

The first (1790) American Book of Common Prayer,
Formatted as the original

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Contact:

Charles Wohlers

P. O. Box 227

East Bridgewater, Mass. 02333 USA

chadwohl@satucket.com

<http://satucket.com>

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
A M E R I C A :

TOGETHER WITH THE
P S A L T E R,
OR
P S A L M S OF DAVID.

P H I L A D E L P H I A :
Printed by HALL & SELLERS, in MARKET-STREET.

M D C C X C.

DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, *to wit:*

BE it remembered, that on the Seventh Day of August, in the Fifteenth Year of the Independence of the United States of America, WILLIAM HALL, of the said District, hath deposited in this Office the Title of a Book, the Right whereof he claims as Proprietor, in the Words following, to wit :—
“ 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.”—In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled “An Act for the Encouragement of learning, by securing the Copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such Copies, during the Times therein mentioned.”

SAMUEL CALDWELL, *Clerk*
of the District of Pennsylvania.

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THE
R A T I F I C A T I O N

OF THE
Book of Common Prayer.

*B*y 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.

THE PREFACE.

IT 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 exigencies 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 exigencies of times and occasions, such changes and alterations should be made therein, as to those who are in places 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*

The PREFACE.

turgy 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 farther 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 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 PREFACE.

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 herein was to make them conformable to what ought to be the proper 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 prepossessions; 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.

¶ *The ORDER How the Pfalter is appointed to be Read.*

THE Pfalter shall be read through once every month, as it is there appointed, both for Morning and Evening Prayer. But in *February*, it shall be read only to the Twenty-eighth or Twenty-ninth day of the month.

And whereas, *January, March, May, July, August, October, and December*, have One and Thirty Days apiece; it is ordered, That the same Psalms shall be read the last Day of the said Months which were read the Day before; so that the Pfalter may begin again on the first Day of the next Month ensuing.

And whereas the CXIX Psalm is divided into XII Portions, and is over long to be read at one Time; it is so ordered, That at one time shall not be read above four or five of the said Portions.

The Minister shall, instead of reading from the Pfalter as divided for Daily Morning and Evening Prayer, may read one of the Selections set out by this Church.

And, on Days of Fasting and Thanksgiving, appointed either by the Civil or by the Ecclesiastical Authority, the Minister may appoint such Psalms as he shall think fit in his Discretion, unless any shall have been appointed by the Ecclesiastical Authority, in a Service set out for the Occasion; which, in that Case, shall be used and no other.

Proper PSALMS on certain Days.

	Morning.	Evening.
CHRISTMAS-DAY,	Psalms 19	Psalms 89
	45	110
	85	132
ASH-WEDNESDAY,	6	102
	32	130
	38	143
GOOD FRIDAY,	22	64
	40	88
	54	
EASTER-DAY,	2	113
	57	114
	111	118
ASCENSION-DAY	8	24
	15	47
	21	103
WHITSUNDAY,	45	104
	68	145

The Minister may use one of the Selections, instead of any one of the above Portions.

¶ *The ORDER how the Rest of the Holy Scripture is appointed to be read.*

THE Old Testament is appointed for the First Lessons at Morning and Evening Prayer, so that the most part thereof will be read every Year once, as in the Calendar is appointed.

The New Testament is appointed for the Second Lessons at Morning and Evening Prayer.

And to know what Lessons shall be read every Day, look for the Day of the Month in the Calendar following, and there ye shall find the Chapters that shall be read for the Lessons, both at Morning and Evening Prayer; except only the Movable Feasts, which are not in the Calendar; and the Immovable, where there is a Blank left in the Column of Lessons; the Proper Lessons for all which Days are to be found in the Table of Proper Lessons.

And, on Days of Fasting and Thanksgiving, the same Rule is to obtain as in reading the Psalms.

And the same Discretion of Choice is allowed on Occasions of Ecclesiastical Conventions and those of Charitable Collections.

And Note, That whensoever Proper Psalms or Lessons are appointed, then the Psalms and Lessons of ordinary course appointed in the Psalter and Calendar (if they be different) shall be omitted for that Time.

Note also, That the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, appointed for the Sunday, shall serve all the Week after, where it is not in this Book otherwise ordered.

¶ TABLES