

Fifty Terms Relating to Worship and God's House

Acolyte. Person who lights and extinguishes the candles before and after the service.

Agnus Dei. Latin for "Lamb of God."

Alleluia. An ancient Hebrew word for "Praise the Lord."

Altar. Table made of marble or wood, located in the center of the chancel. Old Testament sacrifices were made on the altar. New Testament altars remind us of Christ's sacrifice of Himself for us. The altar is the table from which the elements are distributed at the Lord's Supper.

Canticle. Liturgical words derived from God's Word; usually sung.

Celebrant. Pastor administering the Lord's Supper.

Chancel. Front of the church containing the altar, pulpit, lectern, and communion rail. Portion of the church from which the service is led.

Collect. Short prayer.

Consecrate. To dedicate to the Lord; to declare holy, as when the Words of institution are spoken over the bread and wine during the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Crucifix. Cross with Christ on it. The crucifix reminds us of Christ's sacrifice for us and for our salvation.

Doxology. Words of praise to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Epistle. A letter. The Epistles of the Bible were written by the apostles and sent to other believers. Usually a portion of the Epistles is read during a worship service.

Eucharist. Greek for "giving thanks." Another name for the Lord's Supper, originating from Jesus' giving of thanks over the bread and wine at the institution of this special meal.

Gloria Patri. Latin for "glory to the Father." Identifies the hymn of praise to the triune God.

Gloria in Excelsis. Latin meaning "glory in the highest, glory to God in heaven." A hymn for praise to the triune God.

Good Friday. Day on which Christ died for the sins of the world.

Gradual. Response included between the reading of the Epistle and the Gospel.

Holy Week. Week between Palm Sunday and Easter containing Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Hosanna. Hebrew word meaning "Save now, we pray." Hymn. Song of prayer used to praise, adore, or thank our good and gracious God.

Introit. Latin for "he enters." Psalm sung or spoken at the beginning of the worship service.

Invitatory. Latin for "invitation." Opening sentence in the Order of Matins.

Kyrie. Greek word for "O Lord."

Lectionary. Book or list of Scripture readings designated throughout the Church Year.

Lectern. Podium from which the Scripture lessons are read.

Litany. Greek word for "prayer." Responsive prayers spoken by the pastor and people.

Liturgy. Greek word meaning "service." Order of worship.

Magnificat. Latin for "magnify, praise." First word of Mary's song (**Luke 1:46-55**).

Maundy Thursday. Thursday in Holy Week when Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. *Maundy* is Latin for "command," referring to the new command of love of which Jesus spoke on the night of His betrayal (**John 13:34**).

Narthex. Hall or room at the entrance to the church.

Nave. Main part of the church where the congregation assembles for worship. Latin for "ship."

Nunc Dimittis. Latin for "now let your servant depart," from Simeon's song (**Luke 2:29-32**), traditionally sung after the distribution of the Lord's Supper.

Offertory. Words sung as the offering is received at the altar.

Ordinary. Parts of the worship service that are the same each week.

Pall. Cloth that covers the coffin at a funeral.

Paraments. Cloths placed on the altar, pulpit, and lectern. Changed to match the color for the season of the Church Year.

Pax Domini. Latin for "peace of the Lord."

Pericope. Portion of the Bible designed to be read on a given Sunday.

Propers. Parts of the worship service that change each week.

Preface. Part of liturgy preceding the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Pulpit. Place from which the pastor preaches the sermon.

Responsory. Scripture verses sung or spoken after the reading of a lesson. The Gradual is a type of responsory.

Sacristy. Room, usually small and located off the chancel, where preparations for the Sacrament are made.

Salutation. Greeting between pastor and people.

Sanctus. Song of praise concluding the Preface based on **Isaiah 6:3** and **Matthew 21:9**.

Stanza. Verse of a hymn.

Suffrage. Responsive prayer.

Versicles. Portions of Scripture that call the congregation to worship and reflect the theme of the day.

Vestments. Garments worn by the pastor, acolytes, choir, and others assisting in worship.

Vestry. Small room, usually off the chancel, used to store vestments and where the pastor prepares for worship. One room may serve as both the vestry and the sacristy.