive, hand out copies of the newspaper and tell them to start cutting out church ads. (use several Saturday additions of several different newspapers. If your paper features church ads on another day, use that edition. For newspapers from beyond your area, talk with the local library.)

The church ads can be made into a collage or posted on a bulletin board. The idea is going to be to look at the different kinds of ads and what they say.

**Going Deeper...**

Create an ad for your church

Once you have enough ads cut out and have displayed them, have the students select the best one. The young people need to be able to tell why it is the best one. There can be more than one good ad. You might possibly ask for different winners in different categories such as the largest or the one with the most information.

**Materials needed:**
- Medium for creating an ad for your parish

Continued on next page.
Going Deeper Continued...

On a piece of paper, write down everything good you can think of about your church. Be creative; don't just make a list. Draw pictures, write in color, and write sideways if you want to. Come up with unique things about your church and things no one else but you has ever noticed. Today you are going to be creating advertisements and presentations about your Church. As you create, write down your thoughts and ideas in this space. Who knows, you just may come up with the next ad for your parish and discover a whole new career.

Or

Come up with a bumper sticker slogan for your church. You can actually make these on the computer or with poster board.

EXTRA: If you have access to a few video cameras, divide the young people into teams of any small number that works best. The assignment is to make a 3 minute movie of the church to show to visitors and new members. The video should answer the question of why people should come to your parish. If you are using digital cameras, the assignment is the same. If you have a computer with Power Point, then the task should be to create a Power Point presentation. Bring everyone back together at the appointed time to show their videos or presentations.

Reflection

Read and consider the parable in Luke 5:17-26 and the story of Father Damien.

- How are these stories of evangelism?
- Would you be willing to carry a friend to Jesus?
- What are some ways you can be an evangelist?
- Have you ever had an opportunity for evangelism?
- What did you do?

Almighty God, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to reconcile the world to yourself; we praise and bless you for those whom you have sent in the power of the Spirit to preach the Gospel to all nations. We thank you that in all parts of the earth a community of love has been gathered together by their prayers and labors, and that in every place your servants call upon you Name; for the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours forever. Amen. (A Collect for the Mission of the Church, BCP 838)

Materials needed:
- Handout with story
- Bible
Action


- What are the different languages that people in their town and city speak?
- Talk about the differences in language even though people are all speaking English. How do people talk differently?
- What messages about Jesus would appeal to different people living in the same town?
- What message should your parish be sending out to people who might be looking for such a church?

Following this discussion, split your class up into groups of 3 or 4. Give them about 10 minutes or so to come up with a commercial for your parish. Have them present their commercial to the rest of the class.

- Talk about why they are including the items they are including and what they plan to leave out.
- Find out who their target audience is and why.
- Wind this part up with a discussion of evangelism and the Great Commission (found in Teacher Background).

EXTRA... If you created the videos or digital pictures/presentations, have the young people put together a final product to show the vestry. Work on the presentation and who will give it. You could also take the ads they designed and include them in the evangelism presentation for the vestry. If you have someone in the parish involved in advertising or another media field, invite them to come and work with the young people.

Materials needed:

- Bible
- Props for commercials
Let’s face it, evangelism is too often known in the Episcopal Church as “The E word.” It comes with images of pushy, Bible-thumping people knocking on doors, shouting preachers with bad hair, and the uncomfortable aspect of talking with people we don’t know about their personal religious beliefs. Those ideas should make us nervous and also help us recognize that evangelism is something else far better.

Think about how many times you tell people where you attend Church. Perhaps you have invited a friend to a Sunday morning Eucharist or a weekday activity. What do you think they would enjoy about the Church you attend? How did you find your current parish? Perhaps the location had something to do with your first visit, but why did you join? Do the members of the parish enjoy being a Church? Why?

When you put all the answers together, your parish probably sounds pretty good. Think of evangelism as the Ministry of Sharing a Good Thing! This is what Jesus was telling the disciples when he gave them the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19. The Resurrected Christ appeared to the amazed disciples. They thought he was dead and the life they had lived for the past three years over. Imagine their joy! Jesus’ commandment is for the disciples to take all they had learned and spread the Good News throughout the world. This is evangelism.

There are, however, other equally important scripture passages that point to our understanding of evangelism. Consider the story in Luke 5:17-26 of a paralytic man brought to Jesus by his friends. When they could not get through the crowds, the paralytic’s friends lowered him through the roof of the house. Bringing someone to Church when they need healing is evangelism. Church activities, fellowships, and special events are a wonderful way to introduce your parish to someone who might be a little reluctant to come on their own on a Sunday morning. What better way to help someone find healing when they are lonely than to introduce them to a community of faith?

Jesus asked the disciples: do you hide a light under a bushel? No, you bring it out so that you may share its light with everyone. This is the ministry of evangelism. Time and time again it has been shown that the number one reason people first attend a church is because they are invited by a friend. The challenge for Episcopalians and our parishes is to offer the opportunities we already enjoy and then share them with those we already know. This is just as true for young people as it is for adults.

20/20 Mission

At General Convention in July 2000, the Episcopal Church set out on an ambitious campaign of evangelism to reach out to people in the name of Christ. Some people have never attended a church and the Episcopal Church may just be what they are looking for, but have never found. Others are those who consider themselves Episcopalians or who have attended an Episcopal parish in the past, but, for one reason or another, are not attending now. The goal is to double our attendance by the year 2020 and it will take a lot of work.

Our national church website has a lot of information about our 2020 mission plans. You can read all about it at www.dfms.org/2020.htm?menu=menu4511 or just go to the ECUSA website at www.dfms.org and look under Congregational Development. Soon you will find all kinds of information about 20/20. One important aspect of evangelism asks us to look at our individual parishes with the question in mind, “What do we have to offer?” Arlin Rothauge, an Episcopal priest and recognized consultant in Church Development, has written a marvelous little book, “All Doors Open.” You will find it on the web at www.dfms.org/documents/CDR_series5.pdf. This book helps congregations answer the questions about how to reach out to those looking for a church home. It is well worth spending the few minutes it will take to read this valuable resource.
Consider the story of Father Damien and how the message is one of evangelism in the light of the reading from Luke 5:17-26.

Father Damien was a young Roman Catholic priest, sent by his Bishop, to a leper colony on Hawaii’s island of Molokai in the late 1800’s. Father Damien had decided that it was his calling to build a beautiful chapel on this island to the glory of God. So, he brought on the journey the finest woods, metals, and ornamental decorations for his task.

When the ship arrived at the island, a row boat came out to bring the priest ashore. As Father Damien prepared to step into the small boat, the leper at the oars held out his hand to steady the priest. Seized by the fear of leprosy, Father Damien refused the man’s hand. Hurt and separation showed in the leper’s eyes as he drew back his hand and offered a wooden oar instead.

Arriving at the leper colony, Father Damien began preparing for the construction of his church. Each day he would look for workers among the lepers. No one volunteered. Each Sunday, he would ring the bell for mass. No one came. None of the lepers wanted anything to do with Father Damien or his building. So when the ship returned to the island some months later, Father Damien decided that it was time to leave. As he climbed back on board the ship, there was a new group of lepers waiting to go ashore. One was a little girl who reached out her arms to the priest. In the thought of a moment, Father Damien realized the hypocrisy of his faith. The priest reached down, picked up the little girl, kissed her on the cheek, and got back into the row boat headed for the colony.

Word spread quickly and this time everyone gathered to greet Father Damien. They were ready to build the chapel. However, to their surprise, the priest announced that the materials would be used to build a hospital to care for the needs of the people. After all, isn’t that what a church is supposed to be – a place which cares for people?

Almighty God, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to reconcile the world to yourself: we praise and bless you for those whom you have sent in the power of the Spirit to preach the Gospel to all nations. We thank you that in all parts of the earth a community of love has been gathered together by their prayers and labors, and that in every place your servants call upon your Name; for the kingdom and the power and the glory are yours forever. Amen. (A Collect for the Mission of the Church, BCP 838)
Responding to God’s Love Lesson

Confirmation Rehearsal
Instructed Eucharist
Confirmation Rehearsal

Activities

RESPONDING TO GOD’S LOVE

Summary of Activities

Intro Activities

Arrange to meet with your Rector or the clergy person who will be working with the confirmation group. In some parishes, adult and youth confirmands will take part in this lesson together. If there is a leader of an adult confirmation class, talk with this person as well.

- Find out from the Rector what information will be needed from each young person being confirmed. There are normally cards that will need to be filled out by each person to be confirmed.
- Invite the parents and sponsors to the rehearsal.
- Send out good instructions as to the time of the rehearsal and expectations for the bishop’s visit.
- If bulletins are available for the liturgy, ask for enough for each young person.

Or

Play Jeopardy

Put students in groups and have them choose from one of the following categories: OT, NT, Church History, Liturgy, Jesus’ life.

Going Deeper

As the young people arrive, have them go to the designated seating for confirmands if there will be a special place for them to sit. Have them turn to the liturgy for Confirmation in the BCP on page 413. Ensure that all information required by the Rector and diocese is compiled. Go over the instructions for time, dress, etc.

Reflection

If the Rector is directing the rehearsal and the Instructed Eucharist, then follow the directions given. If a priest is not able to be present, designate one of the adults to be the Bishop and you play the role of the priest. Go through the applicable parts of the service with special attention to the Presentation and Examination of the Candidates on pages 415-419. Walk the young people through the instructed Eucharist using the instructions included on the following pages.

Action

Spend a few moments with the young people reflecting on what they enjoyed about their confirmation experience to this point. Close with the “Prayer for Those About to Be Baptized or to Renew Their Baptismal Covenant” on page 819 of the BCP.
Confirmation Rehearsal and an Instructed Eucharist

The Bishop’s visit is always a special time of celebration in the life of a parish. The Sacrament of Confirmation is a turning point in the life of the young people who will confirm their commitment to Christ. A rehearsal is highly recommended and your Rector will want to be an important part of this preparation. It is also a good time for young people to learn about the Eucharist and spend some time with the Rector.

In most of the parishes of our diocese, it will be the Rector who directs the Confirmation Rehearsal and celebrates at the Instructed Eucharist. It is a good idea to meet with the Rector early on and schedule the rehearsal. If you are in a larger parish with several priests, the Rector may include any and all of the Associates in different capacities in this important event. If those being confirmed have sponsors, they should be invited to the rehearsal along with the young person’s family. The Rector will let you know who should be included in the rehearsal.

Each year, the Bishop’s office sends out a letter to the Rector with instructions and expectations. Ask your Rector if you can have a copy. You will find it contains quite a bit of valuable information. The previous year’s bulletin can also be an important source of information and if you have access to the past several years, you might want to look over them as well with your BCP open to the liturgy for Confirmation on page 413.

In the unlikely event that your parish is without a Rector at this point and you are being served by a supply priest, you will still want to have a rehearsal. The Instructed Eucharist is still a possibility as well. Have an Instructed Eucharist at another time when a priest can be present. You can also walk through the Eucharist without the priest there. Included in this segment is the text of the Holy Eucharist, Rite II with instructional comments. You can set up everything as it would be on a Sunday morning and walk the confirmands through the service.

Finally, just as every parish is different, our worship is different as well. From St. Paul’s in Selma to St. Luke’s in Scottsboro, from Grace Church in Sheffield to St. Stephen’s in Phenix City, you will find many different worship traditions and practices. Your parish will be different and so it is important to stress the uniqueness of your tradition during the Instructed Eucharist.
JEOPARDY

CATAGORIES

Old Testament
100 pts. Who lead the Hebrew people out of bondage in Egypt and? (Who is Moses)
200 pts. How many books are in the Old Testament? (What is 39)
300 pts. The longest book of the OT that contains a number of prophecies concerning Israel's messiah? (What is the Book of Isaiah)
400 pts. Who was Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? (Abraham= father of many descendents; Isaac= son of Abraham who was almost sacrificed by his father; Jacob=had 12 sons who were also known as the 12 tribes of Israel.)

New Testament
100 pts. What Gospel contains the saying, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not die but will have eternal life.” (John 3:16)
200 pts. What is the name of the last book in the bible? (What is Revelation to John)
300 pts. Which Gospel was the first to be written? (What is the Gospel of Mark)
400 pts. Originally a persecutor of Christians, now the most prolific writer in the NT thanks to an encounter on the road to Damascus? (Who is Paul)

Jesus’ Life
100 pts. Where did Mary & Joseph flee to after Jesus was born? (Where is Egypt)
200 pts. How many disciples did Jesus call to follow him? (What is 12)
300 pts. Who did Jesus raise from the dead? (Who is Lazarus)
400 pts. How many times did Jesus appear after the resurrection and before the ascension? (What is 5 times)
BONUS= What was the first miracle Jesus performed? (What is changing water into wine)

Church History
100 pts. Who was the King of England who wanted a divorce but the church wouldn't grant it? (Who is King Henry VIII)
200 pts. The Episcopal Church gets its name from the Greek word episkopos, which means (What is bishop)
300 pts. Who was the man who challenged the Roman Catholic Church regarding corruption and instigated the Reformation? (Who is Martin Luther)
400 pts. Who was the first bishop in the United States? (Who is Samuel Seabury)

Liturgy
100 pts. What is the longest season of the Church Year? (What is Pentecost)
200 pts. How many scripture text are normally read during a Holy Eucharist? (What is 4, OT, NT, Psalm and Gospel)
300 pts. How many sacraments are there? (What is 7)
What are the two Great Sacraments? (Baptism and Holy Eucharist)
400 pts. According to the book of Acts, Jesus remained with his disciples for forty days after His resurrection. This day marks the time when, after these forty days, he was taken up to heaven… (What is Ascension Day)

Bible Potpourri
100 pts. Who was the disciple chosen to replace Judas? (Who is Matthias)
200 pts. Who wrote the first Book of Common Prayer in 1549? (Who is Thomas Cramner)
300 pts. Name at least 3 forms of prayer. (What is adoration, confession, intercession, thanksgiving)
400 pts. On this day people spoke different languages yet everyone understood. (What is Pentecost)
Instructed Eucharist

The Holy Eucharist: Rite Two

The Word of God

A hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung.

The people standing, the Celebrant says

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever.

Amen.

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

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

In Lent and on other penitential occasions

Celebrant Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins;

People His mercy endures for ever.

The Celebrant may say

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.
When appointed, the following hymn or some other song of praise is sung or said, all standing

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

On other occasions the following is used

Lord, have mercy upon us. Kyrie eleison.
Christ, have mercy upon us. or Christe eleison.
Lord have mercy upon us. Kyrie eleison.

or this

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

This hymn is the “Gloria in excelsis” or “The Gloria” for short. It is a hymn of praise to God. Other hymns which offer praise to God may also be used here.

The Kyrie and The Trisagion

are ancient Greek hymns often used during penitential times of the Church year, like Advent and Lent. The word “Trisagion” is from the Greek, and means “Thrice-holy.”
The Collect of the Day

The Celebrant says to the people

   The Lord be with you.

People      And also with you.

Celebrant  Let us pray.

The Celebrant says the Collect.

People      Amen.

A collect is a prayer and the name means either that this is a collection of the people’s prayers or a prayer for the people collected together. The BCP has a Collect for each Sunday of the Church Year and for other occasions or needs. The Collects of the Day can be found on pages 159-261 in the BCP.

The Lessons

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

A Reading (Lesson) from ________________.

A citation giving chapter and verse may be added.

After each Reading, the Reader may say

   The Word of the Lord.

People      Thanks be to God.

or the Reader may say   Here ends the Reading (Epistle).

Silence may follow

A Psalm, hymn, or anthem may follow each Reading.

Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Gospel, first saying

   The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
   according to ________________.

People      Glory to you, Lord Christ.
After the Gospel, the Reader says

The Gospel of the Lord.

People    Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

On Sundays and other Major Feasts there follows, all standing

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eterally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

Prayer is offered with intercession for

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

See the forms beginning on page 383.

If there is no celebration of the Communion, or if a priest is not available, the service is concluded as directed on page 406.

Confession of Sin

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

One of the sentences from the Penitential Order on page 351 may be said.
Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Bishop, when present, or the Priest, stands and says

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

The Peace

All stand. The Celebrant says to the people

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

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

Jesus said that the first and greatest commandment is that we should love God with all of our being and the second is that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. In Matthew 5:23, we are told to leave our gift at the altar and make peace with a brother or sister whom we have wronged. This is the purpose of the confession in the Eucharist. The opportunity for silence at the beginning is the chance for us to confess specific sins and then we join with the whole congregation in offering a corporate confession.

The Absolution is not the Priest forgiving your sins, but rather the Priest announcing God’s forgiveness through Christ of our sins.

The Peace is also one of the oldest parts of our liturgy. References to the Peace of Christ is found throughout Paul’s Epistles. It is also a chance for us to make peace with those we have wronged now that we have confessed our sin.
The Holy Communion

The Celebrant may begin the Offertory with one of the sentences on page 376, or with some other sentence of Scripture.

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

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

The Great Thanksgiving

Alternative forms will be found on page 367 and following.

Eucharistic Prayer A

The people remain standing. The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest, faces them and sings or says

The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.
People We lift them to the Lord.
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.

The Offertory is when we make our offering to God. In the Early Church, the people brought the bread and wine, along with other special foods to the altar for the celebration of the Eucharist. The deacons would take part for the Communion and the rest would be distributed to the needy.

Today we make our offerings of money to support the ministry of our parish and the Church. The bread and wine brought forward by members of the parish remind us that all things come from God and to God we return our offering.

The Eucharist Prayers in Rite I and Rite II offer our thanksgivings and praise to God for our creation, salvation, and the hope found in Christ.

The Proper Preface is a special phrase appropriate to the Sunday or occasion. You can find the prefaces on pages 344-349 for Rite I and pages 377-382 for Rite II.
Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
   Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
   Hosanna in the highest.

The people stand or kneel.

Then the Celebrant continues

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or to lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

The Sanctus (meaning Holy) is another ancient hymn of the Church. It comes from Isaiah 6:1-3 and Revelation 4:8

When the celebrant extends his arms during the Eucharist, this is called the Orans position. It is an ancient posture of prayer found in both Christian and Jewish worship.

The prayer over the bread and the wine is called the Anamnesis (ask your priest how to pronounce it). Anamnesis is the opposite of amnesia which literally means to lose our identity and purpose.
After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Celebrant and People**

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

*The Celebrant continues*

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. AMEN.

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**In the Anamnesis, we not only remember, but also live once again the Last Supper. Notice the wording, we do this *for* not just in, remembrance of Christ.**

**So we proclaim the mystery of faith in the Memorial Acclamation. We remember and we proclaim.**

**This is called the Epiclesis. It is important to remember that Anglicans believe that Christ is present in the bread broken and the cup of wine shared. It is not just a re-enactment, but Christ is actually present with us through the Eucharist.**
And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

Celebrant and people

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our tresspasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

Celebrant and people

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.

Then may be sung or said

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

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

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

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation
The Gifts of God for the People of God.

The breaking of the Bread is called the Fraction. The bread is broken as Christ’s body was broken for us. Each of us shares in the gift of Salvation as we receive the bread and wine.

It is important to keep in mind that the bread and wine are the outward and visible signs in the Eucharist of God’s grace given to us. The bread and wine are spiritual food for our spiritual journeys.

All baptized Christians (not just Episcopalians) may join in receiving bread and wine. Some dip their bread (or wafer) into the chalice. This is called Intinction. The BCP also tells us that receiving just the bread or just the wine is also full participation. In fact, if there is good reason why neither the bread or the wine can be received (like when a person … OR,… before surgery) they will still receive all the benefits of God’s grace. It’s not a magic show. The Eucharist is God’s grace working in us to strengthen us for ministry.
and may add  Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The ministers receive the Sacrament in both kinds, and then immediately deliver it to the people.

The Bread and the Cup are given to the communicants with these words

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

or with these words

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

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

When necessary, the Celebrant consecrates additional bread and wine, using the form on page 408.

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

or the following

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

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

The Deacon, or the Celebrant, dismisses them with these words

    Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People    Thanks be to God.

or this

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

or this

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

or this

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

From the Easter Vigil through the Day of Pentecost "Alleluia, alleluia"
may be added to any of the dismissals.

The People respond    Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia.

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APPENDIX 1: PARTS OF A CHURCH

Aisle: the central walkway along the main axis of the nave leading up to the altar.

Altar: the table on which the Eucharist is celebrated.

Ambo: a raised pulpit or reading stand.

Apse: the area behind the altar, often semicircular in shape and with a domed roof.

Chancel: the area around the altar, with seats for the officiating ministers.

Choir: Used to mean both the singers and the part of the sanctuary in which they are seated, which may be near the chancel or in a balcony.

Epistle side: the right side of the church facing the altar.

Font: the container for the water used in Baptism.

Gospel side: the left side of the church facing the altar.

Lectern: the place, often raised, from which the Scripture lessons are read.

Narthex: the foyer or entrance area of the building.

Nave: the main seating area of the sanctuary.

Pulpit: the place, often raised, from which the sermon is preached.

Reredos: a more or less elaborate backdrop behind the altar.

Sacristory: the work room of the altar guild, a room attached to the sanctuary in which altar cloths and unconsecrated bread and wine are kept, flowers may be prepared, etc.

Sanctuary: the worship space of the church building.

Transept: the aisle perpendicular to the main axis of the church building.
APPENDIX 2: AT THE ALTAR

**Ambry:** a container or compartment in the wall near the altar in which the consecrated elements are kept; also commonly called a tabernacle.

**Burse:** two stiffened cloths forming a pocket for extra purificators, placed on top of the veil.

**Chalice:** the cup in which the wine is consecrated and from which the communicants drink.

**Celebrant:** the presiding clergyperson at the Eucharist, a bishop or priest.

**Ciborium:** a container for the bread or host.

**Corporal:** a square linen cloth in the center of the Fair Linen on the altar, on which the Eucharistic vessels are set.

**Credence:** the table on which the Eucharistic elements are kept before being brought to the altar for consecration.

**Cruet:** a vessel containing unconsecrated wine or water to be used during the Eucharist.

**Daily Office:** Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer.

**Elements of consecration:** the bread and the wine.

**Fair Linen:** a white linen cloth set on top of the altar for the Eucharist.

**Frontal:** a hanging cloth on the front of the altar, its color corresponding to that of the season of the church year.

**Host:** the bread of the Eucharist when in the form of small wafers rather than a loaf.

**Lavabo:** a bowl used in the ceremonial washing of the celebrant’s hands before the prayer of consecration in the Eucharist.
**Office**: a rite, especially the Daily Office, i.e., Morning Prayer or Evening Prayer.

**Officiant**: the leader, clergy or lay, of the Daily Office.

**Pall**: a stiff cloth-covered board put on top of the chalice. A Funeral Pall is a vest-ment for the casket or the urn containing the ashes of the deceased.

**Paten**: the plate on which the host is consecrated and from which it is distributed to the communicants.

**Purificator**: a small white linen cloth used to wipe the chalice after each commu-nicant has received wine.

**Tabernacle**: the ambry.

**Thurible**: the container in which incense is burned.

**Veil (or Chalice Veil)**: a cloth, usually silk or damask, and colored corresponding to the season of the church year, covering the chalice and the paten when they are on the altar.
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