

## **Worship in the Diocese of Adelaide**

Last modified January 2018

### **General**

Gathering together to worship God, to hear the scriptures read and explained, to pray and to obey the command of Christ to share in the Holy Communion has been a part of Christian practice since the very beginning of the Church. To aim for excellence in our gatherings means that our gatherings glorify God and are helpful to those who participate.

For the Anglican Church the liturgy we use for our worship is of particular importance because the Anglican Church is not a 'confessing church'. That is, the Anglican Church has a very limited range of statements of belief. These are the Nicene and Apostles Creeds, the Articles of Religion and the doctrine of the Book of Common Prayer (1662). For the Anglican Church our doctrine is contained in and expressed by our authorised liturgy. It is the case that liturgy always reflects doctrine but for the Anglican Church our liturgy is very important in reflecting and communicating what we believe.

Because of the very important role liturgy has in communicating the Christian faith the Anglican Church has taken liturgy very seriously and seen it as something of the Church not individuals. The notion of 'common prayer' is important to us not so that attenders will always get the same no matter which Anglican service they attend (predictability) but so that the belief of the Church reflected in the liturgy is 'owned' and approved by the church as a whole. Therefore liturgies which can be used in our church must be authorised not by an ordained minister or a congregational meeting or even a diocesan synod but normally by the most representative body the Anglican Church of Australia has-the General Synod. Recently at General Synod a canon was passed which has been adopted in the Diocese of Adelaide allowing for some extra flexibility but that ordinance still requires authorisation of liturgy at a greater than Diocese level.

Before they are ordained or licensed Anglican clergy make a solemn commitment to use authorised forms of liturgy only. Liturgies authorised by the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia are: The Book of Common Prayer (1662), An Australian Prayer Book (1978) and A Prayer Book for Australia (1995). It should be noted that the restriction to using authorised liturgies applies to both Eucharistic and non- Eucharistic liturgies and includes weddings, baptisms and funerals.

Section 4 of the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia includes a mechanism for authorising deviations in authorised liturgies but the intention of this section is for permanent and not 'one off' purposes and requires a general meeting of parishioners to approve a proposed deviation before a submission is made to the bishop for approval.

Liturgies which reflect particular themes or occasions can be very helpful in enabling people to worship and grow in discipleship of Christ. There are two broad avenues for introducing this variety. The first is the General Synod *Canon Concerning Services*. Section 5 of the Canon includes the following:

- (1) The minister may make and use variations which are not of substantial importance in any form of authorised service authorised by section 4 (BCP, AAPB, APBA or via section 4 of the Constitution) according to particular circumstances.*
- (2) Subject to any regulations made from time to time by the Synod of a diocese, a minister of that diocese may on occasions for which no provision is made use forms of service considered suitable by the minister for those occasions.*
- (3) All variations in forms of service and all forms of service used must be reverent and edifying and must not be contrary or a departure from the doctrine of this Church.*
- (4) A question concerning the observance of the provisions of subsection 5(3) may be determined by the bishop of the Diocese.*

If an ordained minister in the Diocese of Adelaide is in any doubt whether or not liturgical variations are appropriate under this Canon they should consult the bishop prior to using the variation.

The second avenue for flexibility is via the resources of the prayer book itself. This is particularly evident in A Prayer Book for Australia. Not only does APBA offer a variety of services but the rubrics within the services offer even more options for variety. Those leading worship are encouraged to make use of the flexibility offered by attention to the resources of the prayer book and a careful reading of the rubrics.

### **Welcoming worship**

Our liturgy is rich and has much depth. It is steeped in Scripture. However, increasingly we live in a society disconnected from Church culture. This means we have to work hard at making worship accessible for those who are new or who attend occasionally. Those who have the responsibility to prepare and lead worship have an important role in helping people to feel included and welcome.

A multitude of books and page numbers can often alienate the newcomer. People can be helped to use the Prayer Book if some elements such as the Psalm and Collect are printed in the Sunday Pew Bulletin, thus minimising the need for the constant changing of place. In the same way, if more than one hymn or songbook is to be used it may be better to produce a song sheet or include the words in the Pew Bulletin (with appropriate copyright clearance and acknowledgements).

If data projection is used care should be given as to the amount of text projected as large amounts of text on a screen can be difficult to read. White text on a dark background has been shown to be best for people with eyesight difficulties.

We should seek to use inclusive language in our public worship. Readings from Scripture should be drawn from an inclusive language version such as the NRSV or the new inclusive version of the NIV. While many of our older members understand the use of the masculine as inclusive, our younger members almost certainly will not. Their education has required the use of inclusive language.

It is important, however, that the use of inclusive language is inconspicuous. Forced or awkward English is no enhancement of worship!

The Diocese has a helpful resource in its Inclusive Language Policy which can be downloaded from the Diocesan website - Ministry Resources at the following link <https://adelaideanglicans.com/support> or click [here](#).

### **Authorisation to lead worship or preach.**

No clergy member may officiate or preach in any Church or registered congregation without the licence or written permission of the bishop. No lay person may conduct a service of worship or preach in a church or registered congregation unless he or she holds the licence of the bishop or has received written permission from the bishop.

In all cases where a Parish Priest or Priest-in-Charge desires a visiting clergy member to preach or officiate (other than a Clergy member holding the Bishop's Licence or Permission to Officiate), permission should be sought from the Bishop before an invitation is issued to the Clergy member concerned. The letter to the Bishop should indicate that the person to be invited as a clergy member is in good standing within his or her own diocese. Professional Standards checks will be completed prior to permission being given. These checks can take quite some time so advance notice will improve the likelihood of permission being granted.

### **Robes**

The Diocese of Adelaide has passed the "Canon Concerning Vesture of Ministers 1992". The canon recognises that the ministers of our church have worn "distinctive vesture while ministering in Divine Service", but also that the vesture worn may "vary from time to time and place to place".

It is expected that clergy will robe when leading morning worship. Some flexibility for particular services may be negotiated by conversation with the Bishop.

### **Vessels and linen**

The chalice and paten we use at the Holy Communion should be of such quality as is suitable for their solemn use, and kept in good order. Plated vessels may be re-plated for a modest sum by a silversmith. It is neither seemly nor hygienic to use a badly worn or pitted chalice. New or newly plated vessels ought to be scalded or washed in hot soapy water after each use.

We owe to the dignity of the Sacrament and to the sensibilities of communicants to be thorough in cleaning the vessels immediately following the service. They should be kept in a dust free cupboard and preferably locked. A final wipe with a purificator before filling with wine helps to ensure cleanliness and avoids the distressing sight of dust particles on the surface of the wine. The use of the pall during periods when the chalice is not being administered is helpful and it is better to place the pall "top down" on the altar so that dust is not picked up from the altar and transferred to the chalice when the pall is replaced.

In services where there are many communicants, a ciborium is a helpful vessel to use. It is often more seemly to use this chalice-like vessel than a very full paten.

### **Administration of the Holy Communion**

The bread used in Holy Communion must be "wholesome" and the wine "fermented juice of the grape and of good quality" (Canon P4 1992). With the approval of the bishop, the wine offered to some of the communicants may be "unfermented juice of the grape and of good quality".

There is increased anxiety in the Church about the safety of the Common Cup. This means we must ensure that we take every precaution in the administration of the Sacrament.

Here are some guidelines:

- Make sure the vessels are appropriate. They should be precious metal or glass only. Please do not use pottery chalices or those made of non-precious metals such as pewter. Ensure that the metal vessels are in good condition and do not have pitting in their surfaces. You may need to have some vessels re-plated. Scald vessels before use and store appropriately.
- Ensure that those assisting in the administration wash properly immediately before the service and use the purificator properly. A purificator should never be wiped in the same place twice. It helps to provide multiple purificators. I encourage those administering to hold the chalice around the stem. Most chalices have a ball on the stem for this purpose. It may be good to encourage people receiving not to handle the bowl of the chalice, but to steady it by a hand on the base.
- If intinction is being offered, it should be provided from a chalice designated for this purpose. A minimum of wine should be used.
- If there are consecrated elements remaining after the communion they may be kept safely in an aumbry approved for this purpose so the ancient practice taking the communion to the sick who are not able to attend church may be practiced.
- If remaining bread and wine is not being kept for this purpose they should be eaten and drunk reverently by the priest and/or communicants prior to the conclusion of the service or if quantities of consecrated wine remain and it is not convenient to drink the wine it may, following ancient practice, be poured reverently on the ground