

Christianity in Episcopal Tints



2. Our Worship

Christianity in Episcopal Tints

Introduction

- n Where did the Episcopal Church come from?
- n What does it believe?
- n How does it worship and why?
- n How does it understand the Bible and God?
- n How does it reach out to the rest of the world?
- n In this broken world – where the followers of Jesus are fractured into many denominations – what positive role does the Episcopal Church play?

Christianity in Episcopal Tints

Introduction

n **1:** Our History

n **2:** Our Worship

n **3:** The Church's Teaching and the Bible

n **4:** Spirituality

n **5:** Ministry and Organization. The Church's Mission.

Gracious Father, we pray for they holy Catholic Church. Fill it with all truth, in all truth with all peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in any thing it is amiss, reform it. Where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in want, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son our Savior.

For the Church, Book of Common Prayer, p. 816

What is Worship?



Definition of Worship

- n Webster's definition of **worship**:
 - n reverence (profound, adoring, awed respect) offered to God;
 - n the act of expressing such reverence

God and Worship

n God:

- n Personal,
- n The Creator,
- n Holy, Unknowable, Infinite,
- n The Alpha and the Omega,
- n “I AM who I AM.”

n Worship:

- n Our reverent response to the personal, holy, unknowable, infinite God.

Roots From Which Worship Springs

n “Thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in thee.”

- St. Augustine of Hippo (b. 354)

n Worship is rooted in our:

n sense of the mystery of existence,

n desire for transcendence, meaning,

n sense of beauty,

n love,

n human needs, fears, joys.

Settings and Expression of Worship

- n Worship can involve language, music, art, dance, all the senses.
- n Formal worship can range from an Eastern Orthodox Divine Liturgy to a Quaker meeting.
- n May be corporate or private.
- n Can be in diverse locations: Gothic cathedral to private home.

Dual Actions of Worship

- n Worship involves *dual actions*, both:
 - n receiving something from God, and
 - n offering and giving something of ourselves to God.

Intimations of the Divine in the Created World

- n A sacramental view of the universe rises from the belief that it is possible to have intimations of the Divine in the created world.

Intimations of the Divine in the Created World

n We can find intimations of the divine in the created world described in literature:

n “Teach me, my God and King, in all things thee to see”

- George Herbert, Anglican poet

Intimations of the Divine in the Created World

- n “Earth’s crammed with heaven,
- n And every common bush afire with God;
- n But only he who sees takes off his shoes,
- n The rest sit round and plunk blackberries.”

- Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Intimations of the Divine in the Created World

- n “To me, the meanest flower that blows can
give
- n Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.”
- William Wordsworth

Intimations of the Divine in the Created World

- n “Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made.” (NRSV)
- St. Paul, Romans 1:20

Duality of Our Experience in this World

- n There is a dualism in our experience of this world:
 - n We are embodied beings existing in a very material, very concrete world, the stuff of atoms and physical forces.
 - n We can feel intimations of non-material, transcendent entities – beauty, mystery, meaning – through this material world (in a bush, a flower, a sunset...) .
- n A “sacramental” view of the universe links the two pieces of this duality:
 - n the material world is good,
 - n the material world can be “door to the sacred.”

Theology of a Sacramental View of the Universe

- n The fundamental “theology” behind a sacramental view of the universe is:
 - n 1. The material world is good, because:
 - n it is created by God;
 - n in the Incarnation, God freely took on embodied existence, God lived in space and time, God became the stuff of atoms and physical forces.
 - n 2. The material world can be a door to the sacred, because God is both:
 - n transcendent reality beyond the world he has made,
 - n immanent reality who dwells in this world and is active in it.

Sacramental Rites in Our Daily Lives

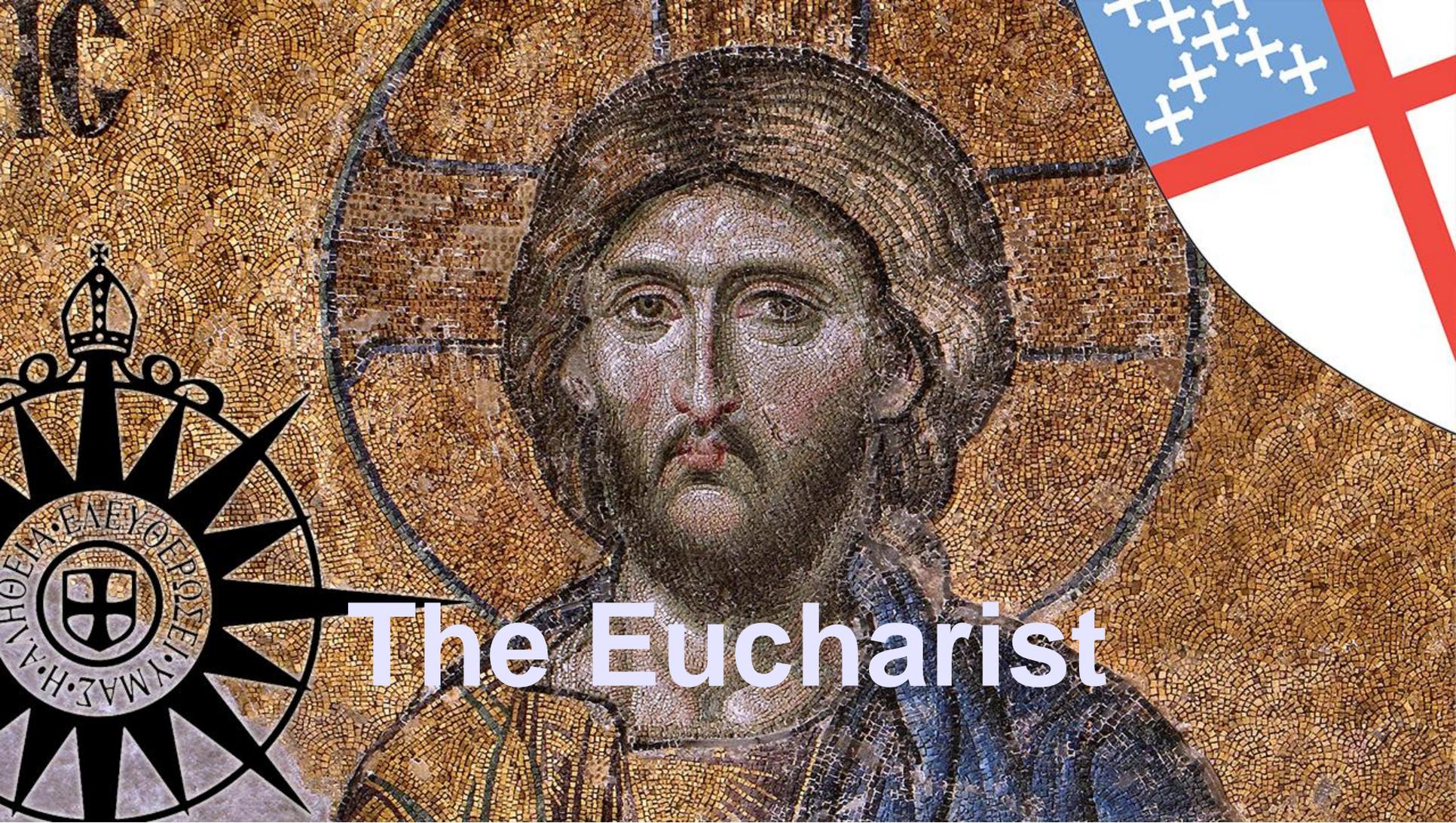
- n There are many “sacraments:” material objects, physical events or physical actions that can be “doors” to the sacred.
- n Throughout our lives, we have many “rites” = ritual physical actions, that express and are “doors” to feelings, inner realities, meanings beyond the mechanics of the act:
 - n touching, embracing another person,
 - n making love,
 - n sharing a meal together,
 - n giving a gift,
 - n gestures of hospitality and welcome.

Sacramental Rites or Rituals in the Church

- n The Church has defined seven “sacramental” rites or rituals, call “Sacraments.”
- n Two Sacraments of the Gospel:
 - n Baptism,
 - n Holy Eucharist.
- n Other Sacramental Rites that evolved under guidance of the Holy Spirit:
 - n Confirmation,
 - n Ordination,
 - n Holy Matrimony,
 - n Reconciliation of a Penitent (Confession),
 - n Unction (Anointing of the Sick).

Outward Parts and Inward Spiritual Reality

- n We describe the Sacraments defined by the church as possessing two facets:
- n 1. an outward or visible part = the **“matter”** and/or **“form”**:
 - n the material object and/or physical action that is the “door” or “portal” to the sacred;
 - n in the Catechism, called “the outward and visible signs.”
- n 2. the inward spiritual reality = the **“res”**:
 - n This is the heart of the sacrament.
 - n It is the action of God on the human spirit;
 - n in the Catechism, called “the inward and spiritual grace.”



The Eucharist

The Eucharist: Introduction

- n The Eucharist is the “supreme” sacrament.
- n Other names for the Holy Eucharist:
 - n The Lord’s Supper,
 - n Holy Communion,
 - n Divine Liturgy,
 - n The Mass,
 - n The Great Offering.

The Eucharist and Christ

- n Christ is the:
 - n founder of the Sacrament of the Eucharist,
 - n minister of the Sacrament of the Eucharist,
 - n the supreme grace bestowed by the Sacrament.

Matter, Form, and Grace

- n The outward part: “matter” and/or “form:”
 - n matter: bread and wine.
- n form: the “four-fold” shape of the Eucharist:
 - n Jesus took bread,
 - n blessed it,
 - n broke it,
 - n and distributed it.

Matter, Form, and Grace

- n The inner spiritual reality: “res:”
 - n The richness of the Eucharist makes it almost impossible to name a “specific” grace.
 - n It is the “Body and Blood of Christ given to his people.”
 - n It is God giving of God’s very self to us.

Three Facets of the Holy Eucharist

- n The three facets of the Holy Eucharist:
 - n 1. a meal,
 - n 2. the real presence of Jesus,
 - n 3. a remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus.

Holy Eucharist as a Meal

- n The original setting of the Holy Eucharist (the Last Supper) was a Jewish meal.
- n Note the form of the Jewish *beraka* (blessing or thanksgiving):
- n *before the meal*: the host takes a small loaf of bread and says:
 - n “Blessed are you, Lord God of the universe, you bring forth bread from the earth.”
 - n The host then breaks bread and distributes it.
- n *after the meal*: the host takes a cup of wine and says:
 - n “Blessed are you, Lord God of the universe, you create the fruit of the vine.”
 - n The host then passes the cup round the guests.

Meals in the Ancient World

- n In Israel and ancient world: a meal was not merely an occasion for eating, drinking, but a sacred occasion.
- n In the ancient church, the Eucharist began as a regular meal; then gradually became a symbolic meal.

Problems with Eucharist as Regular Meal

- n The problems that arose with doing the Eucharist as part of a regular meal are documented in the New Testament (a name used for these gatherings of a meal and the Holy Eucharist was “love feast”):
 - n I Corinthians 11: “I do not commend you, because when you come together, it is not for the better, but for the worse . . . it is not the Lord’s Supper that you eat. For in eating, each one goes ahead with his own meal, and one is hungry and another is drunk.”
 - n Jude 1:12: “These are blemishes on your love feasts, as they boldly carouse together, looking after themselves.”

Summary: Eucharist as a Meal

- n As a meal, Eucharist includes:
 - n table fellowship,
 - n praise and thanksgiving for God's blessings to us,
 - n a foretaste of the "feast to come."

Mystery of the Real Presence of Jesus

- n We affirm that the body and blood of Christ are “truly present” in the Eucharist, that the flesh of Christ is in some way “life-giving.”
- n But how can this be?
- n This is a matter of continued theological speculation, but ultimately remains a mystery.

Mystery of the Real Presence of Jesus

- n St. Augustine's description is still an apt description of the mystery of the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist:
- n “That which you see is bread and the cup, which even your eyes declare to you; but as to that in which your faith demands instruction, the bread is the body of Christ, the cup is the blood of Christ. . . these things are called sacraments for this reason, that in them one thing is seen, another thing is understood.”

- St. Augustine of Hippo (b. 354)

Transubstantiation

- n During the Middle Ages, a view called **Transubstantiation** attempted to provide an explanation for the real presence:
- n Transubstantiation is based on a Greek view of reality. Every “thing” has:
 - n a physical being detectable by our senses: **“accidents”**
 - n a metaphysical reality: **“substance”**

Transubstantiation

- n **Transubstantiation** says:
 - n the “substance” (= the “metaphysical reality”) of bread and wine is changed into the “substance” of the body and blood of Christ;
 - n the “accidents” (= the “physical being detectable by our senses”) of the bread and wine remain, still genuinely there.
- n The view of transubstantiation however does not seem helpful in a modern world where we think of matter as purely the stuff of atoms and molecules and physical forces.

Summary: Real Presence of Jesus

- n The Holy Eucharist as the Real Presence of Jesus:
 - n In the material objects (the “matter”) of bread and wine, a “door” is open to us, and we truly receive Jesus
 - n The “how” of that event is a mystery, and continues to be a matter for theological speculation.

Holy Eucharist as Sacrifice

- n Sources for the view of the Holy Eucharist as a sacrifice:
 - n The Last Supper likely a Passover meal, a sacrificial feast:
 - n Jesus' was the "paschal lamb" of the new covenant being established between God and human beings.
- n Scripture also refers to the sacrificial nature of Jesus' mission:
 - n Mark 10:45: "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."
 - n Mark 14:24: "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many." "Do this in remembrance of me."

Remembrance: not Repetition, but Re-presenting

- n We affirm Jesus' death on Calvary is a unique and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of humanity.
- n A “repetition” of Calvary in the Holy Eucharist is thus unnecessary, and an affront to this affirmation.
- n The Protestant Reformers accused the Roman Church of teaching that the Eucharist was a “repetition” of sacrifice of Calvary (probably an unfair charge).

Remembrance: not Repetition, but Re-presenting

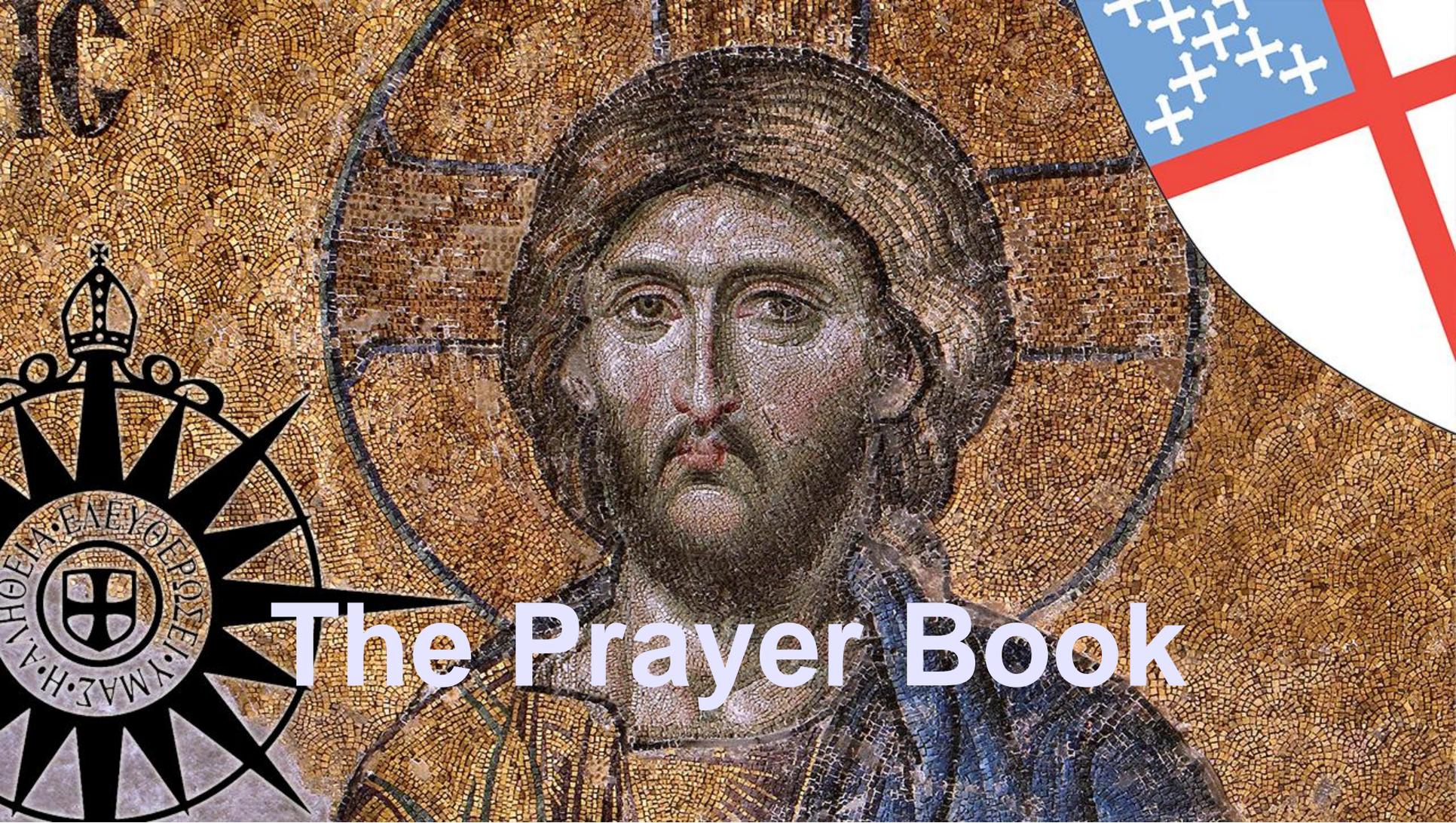
- n Jesus asked: “Do this in “remembrance” of me.”
- n What is mean by “remembrance?”
- n remembrance = Greek *anamnesis*
- n Not a mere remembering but a “re-presenting:” a “past” event recalled and experienced so that its significance and power are known and felt as if the event were *present*.

Remembrance: not Repetition, but Re-presenting

- n In the Holy Eucharist, we “re-present” the sacrifice of Calvary.
- n This “re-presenting” of Calvary is not merely a psychological “trick,” but a recognition of a metaphysical reality:
 - n The event of Calvary is not only a historical reality in space-time, but also was “slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8):
 - n for *all* moments of space-time are eternally *present* to God, including Jesus’ suffering and death on Calvary.

Holy Eucharist: Summary

- n The Holy Eucharist is a:
 - n 1. table fellowship of thanksgiving and praise,
 - n 2. “sacramental” door to communion with Christ,
 - n 3. ” re-presenting” of Jesus’ sacrifice on Calvary, acknowledging that sacrifice as eternally *present* to God.



The Prayer Book

Centrality of the Prayer Book

- n The Prayer Book is central to the Episcopal church. Other denominations have theologians:
 - n Lutherans – Luther,
 - n Reformed Churches – Calvin,
 - n Roman Catholic Church – Thomas Aquinas (Pope in 1879 declared “Thomism” eternally valid).
- n The Anglican Church does not have a dominant theologian, but rather finds unity through its prayer book.

History and Development

- n 1549: first Prayer Book.
- n Was largely the work of Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Cranmer.
- n Today, each Anglican Church has its own Prayer Book.

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- n Note the Holy Eucharist lies at the center of the book (It is easier to use a book opened at its center).
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The Daily Offices

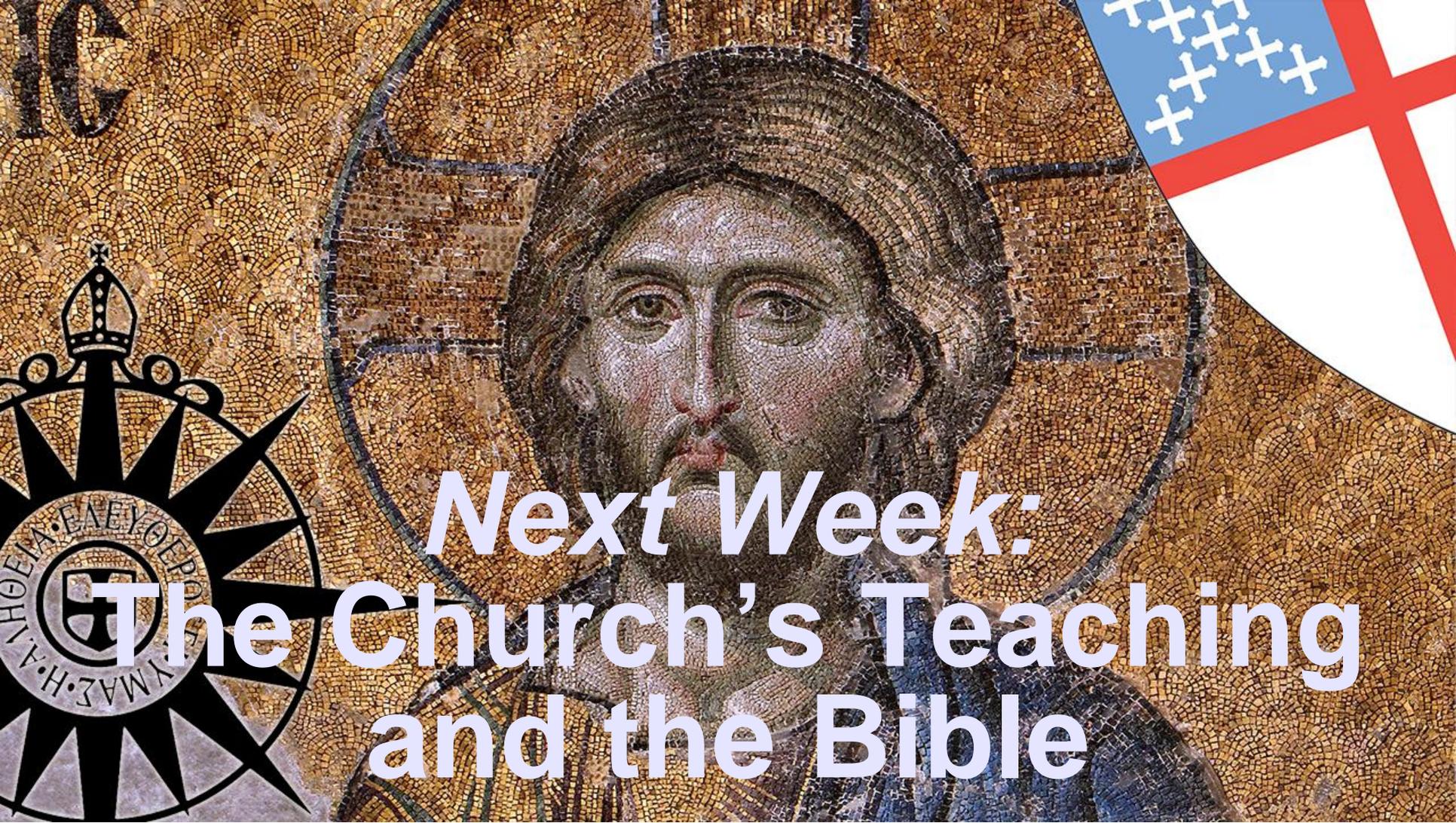
- n Medieval Monasticism in the West defined “offices” of prayer through the day:
 - n Nocturns
 - n Lauds
 - n Prime
 - n Terce and sung mass
 - n Sext
 - n None
 - n Vespers
 - n Compline
- n The peculiar (to modern ears) name of “**offices**” comes from the Latin “*officium*” meaning “a duty, an obligatory service or gesture.”

“Daily Offices” in the Prayer Book

- n The First Prayer Book tried to make such prayer part of the daily life of all the faithful with two “offices” of prayer: morning and evening.
- n The 1979 Prayer Books has short (< 5 minutes) prayers for *four* times during the day:
 - n Morning,
 - n Noonday,
 - n Early evening,
 - n Evening.

Motivation and Importance

- n The Daily Offices reflects a biblical image of church as a people of prayer.



Next Week:
**The Church's Teaching
and the Bible**