

St. Paul's *Episcobasics*

A weekly class for those seeking Confirmation, those new to the Episcopal Church, and anyone who is interested in expanding their understanding

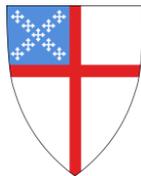
The purpose of *Episcobasics* is to provide information to persons interested in the Episcopal Church as a whole and St. Paul's in Waco in particular. As we gather each Sunday morning, we will be covering a range of topics about Christian faith and the Episcopal tradition, as well as life here at St. Paul's. Each session will be led by a members of the clergy and the laity of St. Paul's, offering their valuable insights and experience. This class is perfect for those who are new to the Episcopal Church, those who are new to St. Paul's, or those who have been with us for a while but have a new desire to explore their relationship with their church. It also fulfills the education requirement for those who are seeking to be Confirmed or Received into the Episcopal Church.

September 18 – Hello, my name is...



In this class, we will take time to introduce ourselves and tell our stories. We will learn where we are from, and what led us to be together in the same room. All are welcome, regardless of spiritual background. This is a time to share the story of your spiritual path, with all its joys, challenges, and convolutions!

September 25 – Who are Episcopalians anyway?



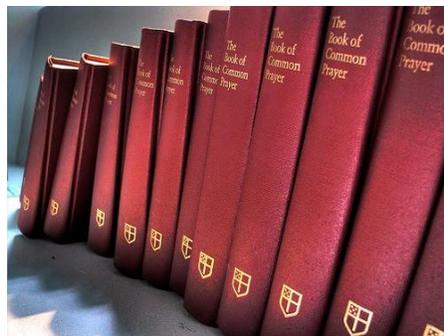
This class is a discussion of the culture and character, as well as the structure of the Episcopal Church. You may learn how the Episcopal Church evolved from its English roots with more than a wee bit of help from the Scots—as well as a dose of Revolutionary spirit—to become what we are today. You might even hear about the *via media* and the three-legged stool.

October 2 – Blessing of the Animals (All Parish Event)



In recognition of the Feast of St. Francis on October 4, St. Paul's celebrates the spirit of the life of this saint through a special service the first Sunday each October. All are invited to bring their pets this Sunday with the blessing of the animals taking place following the 9:00 am service held outside in the courtyard. St. Francis composed an ode to God's living things saying, "All praise to you, Oh Lord, for all these brother and sister creatures." The cacophony of animal and human voices is a joy to hear during this service as we come together to express thankfulness for the presence of these animals in our lives, to praise God who created us both, and to enjoy fellowship with one another!

October 9 – The Book of Common Prayer



The Book of Common Prayer might be characterized as an Episcopalian's tool kit. Within its covers are several forms, orders, or guides for worship, ranging from the Eucharist to the simple, end-of-day service of Compline. There is much more than that, however. Also included are prayers for virtually any occasion, historical documents of the church, a succinct statement of Christian faith known as the catechism, suggested Bible readings for daily devotionals and special days alike, expressions of praise drawn directly from the Psalms, and much more.

October 16 – Corporate & Personal Piety



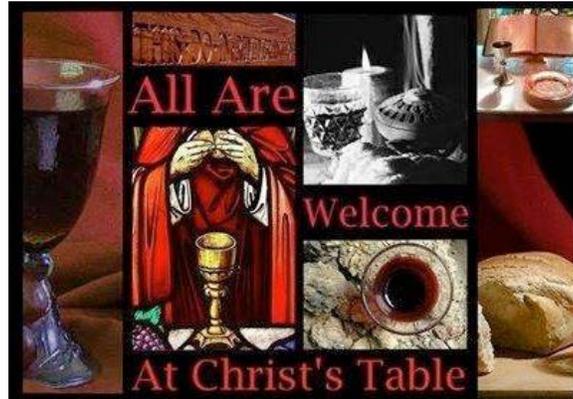
This week will offer an opportunity to become acquainted with various specific actions and gestures that are used to express reverence or praise, or perhaps to serve as personal reminders of the meaning of what we are doing. Why do we kneel or stand as a group when we do? What is meant by making the sign of the cross, bowing, and genuflecting? When are such actions appropriate? You may have noticed that some persons may do something and others do not. We will have a discussion about personal expressions of piety and how they are meaningful to the individual who performs them.

October 23 – The Bishop's Visit



The Right Reverend C. Andrew Doyle, 9th Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas, will be visiting St. Paul's to baptize and confirm congregants at both the 9:00 and 11:00 services and meet with parishioners at a reception between the services. From the Greek word *épiskopos*, meaning overseer, it is obvious from our denomination's name that bishops hold a revered leadership position within the Episcopal Church.

October 30 – Eucharist & The Daily Office



This session addresses the sacrament of Holy Eucharist in the Episcopal Church, how it has developed over the years, and its place in the life of the church. In addition, we'll cover Morning Prayer, Noonday Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Compline. We will talk about how they are used in our church and how you can use them in your own prayer life.

November 6 – Baptism & Confirmation



In our discussion of Baptism and Confirmation, we will investigate the outwardly visible actions that mark us as Christians and members of the Body of Christ. Baptism is understood in the Episcopal Church as full initiation into the life of the church, and this class will take the time to explain what that means and how baptism gives us new life in Christ. Confirmation is a mature and public affirmation of faith and commitment to the responsibilities of our baptism which leads to the laying on of hands by a bishop. This class is designed to talk about what baptism and confirmation mean in the Episcopal Church, but in such a way that isn't exclusive of people who have been a part of other denominations.

November 27 – Advent Workshop (All Parish Event)



Advent is a time of reflection when the Church prepares its heart and spirit for the birth of Jesus, first as a singular event two thousand years ago and also in our lives today...as well as prepare for the coming of Christ in the future. On this first Sunday of Advent, this parish-wide event is an opportunity for participants to create traditional Advent tools and gather resources for use at home.

December 4th – Prayer & Rule of Life



There are a variety of ways to pray. We can pray through words, journaling, music, meditation, or even by walking! While prayer grounds our corporate life together in worship, prayer can be an integral part of our personal life. In this class we will look at the many different ways in which a person can pray and share the ways in which we communicate with God. We will also cover a Rule of Life which is an intentional set of practices a person can utilize to support their growth in Christ. By keeping a Rule of Life, a person can more intentionally order their selves and their lives toward God and worship.

December 11 – Ministry and Mission



In the church, we talk about “ministry” and “mission” all the time, but what do they mean? How are they related to each other and what role do they play in our life in the church and in our lives? This is an opportunity to talk about different ways we think about lay and ordained ministry, ministry in our lives, the “Five Marks of Mission,” and God’s mission in the world.

December 18 – Your Questions!



This class serves as an opportunity to ask any questions you have as we wrap up the class! It is fitting that, over time, you will have questions that could not get covered in the time allowed per week. This class is the time to ask those questions!