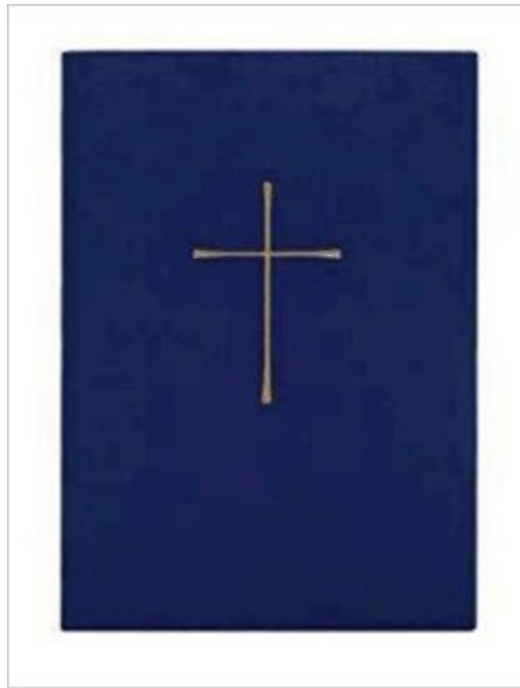


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# **The Book Of Common Prayer: And Administraton Of The Sacraments And Other Rites And Ceremonies Of The Church**



## Synopsis

This is the standard Book of Common Prayer (BCP) and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church together with The Psalter or Psalms of David according to use in the Episcopal Church in the United States authorized in 1979. (1,001 pp)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The Book of Common Prayer (1979) is the latest, complete BCP used by the American branch of the Anglicans, the Episcopal church. There have been many books that have had the title 'Book of Common Prayer' since the first one appeared in 1549; it has been used continuously in one edition or another in the Anglican tradition since 1559; the 'main' edition remains the 1662 edition. The American church modified the Book of Common Prayer for its own use beginning shortly after the Revolutionary War -- this book is the successor of a long and worthy tradition. A bishop in the Episcopal church once said to me, 'We don't have a theology that we have to believe -- what we have is the prayerbook.' Please forgive the absence of context for this phrase -- while he would say that this statement in isolation is an exaggeration, and I would agree, nonetheless his statement serves to highlight both the importance of and the strength of the Book of Common Prayer. To be an Anglican (in the United States, read Episcopalian for the same in the context of this article), one does not have to subscribe to any particular systematic theological framework. One does not have to practice a particular brand of liturgical style. One does not have to have an approved politico-theological viewpoint. One can be a conservative, liberal or moderate; one can be high

church, low church, or broad; one can be charismatic, evangelical, or mainline traditional -- one can be any number of things in a rich diversity of choices, and the Book of Common Prayer can still be the book upon which spirituality and worship is centred. The Book of Common Prayer is not, in fact, a book that changed my life. It is a book that changes my life. Even though it is not the primary book of my own church, it continues to provide for spiritual insight and development; it continues to guide my worship and my theology. It continues to help me grow. The words are part of a liturgy now shared by Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and other liturgical churches, in different combination and priority. Gerry Janzen, an Anglican professor at my seminary, said to me recently as we were lunching and having a fascinating and wide-ranging conversation (in a unique way that only Gerry Janzen is capable of doing) that he strives for that kind of memory and understanding that is so complete that one forgets what one has learned. He recounted to me his experience of working with his book on Job -- he had done a lot of research, development of ideas, writing, and organisation, and then set it aside for a time. When he picked up the topic later, he decided to begin by writing, and then go back to the research, other notes and writings he had done earlier. He was surprised to see, in comparing the work, that he had in fact duplicated much of the material -- he had internalised the information, incorporated it so well into his thinking and being, that it came forward without effort. It is this kind of relationship I feel I have developed with the Book of Common Prayer. To be sure, there are pages of information that I don't know. I haven't memorised the historical documents; I still consult the calendars; I haven't learned all of the collects by heart. But it has become a part of me. When I was asked to put together a liturgy for a house blessing for Episcopalian friends, there were rooms that called for collects that had not been written -- I wrote new collects and inserted them into the liturgy. 'Can you do that?' the householder asked, worried about the flow and the approval of the priest doing the blessing. 'I trust Kurt to write collects -- his probably belong in the BCP,' the priest said in response, and I appreciated her vote of confidence. That was perhaps the first confirmation to me of this sense of incorporation of the book into my life. From his first edition, Cranmer distinguished in his terminology the words minister and priest, and the two should not be viewed as interchangeable. A priest is a minister, but a minister need not be a priest. This became part of the early development of the idea of all people being ministers to each other, which is also a concept that has varying acceptance and fulfillment in actual practice over the history of Anglicanism. One of my favourite prayers derives from this book, part of the English prayer book from the very first one in 1549: Almighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication unto thee, and hast promised through thy well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his name, thou wilt be in the midst

of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be best for us, granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come, life everlasting. Amen. This prayer, like many things in the BCP, has moved to a new location from the first edition, but nonetheless the spirit of the BCP shows a circuitous but continuous development from this first English Prayer Book to the current varieties. Likewise, other denominations have gleaned insights, prayers and structures from this and other versions of the BCP. The current Book of Common Prayer is not copyrighted material. The purpose for leaving the BCP out of copyright is to permit free and easy duplication and incorporation into worship materials; however, it also serves the purpose (deliberately intended) of permitting people, Anglicans or not, to use portions of the BCP as inspiration and material for their own worship. The Book of Common Prayer is an Anglican gift to the world.

Paging is different than the original book, which creates problems. Page numbers are an important reference during the course of Episcopal services.

While this is a far superior product to previous Kindle editions of the Book of Common Prayer, I am surprised that one cannot search by or "go to" a page number. Countless Episcopalians know where things are in the BCP by their page number. Plus if one wanted to use this during worship, being able to jump to a page number would make it easier to use. A grand improvement, but missing one rather key feature.

This is an almost faithful reproduction of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer (The Episcopal Church). Unfortunately, it was created using the "% location" format used in most Kindle books. This makes it impossible to use the cross references in the rubrics (which are not hyperlinked). Thus, this edition is not usable for worship, or even for study and preparation. The PDF version of the Book of Common Prayer works better.

The book of Common Prayer is just what I needed. This edition with the Revised Common Lectionary is great.

I have two Kindle versions of the BCP, both the one by Episcopal Church and Christian Miracle Foundation Press (EC for short) as well as the one by Church Publishing (CP). I feel like they each have pros and cons, and I'm happy to have both. I'm placing this same review in both locations.

prefer the formatting in the CP; it's a bit cleaner. However, the EC includes the page numbers which, while it can be disruptive while reading, certainly helps me to find a particular page quickly. The Table of Contents in the CP is short and easy to navigate while the one in the EC is very long and takes forever to get through. So the CP TOC will get you to a general area of the book, while the EC TOC will get you to exactly the spot that you want. I don't use the TOC often because I just bookmark all the main spots that I want to get to quickly. One thing that I love about the EC is that in the Daily Office Lectionary, the Psalms readings are hyperlinked to the Psalter, making it very easy to move back and forth between the two sections of the book. Both books occasionally crash the Kindle app, but it does seem like the CP version does it more often. If I had to choose only one (which, realistically, I should have), it would be the EC version. I find that its pros outweigh its cons, and it's less than a third of the price of the CP version.

I found it helpful during deployment to stay grounded in faith and help keep my sanity. A great addition to just reading the bible.

It took me a while to go Kindle, but it's nice to have the BCP in such a compact, portable form. I use it for traveling mainly, when carrying a bunch of books becomes unwieldy. I advise bookmarking ahead of time, since the pages on Kindle don't match the pages we are so accustomed to opening.

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