

## I'M NEW-WHAT TO EXPECT AT CHRIST CHURCH . . .

### **BEFORE YOU COME**

#### **What to wear:**

Anything you feel comfortable in. There is no dress code at Christ Church. Some people wear coats and ties, dresses and others wear jeans and anything in between. Business casual is the usual level for attire for most of our congregation.

#### **When our services are held:**

Sundays at 9:00 a.m. Holy Days and Special Services as announced.

#### **Where:**

408 South First Street, at the intersection of 1st Street and 15th Avenue. Our home page has a map with our location on it.

#### **Parking:**

We have a parking lot next to the parish hall, which adjoins the church.

#### **When to arrive:**

We love to have people come to visit! You will be greeted warmly. Our members take turns serving as ushers and will greet you when you arrive. There are no "reserved" pews at Christ Church. If you would like the usher to show you to or suggest a pew they will be happy to.

Our bulletin is a step-by-step guide to what will happen at the service. It will have the hymn numbers, hymn text (if the hymn isn't in the Hymnal in the pew), prayers, lessons, and the musical selections for the Eucharist (Holy Communion).

Our bulletin will refer you to two books found in the rack in front of you: the Hymnal and the Book of Common Prayer. You will use both of those books during worship. The Book of Common Prayer outlines the service and so you can follow along with the clergy and lay ministers. Some of the prayers and responses are read by the clergy and some by the congregation. Our bulletin will indicate which is which.

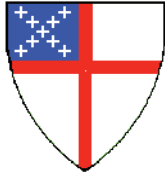
The Hymnal contains the hymns for the day which are listed by hymn number. When a piece of music is not readily accessible in the hymnal we will print the words and music in the bulletin.

### **BEFORE THE SERVICE:**

When you come into the church you will notice an atmosphere of quiet reverence. Your eye is immediately taken to the altar, where there will be lighted candles, and the cross behind the altar. The Sanctuary Lamp, the large candle to the left of the altar, is lit signifying that the consecrated elements (host and wine) are reserved in the tabernacle under the cross behind the altar.

Before the service most people kneel in their pew for a moment of private prayer and devotion, and to prepare themselves for the reception of Holy Communion. Conversation is quiet and very limited. A good rule to follow is what is found on a sign on the door on a parish church in England that reads: "Before Mass, talk to God. During Mass, let God talk to you. After Mass come to Coffee Hour and talk to each other."

Please silence all communications devices upon entering the church.



### **DURING THE SERVICE:**

Our services normally begin and end with a procession. It is customary to stand as the procession enters, and some bow as the cross passes by. We normally stand for singing of hymns, kneel for prayers, and sit for the Bible readings (except the Gospel, when we stand) and sit for the Sermon.

If you're ever in doubt as to what to do, look around and see what the rest of the congregation is doing. Don't feel embarrassed if you don't do exactly what others are doing. Everyone, even lifelong Episcopalians learned it at some point! If you'd like to learn more about traditional Anglican liturgy, please click on our Liturgy page [here](#) for more information.

### **THE PEACE:**

It is customary to exchange the Peace midway through the service. As the peace is passed from one to another you will be greeted by other members of the congregation. We try to limit conversation during the Peace, but feel free to greet others in the pews nearby.

### **THE COMMUNION:**

All Christians who are baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are invited to come forward and receive communion. We give communion in two kinds: the bread (the Body of Christ) and the wine (the Blood of Christ). Some communicants prefer to take a small sip of wine from the cup (chalice) and others prefer to take their communion wafer and dip it into the chalice (intinction). Either is acceptable. If you're worried about drinking from a common cup due to germs, don't be. Extensive studies have been done by agencies such as the CDC concluding that the risk of disease transmission from a chalice is so low as to be undetectable.

If you and your family prefer not to receive Communion you may still come forward and receive a blessing from the priest. Please cross your arms across your chest which signals the priest to administer a blessing.

Children may receive Communion prior to Confirmation as long as they are at an age where they can understand (in a child's mind) what they are receiving. Some parents prefer to wait for their children to receive Communion until after Confirmation. Either is acceptable. Explaining why we receive Communion and what it means can be a very special moment for a parent and child and parents are encouraged to discuss this with their children.

### **AFTER THE SERVICE:**

While our liturgy is formal, we're anything else but, and don't be surprised if people come up and introduce themselves. We normally have coffee and refreshments after the service and you are cordially invited to attend. The Vicar, or other officiating clergy will greet you on your way out, and please feel free to introduce yourself. If you would like more information about Christ Church the Vicar will be happy to speak with you after the service.

### **YOU WILL NOT BE EMBARRASSED:**

When you visit an Episcopal church, you will be our respected and welcome guest. You will not be singled out in an embarrassing way, nor asked to stand before the congregation nor to come forward. You will worship God with us.