

If you plan on visiting with us at St. Stephen's for Sunday Worship, here are a few questions and answers that we hope will help you feel at home with us.

What time are your Sunday Worship Services?

8:00am Rite I Holy Eucharist (Traditional English with hymns)

9:00am Breakfast in the Parish Hall

9:30am Christian Education for all Ages

10:30am Rite II Holy Eucharist (Contemporary English with Choir)

Nursery Care is available during the 10:30 Service. Each week there is something to involve the youth in our 10:30 Service.

11:40am Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall

What basic things should I expect upon first visiting an Episcopal service?

Upon entering, you will be greeted by an usher. If you have any initial questions, this is the person to ask. The usher will give you the day's bulletin. After this, you may take a seat anywhere you like. . . there are no assigned seats!

The Episcopal Church uses books to guide our worship. These books are the red Book of Common Prayer, the blue *Hymnal 1982*, the green Celebration Hymnal, and the Holy Bible. Page numbers will be announced, and will be in your bulletin and/or on the hymn board at the front of the church. All services include scripture readings from the Bible, and while these lessons are printed on an insert in the bulletin, we encourage the use of the Pew Bibles for reference during the proclaiming of the Word of God and the Sermon. If you would like to bring your own Bible to church, please feel free!

At first, following along with the Episcopal Service may be a little difficult; but remember, most services follow the same order, so once you've been through it a few times, it will feel natural. If you get lost, don't hesitate to ask someone where we are!

After the service, be sure to come to breakfast or coffee hour in our Parish Hall for light refreshments and to meet the congregation!

When do I stand, sit, or kneel?

Specific instructions are in the rubrics (directions) of the Book of Common Prayer; but in general, we stand when we sing, praise, or read the Gospel; we sit during all other Bible readings, and during the Sermon; and we kneel to pray. During the blessing of the bread and wine at communion (The Eucharistic Prayer), either standing or kneeling is appropriate. If you're not sure, just follow the example of the people around you. If you are unable to stand or kneel for long periods of time, please feel free to remain seated.

Do I have to pay anything to go to church?

There is no fee to attend church, but an Offertory is taken as part of the service. This "passing of the basket" and our annual pledges are what keep the church alive. This money goes towards maintaining the building, paying our rector and staff, and stocking administrative and liturgical supplies as well as outreach (both local and foreign). To request a pledge booklet, please speak to our treasurer.

I'm planning on visiting an St. Stephen's. May I take communion?

All baptized Christians, regardless of denomination, may take communion in the Episcopal Church. Your own denomination may have some restrictions on where you may or may not communicate, however, so it would be wise to check with a clergy person in your own church first.

I am handicapped and am unable to walk to the Altar to receive communion. Can I still receive communion?

Of course you can! Simply tell the usher or someone near you who is going to the Altar to have the Rector bring the Elements (the bread and the wine) to you

What should I wear to an Episcopal Service?

What you wear is entirely up to you. Many people like to dress up to go to church. This is more out of tradition than necessity. You will see people in dresses and suits, and you will see people in shorts and jeans.

This topic is talked about in James 2:2 . . . "For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you

say, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?"

The important thing is that you are at church, praising God . . . NOT what kind of clothes you are wearing!