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## Worship Introduction

One of the ways that Anglicans share beliefs with one another and with the wider world is through common prayer. Our corporate worship, the liturgies that we develop, and in which we participate, shape our encounter with the divine. Worship also mirrors the culture and context of the gathered body.

Each **via media: expanded** session is designed to conclude with a brief worship experience. These simple liturgies incorporate prayer, Scripture, hymns and a benediction, most of which are drawn from the *Book of Common Prayer* and other liturgical resources of the Episcopal Church. They also include a range of prayer practices that draw upon the diverse traditions of Christian spirituality. Each liturgy provides a fitting conclusion to the small-group discussion, and reinforces the themes of the session. These liturgies are offered as a way to introduce participants to the liturgical richness of the Anglican traditions.

What we have offered is a basic structure for concluding worship. As communities differ, and as your context shifts, the Coordinator of your **via media: expanded** program may want to add to or take from these suggestions. In some cases we use inclusive language forms of standard prayers; in other cases we include traditional language; in still other cases we have written new prayers and meditations.

Worship is an important end to the time a community has spent in dialogue together. As Anglicans, our prayer is shaped by our experience and encounter of God in each other. Your Coordinator will introduce the transition from the small groups into the closing community worship liturgy.



## **Session Eight—So What?**

### **Closing Liturgies for Session Eight**

#### **Session Eight Modules**

- Module A: What Does It Mean to Be a Christian?
- Module B: What Does It Mean to Be an Anglican Christian?
- Module C: What Does It Mean to Participate in the Eucharist?



## **Session Eight—So What?**

### **Module A—Closing Liturgy**

*Customs vary in local communities. For Session Eight, planning the closing liturgies is left to the local community. The Coordinator prepares beforehand the liturgy for Morning Prayer, marking readings, selecting readers, and making prayer books available. It is desirable to assign as many portions of the service as possible to the **via media** participants. The Theology Statement for Session Eight is read after the Gospel and before the Apostles' Creed. Below is an outline for the Office with suggested readings and the Collect from For the Ministry III.*

#### **Daily Morning Prayer, Rite II**

##### **The Introduction**

Opening Sentence of Scripture  
Confession of Sin

##### **The Invitatory and Psalter**

Invitatory (Venite, Jubilate, or Pascha Nostrum)  
Appointed Psalm (Psalm 15 suggested)

##### **The Lessons and Canticles**

Lesson (Exodus 19:3-8 suggested)  
Canticle  
Lesson (1 Peter 4:7-11 suggested)  
Canticle  
Gospel (Matthew 16:24-27 suggested)  
Sermon (read Theology Statement for Session Eight)  
The Apostles' Creed

##### **The Prayers**

Salutation and response  
The Lord's Prayer  
Suffrages (either set A or set B)  
The Collect of the Day (For the Ministry III, BCP 256, suggested) (Additional Collects, if desired)  
Prayer for Mission (one of three at BCP 100-101)

- (A hymn, if desired, may be sung)
- (If desired, members of the congregation may be given an opportunity to offer spontaneous prayers of intercession and thanksgiving)

##### **Close of the Office**

The General Thanksgiving (or the Prayer of St. Chrysostom)  
Officiant says, "Let us bless the Lord." and People respond Closing Sentence of Scripture



## **Session Eight—So What?** **Module B—Closing Liturgy**

### **Lectio Divina**

*Lectio Divina: A Method of Bible Reflection*, by Michel de Verteuil  
from <http://www.clubi.ie/shalom/lectio/method.html>

*Lectio divina* (a Latin expression which means “sacred reading”) is done in four stages:

- *lectio* (reading): in which you read the passage slowly and reverently, allowing the words to sink into your consciousness
- *meditatio* (meditation): in which you allow the passage to stir up memories within you, so that you recognize in it your own experience or that of people who have touched your life
- *oratio* (prayer): in which you allow the meditation to lead you to prayer – thanksgiving, humility and petition
- *contemplatio* (contemplation): in which you rest in the presence of God, having used God’s word as a means to invitation to accept God’s transforming embrace.

The basic principle of *lectio divina* is that Bible reading is a personal encounter with God, a communion. In *lectio divina*, we love the text, linger over it, read it over and over, let it remain with us.

Once we approach the text in this way, we come face-to-face with the fact that it speaks to the imagination. A Bible text is not like a textbook or a newspaper, providing us with objective information. It was not written like that. Instead, it stirs up feelings; we find ourselves identifying with the characters, we feel for them, admire them or dislike them. We are caught up in the movement of the text, its suspense, its dramatic reversals of fortune, its unanswered questions.

Gradually, we *recognize* the text; we find that we have lived the sequence of events ourselves, or have seen them lived in others who have touched our lives, for good or for ill. Reading the text becomes a homecoming – and a lifting up.

Lectio divina, like all imaginative communication – especially story-telling – teaches not directly but by changing the consciousness of those who practice it. By identifying ourselves with God’s people – Jesus, the prophets, and the great men and women of the Old and New Testaments – we find ourselves adopting their attitudes. We also recognize ourselves in the bad characters of the text – the Pharisees, Pharaoh, the apostles when they were jealous of each other – and find that we want to give up these attitudes.

The Bible, recognized as coinciding with our experience, reveals to us the truth about life – not abstract truth, but an ideal we hunger and thirst for and, from another perspective, an evil we

recoil from. In the Bible text, therefore, we discover the double reality of every human person – a story of sin and a story of grace.

In *lectio divina* we experience the true meaning of theology – entering through Bible reading into the wisdom of God or, more accurately, allowing God to lead us into wisdom, humbly, gratefully and with awe. The wisdom of God gives us God’s perspective on every aspect of life: interpersonal relationships, economics, politics, agriculture, etc.

### **Additional Lectio Divina Resources**

- <http://www.osb.org/lectio/>
- <http://www.valyermo.com/ld-art.html>
- <http://www.sp.uconn.edu/~salomon/ld/lectio.html>
- <http://www.ocarm.org/lectio/lecteng.htm>

### **The Lectio Divina Process for via media**

- 1) Read the passage aloud in a group: slowly, reverently, allowing each word, however “insignificant” to resonate in its own moment.
- 2) Pause for a short period of reflection, around 60 seconds, praying for clarity and guidance about the passage.
- 3) Read the passage aloud again, in the same manner, asking another person to read.
- 4) Select a word or phrase that stands out at that moment. Observe an eight-minute period of silence, meditating on that phrase. As you feel your mind begin to wander, pull it back into focus by silently reciting the phrase you have selected.
- 5) Allowing around two minutes per person, invite participants to share the word or phrase that resonated with them, what that word or set of words means to them, and how their prayer or meditation on that word or phrase has led them to a deeper spiritual understanding.
- 6) Conclude by reciting the Lord’s Prayer.

## Optional Passages for Lectio Divina

Matthew 28:16-20 NRSV

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Exodus 3:1-6 NRSV

Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, “I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.” When the Lord saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Then he said, “Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” He said further, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Micah 6:6-8 NRSV

With what shall I come before the Lord,  
and bow myself before God on high?  
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,  
with calves a year old?  
Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,  
with ten thousands rivers of oil?  
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?  
He has told you, O mortal, what is good:  
and what does the Lord require of you  
but to do justice, and to love kindness,  
and to walk humbly with your God?



## **Session Eight—So What?**

### **Module C—Closing Liturgy**

*Customs vary in local communities. For Session Eight, planning the closing liturgy is left to the local community. The Coordinator, working with local clergy, prepares beforehand the liturgy for Holy Eucharist, marking readings, selecting readers and hymns, and making prayer books available. It is desirable to assign as many portions of the service as possible to the **via media** participants. Below is an outline for the Holy Eucharist with suggested readings and the Collect, Of the Holy Eucharist (BCP 927).*

## **Holy Eucharist, Rite II**

### **The Word of God**

#### The Entrance Rite

- Entrance Hymn
- Opening Acclamation
- Collect for Purity
- Praise Hymn
- Salutation and response
- Collect of the Day (Of the Holy Eucharist, BCP 252, suggested)

#### The Lessons

- Hebrew Scripture (Deuteronomy 8:2-3, suggested)
- Appointed Psalm (34 or 116:10-17, suggested)
- Epistle Reading (Revelation 19:1-2a,4-9 or 1 Corinthians 10:1-4,16-17 or 1 Corinthians 11:23-29, suggested)
- Alleluia Verse or Sequence Hymn
- Gospel (John 6:47-58, suggested)

#### The Sermon

#### The Nicene Creed

The Prayers of the People (written by **via media** participants)  
(Confession of Sin)

#### The Peace

### **The Holy Communion**

The Offertory (with an Offertory Hymn)

#### The Great Thanksgiving

- The Sursum Corda and Preface (Preface of the Epiphany, suggested)

- The Narrative

- Doxology and Great Amen

- The Lord's Prayer

#### The Breaking of the Bread

- Fraction Anthem

- Invitation and Administration (with Communion Hymns)

#### Conclusion of the Liturgy



Postcommunion Prayer  
(Postcommunion Hymn)  
Blessing and Dismissal