

But “Everyone Knows...” Oh Yeah?
Trying Christ Church for First Time? Trying an Anglican Church for the first Time?
So, you found the map and directions on the website, but then what?
Here is a Short Primer to Help you Find Your Way!

Parking...

- There is a modest parking lot in the alley behind the church... often it's full by 10am, so most people park on 8th Street and 34th Ave or on the nearby residential streets. Parking is free.
- If you're coming north on Elbow Drive, keep in mind you can turn left on Sifton, but not on 34th.

Getting Inside... We have three west-facing entrances on 8th Street.

- **Door #1 - Don't bother** with the southernmost one by the labyrinth... this is for the office on week days and we lock it to avoid confusion on Sundays.
- **Door #2 - Better...** the next door north (called the “Loggia” or the hallway that runs along the outside of the worship space) This leads to the stairs and elevator which access the nursery and Sunday school rooms, and further along on the main level the washrooms. This entrance also accesses the worship space.
- **Door #3 - Best...** the main entrance into the narthex (funny church word for foyer). There, you will find a greeter to help you find your way... and a place to hang your coat if you wish!

Worship Materials

- The greeter will offer you a “bulletin”, a little booklet which contains almost everything you need to follow along in the service.
- The songs and hymns are in the blue book that you will find in the pew).

Where Can I Sit?

- There are folks that love to sit in the same place every week... that's human nature. Or, likely, because that's where they grew up sitting... we've got some long time committed members! But the Anglican rules are clear... nobody owns a seat!! So, you can sit where you are comfortable! Mind you, it's funny, the back sometimes fills up first... :)

What About Kids?

- When you arrive at Christ Church with your kids you can take them upstairs to the Sunday School and Nursery rooms before the liturgy begins. Walk down the loggia - the hallway south of the main worship area – and take the elevator or the stairs up to the second floor.
- We offer staffed care for children 3 years and younger in the nursery,
- We offer program for children older than 3 and invite them to join the Sunday School class.
- Children in the nursery are customarily picked up after the passing of peace.
- Children in Sunday School come down together to join us in worship at the same time.
- Some folks like to have their kids in worship. This is also welcome if your child learns better this way!

The Shape of the Eucharist (Our word for Holy Communion)

Gathering

- We come from many different places to worship together. Here we are gathered to form true community, not to be just a bunch of individuals making their religious practice. We sing and pray to collect ourselves, preparing to meet with God together.

Hearing and Responding to Scripture

- Anglicans use a lot of scripture! In every liturgy (worship service) we hear portions of God's word spoken to us through the words of Scripture. We have three readings plus a Psalm which we sing together with the assistance of our fabulous choir in something called "Anglican Chant".
- Then we hear a reflection on the readings connecting them to our lives today in a sermon or homily.

Affirming Faith

- We respond to the Word of God with a statement of our belief called a "creed". Anglicans are not a "confessional" church as such, but rather a community and communion that stretches around the world. The creed is the faith we share with all Christians, or people who believe in the Person, life and teachings of Jesus Christ.
- We respond with prayers, including a prayer of confession – acknowledging that when we fall short of what we seek to be, God hears us when we are truly sorry then offers reconciliation and the assurance of forgiveness.

The Passing of the Peace

- Having made peace with God, we symbolically make peace with one another by shaking hands with those seated around us and offering words like: "Peace be with you". So, yes, that this feel awkward for some who don't know many people around them or who are introverted. But remember, this isn't a social time... it is an act of intention and community. You don't have to feel any pressure to shake a bunch of hands. Do what is comfortable for you, and remember peace was the risen Christ's first gift to the church.

Offering

- As the altar is being set for communion with the offering of bread and wine. These represent the way that Christ offered his life for ours.
- The altar is also the place where the offering of the people is blessed for the mission and work of the parish and the wider church.
- An offering plate is passed along the pews for people to offer gifts. The money is blessed then used to fund, maintain and build up community here in the parish, the region, and in the mission of the wider church. You are free to make a gift or not as you choose.
- In recognition of the remarkable work the church does in society, the government give a tax break based on what you offer. You may wish to use the guest envelope found in the pew so we can track any gift for income tax purposes.
- If you choose not to make a gift, please take a moment to thank God for your life and all its blessings. In the pew you will find a blue welcome card. We would love it if you would fill that out and put it in the offering plate so we can be in touch.
- What should I give? Give as you are able. Many people use a goal of \$1/1000 a year in income. But give in proportion to what you have been given and are able, together with your other sacred commitments. Material about giving is found on the website.

Communion

- Eucharist means "thanksgiving". We give thanks for the way the presence of Christ is made known as we take bread, give thanks, break bread and share the cup in community as Christ taught. Anyone who seeks Christ in their life is welcome to share in the bread and wine, including children.
- Communion instructions to guide you, and to keep communion safe as well are in the bulletin each week, as follows:
 - Bread and wine are given out at the altar rail and the baptismal font (that's at the front near the side door on the right).

- Someone standing in the aisle will make it clear to you when you should go.
- To receive bread, place one hand over the other, palm up.
- To receive wine, please help guide the chalice to your mouth and take a sip.
- Please touch the base of the chalice to guide, not the bowl.
- If you do not wish to receive wine, you are invited to gently touch the base of the chalice.
- Receiving only bread or only wine is considered full participation in the sacrament.
- If you do not wish to receive, cross your arms across your chest and a blessing will be offered.
- Please do not dip bread in the wine.
- Gluten-free (potato based) wafers are available - please ask at the altar rail.
- You may choose to stand or kneel at the altar rail.
- After you have received the wine you may return to your seat, usually down the side aisle to keep traffic flowing smoothly.
- During communion, you are asked to remain in prayer and music is offered to support this by our choir.

Announcements

- Christ Church is a busy place with lots of outreach, fellowship, ministry opportunities and such going on. Key events in the life and work of the church are often spoken to in the announcements, but a printed sheet is included to cover as much as possible.

Sending

- Having been fed with Holy food, we are sent out to live Christ-shaped lives... both as a community and individuals. With God's help, we are to be agents of grace, peace, hope and love in the world.
- The parish prayer is used to remind us that we are praying to become a community that truly reflects the nature of Jesus Christ, our namesake. Nobody expects you to be perfect, but to be intentional and present... To quote one of our favourite monks, "Jesus isn't interested in your spiritual life. Jesus is interested in your life!" They are the same thing.

Fellowship

- Please do come after the service for coffee and tea and conversation in the "Crump Room". It's named after one of our former priests. You can find that through the font doors off the Loggia (if you're not sure of the way, someone would be happy to help you, or you can follow the crowd!).

What to Wear...

- Showing up at a party underdressed or over-dressed isn't the end of the world, but it's good when people tell you ahead of time. Folks at Christ Church dress in a variety of levels... but all to offer praise to God. The fact is, our folks dress up a little.
- But go by this: offer the best you have to God. That means dressing according to what you have. No one is excluded on appearance! Yes, you'll see skirts and jackets, and you'll see business casual, and you'll see less formal... the main thing is we want people to feel comfortable. But it's not about impressing other people. It's about honouring God.

I'm Hungry for More in Faith

- Anglicans believe in a life-long commitment to learning and growing. Anglican worship is our most important way to do that over time. But Christ Church is a learning parish, and offers opportunities for program and study all year around.