




# THE LAMP



*"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119)*

## INTRODUCING A NEW CHURCH SCHOOL CURRICULUM FOR YOUTH

The national PBSC has launched an exciting new project: the development of a Sunday school curriculum for teens, drawing on and complementing the Book of Common Prayer. The pilot phase of the project consists of 42 lessons, enough for one year. The curriculum will be made freely available on-line, so that any interested parish may download and use it. The name that has been chosen is "622" (the page number in the BCP on which the "Service for Young People" begins, which undergirds each lesson.) The developer of the curriculum is Kerry Dickson, a resident of Toronto and a member of St. Thomas's Church, and a freelance software and web designer. The project is currently in the initial testing phase, and we are looking for parishes to try out the lessons and give us feedback. If your parish is interested in participating, please contact the Editor (see information on the back page).



LEADER NOTES  
1 of 4

# KNOWN

622 | 01  
DRAFT 14.10v1

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**CHECKLIST: WHAT YOU NEED**

- Pencils and scrap paper
- Copies of the Book of Common Prayer (or 622 service booklets)
- Copies of the lesson handout
- Copy of the leader's notes
- OPTIONAL: Bibles (ESV or similar recommended)
- OPTIONAL: A white board, easel pad, or chalk board with markers/chalk
- OPTIONAL: Notebooks for teens to take home and use as prayer journals

**ICE BREAKER: PECULIAR INTRODUCTION**

As teens arrive, give them a pencil and a scrap of paper and ask them to write down one unexpected thing about themselves that they don't think anyone else in the group knows. It can be a place they've been, a favourite food, something they are good at—anything. Have them fold up the paper and give it to the leader. When everyone is assembled, open the papers one by one and have the group guess who each one belongs to.

FOR SMALLER GROUPS, TRY A VARIATION OF THIS ACTIVITY, WHERE EACH PERSON WRITES TWO THINGS ABOUT THEMSELVES THAT ARE TRUE AND ONE THING THAT IS FALSE, THEN THE GROUP MUST GUESS WHICH STATEMENT IS FALSE.

**622: BEGINNING WITH PRAYER**

Begin the formal part of the lesson by saying together the order of service for young people found on page 622 of the BCP. Include the collect, the confession and pardon, the gloria, the offering sentence, the apostle's creed, and the second intercession on page 625.

IDEALLY THERE SHOULD BE ENOUGH COPIES OF THE BCP FOR EACH PARTICIPANT TO HAVE THEIR OWN, BUT IF THAT IS NOT AN OPTION, PRINT OFF AS MANY COPIES OF THE 622 SERVICE BOOKLETS AS NEEDED.

**DISCUSSION: WHO KNOWS YOU?**

For this portion of the lesson ask teens to discuss the following questions.

DEPENDING ON THE COMFORT LEVEL FOR SHARING IN YOUR GROUP, IT MAY BE EASIER TO HAVE THEM BRAINSTORM ANSWERS WITH ALL RESPONSES WRITTEN TOGETHER ON A BOARD.

- What are the places that make you feel most as though you are known and belong?  
Who are the people that make you feel that way?
- Have there been times when people you thought understood you disappointed your expectations of them?  
How did that affect you?
- Do you feel known by God?  
How does it seem similar to or different from the way that the people in your life know you?

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622 | LESSON 01: "KNOWN" | LEADER NOTES | ©PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY OF CANADA

*Sample page of leader's notes from the first lesson, "Known".*

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# THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER REMAINS A FORCE: AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. ALAN JACOBS

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(Dr. Alan Jacobs is a distinguished professor of the Humanities at Baylor University and former professor of English at Wheaton College. Bible Gateway interviewed Dr. Jacobs about his latest work, *The Book of Common Prayer: A Biography* (Princeton University Press, 2013). We reprint this interview here because another one that we ran in our Easter 2014 issue gave a slightly skewed impression of Dr. Jacobs' view of the BCP.)

## How did the Book of Common Prayer originate and why was it given that title?

It originated when Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of Henry VIII, decided to put into one book, and in English, all the prayers that in the medieval church had been in Latin scattered in various smaller books. That is, he wanted people to understand their public prayers. And that's what "common prayer" is: the prayers we pray in common, that is, together in public worship.

## What are some well-known phrases that come from the Book of Common Prayer?

There are so many! Several famous ones come from the rite for Holy Matrimony, beginning with the first words: "Dearly beloved, we are gathered here this day..." and including a number of other phrases: "To have and to hold, from this day forward", "With this ring I thee wed", etc. And then from other rites:

"Give peace in our time, O Lord"  
"In the midst of life we are in death"  
"Ashes to ashes, dust to dust"  
"All the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil"

You'll notice that many of these passages strongly echo Scripture. This was very important to Cranmer.

## Why was the Book of Common Prayer needed; wasn't the Bible sufficient?

One of Cranmer's chief concerns was to teach people the Bible. The Book of Common Prayer was accompanied by a *Book of Homilies*, the very first one of which is called "A Fruitful Exhortation to The Reading and Knowledge of Holy Scripture". It begins like this: "To a Christian man there can be nothing either more necessary or profitable than the knowledge of holy

Scripture, forasmuch as in it is contained God's true word, setting forth his glory, and also man's duty. And there is no truth nor doctrine necessary for our justification and everlasting salvation, but that is (or may be) drawn out of that fountain and well of truth."

So you really can't have a higher view of the authority and sufficiency of Scripture than Cranmer did. The Book of Common Prayer adds nothing to Scripture and is not the means of salvation. It was meant just to provide a form of words and actions to guide and direct public worship. It should be remembered that very few Christians, at that point in the mid-sixteenth century, practiced extemporaneous worship. Almost everyone used set forms. Cranmer just wanted the Church of England's to be in understandable English and to be derived as closely as possible from the Bible.

## What were a few of the controversies surrounding the book throughout its many years?

The main ones were these:

- At first, whether the book should be in English at all (traditionalists wanted Latin).
- Then, later, whether there should be set forms for worship at all.
- Whether people should or should not kneel to receive Communion.
- How "Catholic" the service should look (candles, priestly vestments, etc.)
- And most recently, whether the prayer book needs to be in modern language.

## Why were different editions created for different countries?

A nearly universal belief in Europe in the sixteenth century was *Cuius regio, eius religio*: "Whose realm, his religion" – that is, every country should have just one religion (one Christian "denomination", as we would now say) and that should be determined by the monarch. So Cranmer was just trying to create a prayer book for his country, for England. He never expected that it would be used elsewhere – though, because of the spread of the British Empire, it was. But eventually all those colonies wanted the right to make their own prayer book, especially when they ceased to be colonies. The prayers for the King didn't sit too well with American revolutionaries!

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## To what do you attribute the book's longevity?

The beauty of its language and its closeness to Scripture. Consider one famous prayer, a Communion prayer usually called the Prayer of Humble Access:

“We do not presume to come to this thy Table (O merciful Lord) trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We be not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the Flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his Blood, in these holy Mysteries, that we may continually dwell in him, and he in us, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his Body, and our souls washed through his most precious Blood. Amen.”

The heart of this passage is its evocation of Matthew 15:21-28, where a Canaanite woman whose daughter is possessed by demons pleads with Jesus to let her have some of the crumbs from the master's table; though the centurion who declares that he is not worthy to have Jesus enter his home (Matthew 8:8) is also a strong presence here. These stories about non-Jews remind us that Gentiles claim God's mercy by virtue of having been “grafted in” to the Covenant (Romans 11:13-24).

That God is characterized by his great and abundant mercy is a constant theme in Scripture, perhaps the most relevant passage echoed here being 1 Peter 1:3. That we cannot trust in our own righteousness is one of the Apostle Paul's strongest themes and the explicitly stated message of the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector in Luke 18:9-14. And of course, the eating of Christ's flesh and drinking of his blood is a close paraphrase of John 6:52-58.

The artfulness with which Cranmer wove together all these biblical passages – and my list is not complete – is truly astonishing. And that is what accounts for the long life of this book, in its many forms.

## After 500 years, how is it still relevant today?

I think any foundation for public prayer that is so thoroughly saturated with Scripture will always be relevant – but I also think that some of the people who have sought to revise the prayer book to *make* it relevant have stripped away the biblical language and biblical theology, and that has been unfortunate. I do not think their versions will last very long at all.

## What do you say to those who believe the book promotes empty ritualism?

It can! – just as unstructured forms of worship can degenerate into emotionalism and spiritual thrill-seeking. To worship the Lord “in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24) is both a discipline to be practiced and a gift to be prayed for. All Christians, I think, are regularly tempted to stray from the true worship of the true God. But for those of us who love the prayer book, it is a strong and faithful guide to keeping us focused on the Word of God and, above all, on the One to whom that word bears witness: Jesus Christ (John 5:39).

## Why do you believe the book can be considered evangelical?

In making his prayer book, Thomas Cranmer wanted to make sure that the people of England were constantly exposed to Holy Scripture in a language they understood, working through the whole of the Bible regularly and the Psalms every month, while following a calendar that rehearsed in every church year the whole story of salvation starting with the Fall and culminating in Christ's unique sacrifice of himself on the

Cross and his glorious resurrection, the benefits of which we are not worthy to receive on any merits of ours – “we are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs from under Thy table” – but only through the purest grace extended on the basis of Christ's unique status as Lord and Savior. How can you get any more evangelical than that?

## What do you see as the *Book of Common Prayer's* future?

It has a wonderful future ahead of it – as long as those who teach it and use it and revise it and promote it stay faithful to Cranmer's great vision. That is something I pray for.



*Dr. Alan Jacobs*

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## ONTARIO REGIONAL CYCLE OF PRAYER, JANUARY-MARCH

(Over the coming months, please remember the following parishes in your prayers. You might consider using for this purpose one of Prayer #8 or #9, found on pages 43 and 44 of the Book of Common Prayer, or the prayer "For the Parish" found on page 736.)

<b>JAN.</b>	<b>4</b>	<i>Christmas II</i>	St. John the Evangelist's Church, Elora
	<b>11</b>	<i>Epiphany I</i>	St. Mark's Church, Niagara-on-the-Lake
	<b>18</b>	<i>Epiphany II</i>	Church of the Resurrection, Toronto
	<b>25</b>	<i>Epiphany III</i>	Little Trinity Church, Toronto
<b>FEB.</b>	<b>1</b>	<i>Septuagesima</i>	St. George's Church, Windsor
	<b>8</b>	<i>Sexagesima</i>	St. Barnabas' Church, St. Catharines
	<b>15</b>	<i>Quinquagesima</i>	St. Thomas's Church, Toronto
	<b>22</b>	<i>Lent I</i>	St. Luke's Church, Brantford
<b>MAR.</b>	<b>1</b>	<i>Lent II</i>	St. John the Evangelist's Church, Port Hope
	<b>8</b>	<i>Lent III</i>	St. John's Church, North Bay
	<b>15</b>	<i>Lent IV</i>	St. George's Church, London
	<b>22</b>	<i>Lent V</i>	St. Paul's Church, Kanyengeh (Six Nations Reserve)
	<b>29</b>	<i>Palm Sunday</i>	St. Olave's Church, Toronto

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**The Prayer Book Society of Canada** was founded in 1986 by Anglicans who were alarmed at the erosion of classical Anglican doctrine, worship and spirituality that was proceeding alongside the adoption of new liturgies. The Society's aim is briefly to support the continuing use of the Prayer Book for all who value it as their preferred medium of worship, preserving as it does faithfulness to Holy Scripture and adherence to the orthodox Anglican doctrine of the Christian faith. The Mission Statement of the Society, adopted in 1995, is: "To promote the understanding and use of the Book of Common Prayer as a scriptural system of nurture for life in Christ".

The Society operates on two levels: the national level and the branch level. The National Council is responsible for setting policy and direction for the Society, and for overseeing activities with a national scope. All branch presidents are *ex officio* members of the National Council. The branches are individually responsible for organizing local activities and initiatives in their own geographical areas, in support of the aims and objectives of the Society.

**The Ontario Council of PBSC Branches** is an informal coalition of branches in southern Ontario, formed in 1994. It serves as a forum for the planning of joint activities, and provides a network of support for the branches. It publishes this newsmagazine, "**The Lamp**", which appears quarterly in the months of March, June, September and December. Opinions expressed in these pages are not necessarily those of the Society as a whole. Contributions of articles and news items are welcome, and should be sent to the editor (see opposite).

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