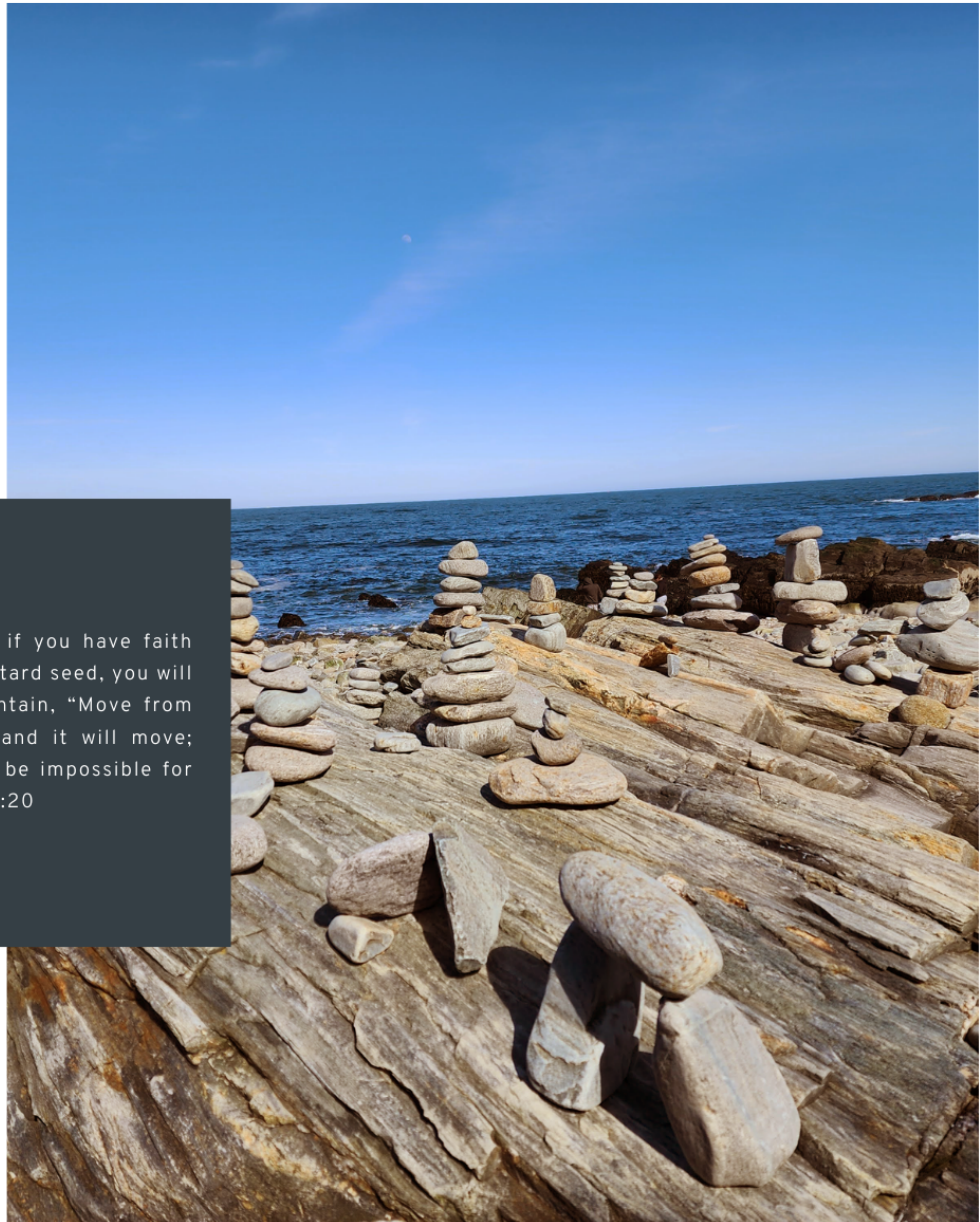


CONFIRMATION GUIDE

Truly I tell you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, "Move from here to there," and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. -Matthew 17:20



LEADER'S GUIDE



*the Episcopal Church
in Wyoming*



the Episcopal Church in Wyoming

*Strengthen, O Lord, your servants with your Holy Spirit;
empower them for your service, and sustain them all the days
of their life. Amen. (Book of Common Prayer, p. 418)*

Dear Friend in Christ,

We are pleased to have you as a leader in our confirmation program and are looking forward to working with you to make it a meaningful experience for you and your confirmands.

Confirmation is a rite of the church that allows each person to make an affirmation of their faith, and to commit to the responsibilities of their Baptism. At its core, it represents a mature commitment to Christ and allows each confirmand to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands by a bishop.

This course presents an opportunity for you to engage your confirmands in various types of spiritual and group practices and to help them actively participate in your church community. Through the discovery and strengthening of their Gifts in the Holy Spirit, they will be empowered to take on new responsibilities and become witnesses of Jesus to the world.

Your church may have a confirmation program that is effective and comfortable. Please continue to use anything from your program that you find helpful. The exercises on the following pages may be added to your current program in order to enhance what is already working. It is also possible that there are lessons you would like to see for your confirmands that are not in this guide. You are welcome to add to and adapt this program as it fits the needs of your church and your confirmands.

The leader of this program and any other confirmation or baptismal preparation should be licensed and trained to do so. Please speak with your clergy leadership or the diocesan office for guidance in this area.

Blessings to you as you do this sacred work, and may the Holy Spirit guide your way.

The Rev. Canon Lara Gilbert

Canon for Spiritual Formation & Congregational Development

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Approved by the COM on 2/12/2025

Unit 1: Making Promises, Forming Community

Objective: Participants will get to know one another and understand the connection between making promises and the vows of their confirmation.

SESSION 1

Opening Prayer

God of All,

You have built promise into the cycles of your creation: The rising and setting of the sun and moon, the brilliance of the stars in the night sky, the new buds in spring, snow in the winter, and long summer days. Help us, who are made in your image, to also build promise into the cycles of our community that we will be faithful, compassionate, and open to you and all that we are called to learn together. May all that we do glorify you and show forth your love and joy for the world. Amen.

Introduce Yourself

Invite each participant to answer the following questions.

- What is your name and where are you from?
- What's your best memory of being in church?

Contemplative Practice: Luke 2:22-38

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise.

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word,
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul, too."

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

Group Discussion

Invite each participant to answer the following questions.

- What are promises?
- What promises have you made?

Exploration: Book of Common Prayer p. 302 – Examination of Candidates

At their Confirmation, the candidates will be asked if they reaffirm their renunciation of evil and to renew their commitment to Christ. This exercise is meant to help them answer those questions in an informed and truthful manner.

Leaders: Read through each question, stopping for discussion between.

- Ask participants to restate each question in their own words and/or explain how they perceive the question.
- For the first three questions, discuss what “renounce” means.
- Ask participants what their life might look like or how it would change if they truly renounced.
- If you follow the promises made in the examination, what would your life look like?

Closing Prayer

Good and Gracious God,

Thank you for this time we have spent together. Be present with each of us as we go our separate ways for now and fill us with excitement and love for our new community upon our returning. May we keep our promises, Lord, to you and to one another. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

Unit 1: Continued

Objective: Participants will get to know one another and understand the connection between making promises and the vows of their confirmation.

SESSION 2

Opening Prayer

Almighty God,
We are grateful for this community that we are building. Be with us and others who are seeking a mature and loving relationship with you. Help us to lift one another up and to support our new friends as we come together in your Presence. We are your people; may we live in your light. Amen.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Leaders: This question is not meant to invite the participants to tell what they did in the last week, but where their heart was touched since the last time the group was gathered. This can be a joyful experience or something difficult. We are looking for emotion, connection, or moments when God was with the participant.

Contemplative Practice: Luke 2:22-38

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise. Choose a different contemplative practice from the previous session, as the same reading is used in Session 1.

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word,
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”

And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul, too.”

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

Group Discussion

Invite each participant to answer the following questions.

- Why do you wish to be confirmed?
- Who are the elders of your church and how might they help you on your journey?

Leaders: Help participants to choose or invite their sponsor after this exercise.

Exploration: Book of Common Prayer p. 415

Leaders: This exercise will give participants the opportunity to return to the previous exercise in Session 1. Discuss if the participants had any further thoughts or questions. You may need to go back to p. 302 in the Book of Common Prayer to review.

This exercise will give you the opportunity to return to the previous exercise in Session

- Read both the reaffirming of the renunciation and renewing of the commitment, pausing between for discussion, explanation, and questions.
- Talk about what the words “reaffirm” and “renew” mean in the context of the examination.
- The response to the renewal should also be questioned and discussed. What is God’s grace? What does it mean to follow Christ as Savior and Lord?

Closing Prayer

Good and Gracious God,

Thank you for this time we have had together. Be present with each of us as we go our separate ways for now and fill us with excitement and love for our new community upon our returning. May we live in your grace, Lord, following you each day. In Jesus’ Name we pray. Amen.

Unit 2: Intro to the Baptismal Covenant

Objective: Participants will be able to verbalize The Baptismal Covenant in their own words and envision what living that covenant could look like for themselves.

SESSION 1

Opening Prayer

God of All,

We are your people in baptism and love. We thank you for the gifts we have been given as we mature into our Christ-filled selves and experience your Presence in our lives. As we continue this journey together, help us learn to live our Baptismal Vows. May all that we do be for your glory. Amen.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise.

Contemplative Practice: Matthew 3:13-17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God’s Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from the heavens said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

Group Discussion

Invite each participant to answer the following questions.

- What does it mean that God is “well pleased” with Jesus? What does this tell us about ourselves?
- How might baptism affect a person? Did it affect you?

Exploration: Book of Common Prayer pp. 304-305, The Baptismal Covenant

Leaders:

- Visit your church’s baptismal font, touch the water, invite a priest to bless the water if appropriate, asperge the participants if appropriate
- Using sacred imagination, ask the participants to imagine their own baptisms.
- Participants who remember their baptism can be invited to recall their memory.
- Say The Baptismal Covenant together

Closing Prayer

Good and Gracious God,

Thank you for this time we have had together. Be present with each of us as we go our separate ways for now and fill us with excitement and love for our new community upon our returning. May we go forth in your love, Lord, following you each day. In Jesus’ Name we pray. Amen.

Unit 2: Continued

Objective: Participants will be able to verbalize The Baptismal Covenant in their own words and envision what living that covenant could look like for themselves.

SESSION 2

Opening Prayer

God of All,

We are your people in baptism and love. We thank you for the gifts we have been given as we mature into our Christ-filled selves and experience your Presence in our lives. As we continue this journey together, help us learn to live our Baptismal Vows. May all that we do be for your glory. Amen.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Contemplative Practice: Matthew 3:13-17

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise. Choose a different contemplative practice from the previous session, as the same reading is used in Session 1.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God’s Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from the heavens said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

Group Discussion: Book of Common Prayer pp. 304-305, The Baptismal Covenant

Invite each participant to answer the following questions.

- What do we say we believe?
- What does that mean to you?
- What are we vowing?
- How will you keep these vows in your life?
- What changes will this make in your life?

Leaders: Scribe good notes of this discussion. These responses will need to be transferred to large flipchart paper for Unit 4, Session 1. When doing so, leave room to write more on each page during that session; write each question from the Covenant at the top of its own flipchart paper as a heading.

Closing Prayer

Good and Gracious God,

Thank you for this time we have had together. Be present with each of us as we go our separate ways for now and fill us with excitement and love for our new community upon our returning. May we go forth in your love, Lord, following you each day. In Jesus’ Name we pray. Amen.

Unit 3: First Vow - Apostle's Teaching, Breaking Bread, Prayers

Objective: Participants will explore this vow in a genuine experience, discerning the symbolism and mystery of bread as Christ's body and the role prayer has in life, work, and ministry.

SESSION 1: BAKING BREAD

*Note: This session may run longer than others

Leaders: You will need access to a kitchen for this session.

Opening Prayer

Invite a participant to say the opening prayer.

Leaders: You may choose either extemporaneous prayer or have asked the participant ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Contemplative Practice: John 6:25-35

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise.

When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal." Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us, then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' " Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

Group Exercise

Bake Bread for Eucharist (recipe is on pp. 34-35 of this guide). While you are in the kitchen lead participants in discussion using these questions:

- What is your favorite way to eat bread? What memories do you have that involved eating bread?
- What does receiving bread at the altar mean for you?

Leaders: The bread you bake will be used at Eucharist for the upcoming Sunday in order to share it with the whole congregation.

Closing Prayer

See instructions for the opening prayer.

Unit 3: Continued

Objective: Participants will explore this vow in a genuine experience, discerning the symbolism and mystery of bread as Christ's body and the role prayer has in life, work, and ministry.

SESSION 2

Opening Prayer

Invite a participant to say the opening prayer.

Leaders: You may choose either extemporaneous prayer or have asked the participant ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Contemplative Practice: John 6:25-35

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise. Choose a different contemplative practice from the previous session, as the same reading is used in Session 1.

When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal." Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." So they said to him, "What sign are you going to give us, then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' " Then Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

Group Discussion

Invite each participant to answer the following questions.

- What does it mean to never be hungry or thirsty? Jesus has a deeper meaning; what is Jesus saying to you?
- Say the first vow together; what new insights do you have regarding this vow?
- The congregation was given the bread you baked together for communion. How does that make you feel?

Closing Prayer

See instructions for the opening prayer.

Unit 4: Second Vow - Resist evil, repent, and return to the Lord

Objective: Participants will develop strategies for overcoming the barriers and difficulties of living their baptismal vows.

SESSION 1

Opening Prayer

Invite a participant to say the opening prayer.

Leaders: You may choose either extemporaneous prayer or have asked the participant ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise.

Contemplative Practice: Matthew 4:1-11

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” But he answered, “It is written,

‘One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

‘He will command his angels concerning you,’
and ‘On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’”

Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

‘Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.’”

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

Group Discussion

Review and expand upon the conversation from Unit 2, Session 2

Leaders: Hang the flip chart papers you have transcribed from the previous discussion around the room. Provide each participant with a stack of sticky notes. For question one, have participants write answers on the sticky notes and stick them to the appropriate vow. For question two, scribe this directly on the flip chart paper. Keep these flipchart papers for Unit 4, Session 2.

Question One: What gaps do you see between perfectly living these vows and how you are actually going to be able to live them? Where are there specific obstacles in the changes we named?

Question Two: What does repent mean? Why is it important? How do we do it? What might repentance look like in the face of obstacles?

Closing Prayer

See instructions for the opening prayer.

Unit 4: Continued

Objective: Participants will develop strategies for overcoming the barriers and difficulties of living their baptismal vows.

SESSION 2

Opening Prayer

Invite a participant to say the opening prayer.

Leaders: You may choose either extemporaneous prayer or have asked the participant ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Contemplative Practice: John 6:25-35

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise. Choose a different contemplative practice from the previous session, as the same reading is used in Session 1.

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” But he answered, “It is written,

‘One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

‘He will command his angels concerning you,’
and ‘On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’”

Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

‘Worship the Lord your God,
and serve only him.’”

Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

Group Discussion:

Review and expand upon the conversation from Unit 4, Session 1

Leaders: Hang the flip chart papers around the room. Provide each participant with a stack of sticky notes. Have participants write answers on the sticky notes and stick them to the appropriate repentance. Lead discussion to expand these ideas.

Invite each participant to answer the following questions.

- We have obstacles and repentance here. How do we ‘return to the Lord?’

Speak the Vow – Book Of Common Prayer p. 305

Say the second vow together; what new insights do you have regarding this vow?

Closing Prayer

See instructions for the opening prayer.

Unit 5: Third Vow - Proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ

Objective: Participants will sample ministries available in the church to see how their gifts may fit into the life of the church.

SESSION 1

Opening Prayer

Invite a participant to say the opening prayer.

Leaders: You may choose either an extemporaneous prayer or have warned the participant ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Contemplative Practice: James 1:17

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise.

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

Exploring Gifts Activity

- Name a thing you do that brings you joy
- Name a thing that seems to come naturally to you
- How does it make you feel that God has given you this gift?
- Review a list of your church's ministries. Find a ministry that speaks to your gifting.
- If nothing sparks, in what other way might you give the beauty of your gift back to God?
- Discuss the Frederick Buechner quote: "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

Leaders: In light of the discussion and using a list of church ministries, you will help the participants identify ministries that appeal to their gifts.

Closing Prayer

See instructions for the opening prayer.

Unit 5: Continued

Objective: Participants will sample ministries available in the church to see how their gifts may fit into the life of the church.

SESSION 2

Opening Prayer

Invite a participant to say the opening prayer.

Leaders: You may choose either extemporaneous prayer or have asked the participant ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Contemplative Practice: James 1:17

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise. Choose a different contemplative practice from the previous session, as the same reading is used in Session 1.

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

Group Discussion

Leaders: Invite the ministry leaders of your church to this session. Ask each of them to talk about the ministry they lead.

- How it serves the church.
- Others who join them in this ministry.
- Where Christ is in their ministry.
- Ask them to invite the participants to join them in ministry; there should be a plan in place for how that will happen in each ministry in a very welcoming and organized manner.
- Use the information gleaned from the 'Exploring gifts' activity to help each confirmand make good choices for entering a ministry suited to their gifts.

Speak the Vow – Book Of Common Prayer p. 305

Say the third vow together; what new insights do you have regarding this vow?

Closing Prayer

See instructions for the opening prayer.

Unit 6: Fourth Vow - Seek and Serve Christ, loving your neighbor as yourself

Objective: Participants will join a church ministry.

SESSION 1

Leaders: Allow for a full month to pass before reconvening. This will allow the participants ample time for their ministry experience, which will happen in place of Unit 6, Session 1.

Unit 6: Continued

Objective: Participants will discuss their ministry experience.

SESSION 2

Opening Prayer

Invite a participant to say the opening prayer.

Leaders: You may choose either extemporaneous prayer or have asked the participant ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Contemplative Practice: Luke 10:25-37

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise.

An expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbor as yourself.” And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.”

But wanting to vindicate himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and took off, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came upon him, and when he saw him he was moved with compassion. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, treating them with oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him, and when I come back I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

Group Discussion

Invite each participant to answer the following questions

- How did it feel to serve in the church?
- What did you do?
- How does participating in ministry help you love and serve the people?
- How does your presence add to the Body of Christ?

Speak the Vow – Book Of Common Prayer p. 305

Say the fourth vow together; what new insights do you have regarding this vow?

Closing Prayer

See instructions for the opening prayer.

Unit 7: Fifth Vow - Strive for justice and peace, respect each person's dignity

Objective: Participants will be able to put into their own words the idea of God's Justice and how it is different from human justice. They will begin a journey of practicing God's Way.

SESSION 1

Opening Prayer

Invite a participant to say the opening prayer.

Leaders: You may choose either an extemporaneous prayer or have asked the participant ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Contemplative Practice: Psalm 85:7-13

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise.

Show us your steadfast love, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation.
Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.
Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.
Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.
Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.
The Lord will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.
Righteousness will go before him
and will make a path for his steps.

Exploring Justice

Invite each participant to answer the following questions.

Leaders: Provide participants with Bibles, Books of Common Prayer, dictionaries, and online resources. Find examples of justice within these resources.

- What does the Psalm say about God's justice?
- How do you suppose God models justice?
- What does that say to you and how you view human justice?
- What about these examples is reminiscent of the imagery of the Psalm?
- What troubles you about those examples?
- How did Jesus model justice?

Speak the Vow – Book Of Common Prayer p. 305

Say the fifth vow together; what new insights do you have regarding this vow?

Closing Prayer

See instructions for the opening prayer.

Unit 7: Continued

Objective: Participants will be able to put into their own words the idea of God's Justice and how it is different from human justice. They will begin a journey of practicing God's Way.

SESSION 2

Opening Prayer

Invite a participant to say the opening prayer.

Leaders: You may choose either extemporaneous prayer or have asked the participant ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Contemplative Practice: Psalm 85:7-13

Leaders: Please select a contemplative practice from the Resources Guide (beginning p. 27) for participants to complete during this exercise.

Show us your steadfast love, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation.
Let me hear what God the Lord will speak,
for he will speak peace to his people,
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.
Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
that his glory may dwell in our land.
Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
righteousness and peace will kiss each other.
Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
and righteousness will look down from the sky.
The Lord will give what is good,
and our land will yield its increase.
Righteousness will go before him
and will make a path for his steps.

Group Discussion

Invite each participant to join this discussion.

Leaders: Invite people from your church who are involved in social justice, either as a ministry of the church or in your community at large. Give them time to speak to the group about their ministry. Some of the following questions from Unit 5, Session 2 (see below) may be helpful to facilitate discussion.

- How it serves the church or community.
- Others who join them in this ministry.
- Where Christ is in their ministry.
- Ask them to invite the participants to join them in ministry; there should be a plan in place for how that will happen in each ministry in a very welcoming and organized manner.

Join in this discussion or try out this work if you feel called. Speak to the leader about signing up.

Speak the Vow – Book Of Common Prayer p. 305

Say the fifth vow together; what new insights do you have regarding this vow?

Closing Prayer

See instructions for the opening prayer.

Unit 8: Episcopal Church Tradition

Objective: Participants will focus on Episcopal Church traditions.

SESSION 1

Opening Prayer

Invite a participant to say the opening prayer.

Leaders: You may choose either extemporaneous prayer or have asked the participant ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Introduction to Tradition

Leaders: You may use one of the following resources to lead this session. If you have another you prefer, that is fine. The purpose of this lesson is to focus on Episcopal tradition, so be sure your chosen resource provides that foundation. You may ask your participants to read the book you choose, or you may use the book to lead an informational session. Whichever works best for your group.

Recommended resources are:

- Those Episkopols by Dennis Roy Maynard
- Welcome to the Episcopal Church: An Introduction to its History, Faith, and Worship by Christopher L. Webber
- A People Called Episcopalians: A Brief Introduction to Our Way of Life by John H. Westerhoff III and Sharon Ely Pearson

If these resources are cost prohibitive, Financial Assistance is available through the Diocesan office.

Group Discussion

Invite each participant to answer the following questions.

- What did you find surprising?
- What did you find inspirational?
- What did you find troubling?

Closing Prayer

See instructions for the opening prayer.

Unit 8: Continued

Objective: Participants will focus on Episcopal Church traditions.

SESSION 2

Opening Prayer

Invite a participant to say the opening prayer.

Leaders: You may choose either extemporaneous prayer or have asked the participant ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Check-in

Invite each participant to answer the following question.

- What was the heart of your week?

Contemplative Practice: Contemplation on an Object or Work of Art

Invite each participant to participate in the following activity.

Leaders: Lead this exercise based on a window, icon, piece of artwork or artifact in your church. Do it at that item's location in the church. Below are the instructions to give to your participants for each step of the practice.

- First Look at the image:
- Close your eyes
- Breathe and center
- Glance at the image – less than a minute
- Close your eyes and ask yourself:
- What is my gut reaction to the image?
- Second Look at the image:
- Concentrate on the image – at least 3 minutes
- Let a detail of the image draw your eye.
- Close your eyes.
- Contemplate:
- Sit comfortably in silence with your eyes closed – at least 3 minutes
- Contemplate the feelings that have been evoked by the image.
- Third Look at the image:
- Gaze longer at the entire image – at least 3 minutes
- How are you affected?
- Share your experience.

Review

Leaders: Give an overview of the church traditions listed below if they were not covered in Session 1:

- Lectionary
- Church Seasons – see chart on page 36
- Liturgical Colors

Give an overview of some of your church's particular customs.

Give the instruction and have discussion while visiting each particular area of the church:

- Movement during the service
- Some explanation of who is at the altar
- Spend some time in the Sacristy
- What happens during Eucharist
- Tour the church building(s) and grounds
- Visit memorial or stained-glass windows

Allow time for questions.

Baptismal Covenant – Book Of Common Prayer pp. 304-305

Say the entire baptismal covenant together; what new insights or questions do you have?

Closing Prayer

See instructions for the opening prayer.

Unit 9: Being Confirmed

Objective: Participants will be able to navigate the confirmation service gracefully and with as little anxiety as possible.

Opening Prayer

Invite a participant to say the opening prayer.

Leaders: You may choose either extemporaneous prayer or have asked the participant ahead of time to allow for preparation.

Rehearsal

Take the Book of Common Prayers to the sanctuary to walk through the entire service.

Leaders: It is appropriate to invite the priest to participate in and help lead this unit.

Do a “dress rehearsal” of the entire liturgy – instructed Eucharist-style for anything that wasn’t covered in previous sessions. Each participant should have a Book Of Common Prayer or a service bulletin. Invite sponsors, parents, or anyone with a vested interest:

- Where to stand
- Where to sit
- What to say and how to say it
- Go over the details

Eucharist

Talk about the Eucharist. Spend time around the altar allowing the confirmands an up close view of The Great Thanksgiving.

Leaders: Allow time for questions, clarifying, making changes, and considering suggestions. Be sure to include instructions regarding the rite and ceremony as you walk through the confirmation.

Closing Prayer

See instructions for the opening prayer.

Resource Guide

But seek first the kingdom of God
and his righteousness, and all
these things will be added to you.
-Matthew 6:33



Contemplation Practice

IGNATIAN CONTEMPLATION – IMAGINATIVE PRAYER WITH SCRIPTURE

Ignatian Contemplation is a prayer form developed by Ignatius of Loyola in the 1500s to help people come to know Jesus through imaginative interaction with Scripture. Ignatius was convinced that God can speak to us as surely through our imagination as through our thoughts and memories. In the Ignatian tradition, praying with the imagination is called contemplation. It is a very active way of praying that engages the mind and heart and stirs up thoughts and emotions. It is a form of prayer that is especially suited for the Gospels. We accompany Jesus through his life by imagining scenes from the Gospel stories, letting the events of Jesus' life be present, visualizing events as if in a movie. Contemplating a Gospel scene is not simply remembering it or going back in time. Through the act of contemplation, the Holy Spirit makes present a mystery of Jesus' life in a way that is meaningful for each participant, now. We dig deeper into the story so that God may communicate in personal and evocative ways.

Some people find imaginative prayer difficult. They may not be able to picture the scene easily, yet they may have some intuition or gut reaction to the story. Or they may hear or feel the story more than visualize it. In a spirit of generosity, everyone is invited to pray as they are able; not forcing but allowing the Spirit to guide the prayer. Assure all involved that God can speak through memory, understanding, intellect, emotions, or imagination.

General Instructions:

- Arrange the prayer space so participants (including the leader) are sitting in a circle, preferably not around a table.
- The story is read aloud 4 times. This reading can be shared between different people, or each can be read by the same person.
- Before each reading, the instructions for that particular reading will be given.
- There will be 3 minutes of contemplation between the readings with 10 minutes given after the last reading. (use a timer so that you can participate instead of monitoring a clock)
- Ask everyone to sit comfortably, remind them that this position will be held for over 15 minutes, so it should be sustainable. Appropriate postures include feet planted on the floor, straight shoulders and back, hands folded or opened in lap.
- Invite everyone to close their eyes, relax their bodies, and breathe deeply.

The First Reading:

- Give the instructions: listen to the story for broad strokes
 - where and when does it take place
 - who is there
 - what happens
- Read through the passage slowly.
- Pause for 3 minutes.

The Second Reading:

- Give the instructions: listen for more details
 - who are the major players
 - who else is there
 - what are they doing
 - how do they interact
 - what is the setting like
 - what time of day is it
 - what is the mood (atmosphere)
- Read through the passage slowly.
- Pause for 3 minutes.

The Third Reading:

- Give the instructions: Notice more detail and begin to feel yourself in that place, inside the story
 - who are you or what are you (you may be an inanimate object, an animal, part of the scenery; you may be a person or thing that is not specifically mentioned in the story, but that you sense as you hear it read)
 - what are you doing, thinking, feeling, or what is being done to or with you if you are inanimate.
 - what are the sounds, the smells, and the other details about the location that you notice
 - what are the emotions and undertones that you notice
- Read through the passage slowly.
- Pause for 3 minutes

The Fourth Reading:

- Give the instructions: Experience the story as the person or object that you are in the story
 - when the reading ends, let the story continue to unfold within you, in your imagination, mind, and heart, as the person/object you are until you hear the leader say “Amen.”
- Read through the passage slowly.
- Pause for 10 minutes.
- End the silence by saying, “Amen.”
- Ask the participants to leave their prayer and return to this time and place.
- Instruct the participants to open their eyes when they are ready to continue. The group will wait in silence until all are ready.

The Sharing:

- Invite each participant to share what happened for them in the story (it may not be much of anything, it may seem strange or silly, it may be quite dramatic or powerful. Whatever they say is what it is for them – there is no right or wrong answer)
 - who or what they were
 - what happened
 - what they felt, heard, saw, smelled
 - what Jesus did
- Respond to each person’s sharing with a simple “thank you.” Do not enter into conversation until all have had a chance to share.

Contemplation Practice

LECTIO DIVINA – HOLY READING

Lectio Divina, or “holy reading,” is an ancient practice from the Christian tradition, dating from the early medieval era of prayerful study of Scripture in monasteries. Lectio Divina is a slow, quiet, and thoughtful encounter with Scripture. Reading and responding to the biblical passage three times provides time and space for God’s Word to move from our lips, into our minds, and finally into our hearts.

Based on the image of Jacob’s ladder, a twelfth century Carthusian monk named Guigo II described four steps of lectio divina: lectio (reading), meditatio (meditation), oratio (prayer), and contemplatio (contemplation). Through these four steps, God’s Word sinks deeper into our hearts and imagination.

General Instructions:

- Ask for three volunteers to read the Scripture passage.
- The story is read aloud 3 times, one time by each volunteer.
- Before each reading, the instructions for that particular reading will be given.
- There will be 3 minutes of contemplation after each reading (use a timer so that you can participate instead of monitoring a clock).
- Ask everyone to sit comfortably. Appropriate postures include feet planted on the floor, straight shoulders and back, hands folded or opened in lap.
- Invite everyone to close their eyes, relax their bodies, and breathe deeply.

The First Reading:

- Give the instructions: listen for a word or phrase that God is speaking to you today.
- The first volunteer reads through the passage slowly.
- Reflect in silence for 3 minutes.
- The participants are invited to share aloud the word or phrase that spoke to their heart.

The Second Reading:

- Give the instructions: What is God saying to you through the word or phrase that spoke to your heart?
- The second volunteer reads through the passage slowly.
- Reflect in silence for 3 minutes.
- The participants are invited to share aloud what the word or phrase means to them.

The Third Reading:

- Give the instructions: How may God be calling you to act through the word or phrase that spoke to your heart?
- The third volunteer reads through the passage slowly.
- Reflect in silence for 3 minutes
- The participants are invited to share aloud how they feel God is calling them to respond.

Close with a prayer of thanksgiving for the encounter with God’s Word.

Contemplation Practice

QUAKER QUERIES

Queries are questions that guide personal and group reflection on how our lives and actions are shaped by Love and Truth. The emphasis is on how to live a life more completely aligned with the life of the Spirit. Quakers find Queries to be a powerful spiritual discipline. Returning again and again to the same prompt for deep reflection can set the stage for new understandings, changes of heart, and a rising sense of loving action that needs to be taken.

We begin this practice today and are encouraged to continue it beyond this gathering. Try to ask yourself the Query at least once a day for several days. As you do so, look at your life for a sense of some inward changes: a deeper call to kindness, a more forgiving perspective, or an imperative to act.

The leader poses the Query: _____ (see below for query suggestions)

Instructions to participants:

1. Still yourself.
2. Ask the Query of yourself.
3. Wait in silence.
4. Speak when the Spirit moves you.

Suggestions:

- Are you open to the many ways Spirit may speak to you?
- What does love require of you?
- Do you maintain an appropriate balance among work, service, worship, family, and recreation? Are you ready to rest if God asks it of you?
- Is every aspect of your life open to the transforming power of God? What stands in the way?

Contemplation Practice

IGNATIAN CONTEMPLATION – CRAYOLA DIVINA

Crayola Divina is a twist on Ignatian Contemplation, which is a prayer form developed by Ignatius of Loyola in the 1500s to help people come to know Jesus through imaginative interaction with Scripture. Ignatius was convinced that God can speak to us as surely through our imagination as through our thoughts and memories. In the Ignatian tradition, praying with the imagination is called contemplation. It is a very active way of praying that engages the mind and heart and stirs up thoughts and emotions. It is a form of prayer that is especially suited for the Gospels. We accompany Jesus through his life by imagining scenes from the Gospel stories, letting the events of Jesus' life be present, visualizing events as if in a movie. Contemplating a Gospel scene is not simply remembering it or going back in time. Through the act of contemplation, the Holy Spirit makes present a mystery of Jesus' life in a way that is meaningful for each participant, now. We dig deeper into the story so that God may communicate in personal and evocative ways.

This prayer practice encourages the involvement of our imagination, our physical bodies and senses, and our emotions, and invites us to respond. This type of prayer is important for people who approach daily life primarily in a sensory physical way. It helps others stretch out of primarily language-oriented reflection and prayer into new prayer possibilities.

General Instructions:

- Arrange the prayer space so participants (including the leader) are sitting around a table with enough space for paper, drawing implements, and elbows.
- The story is read aloud 2 times, once among the participants and the second time by the leader.
- All drawing will be done with the participants' non-dominant hand so that non-artistic and artistic people are on the same level of competency. Remember, this is not an art class, it's a prayer practice.

Preparation:

- Distribute paper to each person.
- Place a selection of colored art implements strategically within reach of each participant.
- Share the scripture with those who will join in the first reading with instructions for their particular portion.

The First Reading:

- Read the passage as assigned in the preparation

The Second Reading:

- Give instructions: Invite everyone to close their eyes, relax their bodies, and breathe deeply.
 - envision the scene in your mind
 - receive the reading in your heart
 - see the people and the landscape
 - hear the sounds
 - feel the air, the temperature, the breeze
 - smell the aromas
 - feel the emotions of the story's characters
 - allow yourself to move beyond thought into emotion
 - when the reading is completed there will be time for silent reflection
 - when you are so moved, draw what you have experienced in colors, shapes, etc.
- Reading the passage
 - Begin by saying "Let us pray."
 - Read the story slowly allowing time for the participants to "be there."

Reflection and Drawing:

- Pause for 3 minutes of silent reflection.
- End the reflection time with "Amen."
- Invite the participants to draw as they feel called.
- Give ample time for drawing, wait for the majority of the group

Sharing:

- Invite participants to share what they drew and what they experienced (it may not be much of anything, it may seem strange or silly, it may be quite dramatic or powerful. Whatever they share is what it is for them – there is no right or wrong answer)
- Possible leading questions if needed:
 - How did it feel putting your feelings on paper?
 - What was it like to try to express these things with color and shape and size?
 - What was challenging about this experience?
 - What was inspiring?
 - In what ways were you surprised as you prayed in this way?
- Respond to each person's sharing with a simple "thank you." Do not enter into conversation until all have had a chance to share.

Eucharistic Bread Recipe

Preparation and Implements:

- 2 round cookie cutters of differing and appropriate measurements for the size of your bread (see pictures on page 35 for reference)
- Cutting Board
- Cookie Sheet
- Parchment Paper
- Knife for scoring the dough

Ingredients:

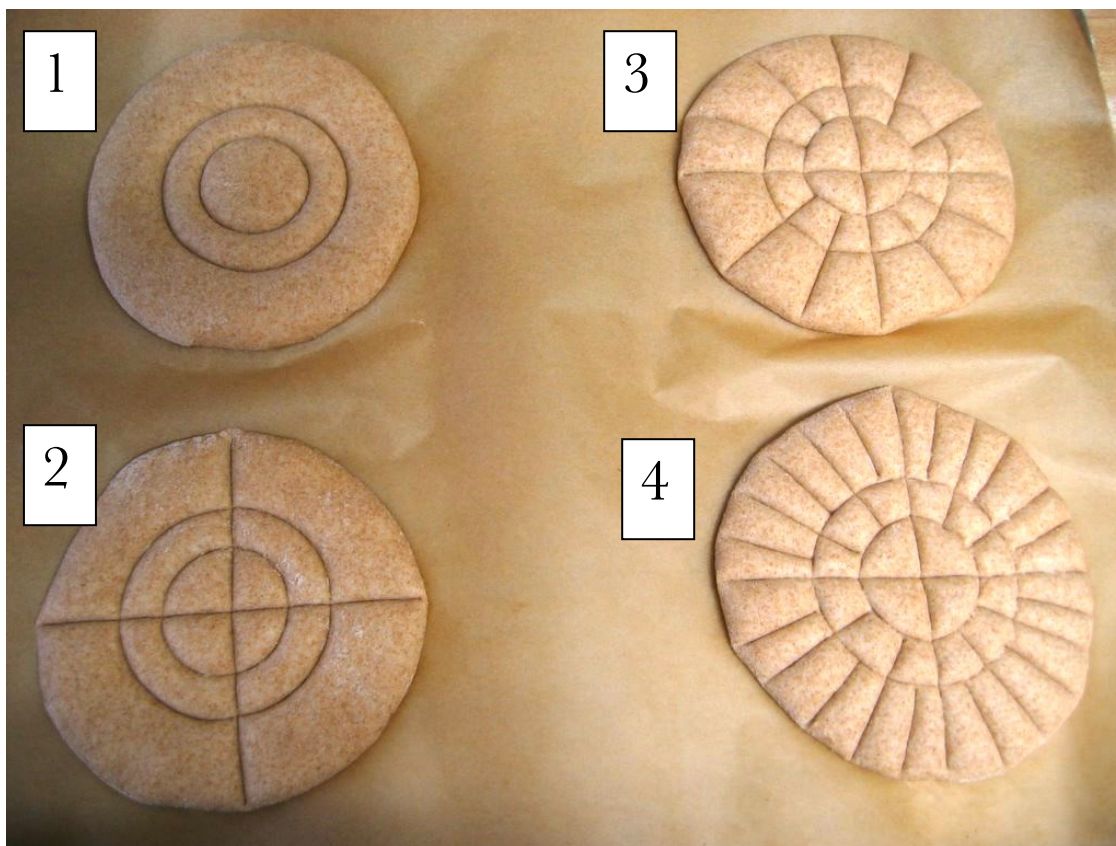
- 1 ½ cups of whole wheat flour
- ¼ + 1/8 cups white flour (can add up to addition 1 Tbsp if needed)
- ¼ tsp. baking powder
- Dash of salt
- ¼ cup oil
- ¼ cup honey
- ½ cup + 1/8 cup of milk

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 350°
- Mix all dry ingredients well
- Add wet ingredients and mix well
- If you think the dough feels too sticky, add up to 1 additional Tbsp of white flour

Shaping the loaves:

- Shape loaves on a cutting board lined with parchment paper that you will transfer to the cookie sheet.
- Divide the dough in half
- Flatten each piece into a circle about half an inch thick (it should be approximately 4-5 inches in diameter).
- Score each loaf into 40 pieces. See the photo on the next page for guidance.
When scoring do not cut all the way through the dough.)
 - Cut the smaller circle first
 - Then cut the larger circle
 - Cut two straight lines at right angles all the way across the circle
 - Cut each quarter of the two outer circles into thirds (two cuts in each quarter)
 - Cut each section in the outermost circle in two



Bake:

- Place loaves on parchment paper on cookie sheets.
- Bake at 350° for 15 minutes
- Cool on a rack.
- It may not look like the bread is done, but it will darken as it cools.
- Do not overbake!





Glossary

To visit The Episcopal Church Glossary of Terms, please visit the following website or scan the QR code below:

<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary/>

