

Music for the Eucharistic Prayers

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Singing the opening dialogue, preface, Sanctus and conclusion of the Eucharistic Prayer has been part of the received tradition of the Church since the earliest times. This music supplement consists of two groups of settings of the Eucharistic Prayers: settings using the traditional chant melodies; and three examples of new settings prepared especially for *Common Worship*.

Chant settings

For Prayers A, B, C and E there is provision for the singing of the dialogue, preface, acclamations, and doxology with chants derived from the traditional melodies of the Church of England, based principally on Sarum tones. This includes provision for Proper Prefaces. Prayer B is set complete. All the chants are presented at modal pitch, with C as the notional reciting note. However, the newly devised G clef is a reminder that this pitch is relative rather than absolute. In most cases, the president will wish to sing these chants at a lower pitch, most likely beginning the dialogue on D, E flat, E or F (with a principal reciting note of G, A flat, A or B flat) according to the range of the voice.

The chant should be sung flowingly at a steady speaking pace, bearing in mind the shape and stress of the text; hollow notes are provided where the reciting pitch is unchanged, and doubled black notes indicate suggested lengthening or weighted sound. Often this will be roughly equivalent to doubling the length of the note. At the end of a phrase such as 'Lift up your hearts', which has two notes set to 'hearts', both notes are slightly lengthened, with the second sung more gently than the first.

Special settings

The three special settings of Prayers D, F and G offer examples of alternative ways of singing the Eucharistic Prayer in three distinct styles. They are intended to be illustrative of a possible way of singing each prayer rather than indicative of a preferred or prescribed setting or style. Although there is provision for singing the complete prayer, some will prefer to select those parts they wish to sing, having in mind the wholeness and coherence of the prayer. Prayer D has strong rhythm and melody. There is an optional ostinato which can form the basis of either vocal or instrumental accompaniment. It is important to establish a strong underlying beat in the measured sections of the prayer, and this will be more important than the ostinato. Prayers F and G are more reflective. Prayer F includes the option of a drone chord to form a gentle support for singing. Prayer G includes a sequence of sustained chords which serve as a slow-moving accompaniment, again very much as background to the recitation of the prayer. This may be played on the organ, or adapted for an ensemble.

Further special settings are published by the Royal School of Church Music.