

Episcopal Church of the Epiphany

Piano Customary

Note: This Customary describes a typical worship service, but our liturgy often differs from that described here for seasonal and other reasons, and the priest is always free to vary the service in his or her discretion. We all stay as flexible as we can!

Before the Service. The bulletin should arrive during the week by email. If it does not, it will be present on Sunday morning. Go over the hymns and service music and make sure you have identified the sources you need for the music specified.

Worship Service. Begin playing a worshipful prelude about 10:20 am. As the 10:30 hour approaches, watch the priest for his sign that he is ready to begin. When you finish your prelude, the priest will announce the opening Words of Peace, usually something along the lines of "Peace be to this place and to all who dwell within it. Amen." Then the outside bell will ring three times. If the bell doesn't ring, don't panic. Give it a beat or two, and if it doesn't happen, forge ahead without it.

When the bell has finished ringing, play the introduction to the processional hymn with authority. As with all hymns, use your judgment about how long the introduction should be. If the hymn is well known, the last line or two will be plenty. If it's not well known, you may elect to play through an entire verse as an introduction to help the congregation become accustomed to it. The congregation will stand and sing, and the priest and the Lay Eucharistic Minister will process with the cross for the service to begin. Our custom is to sing all verses that are included in the staff lines of the hymn. We typically do not sing the additional verses that are sometimes added after the staff lines.

When the processional hymn is finished, the priest will share the opening acclamation from the Book of Common Prayer, and then the Collect for Purity. A designated hymn of praise follows the Collect for Purity.

At the conclusion of the hymn of praise, the congregation will be seated for the lessons. Be readying the sequence hymn, which will come after the lay reader finishes reading the lessons and steps away from the lectern.

At the conclusion of the Sequence Hymn, the priest will read the gospel lesson. Before and after the scripture itself, there is a response from the congregation. When the gospel lesson and the congregational response are finished, play about

30 seconds of "walking music" to give the priest and the Lay Eucharistic Minister time to return to the chancel and for the priest to move to the pulpit for the sermon.

During the sermon, feel free to take your place in one of the pews. There will be plenty of time during the Passing of the Peace for you to return to the piano.

Make sure you (or someone else you know about) is prepared with music to play during the Offertory. When the special music is finished and the priest has finished preparing the table for the serving of the Holy Eucharist, it will be time to play the designated Presentation Hymn.

During the Eucharistic Prayer, there are two hymns you should be ready to play, both specified in the bulletin. The first is the *Sanctus*, and the second is the Fraction Anthem. At the conclusion of the Fraction Anthem, be readying any music you will play during the serving of the elements of the Holy Eucharist. It's fine for you to be first in line to receive the elements, so you can return to the rear of the nave and play during the remainder of the serving time.

Your music should continue until the last person is served, the ushers have removed the center rail from the communion table, and the priest and the Lay Eucharistic Minister have finished restoring the altar after the elements are served.

There will be a Post-Communion Prayer and a blessing, and then it will be time for the Recessional Hymn.

When the Recessional Hymn is finished, the priest will announce a dismissal and the congregation will respond. After the congregational response, you should begin playing your Postlude.

After the Service. Return the cover to the piano and report any issues with the maintenance of the piano to the priest or to one of the vestry members. We hope you'll join us in the Little House immediately following worship for refreshments and informal visiting time.

Thank you for serving at Epiphany!