

The 1789 Book of Common Prayer,
Formatted as the original

We are presenting this electronic version of the U. S. 1789 Book of Common Prayer in hopes that it will prove useful and instructive to the Church. Parishes might find it useful in recreating historical services, for example, to celebrate the anniversary of the parish. Others might find it instructive to compare the changes, additions, and deletions, which have taken place in the various versions of the Book of Common Prayer.

The 1789 Book of Common Prayer was in use in the United States from 1790 until 1892. During that time there were minor changes in the Book. The text used here bears a certification date of 1856, and so will reflect any of these minor changes made between 1789 and then.

The original text is about 6 X 4" in size, or somewhat smaller than the current Book of Common Prayer. As this is not a common size today, it has been reformatted to fill an 8.5 X 11" sheet of paper, two columns, landscape. The pagination, however, is unchanged, so that the type is thus somewhat larger than the original. The font used is Century 731; this seems to be a good match to the original to my untrained eye. Note that a great many editions by a great many publishers of this 1789 Prayer Book were printed, all with somewhat differing formats. The font used, number of columns per page, etc. were not standardized, unlike subsequent prayer books. Thus the appearance of other 1789 Prayer

Books will likely be different from what you see here. The edition here (published by the New York Bible and Common Prayer Society in 1865) was chosen because is fairly common and seemed typical of Prayer Books of the post-Civil War era.

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This document was created by:

Charles Wohlers
16 Pearl St.
East Bridgewater, Mass. 02333
chadwohl@satucket.com

INSTITUTION OF MINISTERS

INTO PARISHES OR CHURCHES.

PRESCRIBED BY THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; ESTABLISHED IN GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE BISHOPS, THE CLERGY, AND LAITY, 1804 AND SET FORTH WITH ALTERATIONS, IN GENERAL CONVENTION, 1808.

¶ *The Bishop having received the Notice of the Election of a Minister into a Parish or Church, as prescribed by the Canon, concerning "the Election and Institution of Ministers" and being satisfied that the "person chosen is a qualified Minister of this Church," may transmit the following Letter of Institution, for the proposed Rector, Associate Rector, or Assistant Minister, to one of his Presbyters, whom he may appoint as the Institutor.*

¶ *In any Diocese, the concluding Paragraph in the Letter of Institution may be omitted, where it interferes with the Usages, Laws, or Charters of the Church in the same.*

To our well-beloved in Christ, A. B., Presbyter, Greeting.

Sigillum. **W**E do by these Presents give and grant unto you, in whose Learning, Diligence, sound doctrine, and Prudence, we do fully Confide, our
Signat. License and authority to perform the Office of a Priest, in the Parish [or Church] of *E.* And also hereby do institute you into said Parish, [or Church,] possessed of full power to perform every Act of sacerdotal Function among the People in the same; you continuing in communion with us, and complying with the rubrics and canons of the Church, and with such lawful directions as you shall at any time receive from us.

And as a canonically instituted Priest into the Office of Rector [or Assistant Minister, as the case may be] of ——— parish [or church,] you are faithfully to feed that portion of the flock of Christ which is now intrusted to you; not as a man-pleaser, but as continually bearing in mind that you are accountable to us here, and to the Chief Bishop and Sovereign Judge of all, hereafter.

And as the Lord hath ordained that they who serve at the altar should live of the things belonging to the altar; so we authorize you to claim and enjoy all the accustomed temporalities appertaining to your cure, until some urgent reason or reasons occasion a wish in you, or in the congregation committed to your charge, to bring about a separation, and dissolution of all sacerdotal relation, between you and them: of all which you will give us due notice: and in case of any difference between you and your congregation, as to a separation and dissolution of all sacerdotal connection between you and them, we, your Bishop, with the advice of our Presbyters, are to be the ultimate arbiter and judge.

In witness thereof, we have hereunto affixed our episcopal seal and signature, at ———, this ——— day of ———, A. D. ———, and in the ——— year of our consecration.

¶ *In the case of a Minister to be instituted in a State or Diocese in which there is no Bishop, the Clerical Members of the Standing Committee shall read the following Letter of Institution, for the proposed Minister, to the Presbyter whom they may appoint as Institutor.*

To our well-beloved in Christ, A. B., Presbyter, Greeting.

Sigillum. **W**E do by these Presents authorize and empower you to exercise the Office of a Priest, in the Parish [or Church] of *E.* And by virtue of the power vested in us, do institute you into said Parish [or Church] possessed of full power to

perform every Act of sacerdotal Function among the People in the same; you complying with the rubrics and canons of the Church.

And as a canonically instituted Priest into the Office of Rector [or Assistant Minister, as the case may be] of ——— Parish [or Church,] you are faithfully to feed that portion of the flock of Christ which is now intrusted to you; not as a man-pleaser, but as continually bearing in mind that you are accountable to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Church here, and to the Chief Bishop and Sovereign Judge of all, hereafter.

And as the Lord hath ordained that they who serve at the altar should live of the things belonging to the altar; so you have our authority to claim and enjoy all the accustomed temporalities appertaining to your cure, until some urgent reason or reasons occasion a wish in you, or in the congregation committed to your charge, to bring about a separation, and dissolution of all sacerdotal relation, between you and them: of all which you will give us due notice: and in case of any difference between you and your congregation, as to a separation and dissolution of all sacerdotal connection between you and them, the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Church in this Diocese (taking the advice and aid of a Bishop), shall be the ultimate arbiter and judge.

In witness thereof, we have hereunto set our hands and seal, at ———, this ——— day of ———, in the year ———.

¶ *The day being appointed for the new Incumbent's Institution, at the usual hour of Morning Prayer, the Institutor, attended by the new Incumbent, and one or more Presbyters appointed by the Bishop (or, where there is no Bishop the Clerical members of the Standing Committee) for that purpose, shall enter the Church. Then, all the Clergy present standing without the rails of the Altar, except the officiating Priest, who shall go into the Desk; the Wardens (or, in the case of their necessary absence, two members of the Vestry) standing on the right and left of the Altar, without the rails; the Senior Warden (or the Member of the Vestry holding his place) holding the keys of the Church in his hand, in open view, the officiating Priest shall read Morning Prayer.*

PROPER PSALMS

Psalm cxxii. Psalm cxxxii. Psalm cxxxiii.

PROPER LESSONS.

FIRST. Ezek. Chap. xxxiii. verse 1 to verse 10.

SECOND. St. John chap. x. verse 1 to verse 19.

¶ *Morning Prayer being ended, the Priest, who acts as the Institutor, standing within the rails of the Altar, shall say,*

DEARLY beloved in the Lord, we have assembled for the purpose of instituting the Rev. A. B. into this Parish, [or Church,] as Priest and Rector or Assistant

Minister] of the same; and we are possessed of your vote that he has been so elected; as also of the prescribed Letter of Institution. But if any of you can show just cause why he may not be instituted, we proceed no further, because we would not nat an unworthy person should minister among you.

¶ *If any objection be offered, the Priest who acts as the Institutor shall judge whether it afford just cause to suspend the Service.*

¶ *No objection being offered, or the Priest who acts as Institutor choosing to go on with the Service, he shall next read the Letter of Institution.*

¶ *And then shall the Senior Warden (or the member of the Vestry supplying his place) present the keys of the Church to the new Incumbent, saying,*

IN the name and behalf of ——— Parish [or Church] I do receive and acknowledge you, the Rev. A. B., as Priest and Rector, [or Associated Rector or Assistant Minister] of the same; and in token thereof, give into your hands the keys of this Church.

¶ *Then the new Incumbent shall say,*

I, A. B., receive these keys of the house of God at your hands, as the pledges of my Institution, and of your parochial recognition, and promise to be a faithful Shepherd over you, In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

¶ *Here the Instituting Minister shall begin the Office.*

Minister. The Lord be with you.
Answer. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

DIRECT us, O Lord, in all our doings, with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help, that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally by thy mercy obtain ever-lasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath taught us to pray unto thee, O Mighty Father, in his prevailing Name and words,

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

¶ *Then shall the Priest who acts as the Institutor receive the Incumbent within the rails of the Altar, and present him the Bible, Book of Common Prayer, and of Canons of the General and State Convention, saying as follows.*

RECEIVE these Books; and let them be the rule of thy conduct in dispensing the divine Word, in leading the Devotions of the people, and in exercising the Discipline of the Church; and be thou in all things a pattern to the flock committed to thy care.

¶ *Then shall be said or sung the following Anthem.*

Laudate Nomen.

OPRAISE the LORD; laud ye the name of the LORD: praise it, O ye servants of the LORD. Psalm cxxxv. verse 1.

2 Ye that stand in the house of the LORD, in the courts of the house of our God. Verse 2.

3 O praise the LORD, for the LORD is gracious; O sing praises unto his Name, for it is lovely. Verse 3.

4 The LORD is gracious and merciful; long-suffering, and of great goodness. Psalm cxlv. verse 8.

5 The LORD is loving unto every man;

and his mercy is over all his works. Verse 9.

6 All thy works praise thee, O LORD; and thy saints give thanks unto thee. Verse 10.

7 The LORD doth build up Jerusalem, and gather together the outcasts of Israel. Psalm cxlvii. verse 2.

8 He healeth those that are broken in heart, and giveth medicine to heal their sickness. Verse 3.

9 The LORD'S delight is in them that fear him, and put their trust in his mercy. Verse 11.

10 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion. Verse 12.

11 For he hath made fast the bars of thy gates, and hath blessed thy children within thee. Verse 13.

12 He maketh peace in thy borders, and filleth thee with the flour of wheat. Verse 14.

13 He is our God, even the God of whom cometh salvation: GOD is the Lord, by whom we escape death. Psalm lxxviii verse 20.

14 O God, wonderful art thou in thy holy places: even the God of Israel, he will give strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God. Verse 35.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

Minister. The Law was given by Moses; People. But Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ:

Minister and People. Who is God over all, blessed for evermore. Amen.

Let us pray.

MOST gracious God, the Giver of all good and perfect gifts, who of thy wise providence hast appointed divers Orders in thy Church; Give thy grace, we beseech thee, to thy servant, to whom the charge of this Congregation is now committed; and so replenish him with the truth of thy doctrine and endue him with innocency of life, that he may faithfully serve before thee, to the glory of thy great Name and the benefit of thy holy Church; through Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

HOLY Jesus, who hast purchased to thyself an universal Church, and hast promised to be with the Ministers of Apostolic Succession to the end of the

world; Be graciously pleased to bless the ministry and service of him who is now appointed to offer the sacrifices of prayer and praise to thee in this house, which is called by thy Name. May the words of his mouth, and the meditation of his heart, be always acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, our strength and our Redeemer. *Amen.*

O GOD, Holy Ghost, Sanctifier of the Faithful, visit, we pray thee, this Congregation with thy love and favour; enlighten their minds more and more with the light of thy everlasting Gospel; graft in their hearts a love of the truth; increase in them true religion; nourish them with all good-ness; and of thy great mercy keep them in the same, O blessed Spirit, whom, with the Father and the Son together, we worship and glorify as one God, world without end. *Amen.*

Benediction.

THE God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant; Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight; through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

¶ *Then shall the Instituted Minister kneel at the Altar, to present his supplication for himself, in this form.*

O LORD my God! I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof; yet thou hast honoured thy servant with appointing him to stand in thy House, and to serve at thy holy Altar. To thee and to thy service I devote myself, mind, body, and spirit, with all their powers and faculties. Fill my memory with the words of thy Law; enlighten my understanding with the illumination of the Holy Ghost; and may all the wishes and desires of my will centre in what thou hast commanded. And, to make me instrumental in promoting the salvation of the people now committed to my charge, grant that I may faithfully administer thy holy Sacraments, and by my life and doctrine set forth thy true and lively Word. Be ever with me in the performance of all the duties of my ministry; in prayer, to quicken my devotion; in praises; to heighten my love and gratitude; and in preaching, to give a

readiness of thought and expression suitable to the Clearness and excellency of thy holy Word. Grant this for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son our Saviour.

¶ *The Instituted Minister, standing up, shall say,*

The Lord be with you.

Answer. And with thy Spirit.

Let us pray.

O ALMIGHTY God, who hast built thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-Stone; Grant that, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, all Christians may be so joined together in unity of spirit, and in the bond of peace, that they may be an holy temple acceptable unto thee. And especially to this congregation present, give the abundance of thy grace; that with one heart they may desire the prosperity of thy Holy Apostolic Church, and with one mouth may profess the faith once delivered to the Saints. Defend them from the sins of heresy and schism: let not the foot of pride come nigh to hurt them, nor the hand of the ungodly to cast them down. And grant that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by thy governance, that thy Church may joyfully serve thee in all godly quietness; that so they may walk in the ways of truth and peace, and at last be numbered with thy Saints in glory everlasting; through thy merits, O blessed Jesus, thou gracious Bishop and Shepherd of our souls, who art with the Father and the Holy Ghost one God, world without end. *Amen.*

¶ *Then shall follow the Sermon, and after that the Instituted Ministers shall proceed to the Communion Service, and to administer the holy Eucharist to his Congregation; and after the Benediction, (which he shall always pronounce,) the Wardens, Vestry, and others shall salute and welcome him, bidding him God-speed.*

¶ *When the Bishop of the Diocese is present at the Institution of a Minister, he shall make to him the address prescribed in this Office in the form of a letter; and may perform such other duties herein assigned the Instituting Minister as he may choose.*