



## Diocese of the Rocky Mountains Customary on Liturgy

### The Centrality of Worship

The most common command in all of scripture is to worship God. In fact, the very definition of the church has to do with the worshipping people of God. This is why the Bible has so much to say about worship – how we worship is important. If worship is our response to an encounter with God, then liturgy is the shape of that response. However, liturgy is not just about what “we do” but about what God does – how He meets us in worship. This is the element of mystery in our worship – and reflects the Gospel, which is not a proclamation of what we must do, but a proclamation of what God has done for us. Instead of a time in which we simply talk ‘about’ God, worship an encounter with the living God in which we are known, healed, called, and sent out to serve in His name.

### The Shape of Worship

How we worship shapes what we believe and how we live. Liturgy is an important means of teaching theology – having a liturgy that is strong theologically will help form a people who are strong theologically.

The preface to the first Book of Common Prayer (1549) states that our worship must be:

1. “Grounded in the Holy Scriptures” – *Holy Scripture must be the foundation of all Christian worship.*
2. “Agreeable to the order of the Primitive Church” – *Tradition is to be carefully respected, especially the worship practices of the Undivided Church, as long as they do not contradict Scripture.*
3. “Edifying to the people” – *The language must be understood by the congregation, and the liturgy be correspondingly relevant to them.*

The postscript to the 1549 BP, “Of Ceremonies,” adds a fourth principle:

4. “Every country should use such ceremonies as they shall think best to the setting forth of God's honor and to . . . the people's . . . perfect and godly living.” – *Liturgies do not have to be identical across nationalities and cultures, but they must also not contradict Scripture or the Creeds.*

The 1662 Book of Common Prayer presents a liturgy in continuity with the ancient catholic tradition but purged of medieval aberrations. Throughout the 1662 Liturgy we see emphasized the primacy and sufficiency of Scripture, creedal orthodoxy, and justification by grace alone through faith alone. We also find the patristic heritage, including the 3-fold ministry of bishops, presbyters, and deacons.

Generally, our liturgy has the following four-fold pattern: the gathering (which invokes the Holy Trinity and calls people to worship); the service of the Word (Scriptures, sermon, prayers, confession); service of the Table (the offertory, Eucharistic prayer, the reception, etc.); and the Sending Forth. There are also, as J.I. Packer points out, three recurring gospel themes: the acknowledgement of sin, the announcement of grace, and the response to grace by faith. Sensitive adaptations may be made in the liturgy, provided they conform to this pattern and these themes, and are understanding of the historic purposes of liturgy, and how it tends to ‘function’ in this pattern.

#### Making Changes to the liturgy

Think of the liturgy as a human body—with a skeletal frame, covered by muscle tissues and skin. While human skeletons vary in size, the essential form and the basic scale are constant. There is relatively little variety between them. However, people look very different. Outwardly there is tremendous variation while at the level of the skeleton there is an essential uniformity. Understanding this kind of metaphor is important for successful adaptation of the liturgical rites, acknowledging that there is a balance between shaping the liturgy to our culture and the need for the liturgy to shape us.

The reasons for changes in the liturgy should reflect what the 1662 Book of Common Prayer (BCP) preface states: *“Our general aim therefore in this undertaking was, not to gratify this or that party, in any of their unreasonable demands; but to do that, which to our best understanding, we conceived might most tend to peace and unity in the Church; the procuring of reverence, and exciting of piety and devotion in the public worship of God.”* The boundaries for change, that our liturgy is consistent with the scriptures, are also given in the preface, *“it does not contain in it anything contrary to the Word of God, or to sound Doctrine, or which a godly man may not with a good conscience use and submit to.”*

Any changes to liturgy must also reflect what the “Concerning the Service of the Church” section of the 1662 BCP states, *“Nothing is ordained to be read, but the very pure Word of God, the holy Scriptures, or that which is agreeable to the same, and that in such a language and order as is most easy and plain for the understanding both of the readers and hearers.”* The latter part is not setting the bar low or shaping our worship to the lowest common denominator – but that our liturgy should not be overly complicated and hard to follow or understand.

However these changes must be done under authority – this is to avoid what we see in Deuteronomy 12:8, *“You are not to do as we do here today, everyone as he sees fit.”* The 1662 states, *“no one ought to take responsibility for, nor presume to appoint or alter*

*any public or common Order in Christ's Church, unless he is lawfully called and authorized to do so.”* The 1662 also states that those who want diversity or have doubts are to take that concern to “*the Bishop of the Diocese, who by his discretion shall take order for the quieting and appeasing of the same.*”

Therefore, any significant deviation from the accepted liturgies needs approval from the bishop.

All approved liturgies may be utilized. But take some time to understand the differences, and how they may be appropriated. For example, in Elizabethan English, “Thee” and “Thou” were the familiar or intimate form of address; “You” and “Your” were the formal form of address. The liturgy of the 1662 is using the familiar or intimate form of addressing God – when we use that same language today it may convey something different than was intended in the 1662.

Anglican liturgies are meant to be taken as a whole. Simply copying and pasting from various liturgies without theological or liturgical insight will result in a liturgy void of power to connect and transform.

It is not appropriate to edit or rewrite any portion of the liturgy (*any contextualization is to be done in consultation with the bishop*). The one exception is the Prayers of the People. The life of the congregation can be reflected in forms that are written by people in your community (just remember at least to cover prayer for the church, the world, and the concerns of the local community).

The liturgy, like the Gospel, is deeply indebted to Israel’s Story. The service of the word is basically the synagogue worship that Jesus would have known and practiced, and the service of the table is the Passover meal, re-cast by Jesus himself. These ancient foundations undergird our weekly worship and are vital to the life of our communities. They have opened the way for worshipers to encounter God for millennia, and will do the same for us, especially as we resist the temptation to innovate for the sake of innovation.

### Leading the Liturgy

It’s important to note that the liturgy is a drama—a reenactment of the Christ event. It should be entered into with dignity and reverence, but not in such a way that it feels distant or ‘staged’. The Celebrant should lead the community with appropriate honor, understanding that what is done in the liturgy is of eternal significance and consequence. It should be accessible, but not pedestrian. Don’t apologize for leading the liturgy well, or calling worshipers to a higher place in the act of worship. That’s what it is about. Jesus is present as friend and also as ascended Lord. Both aspects should be embodied. Remember—it is a celebration.

Don’t rush. Enjoy the dramatic power of silence and pacing, but also don’t succumb to affectation and sentiment. The liturgy creates space for the Holy Spirit to move and act. Honor that.

It's possible to lead the liturgy in such a way that it is both timeless and fresh. Prayerfully approach worship with the understanding that time is collapsed, and the worshipers gather at a place where all times (past, present and future) are held together. This is a great mystery which the leader of the liturgy can either make room for or kill.

Don't over explain. There are places where practical guidance can be offered, but if too much teaching takes place in one setting, it is not likely that worship will occur. Allow people the opportunity to experience and 'catch' what is happening without too much commentary. Classes may be offered to help people understand what is happening as greater understanding often leads to greater participation.

Remember that liturgy is a form of hospitality, enabling people from all walks of life to participate together in worship.

#### Episcopal Roles

The diocesan bishop, whenever present, is the celebrant and presides over the liturgy (*the bishop may choose to delegate parts of the liturgy, like a baptism or being the celebrant*). Since it is normative for the bishop to do the absolution and the blessing, if a visiting bishop is present in the congregation, it is customary to ask the visiting bishop to do the absolution and blessing.

#### Preaching and the Lectionary

The proclamation of the Gospel is central to Anglican Worship (see appendix E). The lectionary is a wonderful tool we have that ensures that our preaching covers the range of scripture. There is also an Anglican tradition of preaching through books of the Bible (see appendix F). Churches in the Diocese are not required to preach from the lectionary, but if not using the lectionary, preaching should be through a specific book of the Bible or on a specific Biblical theme, and not random.

#### Communion

Any baptized believer is welcome to the Lord's Table (with the exception of those who are under church discipline – the Rector is required to notify the Bishop, within fourteen days at the most, giving the reasons for refusing Communion).

The offertory is not simply a way to gather money – it is essential to worship and part of the four-fold action of the Lord's Supper (He took, He gave thanks, He broke, and He gave) and should not be skipped in Sunday services.

When possible, there is a preference for real bread (wafers have no relationship to the daily experience of life) and real wine (we don't want to use cheap symbols; non-alcoholic wine may be used).

Since communion is the covenant meal, infants who have been brought into the covenant



community through baptism, *may* also receive communion. Parents, as the chief spiritual formers of their children, determine when they want their baptized children to receive communion.

In the Prayer of Humble Access, “Apart from your grace,” may be inserted at the beginning of sentence: “We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your table; but you are the same Lord whose character is always to have mercy.” The following prayer of Humble Access may also be used:

*Father, we come to your table as your children: not presuming, but assured, not trusting in ourselves, but in your abundant grace. We hunger and thirst for righteousness and ask for our hearts to satisfied with the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, the righteous. Amen.*

In the absence of a Priest, *the Bishop may authorize* a Deacon to distribute Holy Communion to the congregation from consecrated Bread and Wine. Please see Appendix A for the authorized form.

## Baptism

Baptism, since it signifies entrance into the covenant community, is meant to be celebrated within the context of worship on Sunday or some other Holy Day. Candidates for baptism are to have sponsors who are believers and who will continue to support the candidate by prayer and encouragement in the Christian life. Parents of infants and children are to be instructed in the meaning of Baptism, and in their duties to help raise and nurture the children in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

In the absence of a bishop, a priest is the celebrant and presides at the liturgy. If a priest uses Chrism in signing the newly baptized, it must have been previously consecrated by the bishop. In the absence of a bishop or priest, the bishop may specially authorize a deacon to preside. In that case, the deacon omits the prayer for the candidates, the thanksgiving over the water, and the anointing with Chrism. These omitted portions of the rite may be administered on some subsequent occasion of public baptism at which a bishop or priest presides.

When adults are baptized when the bishop is present, the bishop will mark the newly baptized adult with oil and the sign of the Cross and lay hands upon him or her. Such persons are considered to be both baptized and confirmed. They are not to be presented for Confirmation at a subsequent time.

The following preface can be used and may be especially helpful when baptizing an infant (from Diocese of Sydney, adapted by the Rev. Ken Robertson).

Without Christ, we are far from God and mired in sin. Through the gospel, God addresses each one of us and calls us back to himself, resulting in a profound



change: a change so profound, it's called a new birth. The act of baptism is about that change.

Ordinary water is used to point to the extraordinary work of God: He cleanses us from sin, gives us a new heart to trust and serve him, and welcomes us into his family by uniting us to the Son through his death and resurrection.

In the Old Covenant, children were full members of God's people. The same is true in the New Covenant. Jesus said, "Let the children come to me." Peter, on Pentecost, said the promises of God are for us and for our children. When the Philippian jailer was saved, "he and all his household were baptized." The promises of God also embrace the children of God's people: their baptism is a sign to us that God's grace meets us all before we are even aware of him. We baptize children who are not able to answer for themselves on the basis of the faith of their parents and godparents, and on the understanding that they will be brought up as Christians in the fellowship of the church, of which they are full members. This doesn't negate the need for repentance and faith – we trust that God will bring the child to repentance and faith and complete their baptism. At that time, they should come to reaffirm these promises for themselves before the church.

So, let us pray to God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ that he will grant to *insert names* what they cannot have apart from Him: that they may be born again by the Holy Spirit and be made a living member of Christ's Church.

*All: Heavenly Father, we thank you that in your great love you have called us to know you and to trust you. Increase this knowledge and strengthen our faith. Grant that these children may be born again by the Holy Spirit, cleansed from all sin, and inherit your eternal kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

#### Confirmation

The following "Preface Concerning the Confirmation Liturgy" was approved by the College of Bishops of the Anglican Church in North America on January 7, 2015:

*Anglicanism requires a public and personal profession of the Faith from every adult believer in Jesus Christ. Confirmation by a bishop is its liturgical expression. Confirmation is evident in Scripture: the Apostles prayed for, and laid their hands on those who had already been baptized (Acts 8:14-17; 19:6).*

*In Confirmation, God, through the bishop's prayer for daily increase in the Holy Spirit, strengthens the believer for Christian life in the service of Christ and his kingdom. Grace is God's gift, and we pray that he will pour out his Holy Spirit on those who have already been made his children by adoption and grace in Baptism.*



This Apostolic laying on of hands for the empowering of the Holy Spirit is why we refer to confirmation as “Ordination of the People.” Confirmation is seen as normative for the church and is a significant event in the spiritual life of the confirmand. The Apostolic laying on of hands for the empowering of the Holy Spirit also makes confirmation not just about what the confirmand confirms publicly, but also about what God is confirming in the confirmand.

Candidates for confirmation must be properly instructed in the Christian faith and life, repentant of their sins, and duly prepared to make a mature, public commitment to following Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

There is no minimum or standard age for Confirmation. However, it marks a mature commitment to Christ. Young people should not be confirmed because the parents want them to be or because it is expected that all children of a certain grade will be confirmed. An appropriate level of maturity is not normally reached until high school.

Confirmation is for those who have been baptized but have never received the laying on of hands by a Bishop in apostolic succession for the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

Reception is for those who have been baptized and confirmed in another church in Historic Succession, (e.g. the Roman Catholic or Orthodox churches), and now wish to be received into the Anglican Communion.

Reaffirmation is for communicant members who wish to reaffirm their vows previously made at baptism and confirmation. This is a repeatable experience. Spouses of those being confirmed or received often wish to reaffirm their faith at the same time.

## Appendix A Deacon Led Communion Service

When a priest is not available, *with the bishop's permission*, a Deacon may distribute bread and wine that has already been consecrated (*In extraordinary circumstances, a lay leader may distribute bread and wine that has already been consecrated, but this requires licensure by the bishop*).

The first part of the liturgy, The Ministry of the Word, is the same, with the exception that the deacon, still kneeling, will say the absolution substituting “us” for “you” and “our” for “your”.

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

*After the Offering is collected and the Doxology has been sung, the service continues (there is no blessing at the end of the service).*

Deacon: The Lord be with you.  
People: *And also with you. (or "and with your spirit").*  
Deacon: Lift up your hearts.  
People: *We lift them up to the Lord.*  
Deacon: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
People: *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

*The deacon continues:*

Father, we thank you for your love and redemption of us through your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. We thank you that you call us to fellowship with you, and with one another, at your table.

*The service may go straight to the Lord's Prayer or the deacon may say the following (with no manual actions and not touching the bread or the wine):*

“A reading from 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.”

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

*The deacon says*

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

*Deacon and people together:*

*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 trespasses, 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.*

*or*





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

*Deacon and people together:*

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is 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 forever. Amen.*

#### THE INVITATION

The Gifts of God for the People of God. [Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your heart by faith and with thanksgiving.]

#### THE MINISTRATION OF COMMUNION

*The bread and the cup are given with these words*

The Body of Christ, the bread of Heaven. The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.

*or with these words*

The Body of Christ, broken for you. The Blood of Christ, shed for you.

#### POST COMMUNION PRAYER

*After Communion the deacon says,*

Let us pray

*Deacon and People say together one of these prayers*

*Heavenly Father, 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 forever. Amen.*

*Or*

*Almighty and ever-living God, we thank you for feeding us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us, through this Sacrament, of your favor and goodness towards us: that we are true members of the mystical body of your Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of your everlasting kingdom. And we humbly ask you, heavenly Father, to assist us with your grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all the good works that you have prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.*

#### RECESSIONAL HYMN

#### THE DISMISSAL

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

## Appendix B Lay Eucharistic Ministers

Lay Eucharistic Ministers take already consecrated bread and wine to those unable to participate in Sunday Worship. Lay Eucharistic Ministers are licensed on the parochial level, and not the diocesan level<sup>1</sup>. Training also takes place on the parochial level (meeting minimum guidelines, below). Lay Eucharistic Ministers are under the supervision of the clergy (generally a deacon, if there is one present).

Lay Eucharistic Ministers are sent forth by the Church to connect those whom you are visiting with the larger corporate Body of Christ, not only in the local congregation, but also in the whole Communion of Saints. While *sent from* the church, this is not a visit *from the church*, but a participation *in the Church*. This is a time of prayer and worship and receiving Christ in the sacrament. Whatever is done and said during that visit *will be Church*.

### Qualifications and Training

Lay Eucharistic Ministers should:

- Be faithful to growing in their relationship with God.
- Have a good understanding of the faith.
- Be active and regular members of the church
- Be confirmed (the parish may license those not confirmed if they plan to be confirmed at the next Episcopal Visit)
- Demonstrate pastoral sensitivity and an ability to listen to the Holy Spirit

Training should include the practical steps of how to set up for and conduct the service, addressing physical limitations (e.g. somebody has a hard time swallowing), how to create a sacred space in the midst of clutter and distractions, and pastoral sensitivity.

Words alone do not communicate adequately God's love for the people we are visiting: our actions and attitudes speak volumes about the comfort and hope offered in the Gospel. Some of the ways in which we communicate our Faith are very practical. For example:

- *Get on their "eye level."* If the person you are visiting is bed-bound or sitting in a low chair, don't stay standing.
- *"Be there" with the person.* Listen and wait. Give them time to express themselves, or be silent. While visits, generally, shouldn't be long (especially if they are in the hospital) there should be no sense of hurry.
- *Remind them of their ministry. Even if homebound, there is tremendous ministry in praying for others.* Ask them to pray for **you** and the ministries of the Church; tell them of other specific needs so that they may intercede for family, neighbors and friends. This is not giving them something to do: it is a powerful ministry in the Church.

<sup>1</sup> There is a Diocesan licensing process for laity who will administer already consecrated bread and wine to a gathering of people on a more regular basis.



- *Communicate* with supervising clergy if there is a particular need or issue that you encounter. While it is not appropriate to engage in counseling or become involved in medical issues, you may hear or see things that need to be passed on (Do not discuss the person's health with others beyond the clergy).

#### The Liturgy

Others present may be invited to join in the service. All baptized Christians are welcome to receive. Hosts may be broken to accommodate more than the planned number of communicants. Conduct the service in a reverent manner.

If a person desires to receive the Sacrament, but, by reason of extreme sickness or physical disability, is unable to eat the Bread, assure the person that all the benefits of Communion are received, even though the Sacrament is not received with the mouth.

The communion under special circumstances (appendix C) should be used.



## Appendix c

### Communion under Special Circumstances

*The following explanation is adapted from the Canadian Book of Common Prayer.*

*Justin Martyr, in one of the earliest existing accounts of the Sunday Eucharist, tells us that deacons left after the celebration to bring communion to the sick, to the imprisoned, and to those who for any reason were unable to be present at the community Eucharist. Regular reception of the Eucharist was a primary sign of the communicant's desire to remain within the Body.*

*When a member of the community cannot be present at public celebration of the Eucharist but wishes to receive communion, it is desirable that members of the community bring the consecrated elements to that person immediately upon completion of the Sunday celebration. The continuity between communion and community celebration is thus made clear.*

*If a person is unable to attend a public celebration of the Eucharist for an extended period of time, it is appropriate that the Eucharist be celebrated with them, members of their family, the parish community, and friends, if possible. The sign of the Eucharist as an extension of the parish celebration, rather than as a private event, thus becomes clearer. In these cases, it would be appropriate to involve others in the readings and prayers, using the proper of the day or other appropriate material.*

#### OPENING SENTENCES

The Church of Christ, of which we are members, has taken this bread and wine and given thanks according to the Lord's command. We now share together in the communion of his body and blood. Hear now God's word and receive his holy food from the Lord's table.

#### THE READING OF SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Jesus said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him." John 6.51, 55–56

Jesus said, "Abide in me, as I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love." John 15.4-5a, 8–9

*After the reading, there may be a comment on the scriptures read or a few points shared from the sermon preached at the Sunday worship.*

*Suitable prayers may also be offered at this time*

#### CONFESSION

*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.*

Almighty God have mercy upon us, pardon and deliver us from all our sins, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and keep us in eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen

#### THE PEACE

*The Peace may then be exchanged*

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

*together:*

*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 trespasses, 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.*

*Or this form maybe used*

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

*together:*

*Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is 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 forever. Amen.*

#### THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

The gifts of God for the People of God.

*People: Thanks be to God.*

*The already consecrated sacrament is given with the following words.*

The body of Christ, the bread of heaven. The blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.

#### A DOXOLOGY

Glory to God

*All: whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to generation, in the church and in Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.*

#### DISMISSAL

Let us bless the Lord.

*All: Thanks be to God.*

## Appendix D Confirmation Liturgy

*Churches may use this form or the ACNA BCP 2019 Liturgy*

*Only a bishop may confirm, The liturgy is normally done in the context of the Eucharist beginning after the sermon and the Nicene Creed – Prayers of the People are not said when there is confirmation. The Bishop is seated in a chair centrally located.*

### OPENING SENTENCES

*The people stand, and the Celebrant says the following, or the appointed seasonal greeting.*

*Bishop:* The Lord will pour out his Spirit upon all flesh,

*All:* *And your sons and daughters shall prophesy.*

*Bishop:* Your old men shall dream dreams,

*All:* *and your young men shall see visions.*

*Bishop:* You shall know that the Lord is in the midst of his people,

*All:* *that he is the Lord and there is none else.*

*Bishop:* And it shall come to pass

*All:* *that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.*

*The liturgy continues as directed in the Eucharist. Following the Nicene Creed, the candidates are presented.*

### THE PRESENTATION, EXHORTATION AND EXAMINATION

*The candidates and presenters stand facing the Bishop as their presenters say*

Bishop, we present *these persons* who have been baptized and properly instructed in the Christian faith that you may, through the laying on of hands, confirm them and commission them for service and witness to Christ and His Church.

*The Bishop then shall say*

Dearly beloved, it is essential to the Church's good order that any who wish to be confirmed must publicly confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

The Apostles prayed for, and laid their hands on, those who had already been baptized. And this outward sign, the laying on of hands with prayer, has an inward grace, the strengthening of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Since this grace is God's gift, let us pray that he will pour out his Spirit on these who have already been made his children by adoption and grace, that they may be strengthened to serve the world in the fellowship of Christ's Church.

*The Bishop then addresses the confirmands*

Do you, in the presence of God and the Church, renew the solemn promises and vows that were made at your baptism, acknowledging that you are bound to keep them?

*Answer: I do.*



Do you renounce the Devil and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

*Answer: I renounce them.*

Do you renounce the empty promises and deadly deceits of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

*Answer: I renounce them.*

Do you renounce the sinful desires of the flesh that draw you from the love of God?

*Answer: I renounce them.*

Do you turn to Jesus Christ and confess him as your Lord and Savior?

*Answer: I do.*

Do you joyfully receive the Christian Faith, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?

*Answer: I do.*

Will you obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in them all the days of your life?

*Answer: I will, the Lord being my helper.*

*The Bishop then addresses the congregation*

Do you believe *these candidates* should be confirmed and commissioned for the mission of Christ and His Church?

*Answer: We do!*

#### PRAYER AND THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

*Those praying for the candidates come forward at this time. The Bishop stands and says*

Let us pray

Almighty and everliving God, we ask you to strengthen *these* your *servants* for witness and ministry, through the power of your Holy Spirit. Daily increase in *them* the gift of your grace and the fruit of your Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

#### For Confirmation

*The Bishop may make the sign of the Cross with the Oil of Chrism on the forehead of any receiving the laying on of hands, and may say*

N., I sign you with the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

*Bishop and rector pray for each confirmand*

*Bishop lays hands on and prays for each confirmand*

Strengthen, O Lord, your servant N. with your Holy Spirit; empower *him* for your service; and sustain *him* all the days of *his* life. *Amen.*



### For Reception

*Those already confirmed in a Jurisdiction of Christ's Church with the historic episcopate are received with the laying on of hands.*

N., we recognize you as a member of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church; and we receive you into the fellowship of this Communion. May God the Father, the Son and they Holy Spirit bless, preserve, and keep you. *Amen.*

### For Reaffirmation

*The Bishop may also accept with the laying on of hands the reaffirmation of vows by a person who has been previously confirmed or received in this Church.*

*The Bishop then lays hands on each:*

N., may the Holy Spirit, who has begun a good work in you, direct and continually uphold you by His grace, that you may continue in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ until your life's end. *Amen.*

*The Bishop then says, with all the People standing*

Almighty and everlasting God, following the example of the Apostles, we have laid our hands on *these, your servants*. We humbly ask you to assure *them* of your favor and gracious goodness towards *them*. Let your fatherly hand remain upon *them*; let your Holy Spirit be with *them*; and lead *them* in the knowledge and obedience of your Word. Protect *them*, we pray, from the schemes of the devil. Defend *them* at the time of trial. Bless *them* by bringing them safely to Your Home in everlasting glory; and, make *them* strong and courageous in Jesus Christ our Lord, our mighty Savior. *Amen.*

*The Peace is now exchanged*

*Bishop:* The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*All:* *And also with you.*

*The service continues with the offertory.*

*At the conclusion of the service, the following blessing may be used.*

Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; fight the good fight of faith; that you may finish your course with joy: and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

### ADDITIONAL DIRECTIONS

*If there is no celebration of the Holy Eucharist, the liturgy continues with the Lord's Prayer. Other appropriate prayers may be added.*

*The candidates may be part of the processional.*

*It is desirable that each candidate have one or two people who will come up and pray over them during the prayer and laying on of hands. These should be selected ahead of time and given the following instructions: The bishop will inform them when to come forward, please pray loud enough for the candidate to hear your prayers – but not loud enough for the whole church to hear your prayers, please pause in your verbal prayers*





*when the bishop comes to pray for your candidate.*

*The rector will accompany the bishop in praying for each candidate (only the bishop will lay hands for the actual confirmation, reception, reaffirmation prayers).*

*During the prayer and laying on of hands the congregation may be led in soft worship.*

*3x5 cards may be made available for those in the congregation to write down specific prayers for those being confirmed, which can be given to them after the service.*

***The following Alternate Examination may be used.***

*The Bishop then addresses the confirmands*

Do you, in the presence of God and the Church, renew the solemn promises and vows that were made at your baptism, acknowledging that you are bound to keep them?

*Answer: I do.*

Do you turn to Jesus Christ?

*Answer: I turn to Jesus Christ*

Do you repent of your sins?

*Answer: I repent of my sins*

Do you renounce Satan, his works and the evil powers of this world?

*Answer: I renounce them all*

Do you renounce the desires of your sinful nature and all forms of idolatry?

*Answer: I renounce them all*

Do you believe and trust in God the Father who made this world?

*Answer: I believe and trust in Him.*

Do you believe and trust in His Son, Jesus Christ, who redeemed us?

*Answer: I believe and trust in Him*

Do you believe and trust in His Holy Spirit who gives life to the people of God?

*Answer: I believe and trust in Him*

So that all may know your intention and resolve, I ask you:

Will you worship the Lord with all your heart, mind and strength?

*Answer: I will with God's help.*

Will you tell your neighbors about the love of Christ?

*Answer: I will with God's help.*

Will you support and pray for your church, bringing your gifts and talents to the work of the Kingdom of God?

*Answer: I will with God's help.*

Will you read your bible and pray regularly?

*Answer: I will with God's help.*



Will you meet with other Christians for fellowship and stir up the gifts of God that are in you?

*Answer: I will with God's help.*

Will you pursue justice and truth and seek reconciliation among all people?

*Answer: I will with God's help.*

Will you endeavor to feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, welcome the needy, clothe the naked, visit the sick and those in prison?

*Answer: I will with God's help.*

Will you support and pray for the lonely, the orphans, widows and all the voiceless?

*Answer: I will with God's help.*

Will you be a good steward of God's creation?

*Answer: I will with God's help.*

Will you be alert and watchful, and firmly resist your enemy, the devil?

*Answer: I will with God's help.*

Appendix E  
Distinctive Elements of Anglican Preaching

*THE RT. REV. KEN ROSS AND THE REV. DR. SHANE COPELAND*

Our liturgy takes us on a journey. The sermon, as part of that, takes us on a journey as well – it is not simply a talk that has 3 points and an application. To understand the journey, we will look at the context of preaching, the content of preaching, and the character of preaching.

THE CONTEXT OF PREACHING – WORD AND SACRAMENT

The original vision of the English Reformers was that preaching leads to the Table. In the 1662 BCP, the one place where a sermon is appointed is in the Service of Holy Communion. This is not the case with Morning and Evening Prayer. When one considers that the Eucharistic Lectionary covers every Sunday of the year, this lays out a practice of weekly Preaching and Communion. One distinctive of evangelical Anglican preaching should be the proper, perceptible, and profound connection between the gospel proclaimed and the gospel experienced in Holy Communion.

Article 19 connects preaching and the table: the order is important. In Anglicanism, Word and Sacrament are held together with a unique tension. For Cranmer, you would not come to the table without a proclamation of the Word, without a sermon. There was a primacy of the proclamation of the Word – it is seen as the essential part, without which you could not go forward (this is distinct from the Anglo-Catholic understanding that the table, or altar, is the central and essential part).

And yet the liturgy builds towards the table, it builds towards this experience of the Gospel, the experience of being participants of the wedding supper of the Lamb. In Colorado there are 53 14'ers (14,000 ft peaks) and some people try to climb all of them. There are 2 mountains that illustrate this – Democrat and Lincoln. The only way to summit Lincoln is to summit Democrat first, you can't bypass Democrat and just summit Lincoln. This is a picture of what Anglican Worship was designed to be – there are two peaks: Word and Table – we ascend both, but we can't ascend to the Table without first ascending the Word.

Anglican worship is that there is a focus on the gospel through the Word and through the Table, and they work together. The right preaching of the gospel in corporate worship should naturally lead to its application in the celebration of the Table – the gospel proclaimed shapes us to enter into the gospel experienced at the Table in a more profound way. That connection is always there – and sometimes it is helpful for the preacher to make the connection between what is happening in the gospel in the sermon and what is happening at the Table. That can be in the sermon itself, or it can be a simple sentence right before the Sursum Corda, or right before the invitation.

Cranmer was still unable to change people's behavior from annually receiving only the bread to weekly partaking of both the bread and wine. The Church of England eventually settled for Morning Prayer with preaching and monthly Holy Communion for centuries. The Oxford Movement in the mid-19th Century reconnected Cranmer's Prayer Book vision. Unfortunately, the other non-Anglican doctrines and practices that they promoted made Evangelicals also oppose weekly Communion. The bitterness of those battles entrenched both sides in their practices. The reality of Anglican Evangelicalism today, is that in the places where expository preaching is most valued and practiced, the Table has largely been disconnected from the Word. Most Anglican Evangelicals outside of North America offer the Lord's Supper only once a month in their main service. In North America, we have the opposite problem. Even in many churches that would define themselves as Anglican Evangelical, solid, expository preaching is absent with a prime emphasis on the Table.

The distinctive of Anglican evangelical preaching lies in bringing together of Word and Table as laid out in the Book of Common Prayer – this is the journey we are to take each week. It is connecting deep, expository preaching that offers Christ to us and leads us to the Table where Christ is offered to us in the Sacrament. The Preaching of the Word and the Lord's Supper are powerful means of grace that are intended to go together.

#### THE CONTENT OF PREACHING

##### *THE IMPORTANCE OF SCRIPTURE*

The English reformers, and Cranmer in particular, had a high view of scripture. He packed the liturgy with scripture and his goal in the daily offices was to have as much scripture as possible being read every day. The goal was for people to be soaked in the word of God so that it informed their imaginations and shaped their desires. We have to remember that the English Reformers are before the Age of Enlightenment, before a Cartesian understanding of reason where reason was supreme, autonomous, and a rule unto itself. Cranmer's goal was not information transfer: life is not just a puzzle where if you got enough information, you could fit all the pieces together and have mastery. You can't educate somebody into being a New Creation. Transformation comes through the Word of God being applied into our lives by the Spirit of God.

We see a high view of scripture in the 39 articles.

##### **Article 6. Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation.**

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.

Article 20 also states that it is not lawful for the Church to prescribe anything that is contrary to God's written word, or to expound one passage of scripture in such a way that

it disagrees with another. The church is the keeper or guardian of scripture, but still under scripture's authority.

It follows, then, that there is a high view of preaching in the 39 Articles:

**Article 19. Of the Church**

The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

**Article 23. Of Ministering in the Congregation**

It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the Sacraments in the Congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same . . .

So preaching was to be faithful to the text – rise out of the text – which was not common at the time of the Reformation. Medieval preaching, when it happened, tended to not come from scripture, but from Peter Lombard's Sentences written in the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It was not a systematic theology, as that category didn't really exist yet, but was a precursor to systematic theology. In the Homily on Scripture, Cranmer writes that the words of Holy Scripture have power to convert through God's promise, and to be effectual through God's assistance. Cranmer wrote his books of homilies simply because so few clergy were trained in how to understand and handle scripture – and the proclamation of the Word of God was central.

*THE GOSPEL*

Again and again in the English Reformers, you find an emphasis on the gospel. Each sermon is shaped by the gospel and is to be a presentation of the gospel. If the gospel is left out, then we can end up preaching moralism – try harder to be good. There is no good news in “try harder to be good.” It is all too easy to end up preaching sermons that are like “The Little Engine that Could” where we exhort people to be better and do better. We are not to preach obligation, but invitation.

Gospel is not a way of life, or a code of ethics, or a systematic theology (though it rightly anchors, is the foundation, for these things). The good news is not a proclamation of what we are to do – it is a proclamation of what God has accomplished for our salvation through Jesus in order to restore us and eventually to destroy all results of sin in the New Creation. There is an individual aspect – our salvation, and a corporate aspect – the new heavens and the new earth. This is a work of grace. Paul writes in Ephesians 2:8-9, “*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.*” We are saved by grace, by what He has done for us – and even our faith is not our own, not something we stir up from ourselves: even our faith is a gift from God.

There is a difference between what the Gospel is and what the Gospel produces. These are never to be confused or separated. The Gospel is the proclamation of what God has done through Jesus for our restoration and the restoration of all things. The Gospel produces in us a love for neighbor, a concern for the poor, a desire for holiness. But the gospel is not “love your neighbor” or “help the poor” or “be holy.” If we confuse, we end up in legalism and works righteousness. If we separate, we end up hypocrites and our faith is dead. When we call people to holiness in their lives, there are two pieces that need to be clear. The first is that our actions are a response to what God has done, is doing, and will do in our lives. We don’t act to get God to love and affirm us: we act out of His love and affirmation – and the assurance that the good work He has begun, He will finish. Secondly, we have to say at some point, that we are powerless to do this – this can’t be done in our strength. It is His grace that saves us, and it is His grace that sanctifies us – the Holy Spirit working in us. That doesn’t mean “let go and let God,” we are involved in this work. Paul holds these two together well in Colossians 1:28-29, *“He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. 29 To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.”*

Packer says, *“[The preacher] will never let his exposition of anything in Scripture get detached from, and so appear as unrelated to, Calvary’s cross and the redemption that was wrought there; and in this way he will sustain a Christ-centered, cross-oriented preaching ministry year in and year out, with evangelistic as well as a pastoral thrust.”*

At the cross we find that we are more sinful than we ever imagined. We may convince ourselves that we are pretty good people, not perfect, by any means, but basically good people. We tend to have a sliding scale of righteousness and we think we can move up or down by doing good or bad things. We also tend to have two categories of sin – acceptable sins and unacceptable sins. I may gossip or slander, but I didn’t kill anybody. The standard is to never sin or never want to in order to be righteous. But at the cross we find that we are, as it says in Ephesians 2:3, by nature objects of wrath. We are dead in our sins (Eph 2:1) unable to rescue ourselves.

At the cross we find that we are more loved than we ever hoped for. 1 John 3:1, *“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!”* We are lavished with His love – that word conveys extravagance, to the point of seeming wasteful. God loves us not because we are lovable (earn it), but because He is love. We are made new creations, children of God, coheirs with Christ, sons and daughters of the King of kings, and His delight. There is a restoration of the image of God and our identity and worth are grounded in His work on the cross. All our sins are forgiven, which is why Paul can say in Romans 8:1 that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

At the cross we find that we are more glorious than we can comprehend. He does not love us because we are lovely, but He does love us to make us lovely. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:21, *“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we*



*might become the righteousness of God.” Our identity is no longer sin and shame, but the righteousness of God. We are not pardoned criminals who have somehow escaped the punishment but are still defined by our sins. We go from being enemies of God to being children of God, sons and daughters of the King of Kings. This is the truth found in 2 Corinthians 3:18, “And we all, who with unveiled faces reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” If Jesus has rescued you, there is nothing ordinary about you.*

Preaching the Gospel reveals our need, His provision, and our identity in Christ. It anchors us in the truth that more is gained in the resurrection than is lost in the fall. We suffer from spiritual Alzheimer's – we need to Gospel again and again. We are not to give tips and techniques; we are not to reduce the Gospel to just another tool to help you be happy and successful in life. William Tyndale said the Gospel “*makes a man's heart glad and makes him sing, dance, and leap for joy.*” He goes on to say that the Gospel “*Is joyful tidings and, as some say, a good message declared by the apostles throughout all the world of Christ, the right David, who has fought with sin, with death, and the devil, and has overcome them. By this all men who were in bondage to sin, wounded with death and overcome by the devil are, without their own merit or deserving, loosed, justified, restored to life and saved. They are brought to liberty, and reconciled to the favor of God, and set at one with Him again.*”

#### THE CHARACTER OF PREACHING

THE SERMON IS NOT A BIBLE STUDY NOR IS IT A TED TALK.

Preaching was more than just a plain exposition of scripture. Once you have completed the exegetical work, you have done your homework – you don't preach your homework. Once we do all the exegetical work, you have the raw material for a sermon – now comes the harder piece of wrestling with the Holy Spirit to know what God has to say out of those scriptures to a particular people in a particular place at a particular time. J.I. Packer talks about being faithful to the text and sensitive to the people. There is to be a prophetic edge to preaching, not just coming up with what you can say, but what you must say. This is not from analyzing the latest information about demographics from Gallup or Barna, this comes through the Holy Spirit.

Ashley Null, noted Cranmer expert, writes, “*Cranmer believed every presentation of a message had to be tailored to the needs of its specific audience . . . Cranmer taught that the Church's presentation of the gospel had to evolve and change as the society it addressed did. Cranmer held that the gospel message had to be unchanging, but its presentation equally had to be constantly adapting.*” What Null writes we see in Cranmer's preface to the Book of Common Prayer – that it was to be locally adapted: the liturgy not only had to make sense, it had to “fit” the people. The same is true of the preaching of God's timeless word – it is coming to time-bound people. This keeps us from simply giving motivational and entertaining talks or bible-studies – we are taking

people on a journey. For a journey, you need to know the destination – but you also need to know the starting place, you have to begin where people are.

The role of the preacher is also key. Hugh Latimer, in his “Sermon on the Plough,” wrote, *“The preaching of the gospel is one of God’s ploughworks, and the preacher is one of God’s ploughmen.”* The life of the preacher is important. When the sermon is divorced from the life of the preacher, it can appear to be merely propaganda. This isn’t limiting God’s sovereignty, He can work through His word when we are not living in the Gospel well, but it speaks to the truth that we are to receive and be shaped by the Gospel.

Preaching is “incarnational” – Phillips Brooks, an Episcopal bishop in the late 1800’s talks about preaching as truth mediated through personality. The sum of all *truth* is Christ and His truth does not stand in indifference to his person, but comes through the person. When you do your exegetical work, what grabs you in this – where do you wrestle? What truths do you not believe – act on – where do you need God in this? There is a difference between preaching “my stuff” and preaching His Word through me. This is not making the sermon about me or focused on me, this is trusting that the Holy Spirit is at work in you – that what He is zinging you about is what the congregation needs to hear.

The doctrine of means was recovered in the reformation – that God does His work through us. Dr. Llyod-Jones writes, in *Preaching and Preachers*, that preaching *“... is theology coming thru a man who is on fire. A true understanding and experience of the Truth must lead to this. I say again that a man who can speak about these things dispassionately has no right whatsoever to be in a pulpit; and should never be allowed to enter into one.”*

#### DIVINE WOOING – ALLUREMENT

This journey of Word and Sacrament is meant to allure us, it is meant to draw us in. But that is true for the sermon itself, as well. Richard Taverner in 1540 wrote, *“Besides the preaching of the Gospel, Christ gave nothing in commission unto his disciples . . . So ye see that infidels ought not violently to be drawn to our faith, but lovingly invited and allured.”* The English Reformers saw preaching as divine wooing – how God allures us to himself. They understood that encountering God’s unconditional divine love is what brings transformation, not fear of punishment. Again, this was in contrast to the medieval church where the dominant picture was of Jesus as judge on the day of doom, and people were being sent to the miseries of hell. If there is not this alluring, then we miss what Paul commends in 2 Timothy 4:2, *“Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage-- with great patience and careful instruction.”*

Richard Sibbes, an Anglican theologian born in the 1500’s, wrote that *“it is not sufficient to preach Christ”* merely by teaching people the doctrines of the Bible; rather, *“there must be an alluring of them, for to preach is to woo”* (Works 5:505). Sibbes also



compares the preacher to a friend of the Bridegroom, who seeks to win the soul to marry Christ. On the one hand, marriage must be entered with eyes wide open, based on a factual knowledge of the other person. So the friend of the Bridegroom makes known to the woman both her desperate need and her heavenly Suitor's riches and nobility (Works 5:514). On the other hand, this is not just an intellectual matter, so the preacher must "entreat for a marriage," employing all his abilities and powers to woo a bride for Christ (Works 5:506).

The reformers were looking for more than an ability to articulate truths, they were looking for a deeper knowledge in the heart – this indwelling grace of God that was to come through preaching. Preaching does more than inform, it is much more experiential and is meant to draw us closer to Christ. It includes doctrinal teaching but the purpose isn't to learn doctrine, it is to have the imaginations and desires and thus our wills changed. Melancthon wrote, "*What the heart desires, the will chooses, and the mind justifies.*" What we desire shapes our actions significantly – and so our hearts, our desires, need to be allured to Christ.

This is why preaching is expository, but also prophetic and incarnational. Prophetic in that out of the scriptures there is hearing what God is saying to a particular people at a particular time. Incarnational in that where the text grabs you – either with a truth you need to hear and know more fully or a truth you want to gloss over – that is probably where you need to go. And yet we need to guard against being reactionary. Living in a culture that sees Christianity as irrelevant and lives far outside Biblical norms can lead us to think that our job is to be harsh, to be bearers of hard news. We can end up preaching to the choir. There is hard news that needs to be said, but it is overshadowed by the Good news. There is a standing firm on our positions, but we might need to evaluate and change our postures.

The primary words for proclamation in the New Testament (Kerusso, Euangelizo, Martureo) imply a personal investment in the proclamation, an authority in the proclamation, and the proclamation itself creating the reality it proclaims. The Gospel message originates in a person – Jesus, and proclamation flows through a person. The Gospel message breaks in from outside of us and is true regardless of the response.

John Stott quote wrote, "*When a man of God stands before the people of God with the Word of God in his hand and the Spirit of God in his heart, you have a unique opportunity for communication. I fully agree with Martyn Lloyd-Jones that the decadent periods in the history of the church have always been those periods marked by preaching in decline. That is a negative statement. The positive counterpart is that churches grow to maturity when the Word of God is faithfully and sensitively expounded to them. If it is true that a human being cannot live by bread only, but by every word which proceeds out of the mouth of God, then it also is true of churches. Churches live, grow, and thrive in response to the Word of God. I have seen congregations come alive by the faithful and systematic unfolding of the Word of God.*"

Appendix F  
Verse by Verse Preaching in the Anglican Tradition

*THE REV. DR. SHANE COPELAND*

In the week between Christmas and New Years of 1772, the Reverend John Newton sat in his study in Olney, England preparing his sermon for New Year's Day. He had chosen 1 Chronicles 17 as his passage to preach. This chapter tells when King David proposed to build a temple for God. While God told him, "no," He entered into a covenant with David promising that David's son would rule as king forever. Newton was undone when he read David's response to God in verse 16, "Who am I, O LORD God...that you have brought me thus far?" He could not help but think of his own life, his own "wretched" past as a slave trader. He was moved in that moment to write "Amazing Grace," probably the most sung hymn in the world since that day.

Now I could write a lot about "Amazing Grace," but this article is not about the hymn; rather, how Newton drew inspiration from the Scripture passage HE CHOSE to preach. Newton was a minister in the Church of England, an Anglican. So, while on the secular calendar, January 1 is New Year's Day, on the Church calendar, it is the Feast of the Circumcision of Christ. The 1662 Book of Common Prayer that Newton used appoints two Scriptures for this feast day: Romans 4:8-14 and Luke 2:15-21. He did not preach from these lectionary passages; rather, walking in a long line of Anglican ministers, he chose a different passage to exposit.

It is important to acknowledge that from the 16th Century Reformation, there have been two approaches to preaching in Anglicanism. They have existed side by side, and at best, have complemented each other. One is preaching from the appointed passages from the lectionary. The other is preaching verse by verse through books of the Bible, or lengthy passages, that the minister prayerfully chooses. Both of these approaches can (and should, if done right) fall under the overall umbrella of expository preaching. While another whole article can be written on this, in essence, expository preaching seeks to draw out of the passage the meaning and application that God intends, rather than reading a meaning into it.

The Reformers did not invent verse by verse preaching as Church Fathers like John Chrysostom and Augustine laid that foundation. Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, who put the prayer book and lectionary together, at the same time, wrote The Book of Homilies that ministers were to read...as their sermons. Which is to say that at the founding of the Church of England, most ministers were not preaching from the lectionary, but reading topical, Scripture based homilies. The evangelical/reformed expression of Anglicanism has most practiced and developed this rich tradition of verse by verse preaching.

This is the tradition that Newton was in. He was majorly influenced by the two great Anglican preachers of the Great Awakening: George Whitfield and John Wesley. This



lineage continued through Charles Simeon and J.C. Ryle in the 19th Century. The mid-20th century birthed a deep and broad renewal in verse by verse preaching. London, England alone produced three contemporary men: Martin Lloyd-Jones, John Stott and Dick Lucas. Two of these men were Anglicans: Stott and Lucas. Stott was the rector of All Souls Langham Place and Lucas the rector of St. Helen's Bishopsgate (not far from Newton's own London parish: St. Mary Woolnoth). These men not only had fruitful preaching ministries, but both committed to training preachers for the future. This fruit is still being born today through [the Langham Partnership](#) and [Proclamation Trust](#).

There can be great benefit from preaching the lectionary. There can also be great benefit from preaching through books of the Bible. Both of these methods have a solid history in Anglicanism. At the end of the day, whatever method is used, Christ must be at the center of all our preaching.