

The 1928 Book of Common Prayer,  
The Standard Book

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THE BOOK OF  
COMMON PRAYER  
and Administration of the Sacraments  
and Other Rites and Ceremonies  
of the Church

ACCORDING TO THE USE OF THE  
PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



Together with The Psalter  
or Psalms of David

THE SEABURY PRESS, GREENWICH, CONNECTICUT

A. D. MDCCCCLII

# Table of Contents

## CERTIFICATE.

*I certify that this edition of the Book of Common Prayer conforms to the Standard Book of 1928, as amended by subsequent actions of General Conventions.*

JOHN WALLACE SUTER

*Custodian of the Standard Book of Common Prayer*

September 1952

THE RATIFICATION OF THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER	iv
THE PREFACE	v
CONCERNING THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH, INCLUDING THE USE OF	
THE PSALTER AND THE LECTIONARY	vii
PSALMS AND LESSONS FOR THE CHRISTIAN YEAR	x
THE CALENDAR	xlvi
TABLES AND RULES FOR THE MOVABLE AND IMMOVABLE FEASTS, TO-	
GETHER WITH THE DAYS OF FASTING AND ABSTINENCE THROUGH-	
OUT THE YEAR, AND THE DAYS OF SOLEMN SUPPLICATION	1
TABLES OF PRECEDENCE	li
TABLES FOR FINDING HOLY DAYS	lii
THE ORDER FOR DAILY MORNING PRAYER	3
THE ORDER FOR DAILY EVENING PRAYER	21
PRAYERS AND THANKSGIVINGS	35
THE LITANY	54
A PENITENTIAL OFFICE FOR ASH WEDNESDAY	60
THE ORDER FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, OR	
HOLY COMMUNION	67
THE COLLECTS, EPISTLES, AND GOSPELS	90
THE MINISTRATION OF HOLY BAPTISM	273
OFFICES OF INSTRUCTION	283
THE ORDER OF CONFIRMATION	296
THE SOLEMNIZATION OF MATRIMONY	300
THE THANKSGIVING OF WOMEN AFTER CHILD-BIRTH	305
THE ORDER FOR THE VISITATION OF THE SICK	308
THE COMMUNION OF THE SICK	321
THE ORDER FOR THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD	324
AT THE BURIAL OF A CHILD	338
THE PSALTER, OR PSALMS OF DAVID	345
. . . . .	
THE FORM AND MANNER OF MAKING, ORDAINING, AND CONSECRAT-	
ING BISHOPS, PRIESTS, AND DEACONS	529
THE LITANY AND SUFFRAGES FOR ORDINATIONS	560
THE FORM OF CONSECRATION OF A CHURCH OR CHAPEL	563
AN OFFICE OF INSTITUTION OF MINISTERS INTO PARISHES OR	
CHURCHES	569
. . . . .	
A CATECHISM	577
FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES	587
. . . . .	
ARTICLES OF RELIGION	603

# Preface

**I***T is a most invaluable part of that blessed "liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," that in his worship different forms and usages may without offence be allowed, provided the substance of the Faith be kept entire; and that, in every Church, what cannot be clearly determined to belong to Doctrine must be referred to Discipline; and therefore, by common consent and authority, may be altered, abridged, enlarged, amended, or otherwise disposed of, as may seem most convenient for the edification of the people, "according to the various exigency of times and occasions."*

*The Church of England, to which the Protestant Episcopal Church in these States is indebted, under God, for her first foundation and a long continuance of nursing care and protection, hath, in the Preface of her Book of Common Prayer, laid it down as a rule, that "The particular Forms of Divine Worship, and the Rites and Ceremonies appointed to be used therein, being things in their own nature indifferent, and alterable, and so acknowledged; it is but reasonable that upon weighty and important considerations, according to the various exigency of times and occasions, such changes and alterations should be made therein, as to those that are in place of Authority should, from time to time, seem either necessary or expedient."*

*The same Church hath not only in her Preface, but likewise in her Articles and Homilies, declared the necessity and expediency of occasional alterations and amendments in her Forms of Public Worship; and we find accordingly, that, seeking to keep the happy mean between too much stiffness in refusing, and too much easiness in admitting variations in things once advisedly established, she hath, in the reign of several Princes, since the first compiling of her Liturgy in the time of Edward the Sixth, upon just and weighty considerations her thereunto moving, yielded to make such alterations in some particulars, as in their respective times were thought convenient; yet so as that the main body and essential parts of the same (as well in the chiefest materials, as in the frame and order thereof) have still been continued firm and unshaken.*

*Her general aim in these different reviews and alterations hath been, as she further declares in her said Preface, to do that which, according to her best understanding, might most tend to the preservation of peace and unity in the Church, the procuring of reverence, and the exciting of piety and devotion in the worship of God; and, finally, the cutting off occasion, from them that seek occasion, of cavil or quarrel against her Liturgy. And although, according to her judgment, there be not any thing in it contrary to the Word of God, or to sound doctrine, or which a godly man may not with a good conscience use and submit unto, or which is not fairly defensible, if allowed such just and favourable*

## THE RATIFICATION OF THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

BY THE BISHOPS, THE CLERGY, AND THE LAITY OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, IN CONVENTION, THIS SIXTEENTH DAY OF OCTOBER, IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINE.

This Convention having, in their present session, set forth *A Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church*, do hereby establish the said Book: And they declare it to be the Liturgy of this Church: And require that it be received as such by all the members of the same: And this Book shall be in use from and after the First Day of October, in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety.

*construction as in common equity ought to be allowed to all human writings; yet upon the principles already laid down, it cannot but be supposed that further alterations would in time be found expedient. Accordingly, a Commission for a review was issued in the year 1689: but this great and good work miscarried at that time; and the Civil Authority has not since thought proper to revive it by any new Commission.*

*But when in the course of Divine Providence, these American States became independent with respect to civil government, their ecclesiastical independence was necessarily included; and the different religious denominations of Christians in these States were left at full and equal liberty to model and organize their respective Churches, and forms of worship, and discipline, in such manner as they might judge most convenient for their future prosperity; consistently with the constitution and laws of their country.*

*The attention of this Church was in the first place drawn to those alterations in the Liturgy which became necessary in the prayers for our Civil Rulers, in consequence of the Revolution. And the principal care berein was to make them conformable to what ought to be the pro per end of all such prayers, namely, that "Rulers may have grace, wisdom, and understanding to execute justice, and to maintain truth"; and that the people "may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty."*

*But while these alterations were in review before the Convention, they could not but, with gratitude to God, embrace the happy occasion which was offered to them (uninfluenced and unrestrained by any worldly authority whatsoever) to take a further review of the Public Service, and to establish such other alterations and amendments therein as might be deemed expedient.*

*It seems unnecessary to enumerate all the different alterations and amendments. They will appear, and it is to be hoped, the reasons of them also, upon a comparison of this with the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England. In which it will also appear that this Church is far from intending to depart from the Church of England in any essential point of doctrine, discipline, or worship; or further than local circumstances require.*

*And now, this important work being brought to a conclusion, it is hoped the whole will be received and examined by every true member of our Church, and every sincere Christian, with a meek, candid, and charitable frame of mind; without prejudice or pre possessions; seriously considering what Christianity is, and what the truths of the Gospel are; and earnestly beseeching Almighty God to accompany with his blessing every endeavour for promulgating them to mankind in the clearest, plainest, most affecting and majestic manner, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our blessed Lord and Saviour.*

*Philadelphia, October, 1789.*