



COMFORTABLE WORDS

ANGLICAN PIETY
AND THE
Book of Common Prayer

An Exhibition Featuring the
FIRST THREE EDITIONS
from 1549, 1552 and 1559
and the
FIVE REVISIONS
of 1662, 1789, 1892, 1928 and 1979
which guided the worship of the
Episcopal Church in America
into the 21st Century

Curated by Kenneth E. Rowe, Ph.D.
*In Memory of Generous Donors
Fred and Mary Louise Maser*

Bishop Ward Gallery
United Methodist Archives & History Center
DREW UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
July 15-September 25, 2015
Madison, New Jersey

Design by: Cassie Brand
Photography by: Lynne DeLade and Allie McMahan

About the Exhibition

This exhibition of the four hundred year old *Book of Common Prayer* and its progeny showcases a book that is not only used for public worship and private prayer but, by its liturgical excellence, holds a special place in the evolution of English language and literature. Its words for worship, felicitous translations and paraphrases of the old Latin mass, helped guide the development of the English language a generation before Shakespeare and Milton and the King James Bible.

The prayer book has also been the crowning masterpiece of the world's greatest typographers and printers who lavished their art on the prayer book, customizing them with magnificent decoration evident in the fine printings and bindings you will see displayed.

Included in the following pages are items highlighted from the full exhibition.

For Bard and James

Like anyone working on the Book of Common Prayer, I owe more than I can say to the extraordinary scholarship it has inspired. The late Professors Bard Thompson and James White, my teachers and later colleagues at Drew University's Theological and Graduate Schools, have been the presiding spirits over all my efforts, almost as much once they were gone as in their wonderful lectures while alive. Their memory breathes through everything here.

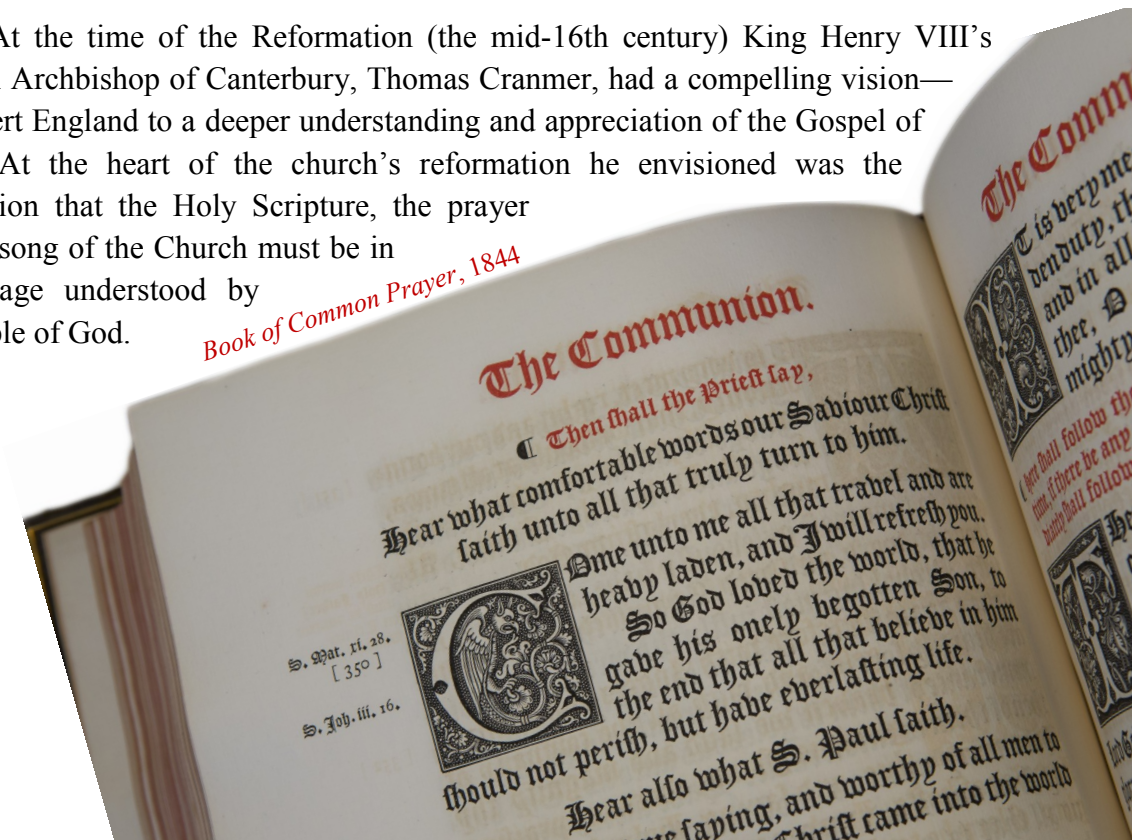


Cover border reproduced from the title page of the first *Book of Common Prayer*, 1549

About the Exhibition's Title "Comfortable Words"

At the time of the Reformation (the mid-16th century) King Henry VIII's youthful Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, had a compelling vision—to convert England to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Gospel of Christ. At the heart of the church's reformation he envisioned was the assumption that the Holy Scripture, the prayer and the song of the Church must be in a language understood by the people of God.

Book of Common Prayer, 1844



Throughout the book Archbishop Cranmer introduced large portions of Scripture into the prayer life of church and home. He added four verses from Scripture to the Communion rite following the General Confession and Absolution to underscore a very important fact: Christians believe baptized church members are forgiven through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ. Forgiveness does not come from a priest, the church, or even a special prayer. It comes through Christ alone.

For almost 500 years these verses that Cranmer chose to name “Comfortable Words” have been spoken in churches around the globe. Episcopalians still hear these verses in Holy Eucharist Rite I. The words are not intended to “comfort” believers in the modern sense of the word; rather, they are meant to “strengthen” believers with the assurance of forgiveness.

About the Book of Common Prayer



Archbishop Thomas Cranmer
Lambeth Palace Portrait

While many of us are familiar with such famous words as, "Dearly beloved, we are gathered together here. . ." or "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust" or “peace in our time,” we may not know that they originated with *The Book of Common Prayer*, which first appeared in 1549. Like the words of the King James Bible and Shakespeare a century later, the language of this book has saturated English culture and letters. Echoes of the book can even be heard in the writings of twentieth century secular authors like Virginia Woolf and Samuel Beckett. From its beginnings as a means of social and political control in the England of King Henry VIII to its worldwide presence today, the book became a venerable work whose

cadences express the heart of religious life for many.

Yet this familiarity also hides a violent and controversial history. When it was first produced the book provoked riots and rebellion; it was many times burned and banned and has been the focus of celebrations and protests down to our own time. As time passed, new forms of the book were made to suit the many English-speaking nations: first in Scotland, then in the new United States, and eventually wherever the British Empire extended its arm. The one book became many over time and shaped the devotional lives of men and women across the globe.

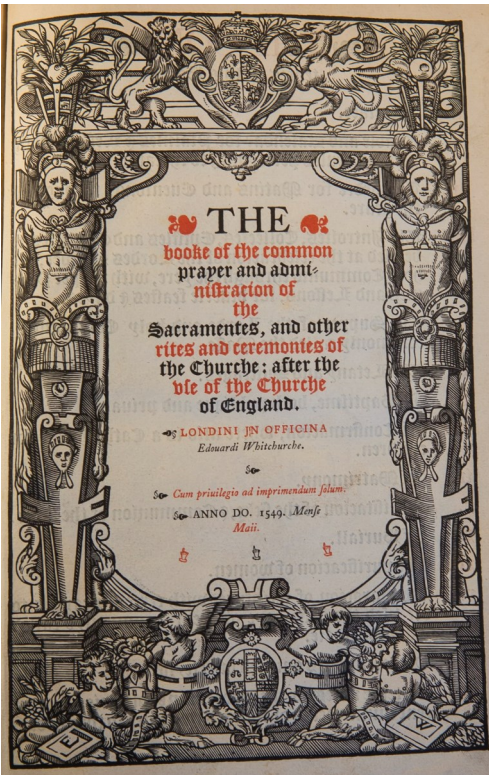
The original *Book of Common Prayer* published in 1549 was a product of the English Reformation following Henry VIII’s break with the Roman Catholic Church. Despite his rift with the Pope in 1533 over divorce, Henry was not a “hot-gospeler” or a raving Protestant. He was a “satisfied Catholic” as long as he was in charge. The Latin mass would continue, except for mention of the Pope in church payers. The mass he continued to favor was the Sarum Missal, a medieval prayer book used in England’s Diocese of Salisbury since the 13th Century (Exhibit Item 1). Although in 1539 King Henry authorized the publication of a Bible in English (Exhibit Item 2) he forbade his Archbishop from making major changes to public worship.

All this changed when in 1547 the old king died and his Protestant-tutored young son Edward VI assumed the throne. Cranmer now had a free hand to reform the worship of the church. The Church in England was then evolving from its Catholic origins into a national church with its own distinctive ethos. The liturgical genius of Archbishop Cranmer ensured that its Anglican ethos found its best expression in a prayer book for people as well as priests. A written liturgy, he thought, could express the mind of a church more subtly and flexibly and hence more permanently than any set of doctrinal formulations. The new manual of worship in English rather than Latin he proposed sought to chart a median course between tradition and reform. The book drew its inspiration from the Bible itself, from traditional Catholicism and from continental Protestantism, Lutheran and Reformed.

Kenneth E. Rowe
Professor Emeritus of Church History
Drew University Theological School

The First *Book of Common Prayer* of Edward VI

The Booke of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church; after the use of the Church of England. London: Edward Whitchurche, March 1549. (Exhibit Item 3)

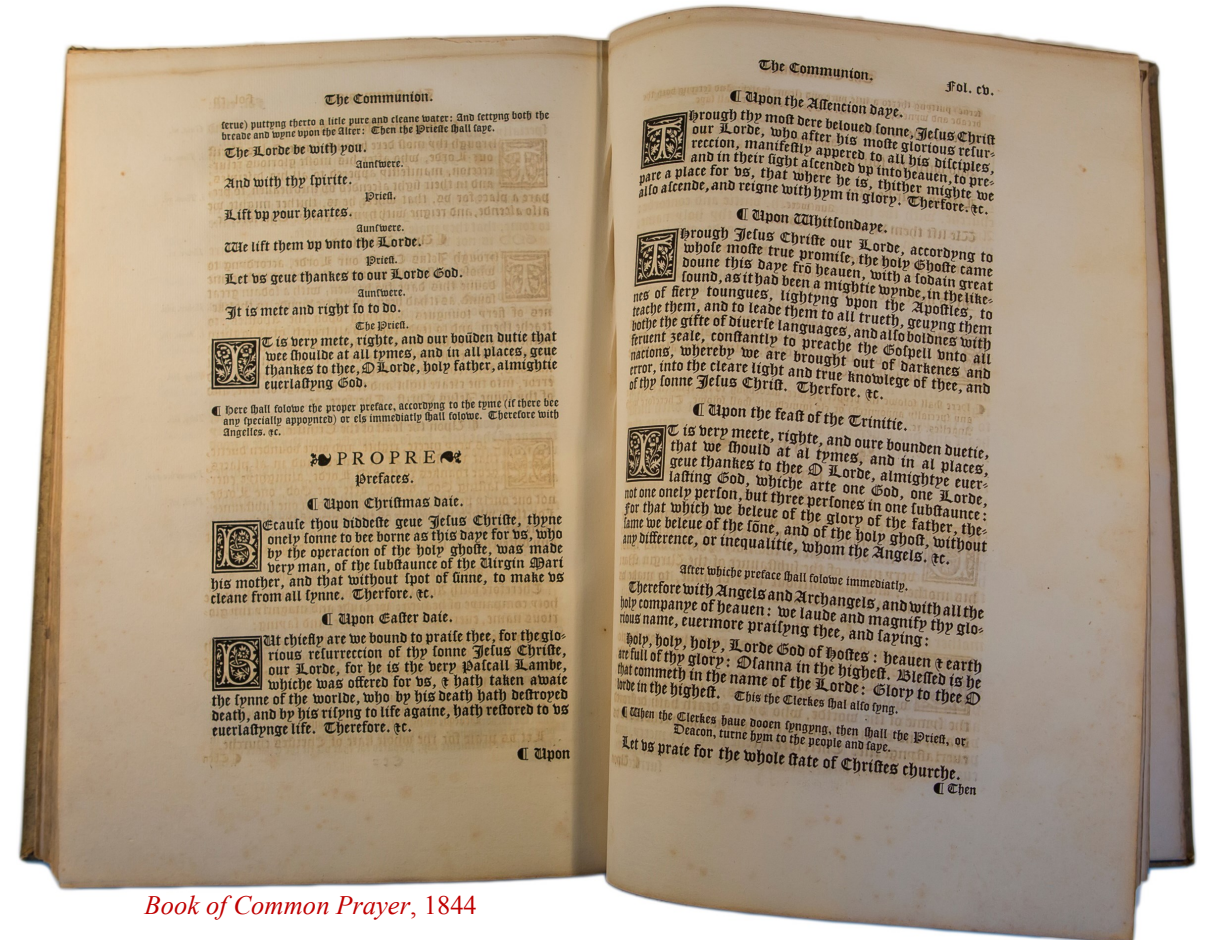


Title Page, *Booke of Common Prayer*, 1549

determined to make Communion much more frequent, administered in both bread and wine and to create a liturgy which explained to laypersons what they were and were not doing when they consumed the elements. The book also contained the Latin Daily Office ingeniously compressed into two services—Mattins (Morning Prayer) and Evensong (Evening Prayer), and also the occasional services in full: the orders for Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, “Prayers to be Said with the Sick” and a Funeral service.

Opened to show the exquisitely decorated title page, this is one of the exceedingly rare first editions/first issues printed in London in March 7, 1549, though marred by a few missing pages. An elaborate engraved architectural border of angels and saints and scrolls and leaves is crowned with the royal arms, surrounding a black and red title page. Whitchurch’s initials are clearly visible in the plaques at the lower left and right. Wood-engraved typographic initials and decorated letters of varying sizes and intricacy are scattered about throughout the book.

Cranmer’s prayer book was the first to include the complete forms of service for daily and Sunday worship in English. His translation into English of the Latin mass during which laypersons receive the bread and the wine provided worshippers with a largely Catholic Communion service with Protestant additions. For centuries laypersons received Communion rarely, perhaps once a year (usually at Easter) and in “one kind” (i.e., bread only, no wine). The archbishop was



Book of Common Prayer, 1844

The Second *Book of Common Prayer* of Edward VI

The Book of Common Prayer, printed by Whitchurch 1552, commonly called the Second prayer book of Edward VI. London: Printed at the Chiswick Press for William Pickering, 1844. (Exhibit Item 4)

The title page of Pickering’s exquisite folio reprint appears within an historiated border and with the printer’s mark of William Pickering along with the calendar are printed in red and black. Handsome decorated initials, anchor device, etc. add interest to the black letter type throughout the text. The order for

consecrating bishops, priests and deacons has a special title page. The Maser copy is marked by an Armorial bookplate with motto “Preserverando,” featuring a lamb atop a shield with a decorative frame, three rosettes, seven arrow forms and a smaller lamb.

Revisions of the first prayer book began almost immediately after it was printed and they all followed the direction the Protestant party preferred made audible in the fine gnashing rhetoric that petitions: “From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome and all his detestable enormities..., Good Lord deliver us.” A growing company of continental reformers of a more Protestant bent had taken refuge in England in the early 1550s. Several contributed to the evolution of Cranmer’s mind, prompting further reforms in a second English prayer book “explained and made fully perfect” as the Archbishop put it in his preface. Not only were the words “Mass” and “Altar” banished, priests were directed to officiate from the north side of the table, ceremonies were reduced, and the use of vestments curtailed. The Communion liturgy was revised to remove certain ambiguities that might have allowed for transubstantiation—the Roman Catholic doctrine which affirms that the substance of bread and wine are transformed through consecration into the body and blood of Christ, though the appearance of the bread and wine remain.

It is hard to say how many parishioners were deprived by these changes and how many felt liberated. Still Cranmer and his allies must have been pleased at what they had accomplished. In the words of Alan Jacobs “They had produced a *Book of Common Prayer* that retained some of the most venerable and beautiful aspects of traditional worship but also fully embodied the evangelical commitment to serious engagement with Scripture, and offered a communal liturgical enactment of what it means to live in faith

Book of Common Prayer, 1844

and by grace.” Cranmer’s somberly magnificent prose, read week by week, entered and possessed the minds of English Christians and became the fabric of their prayer, the utterance of their most solemn and their most vulnerable moments.

When seen together Archbishop Cranmer’s first two prayer books chart a path midway between England’s old Catholic and new Protestant parties—a *via media* / middle way—as Anglicans often boast. All the doctrinal changes were away from Rome. Yet the Prayer Book, in both editions, was on the destruction list for the Catholics of the next reign.

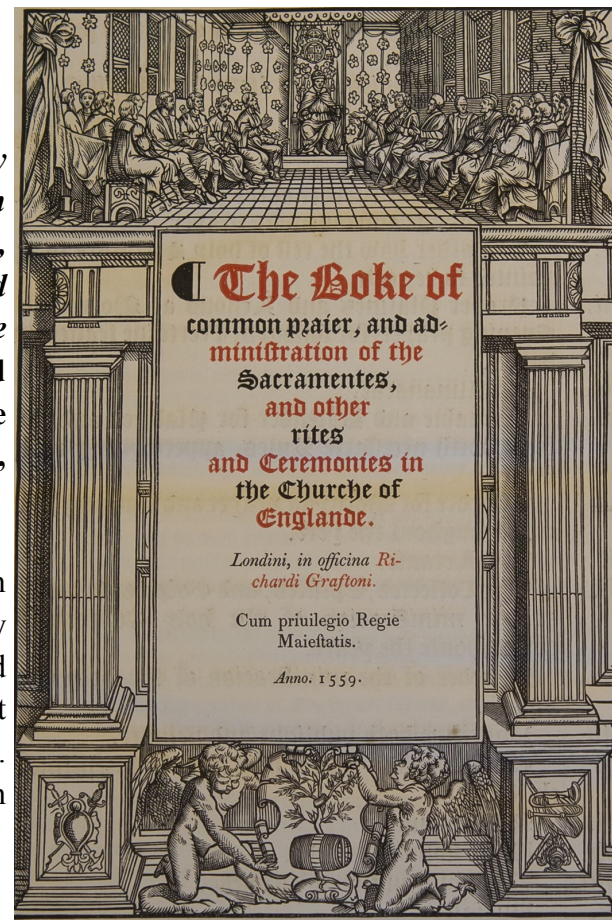
King Edward VI’s reign was considerably shorter than it was hoped. The 1552 Prayer book was hardly a year old when the sickly young King died in 1553. The Protestant Council collapsed and Mary Tudor, a staunch Catholic, was proclaimed queen. She proceeded to ban the Prayer Book, burn at the stake Archbishop Cranmer among many other Protestants and restored the Catholic Mass 1553-1558.

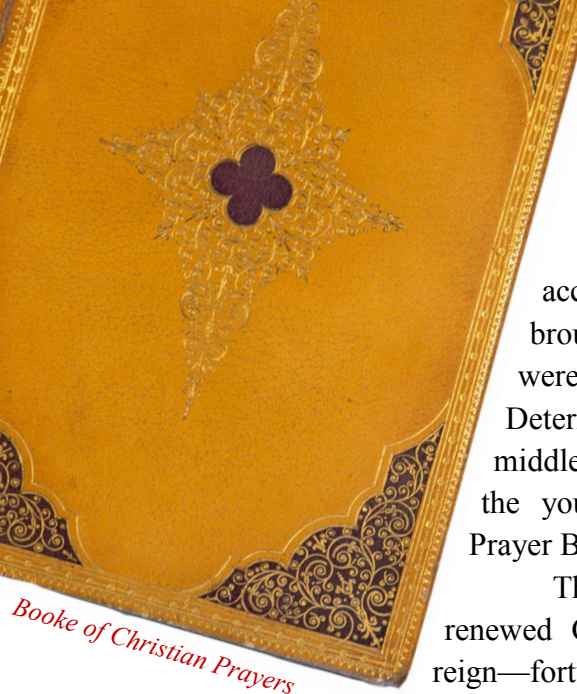
Queen Elizabeth Restores the Prayer Book, 1559

The Book of Common Prayer commonly called the First Prayer Book of Queen Elizabeth [The Boke of Common Praier, and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England, London: Printed by Richard Grafton, 1559.] London: Printed by the Chiswick Press for William Pickering, 1844. (Exhibit Item 6)

This beautiful reprint is printed in black letter type in the style loosely known as Gothic with black and red title page and calendar and woodcut initials throughout as in the original. The Maser copy is bound in vellum

Title Page, Book of Common Prayer, 1844





over boards with gold-stamped leather title and volume labels on spine.

With Queen Mary's death in 1558, the accession of her half-sister Elizabeth to the throne brought an end to Papal restoration. English people were ready for religious peace along Protestant lines. Determined to avoid further bloodshed and to tread a middle path between old Catholics and new Protestants, the young queen restored the Protestant-leaning 1552 Prayer Book in the first year of her reign.

The Queen's judicious compromise shaped a renewed Church of England. Thanks to Elizabeth's long reign—forty-five years—it was this 1559 *Book of Common Prayer* that did more than any other to consolidate the distinctively Anglican form of worship. It was also familiar to Shakespeare and Milton. The growing intellectual ambitions of lay church members and the extension of literacy allowed people to see the deep attractiveness of Reformation spirituality.

The book was in use longer than either of its predecessors, nearly 100 years, until the Long Parliament of 1645 outlawed it as part of the Puritan Revolution. The book served not only the England of Elizabeth I, but her Stuart successors as well. This was the first English prayer book used in America, brought here by the Jamestown settlers and other colonists in the early 1600's.

Queen Elizabeth's *Book of Christian Prayers*, 1578

Booke of Christian Prayers, Collected out of the Auncient Writers, and Best Learned of Our Tyme, worthy to be read with an earnest mynde of all Christians, in these dangerous and troublesome dayes, that God for Christes sake will yet still be mercyfull unto us. London: Printed by John Daye, 1578. (Exhibit Item 7)

The Maser copy contains a full-page woodcut illustration of the Queen at prayer which has led to its being known as "Queen Elizabeth's Prayer Book." In an

outstanding example of iconoclasm, Elizabeth receives the place of honor comparable to the Virgin Mary who reigned supreme in Catholic books of prayer. The book, heavily decorated with borders and figures, is a remarkable tribute to the typographical skill of John Daye, and the woodcuts rival those of the French Books of Hours of an earlier period. They provide a veritable catalogue of Christian iconography. The signed binding in citron Morocco gilt, with dark blue Morocco inlaid corners and center pieces and gilt edges is by Joseph Zaehnsdorf (1816-1886) of London.

With Elizabeth's restoration of the *Book of Common Prayer* came demand for new English primers, or books of private devotion, which had long been popular in Europe as prayer books for the masses to be used on a daily basis. To meet this demand in 1569 master printer John Day began publishing and marketing a collection of Christian prayers and meditations. A revised and expanded edition was compiled at the request of Queen Elizabeth. Most of the prayers were composed by Protestant reformers John Knox and John Calvin and included prayers for Elizabeth. The book went through several private printings beginning in 1569 of what are, in effect, Protestant books of hours that pay tribute throughout to Elizabeth as a Reformation queen.

Following Queen Elizabeth's death in 1603 a great gulf opened between English Christians who valued beliefs and practices of classical Anglicanism as over against Puritan/Calvinist ways. Soon the violent reversals of religious history led to the prayer book being banned again under the Puritan regime of Parliament from 1645 to 1660 led by Oliver Cromwell, a member of parliament and a



Queen Elizabeth, Frontispiece, *Booke of Christian Prayers*

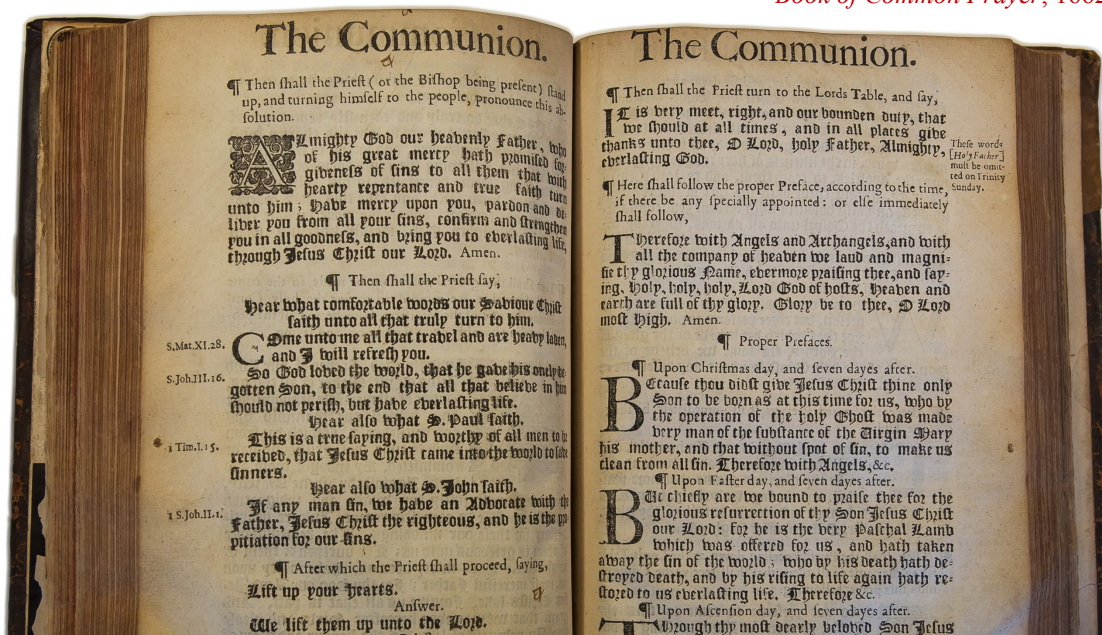
military leader in the Civil War. Under his government the Church of England was drastically recast in the Puritan mode. “Puritan” was a term for English Calvinists from the Reformation to the Restoration. They generally wished to “purify” the liturgy of the church, removing all practices for which they could find no explicit scriptural warrant.

Frustrated at the more “catholic” direction the Church of England was taking, Puritans preferred a mode of worship purged of all “popish residue”—and for some of them this could only be accomplished by completely eliminating scripted forms of prayer. King Charles I, who married a Roman Catholic and sided with the high church party, was impeached for treason by Cromwell’s Parliament and together with his Archbishop (Laud) was finally beheaded.

The Prayer Book Restored by King Charles II, 1662

The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies according to the Use of the Church of England: Together with the Psalter or Psalms of David, Pointed as to they are to be Sung or Said in Churches: and The Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining, and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. London: Printed by His Maj’ties Printers [John Bill & Christopher Barker] *cum privilegio*, M.DC.LXII. [1662] (Exhibit Item 9)

Book of Common Prayer, 1662

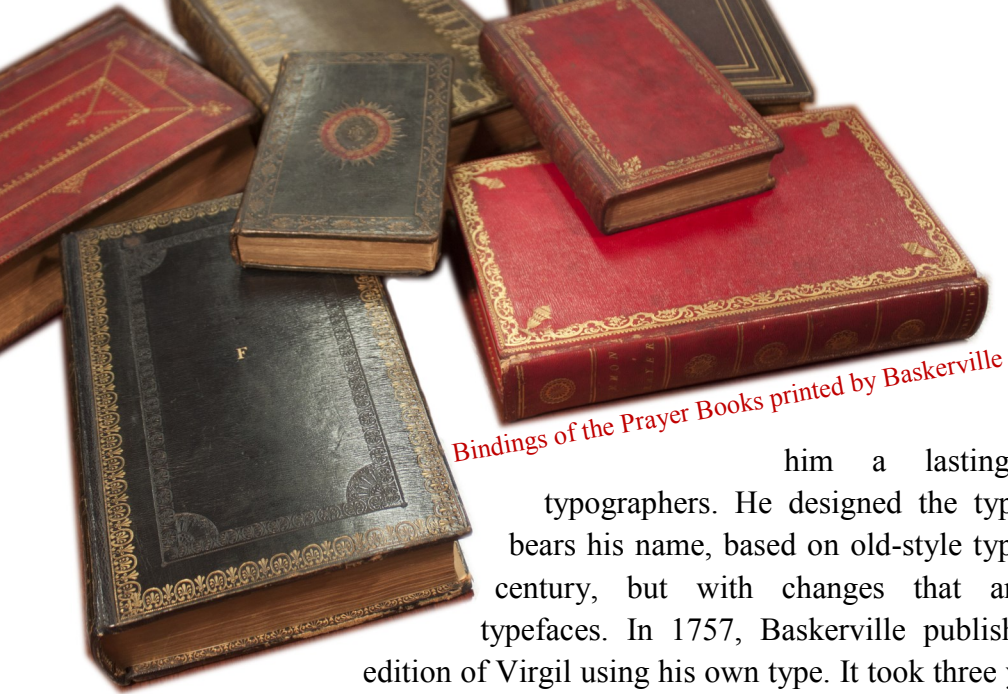


Printed under crown license by John Bill and Christopher Barker, this 1662 folio edition contains an elaborately decorated title page, featuring a neo-classical basilica engraved and signed by David Loggan, surrounded by an engraved architectural border. The Calendar is printed in red and black with head and tail pieces, initials and printed marginal notes. The Psalter or Psalms of David, after the Tyndale translation of Henry VIII’s Great Bible, has a separate dated title-page within red and black rules. Bound in contemporary brown calf, re-backed with some original binding on front and back covers.



Title Page, Book of Common Prayer, 1662

With the death of Oliver Cromwell in 1658 the exile of the prayer book was drawing to an end. Cromwell’s Puritan Commonwealth ended in 1660; the way was open for prominent members of the army to negotiate the restoration of the monarchy and the Prayer Book with the new king Charles II. The following year Charles called a conference at the Savoy Palace London, attended by twelve Anglican bishops and twelve Puritan ministers, with nine assistants from each side, in order to decide on revisions for the *Book of Common Prayer*. The book proposed by the Anglican party was a modest revision of Elizabeth’s 1559 edition. The first sentence of the restored book’s preface states the familiar idea that the Church of England seeks a *via media*, a middle way, between Catholicism and reformed Protestantism.



Bindings of the Prayer Books printed by Baskerville

In the middle of the 18th century a talented printer John Baskerville burst on the scene whose work has given

him a lasting place among typographers. He designed the typeface which still bears his name, based on old-style typefaces of the 16th century, but with changes that anticipate modern typefaces. In 1757, Baskerville published a remarkable edition of Virgil using his own type. It took three years to complete, but it made such an impact that he was appointed printer to the University of Cambridge the following year. His aim was to produce printed books in a finer style than had hitherto been known in England. To do this required a conjunction of new and beautifully-cut type, excellent ink, fine paper, and painstaking press work. Nothing could be neglected. Baskerville not only engaged the best punch-cutters that could be had; he made his own moulds, ink and presses, and almost everything that he required. The end result was the appearance of Prayer Books, Bibles and Classics which are collector's items today and which rival the work of the finest printers of all time. His typefaces were greatly admired by Benjamin Franklin, a printer and fellow member of the Royal Society of Arts, who took the designs back to the newly created United States, where they were adopted for most federal government publishing.

The First American Book of Common Prayer, 1789

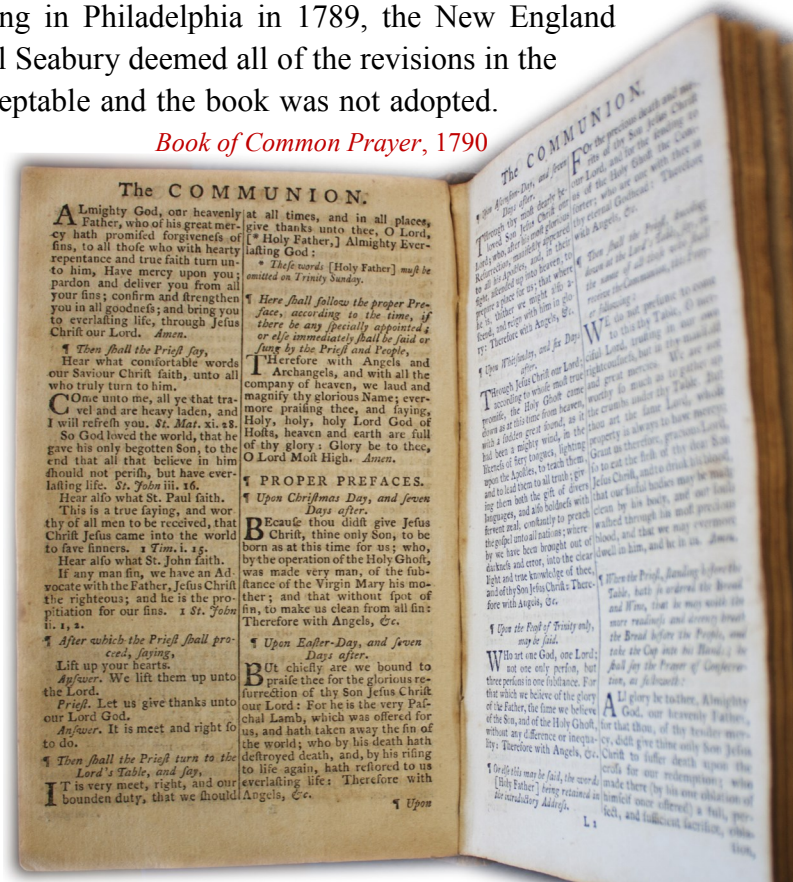
The Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, According to the Use of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America: Together with the Psalter, or Psalms of David. Philadelphia: Printed by Hall & Sellers, 1790. (Exhibit Item 20)

The first American Prayer Book of 1789 was first printed in 1790 by Hall and Sellers of Philadelphia on good paper, with two columns to a page, with a line between the columns, and has very few typographical errors. The title-page has a double ornamental border. One will notice the book uses the old-style long S that looks like an F. This usage did not disappear from American Prayer Books until about the year 1800. It is a small duodecimo volume (about 17 x 11 cm.). The church's first authorized hymnal, bound with the prayer book, has a separate title-page. The two part book remains in its original binding, plain brown sheepskin sewn on four raised cords without spine label.

Before the American Revolution, there were no Anglican bishops in the colonies, partly because the British government was reluctant to give the colonies the kind of autonomy that this would have implied, and partly because many of the colonists were violently opposed to their presence. By 1787 the church had three bishops, a constitution, and a proposed prayer book, which was not well received. At an organizing General Convention meeting in Philadelphia in 1789, the New England party led by Bishop Samuel Seabury deemed all of the revisions in the proposed 1786 book unacceptable and the book was not adopted.

A more widely acceptable American *Book of Common Prayer* was finally drafted and adopted and the newly reunited church was formally organized. The book served the church for over a hundred years.

The preface asserts "this Church is far from intending to depart from the Church of England in any essential point of doctrine, discipline, or



Book of Common Prayer, 1790

worship...further than local circumstances require.” One necessary revision to the English book was to change the required prayer for the King to a prayer for the President of the United States, George Washington and his successors. The most significant difference between the first American book and the 1662 English book in use in colonial America is the Catholic-leaning Prayer of Consecration in Holy Communion. The tradition it belongs to is not that of English prayer books since 1552 but the one that begins with the revised Prayer Book for Scotland proposed in 1637 but never authorized for use, which drew on the original Catholic-leaning 1549 Prayer Book. A key addition is the Epiclesis, the invocation of the Holy Spirit, praying that the bread and wine may be for believers the body and blood of Christ. The prayer is usually thought to be the major improvement of the American book over its 1662 English predecessor. To the present day the American liturgy adheres to the main features of this Rite in one of its Eucharist liturgies.

The Second American Book of Common Prayer, 1892

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 Psalms of David. New York: Printed for the Committee by the De Vinne Press, 1893. (Exhibit Item 22)

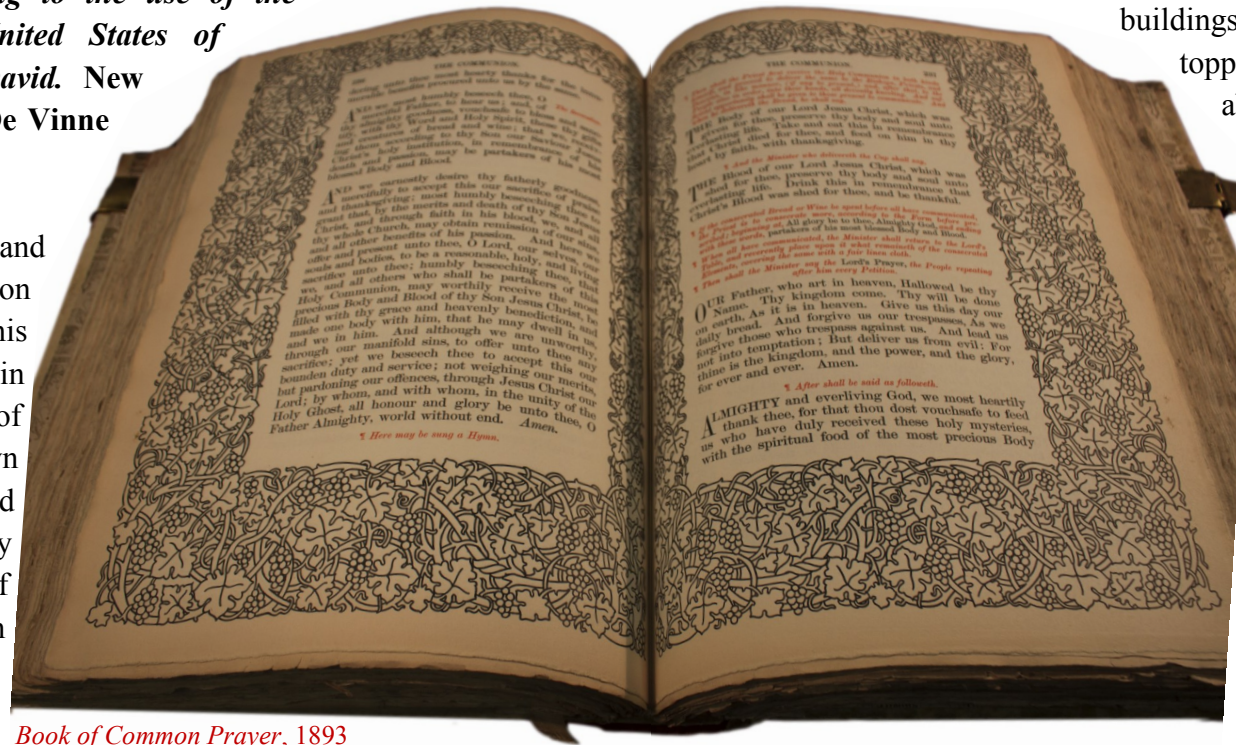
Specially commissioned by financier and member of the church’s liturgy revision committee J. Pierpont Morgan, this limited edition book was published in 1893 in New York at the press of Theodore DeVinne, the best-known American printer of his day and educator of the printing industry through his writings. The printing of this first edition on handmade paper in

folio size with title and text within ornamental floral borders and rubrics in red was designed under the supervision of master craftsman Daniel B. Updike. Only the borders for Good Friday are simple black rules. The Easter Sunday border, by contrast, blazes with lilies. Bertram Goodhue designed the gold-stamped parchment binding, ornate brass clasps, gilt endpapers, and foliated borders. The book which resulted is regarded as one of the classics of American book designs.

The founding prayer book of 1789 wore well for over a hundred years. Sunday Morning Prayer with sermon and quarterly or monthly Communion maintained a remarkable degree of uniformity. Though hard for modern Episcopalians to imagine, the early 19th century church had no central altar, no candles or flowers, no colors for the seasons, and no clergy vestments other than a white surplice worn over a black preaching gown. But by the 1880s church leaders proposed a revision that would bring “liturgical enrichment and increased flexibility of use.”

Desires for a new book were influenced by the Catholic revival in Anglicanism, first in England and then in America, with its renewed emphasis on liturgical enrichment and the sacraments. From this emphasis came more frequent Communion and more elaborate vestments, ceremonies and furnishings, Gothic revival church buildings with deep chancels, altars against the east wall topped with cross and candlesticks, and the gradual abandonment of north-end for eastward (priests facing the altar) communion celebrations.

The process of revision leading up to the 1892 book occupied several General Conventions from 1880 through 1892. In the end, the 1892 revision, the first complete revision of the text since 1789, turned out to be modest and conservative. Most revisions were either restorations from the English 1662 BCP or from the books of 1549 and 1637. In the end the environment for worship had changed but the words for worship remained largely the same.



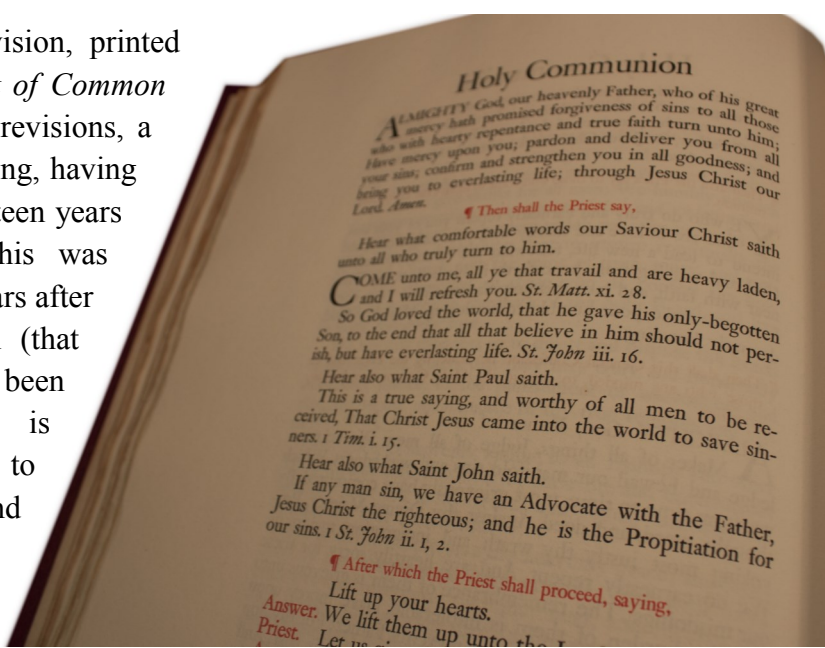
Book of Common Prayer, 1893

The Third American Book of Common Prayer, 1928

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. Boston: Printed for the Commission at the Merrymount Press, 1930. (Exhibit Item 23)

This very special edition of the new “standard” BCP was printed for the Joint Commission on the Revision and Enrichment of the Book of Common Prayer and financed by J. P. Morgan, Jr. The book, begun in 1928 and finished in the autumn of 1930, was impeccably designed by D.B. Updike and printed in Janson Type on folio-size handmade paper. The key to the beauty of the book is its utter simplicity. The book is without decoration, except for a typographic leaf and red-inked initial letters and rubrication. The book has been lauded as one of the great monuments of Updike’s career and is considered one of the finest examples of 20th century American book design. One of only 250 for sale, the Maser copy is bound in fine dark red and black pigskin, ruled and stamped in blind on front cover: The Book of Common Prayer. A,D, MCMXXVIII. The Maser copy contains Updike’s eight-page separately printed folio prospectus.

The 1928 revision, printed in 1930, of the *Book of Common Prayer* was, like all revisions, a long time in the making, having been started some fifteen years earlier, in 1913. This was only about twenty years after the previous version (that of 1892) had been adopted, which is perhaps a testimony to the conservative and



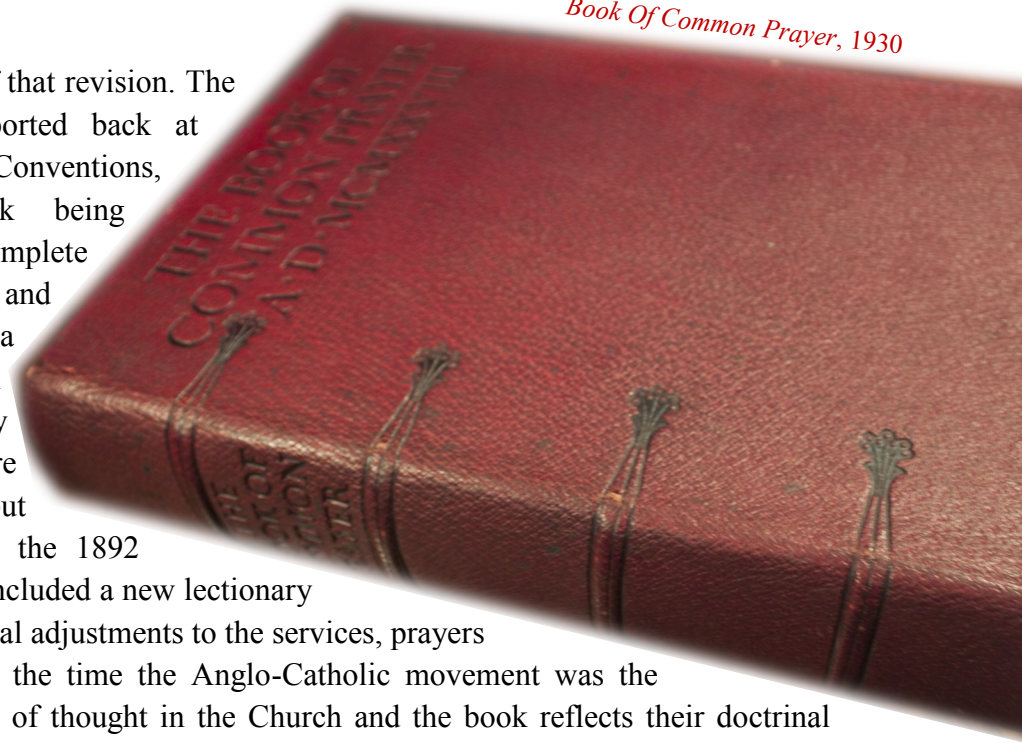
Book of Common Prayer, 1930

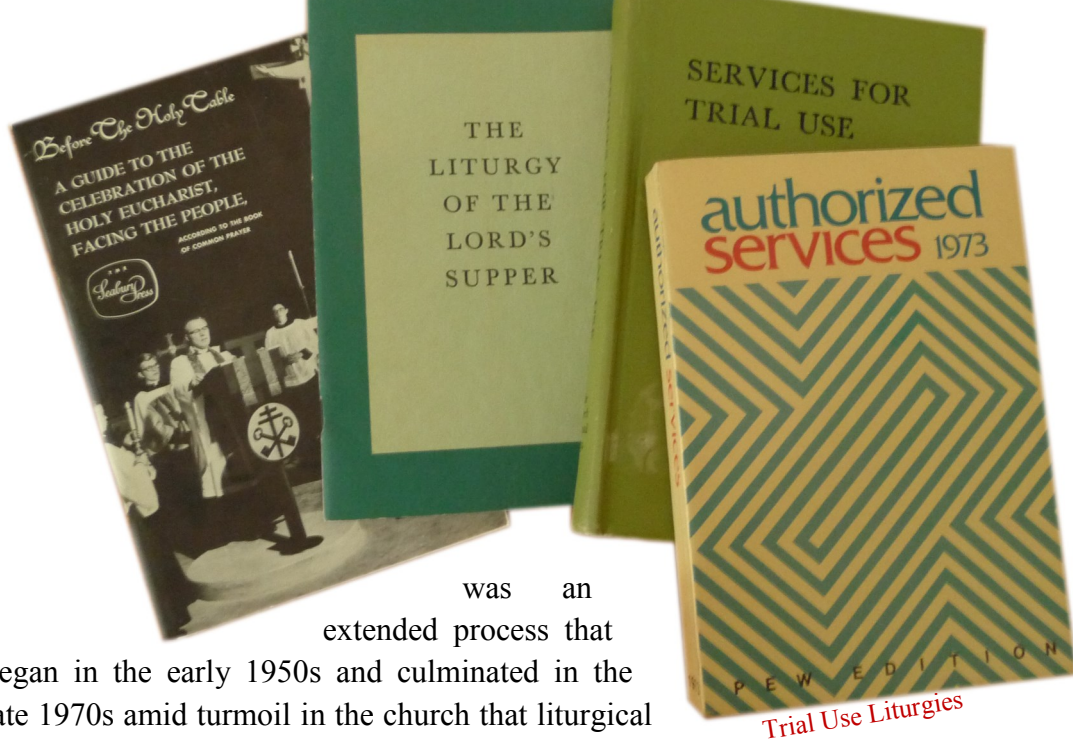
limited extent of that revision. The commission reported back at several General Conventions, with its work being substantially complete by 1922, and resulting in a proposed book in 1925. Many changes were those proposed but not adopted for the 1892

revision which included a new lectionary and many editorial adjustments to the services, prayers and lections. At the time the Anglo-Catholic movement was the dominant school of thought in the Church and the book reflects their doctrinal and liturgical sensibilities. Theologically, the doctrine of real presence (but not that of transubstantiation) became common in the Episcopal Church. The rubric requiring a “north end” position for the celebrant was revised so as to direct the celebrant to stand facing the Holy Table, recognizing what was in fact common practice. Morning Prayer remained the standard Sunday morning service, but with each year that passed after 1928, Holy Communion gained ground.

Trial-Use Liturgies, 1967-1973

The middle years of the twentieth century saw the beginning of one of the greatest “reformations” of liturgy since the publication of sixteenth century Reformation era liturgies. Change was evident and it was not only felt within the Anglican Communion. Most of western Christendom was poised to renew its worship. For the Roman Catholic Church this happened very rapidly as a result of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* adopted in 1963 by the Second Vatican Council. The new Mass, in English for the first time, made its debut on the first Sunday in Advent 1969. For the Episcopal Church, the process of prayer book revision was less swift. Liturgical revision





was an extended process that began in the early 1950s and culminated in the late 1970s amid turmoil in the church that liturgical leaders could not have foreseen.

Two figures defined the shape of liturgical reform for American Episcopalians. Benedictine monk Gregory Dix exercised great influence in the Anglican Communion and beyond. His rite-shaping *The Shape of the Liturgy* (1945) is a landmark in liturgical reform in the late 20th century second only to the impact of the Roman Catholic *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (1963). Against the background of earlier scholarship that had tried to find an original apostolic Eucharistic rite in the assorted bits of evidence that survive from the first few centuries of Christianity's existence, Dix asserted that the common root of the varied forms of the Eucharist were not to be found in a complete rite as such but in their underlying structure.

“What was fixed and immutable everywhere in the second century was the outline or shape of the Liturgy, what was done. What our Lord instituted was not ‘a service,’ something said, but an action, something done—or rather the continuation of a traditional Jewish action, but with a new meaning.” (*The Shape of the Liturgy*, 214-215)

Thanks to Dix, the Eucharistic “meal” in many churches came to be restructured around

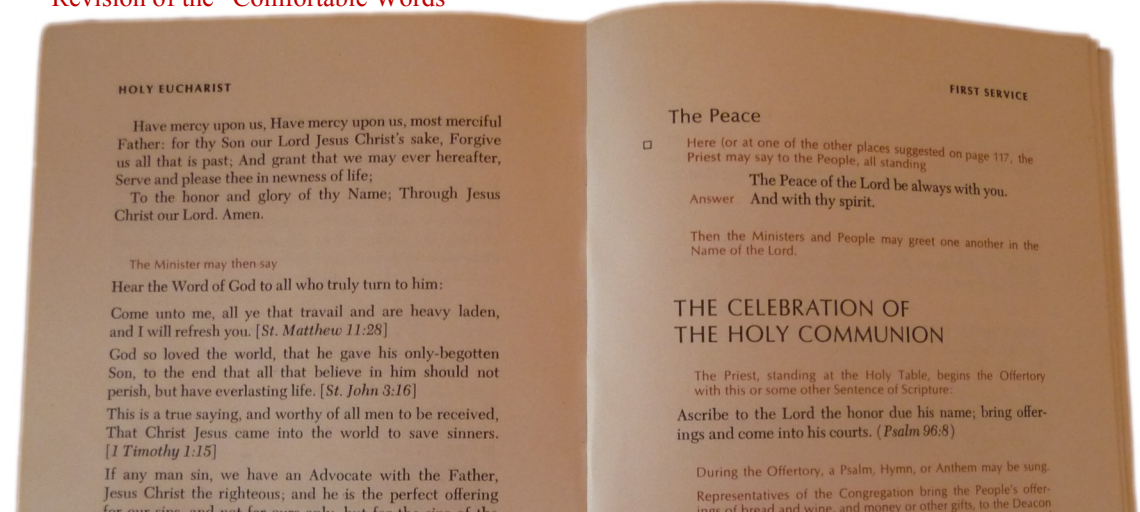
four actions: (1) taking/offering bread and cup, (2) blessing and thanking God over the bread and cup, (3) breaking the bread, and (4) giving both bread and cup to the gathered assembly in that order.

American Seminary professor Massey Shepherd was steeped in the new scholarship on ancient liturgy including Dix’s pioneering work. He worked patiently to lay a thorough foundation for prayer book renewal outlined in part of his 1961 book, *The Reform of Liturgical Worship*. Through the church’s Standing Liturgical Commission which he headed from 1946 until 1976, pamphlets steadily appeared presenting suggested reforms emphasizing the recovery of Baptism as full initiation and the Eucharist as the central act of worship. From the beginning there was also a move to explore the use of contemporary and inclusive language.

The process was controversial and the debate at times heated in the Liturgical Commission, in the General Convention and in the parishes. The church owes a great debt to its parish clergy, for they had not only to catch up and keep abreast liturgically, they also had to deal with considerable conflict that trial use and the adoption of a new prayer book engendered.

The first of several proposed revisions of the Eucharistic rite was published in 1967 at the beginning of the process of revision that resulted in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*. While this liturgy retained traditional language, it incorporated a number of significant changes Gregory Dix proposed. By 1970 the first trial-use version of a full service prayer book, the so-called “green book” because of binding color, was published. A scant three years later a revised set of authorized services appeared, the so-called “Zebra book” because of cover design.

Revision of the “Comfortable Words”



The Fourth American *Book of Common Prayer*, 1979

The Book of Common Prayer: and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church: Together with the Psalter or Psalms of David, According to the Use of the Episcopal Church. New York: Church Publishing, Inc., 2007. (Exhibit Item 26)

This 2007 deluxe edition of the 1979 prayer book was printed on large paper at the Kingsport Press, Kingsport, TN and bound in red Morocco with gilt edges.

By 1976 the Liturgical Commission was ready to present a “Draft Proposed Book of Common Prayer” to the church’s General Convention. The book passed its first reading and the Convention authorized it for trial use beginning the first Sunday in Advent, November 28, 1976. With minor adjustments, the book was adopted for use in all of the churches on its second reading in 1979.

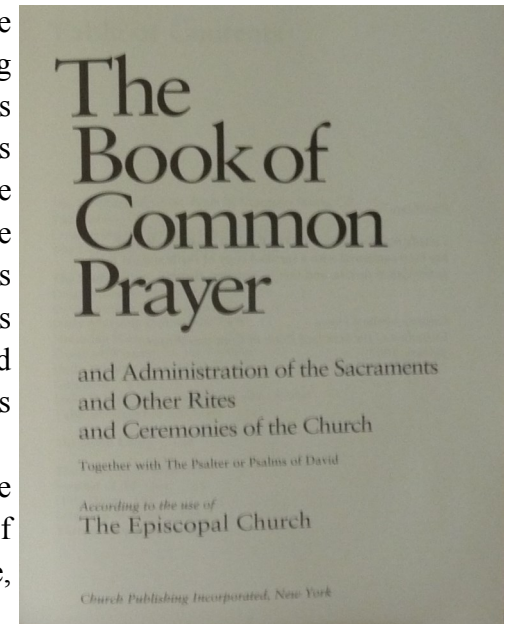
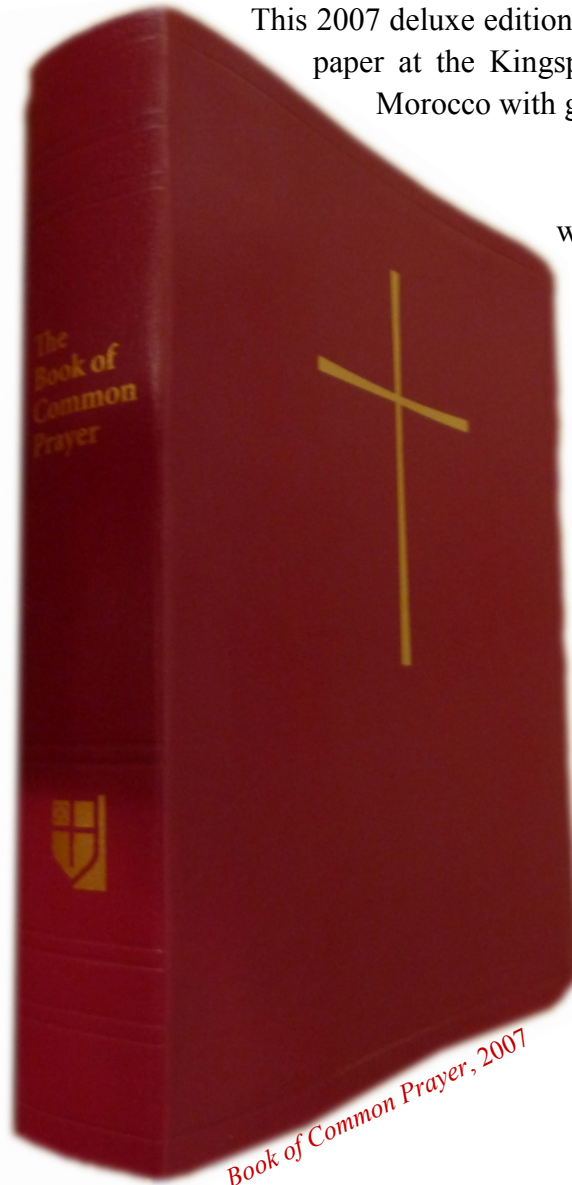
The new route was the adoption of a “re-imagined” public liturgy, parallel to, but not a replacement for, the four-century old *Book of Common Prayer*, retaining a sense of continuity with the church’s worship in previous centuries. Based upon Scripture, the church fathers, and ancient Christian liturgies, a more widely acceptable American *Book of Common Prayer* was finally drafted and adopted. The 1979 book also incorporated the teachings of the ecumenical liturgical movement that

flourished in the mid-20th century, including the recovery of primitive forms (the practice of the church in its first three centuries) in preference to medieval formulations, a three year lectionary of scripture readings, contemporary language, recovery of sharing the peace, a plurality of Eucharistic prayers, and moving altar tables away from the chancel wall to allow the celebrant to face the people—as Cranmer had advocated four centuries earlier.

The 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* is, in several ways, the most truly American prayer book. The words believers pray about God and to God in worship were at the center of liturgical revision throughout the Anglican Communion. While the services of the new American book retain traditional (Tudor) “thee and thou” language in Rite I services, the new book pairs them with a second set of rites in contemporary American vernacular and which expand the vocabulary of prayer, bearing witness to the fact that the mystery of God transcends all categories of knowing, including those of masculine and feminine.

The newest Episcopal Communion service in a real sense is also their oldest since it recovered elements of the classical Christian tradition of giving thanks that were obscured in the Middle Ages or became victims of controversy during the Reformation. The focus of the reformed Eucharistic rite shifted from Good Friday to Easter, the mood changed from funeral to festival as the new/old name “Eucharist” implies. As Jesus gave thanks over (blessed) the bread and cup, so do the priest and people. After an introductory dialog between priest and people, the priest give thanks appropriate to the occasion, remembers God’s saving acts from creation to new creation and the institution of the Lord’s Supper, invokes the present work of the Holy Spirit, and concludes with praise to the Trinity. The people’s responses of adoration and acclamation are interspersed and their best known prayer, the Lord’s Prayer, brings the great thanksgiving to a close.

The process of Initiation was also the subject of considerable debate, because of attempts to establish a more unified rite,



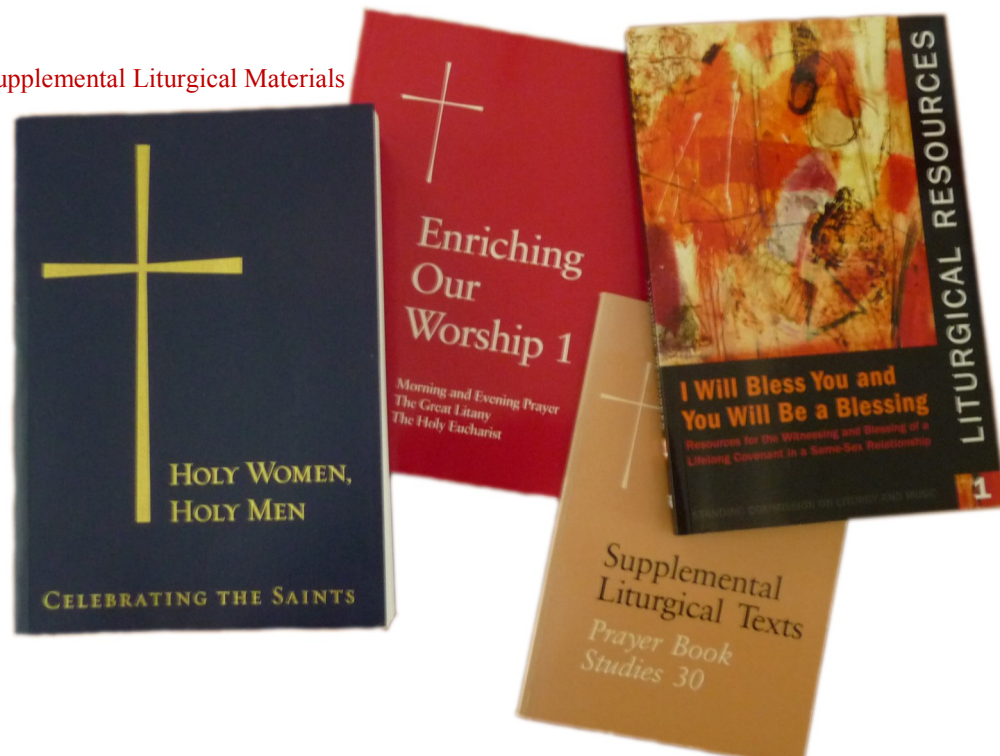
Title Page, *Book of Common Prayer*, 2007

combining Baptism, Laying on of Hands, Anointing with Oil, First Communion, Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation. The cycles of liturgical time changed as more and more parishes made the Eucharist the chief Sunday service, with almost everyone communing—Archbishop Cranmer’s chief goal, at last realized. And finally, a much more varied yearly calendar introduced new and previously unfamiliar feasts.

During the period in which the 1979 book was developed, American English experienced rapid changes in regard to gender-related language. Masculine pronouns no longer referred both to men and women. The new prayer book was attentive to the inclusion of women in the texts of the prayers. In the Psalter, for instance, the masculine pronoun in a number of places was changed to the plural: “Happy is he” in Psalm 1 was rendered “Happy are they.” The use of the word “man” and “men” to include both men and women is absent from Rite Two liturgies. These changes reflected the beginnings of a changing consciousness in the use of language in American society.

If Episcopal worship suffered a loss of the bark and steel of Elizabethan language in the new Prayer Book, it has gained in many other ways. The translation of Biblical words is more accurate and the content of the liturgy more faithfully represents the worship of early Christians.

Supplemental Liturgical Materials



Winds of Change:

Supplemental Liturgical Materials, 1987-2012

Beginning in 1989 an ongoing process of listening to what the Spirit is saying to the Church through the diverse experience of those who gather for worship and to celebrate the sacramental rites led the church’s Standing Liturgical Commission to publish a series of fresh collections listed below. Not until the 1998 issuance of *Enriching our Worship*, a collection of optional liturgies, did the church officially authorize the use of specifically inclusive texts. In 2012 the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music published an authorized collection of *Resources for the Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant in a Same-Sex Relationship* but stopped short of opening the prayer book marriage rite to same-sex couples.

Final Words

As Anglican churches across the globe enter the 21st century, having an unprecedented range of liturgical resources at their disposal, a critical assessment of Archbishop Cranmer’s masterly attempt at liturgical uniformity is both timely and challenging. If the *Book of Common Prayer* is no longer the only voice in the conversation, its claim to a distinctive role in defining what it means to be Anglican/Episcopalian remains unchallenged.



Engraved Title Page,
Book of Common Prayer, 1669

List of Books in the Exhibition

Unless otherwise noted, all books are from the Maser Prayer Book Collection, Drew University Library.

1. *Missale secundum usum insignis Ecclesie Sarum [the Sarum Missal]*. New [i.e. second] edition. Rouen: Martin Morin, Printer, 27 May, 1508. Christoph Keller, Jr. Library, General Theological Seminary.
2. *The Byble in Englyshe*. London: Printed by Richard Grafton and Edward Whitchurch, 1539. Facsimile by Yoshio Terasawa. Tokyo: Elpis Co., 1991. Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.
3. *The Booke of Common Prayer*. London: Edward Whitchurche, March 1549.
4. *The Book of Common Prayer printed by Whitchurch March 1549, commonly called the first prayer book of Edward VI*. London: Chiswick Press for W. Pickering, 1844.
5. *The Book of Common Prayer, printed by Whitchurch 1552, commonly called the Second prayer book of Edward VI*. London: Chiswick Press for W. Pickering, 1844.
6. *The Book of Common Prayer commonly called the First Prayer Book of Queen Elizabeth*. London: Printed by the Chiswick Press for W. Pickering, 1844.
7. *Booke of Christian Prayers*. London: Printed by John Daye, 1578.
8. *The Book of Common Prayer... for the Use of the Church of Scotland*. Edinburgh: Printed by Robert Young, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majestie, 1637. BOUND WITH: *The Psalter... as they shall be sung throughout all the Churches of Scotland*. Edinburgh: Printed by Robert Young, 1636.

9. *The Book of Common Prayer*. London: Printed by His Maj'ties Printers [John Bill & Christopher Barker], M.DC.LXII. [1662].
10. *The Book of Common Prayer as revised and settled at the Savoy Conference, anno 1662, 14 Charles II*. London: Chiswick Press for W. Pickering, 1844.
11. *The Book of Common-Prayer*. London: Printed by John Bill & Christopher Barker, printers to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 1662.
12. *The Book of Common Prayer*. London: Printed by John Bill & Christopher Barker, Printers to the King's Most Excell't Maj'tie, [1669].
13. Charles Wheatly. *A Rational Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer*. Third edition. London: Printed for Bettesworth, Innys & Rivington, 1720. Prinster Prayer Book Collection, Drew University Library.
14. *The Book of Common Prayer*. London: Engraven and Printed by the Permission of Mr. John Baskett, printer to the Kings Most Excellent Majesty; sold by John Sturt, Engraver, 1717.
15. *The Book of Common Prayer*. Cambridge: Printed by John Baskerville, Printer to the University, 1760.
16. *The Book of Common Prayer*. London: Printed for Charles Bill and the Executrix of Thomas Newcomb, deceas'd, printer to the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, 1703. Prinster Prayer Book Collection, Drew University Library.
17. *The Book of Common Prayer*. London: Printed by John Baskett, 1739. Prinster Prayer Book Collection, Drew University Library.
18. William Vickers. *A Companion to the Altar*. London: Printed by E. Parker for John Becnroft by Paternoster Press, [ca. 1756].
19. *The Book of Common Prayer*. Philadelphia: Printed by Hall & Sellers, 1786.



Frontispiece, *A Rational Illustration*



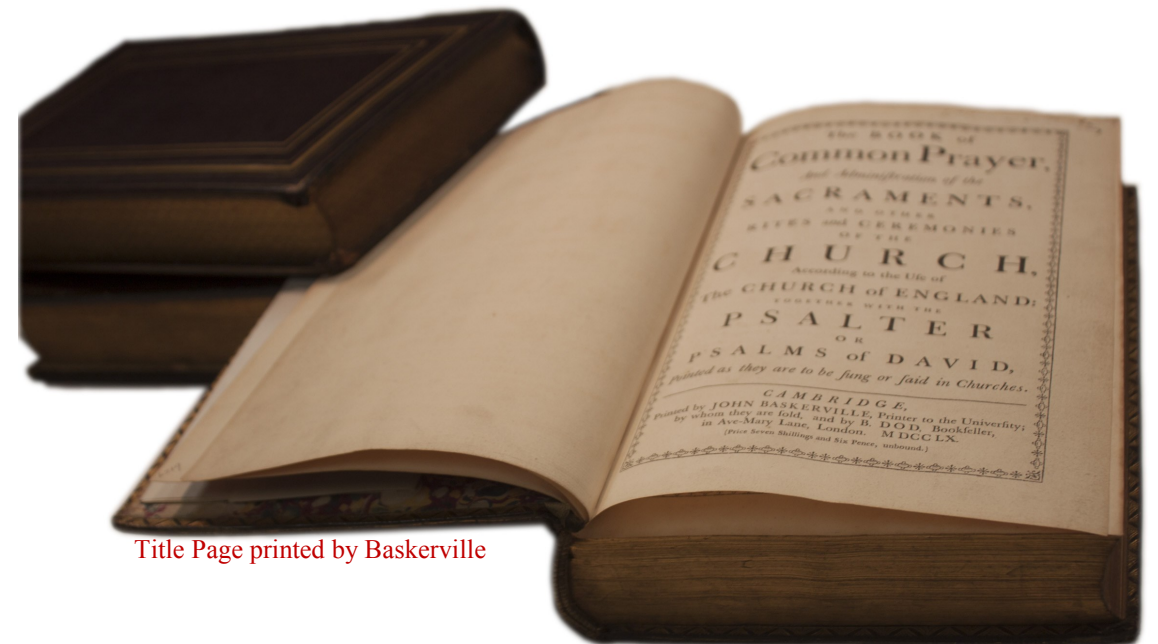
20. *The Book of Common Prayer*. Philadelphia: Printed by Hall & Sellers, 1790.
21. *The Book of Common Prayer*. New York: By direction of the General Convention, Printed by Hugh Gaine, 1795.
22. *The Book of Common Prayer*. New York: The Committee by De Vinne Press, 1893.
23. *The Book of Common Prayer*. Boston: Printed for the Commission at the Merrymount Press, 1930.
- 24a. *The Liturgy of the Lord's Supper, the Celebration of Holy Eucharist and Ministration of Holy Communion*. New York: Church Pension Fund, 1967.
- 24b. *Services for Trial Use: Authorized Alternatives to Prayer Book Services, 1970*. New York: Church Hymnal Corporation, 1971.
- 24c. *Authorized Services, 1973*. New York: Church Hymnal Commission, 1973.
25. *The Book of Common Prayer*. New York: Church Hymnal Corporation and the Seabury Press, 1977. [Draft Proposed Book.]
26. *The Book of Common Prayer*. New York: Church Publishing, Inc., 2007.
- 27a. *Liturgical Texts for Evaluation*. New York: Church Hymnal Corporation, 1987.
- 27b. *Supplemental Liturgical Texts*. New York: Church Hymnal Corporation, 1989.
- 27c. *Supplemental Liturgical Materials*. New York: Church Hymnal Corporation, 1991.
- 27d. *Enriching our Worship 1: Morning and Evening Prayer, the Great Litany, and Holy Eucharist*. New York: Church Publishing, 1998.
- 27e. *Book of Occasional Services 2003*. New York: Church Publishing, 2004.
- 27f. *Holy Women, Holy Men: Celebrating the Saints*. New York: Church Pub., 2010.
- 27g. *I Will Bless You and You Will Be A Blessing: Resources for the Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant in a Same-Sex Relationship*. New York: Church Publishing, 2012.



Binding, Book of Common Prayer, 1669

Thank You

This exhibit would not have been possible without the collaboration, cooperation, and generosity of many individuals and institutions. Special thanks to Linda Connors, Dean of Libraries, Drew University; Andrew Scrimgeour, Dean of Libraries *emeritus*, and Dorothy Scrimgeour; librarians Christopher Anderson, Cassie Brand, Jesse Mann, and Lucy Marks; library staff Kim Magnell and Masato Okinaka; photographers Lynne DeLade and Allie McMahon; Christoph Keller, Jr. Library, General Theological Seminary, New York; Pitts Theology Library, Emory University, Atlanta; and James Willard Mills.



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