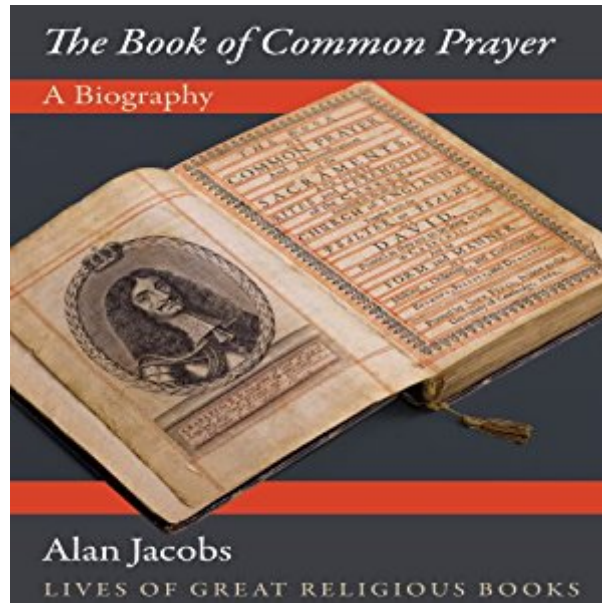


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# The Book Of Common Prayer: A Biography



## Synopsis

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," 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, the language of this prayer book has saturated English culture and letters. Here Alan Jacobs tells its story. Jacobs shows how The Book of Common Prayer - from its beginnings as a means of social and political control in the England of Henry VIII to its worldwide presence today - became a venerable work whose cadences express the heart of religious life for many. The book's chief maker, Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, created it as the authoritative manual of Christian worship throughout England. But as Jacobs recounts, the book has had a variable and dramatic career in the complicated history of English church politics, and has been the focus of celebrations, protests, and even jail terms. 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. Over time, Cranmer's book was adapted for different preferences and purposes. Jacobs vividly demonstrates how one book became many - and how it has shaped the devotional lives of men and women across the globe.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I hesitated about getting this edition because some of the reviewers here mention difficult navigation but am now extremely glad I bought it. Yes, as others have noted, it has a very long, detailed, active Table of Contents which takes a lot of time to page all the way through. It is fine if you are looking

for something near the beginning, like Morning Prayer, but cumbersome for anything toward the middle or end. However, there are other easy ways to navigate through the book. First, if you use Kindle's search feature and search for the word "quick" (without the quotes), you will see numerous Quick Navigation indexes and can choose any you want: Page Numbers, Collects, Psalms, Canticles, Prefaces, Litanies, Sentences of Scripture, Confessions of Sins, Other Prayers, or Common Services. Each is an active index. If you go to the Psalms index, for example, you can select the number of any psalm and immediately arrive at it. I have bookmarked several of these indexes and can now get to them in a snap. Another navigation option is searching for page numbers. The numbers in this Kindle edition are coordinated with those in the current standard edition. Thus, if you have access to a paper edition of the BCP but would rather read on the Kindle where you can adjust the font to a comfortable size, you can note the page number of any often-visited page in your paper edition and then search for it with Kindle's search feature. For example, Prayers and Thanksgivings starts on page 810. If you search for "p. 810" (without the quotes and with a space after the period), you arrive there in a jiffy. (I have found it is quicker to enter numbers by simultaneously pressing ALT and the appropriate letter on the top row of the Kindle keyboard than by opening the "Sym" page.) You can also choose the Quick Navigation index for Page Numbers on the Kindle and select any number to go to that page, though this particular index is a bit long because the BCP has more than 900 pages. An additional interesting feature is that page numbers, formatted in light gray, are sprinkled throughout the text, so you can see what page you are on. I have bookmarked the pages I often visit. Navigation to them is now simple. All in all, this edition of The Book of Common Prayer quickly becomes easy and comfortable to navigate. While using the Kindle during a church service might be distracting, this edition is very nice indeed for prayer at home or while traveling. I am definitely glad I have it!

This is the same book we use in church (1979). One person made a comment that it had the 1789 versions BUT IT DOES NOT--it just has the ratification that is on page 8 of our 1979 prayer book. SO this is just the 1979 version. It is easy to use once you get used to it. It even has page numbers. In the table of contents is a section with just page numbers you can click on to go to the page you desire. There is also an index for each of the Psalms. I find it easy to just bookmark my most frequently used sections to bring me quickly to the section. There are also links in the section that make it easy: for example in Rite II where you do prayers of the people they give links to each of the prayers--ie form one, form two, form 3 etc and you can go right there and then hit the back button to return. Very easy! The only reason I gave it 4 stars is because the table of contents is really really

lengthly and a bit confusing.

I was really happy to be able to get this, especially since I didn't take one to Afghanistan, and there aren't any Episcopal chaplains where I am. But navigation is a pain. You sort of have to guesstimate where you'll land using the Kindle's Location tags. Yes, there are page numbers because the text is exactly like the book, but you can't flip to them, unless I'm missing something.

Well, is there any option of not loving our Prayer Book? I would only give one caveat to the buyer: make sure that you are ordering the exact edition which you have in mind. The Book(s) of Common Prayer of the Anglican Communion have gone through many editions at many times in many places. I thought that I was ordering the most recent BCP of the USA and ended up with a volume from Cambridge, England instead, although its cover design is beautiful.

Good quality paper and binding, as expected. No hassle service from , as expected. One small disappointment: I wish I had known the size of the version of the BCP; it was larger than I thought it would be. I probably would have ordered the "pocket" smaller edition.

I downloaded this and returned it almost immediately. It is way to hard to navigate devotionally, on a touch anyway. It also uses the old Sunday lectionary not the RCL one that is in all new editions of the BCP 1979. The price was right but not worth the difficulties.

This size is just right and the paper is very nice. Not too thick but not onion-skin. You can see thru them just a little but it's not distracting. It's a sturdy book that will hold up well for daily use. Text is good-size and easy to read for me - I wear bifocals and don't have any problem reading this. Nice bright pages.

I have nearly worn out a bonded leather bound 1979 BCP bought 20 years ago so you might call me a frequent user. I only refer to this ebook version when travelling so the shortcomings mentioned by others don't mean as much to me. The interactive table of contents I find adequate. For Daily Office Readings, I use the paperback "Abide in My Word" Abide in My Word 2014: Mass Readings at Your Fingertips; which follows the Revised Common Lectionary, so that issue doesn't affect me. I do think, however, that should update the Lectionary in this ebook retroactively for those who have already bought it. For me the low price and convenience of having the Prayer Book on my

Kindle Ill outweigh the minor niggles with this version.

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