



TRINITY CHURCH ROCKY HILL

Bible Study – April 29, 2021 6:00 PM

Book of Common Prayer

BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER

Liturgical book used by churches of the Anglican Communion.

First authorized for use in the Church of England in 1549, it was radically revised in 1552, with subsequent minor revisions in 1559, 1604, and 1662.

The prayer book of 1662, with minor changes, has continued as the standard liturgy of most Anglican churches of the British Commonwealth. Outside the Commonwealth most churches of the Anglican Communion possess their own variants of the English prayer book. The Book of Common Prayer has also influenced or enriched the liturgical language of most English-speaking Protestant churches.

The First Prayer Book, enacted by the first Act of Uniformity of Edward VI in 1549, was prepared primarily by Thomas Cranmer, who became archbishop of Canterbury in 1533. It was viewed as a compromise between old and new ideas and was in places diplomatically ambiguous in its implied teaching; it aroused opposition from both conservatives and the more extreme reformers. The latter prevailed, and in 1552 *The Second Prayer Book of Edward VI* was introduced. The revision made great changes in its text and ceremonies, all in a Protestant direction. In 1553 the new Catholic queen, Mary, restored the old Latin liturgical books. After Elizabeth I became queen in 1558, the prayer book of 1552 was restored by another Act of Uniformity (1559). It included a few small but significant changes, which allowed for belief in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and removed from the litany an offensive prayer against the Pope. The Puritans were not satisfied, however, and, on the accession of James I, renewed demands for change at the Hampton Court Conference (1604) resulted in some concessions in the prayer book of 1604.

The victory of the Parliamentarians in the English Civil War resulted in the proscription of the prayer book under the Commonwealth and Protectorate. After the Restoration (1660) a revision of the prayer book was adopted (1662), which was essentially unchanged. After the Revolution of 1688, a revision of the prayer book was proposed in an attempt to reunite the Puritans with the established church. That proposal failed, however, and further revisions were not attempted until the 20th century. Much controversy resulted from the revision of 1927 - 28; it was rejected by Parliament,

which suspected “Romanizing” tendencies in changes proposed for the ministering of Holy Communion. The Church of England and most of those within the Anglican Communion did, however, develop an experimental liturgy in contemporary language that was widely used; after much controversy it was fully adopted by the Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States at the end of the 1970s.

Since 1789 the Episcopal Church in the United States has used its own prayer book. The book’s fourth revision, in both traditional and modern language, was published in 1979.