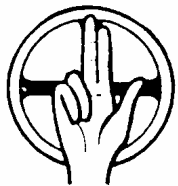




The Chi-Rho are the Greek Letters for CHR symbolizing Jesus Christ. The other two are the Alpha and Omega as Jesus said of himself.

If you are new to ancient 'liturgical' worship or even if you have worshipped in it all your life, you may want to know a little more about what is going on. On any given Sunday you will likely see things that don't show up in your everyday life. However, we continue with these traditions because they are designed to enhance our worship of God through sign and symbol.

We hope that this little flyer can help explain some of the traditions and how they may help you to focus on our Heavenly Father during your time here at St. Peter's.



Clergy make this sign to represent the Holy Trinity, the two fingers pressed into the palm symbolize Jesus coming to earth.

THE CRUCIFORM CHURCH INTERIOR

A view looking east from the nave of a church with a cruciform floor plan.

- | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. The nave. | 7. The lectern. | 13. The choir stalls. |
| 2. The pews. | 8. The pulpit. | 14. The altar rail. |
| 3. The north transept. | 9. The rood screen. | 15. To the sanctuary area. |
| 4. The south transept. | 10. The rood beam. | 16. The altar. |
| 5. The clerestory. | 11. The rood cross. | 17. The reredos. |
| 6. The vaulted ceiling. | 12. To the chancel area. | 18. The rose window. |

Not all of these architectural forms are present in St. Peter's Church

of praise, and we offer our lives by recommitting ourselves to God (Romans 12:1).

Communion

Jesus said "This is my body. This is my blood. Do this in remembrance of me" (Matthew 26:26) and "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him" (John 6:53-55), therein establishing the sacrament of Holy Communion. Based on these and other Bible passages we believe in the "Real Presence" of the Risen Lord Jesus in Communion. This means Jesus is uniquely and spiritually present under the symbol of the bread and wine. Therefore, there is a spiritual connection between the believing Christian and our Lord in Holy Communion. However, Communion is intended for those who have been baptized, who believe that Jesus is really present in the sacrament, and who sincerely repents of their sins (2 Corinthians 11:27-29).



The Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ... God became man for no other purpose. —C.S. Lewis

Much of this is taken from:
Klein, P. Worship Without Words: The Signs and Symbols of Our Faith. Brewster: Paraclete, 2000.

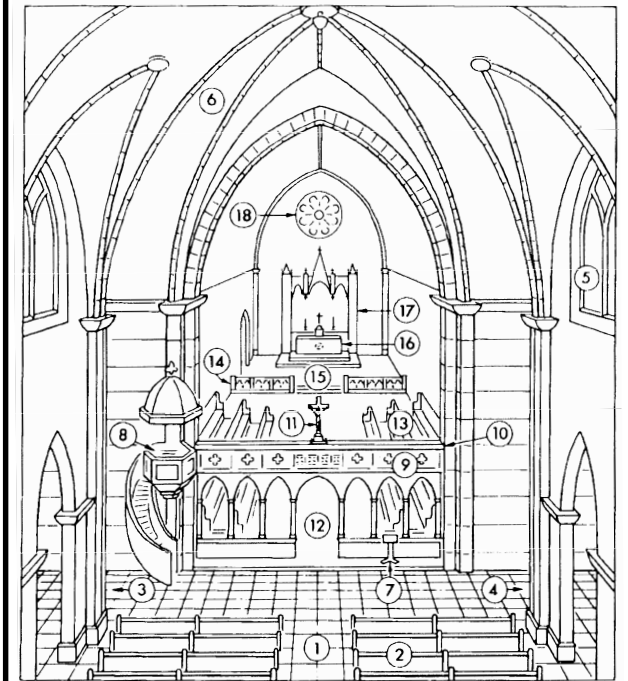
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What ARE we doing?



**EXPLAINING WORSHIP
AT**

St. Peter's Church



www.stpetersdartmouth.org

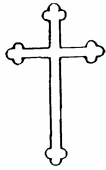
Sanctuary

Under the arch in the front of the church is the area called the Chancel (#12 on the front). This area is traditionally elevated to aid in leading worship. The Chancel is further divided into the Sanctuary (15) which is delineated by the altar rail (14). This is the place where the Communion Table (sometimes called the altar) (16) resides and from where much of the service is led.

Crosses and Candles

The Cross is the primary symbol for the Christian faith representing the death of Jesus Christ on a Roman

cross to pay the penalty of all mankind's sinful rebellion against God. You will see a cross fixed centrally above the Communion Table and occasionally leading the procession. Candles originate from the very practical use; being able to see in the catacombs where the early church met and then in large dark Cathedrals. Candles have come to signify Jesus as the Light of the World (John 9:5) and come in pairs to represent Jesus in both divine and human nature.



Icons

Christianity teaches that the immaterial God took flesh in the form of Jesus Christ, making it possible to depict in human form the Son of God. It is on this basis that the old prescriptions against images were changed for the early Christians. Also, the concept of archetype was redefined by the early church fathers in order to better understand that when a person shows adoration toward an image, the intention is rather to honor the person depicted, not the substance of the icon. Symbolism allows the icon to present highly complex material in a very simple way, making it possible to educate even the illiterate in theology. The Icons at St. Peter's are a way of helping the worshipper to focus on God's saving work for them and in all the world.

Baptismal Font

The stone Baptismal font rests in the front of the church and reminds us of our Baptismal Covenant encapsulated in the Nicene Creed. It has seven sides; the number seven representing perfection and completion and thus perfect and complete life in Christ's Baptism. It also functions practically as a place for the sacrament of Baptism.



Colors

You will notice that the Communion table has colored fabric hanging it. These colors, which the participants' vestments also match, represent different seasons in the year-long calendar of the church. *Green* is the symbol for life and growth and is used for the majority of the church year, what is called Ordinary Time. *Purple* represents penitence and mourning and is used in Advent, before Christmas, and Lent, before Easter, as a time of thoughtful contrite preparation for those two great celebrations. *Red* is the color of love and zeal representing blood and fire. We use red for Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Saint's Days, symbolizing blood and at Ordinations and Pentecost representing the fire of the Holy Spirit. *White* is the symbol for purity and joy and thus is the celebratory color for the church. We use White for Christmas, Easter, and Weddings showing the festivity and purity of those occasions.

Vestments

The participants in the service wear robes to help identify their roles. All the robes originated from the clothing worn by people in the first century AD when the church was formed. As fashions changed, the church maintained their traditional clothes for worship as a sign of the unchanging nature of God and His church. The most basic vestment is the Alb, a white robe worn by the clergy most often held together with a rope Cincture and often with a hood. This most closely resembles the general dress of everyday people in the first century but has also come to symbolize the white robes washed by the blood of the lamb in Rev. 7:14. Non-clergy participants wear a modified version of the Alb. Participants can also wear a Cassock, either black or red, and Surplice, white over-garment. These developed from Clergy ministering in cold climates and thus requiring a heavy under-garment. Clergy wear a Stole in the color of the season which originated as a Roman symbol of authority and has come to mean wearing the yolk of Christ, Matthew 11:29. When celebrating at Communion the clergy may wear a Chasuble in the color of the season which was simply a Roman overcoat but has come to represent either the yolk of Christ or the royal robe given to Jesus at his crucifixion.



Liturgy

In Greek this term simply means "the people work" or "the service of the people". The service we offer to God is worship. 'Liturgy' refers to the structure, sequence and flow of our worship. The Sunday worship service has two main parts, "The Liturgy of the Word" and "Holy Communion". The Liturgy of the Word is based on the structure of Synagogue worship developed by the Israelites while in Exile with scripture readings, a meditation or sermon, a statement of faith, and prayers. Holy Communion is shaped after the four-fold action of the Last supper, a Jewish Passover meal where Jesus *Took* the bread and wine, *Broke* the bread, *Blessed* them both, and then *Gave* them to the disciples commanding them to "Do this in remembrance of me". From the earliest days this two stage pattern of worship has been the norm (Acts 2:42).

Bible Reading

The Anglican church reads more bible than any other tradition because of the centrality of the scriptures in our theology and practice of the faith. Every week there are readings from the Old Testament, New Testament, and from one of the four Gospels. Often the church will follow The Lectionary which is a rotation of Bible readings that read from every book in the Bible over a three year cycle. During Christmas, Lent and Easter the Bible readings focus on those specific events in Scripture. In addition, over 80% of the words written in the liturgy throughout the service come directly from the Bible.

Creed

Every week we recite the Nicene Creed – a brief summary of biblical doctrine. It was developed at the council of Nicea in 325 AD to summarize the Bible's teaching about the character of God and the plan of salvation. The Creed follows a Trinitarian structure, focusing on the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Nicene Creed expands on the Apostles' Creed which is still used in Baptismal services as the basic statement of faith. When reciting the Creeds, we affirm our agreement in the basic teachings of the Christian faith as it has been taught, believed, and lived by the Universal Church in all times and all places.

Offertory

During the Offertory (a time of preparation before Holy Communion) we offer ourselves to God. We offer our financial support for the work of the Gospel, our songs