

Newsletter

Lent 2015

“622”: A New Curriculum for Teens

The Prayer Book Society of Canada is delighted to announce a project currently in development aimed at rekindling use of the BCP’s Service for Young People among Anglican teens. The project is called “622”—referring of course to the page of the Prayer Book on which the service is found.

Solid Christian education resources for teens are crucial to the future of the Church. In the face of a world of declining belief in God, biblical literacy, and church attendance, the answer is not to abandon our rich heritage and sound theology. The past few decades have demonstrated this powerfully, but left us with a growing gap between the culture of the Church and the minds of those we seek to engage. It has never been more clear that those who love the Church need to find effective ways to engage our young in the tradition, facilitating the spiritual formation of a new generation of disciples. True, there are already in existence teaching resources that are aimed at teens. Unfortunately, while these programs may offer some insights, more often they miss the mark, losing the opportunity to go beyond the issues of the day or failing to remain faithful to orthodox teaching. There is a real need for resources that can guide teens into a lifelong practice of meaningful and biblically-faithful private and corporate devotion.

The PBSC is addressing this need by spearheading the development of something new: a curriculum series geared towards teens aged 12-16 and designed to run the length of one school year in 42 lessons. The study series aims to facilitate an experience of God – grounded in scripture and tradition, to help youth understand their relationship with him, discovering who they truly are in the process, while at the same time equipping them with the tools they will need to answer the questions posed by life, culture, and critics of the faith. Something else that will be new is the planned distribution method for the curriculum. 622 will be designed for online distribution so that lessons can be easily accessed and printed by users, enabling even parishes with limited resources to make use of it.

The PBSC has commissioned Kerry Dickson to develop this curriculum. Kerry lives in Toronto, and has been involved from a young age in teaching and caring for children and youth from infancy through high school. She has worked in daycares and schools, volunteered with the Children’s Aid Society, taught Sunday School and led youth groups in several churches. She also has ten years of experience in parish administration in Toronto churches. Currently she offers freelance services for churches in print and web design, and communications tools and strategies.

622 is currently in the first phase of development and will not be available for distribution until the fall of 2016. Currently a handful of sample lessons have been prepared in draft form and are being tried out in test parishes for early feedback. This will lead to the development of a full set of draft lessons, which will then be evaluated over the school year of September 2015 to June 2016. The final product will be released in the summer of 2016, in time for the start of the new school year. If your parish would like to participate in the testing of the curriculum, please contact PBSC Toronto Branch president Diana Verseghy (contact information on the back page).



Kerry Dickson

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A sample page of leader’s notes from the new “622” curriculum:



KNOWN

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DRAFT 14.10v1

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?

Redeeming the Time

Reflections on the 30th Anniversary of the Book of Alternative Services

By the Rev'd Gordon R. Maitland

In September of 1985 I was in the last year of my undergraduate degree in philosophy and was already looking forward to entering seminary and training for the priesthood. I was a server and a chorister and had served on my church's parish council. The Archbishop of Niagara, John Bothwell, was travelling around to various churches in the Diocese to promote the new service book which was published in that year: The Book of Alternative Services. Although many folk were suspicious of the new book (including myself), the Archbishop assured us that with the introduction of the new book we could look forward to young people streaming back into church as they would no longer be alienated by the archaic Book of Common Prayer. Since change was in the air and the book's imposition appeared to be inevitable, I dutifully went to the Anglican Book Centre in Toronto and purchased my first copy of the BAS. It was the first edition of the book, a softcover version which was never to be reprinted. It also had a number of typos which were corrected in the second and subsequent printings. At least in the Diocese of Niagara, the BAS rapidly replaced the BCP as the chief book of worship in almost every parish. In my wife's church in Hamilton the rector boxed up all the BCPs in the church and consigned them to the church basement. The congregation was simply told that it was the Bishop's wish that the BAS be used and that it would be henceforth the only book they would use. Remarkably

enough, young people were not seen to be streaming into church.

It is now thirty years since the publication of the Book of Alternative Services, and it would be useful to look at the present state of this book in the life of the Anglican Church of Canada. The BAS is now the *de facto* prayer book of the Canadian church and it would be foolish to deny this reality. However, it would also be foolish to continue to assert (as some do) that the BAS has been an unmitigated blessing to the Anglican Church of Canada as well. When the Prayer Book Society of Canada (PBSC) was formed in 1986 it was claimed that the Society was a divisive force that would prevent the realization of a new uniformity to be found in the BAS. What is now clear thirty years on is that the BAS opened the door to a chaotic liturgical pluriformity which continues to fracture the life of the Canadian church. One can no longer travel from church to church and assume that a contemporary language liturgy used in one church will bear any resemblance to the contemporary language liturgy used in another church. Will a Creed be said, and if so, which one? Will there be a confession and absolution or some other form of penitential rite? Will the Eucharistic Prayer be one of the eight found in the Book of Alternative Services, one of the three found in the Supplementary Liturgical Material, one of the eleven found in Evangelical Lutheran Worship, or one drawn from another source altogether? While there are many who celebrate this great diversity, it does not make it easy for a person to become familiar with the

prayers, salutations and canticles in the liturgical rites, and thus to internalize them and make them one's own. One could also argue that the great diversity of liturgical options to be found in contemporary Anglicanism encourages a congregationalism which is straining the unity of the church.

The Book of Alternative Services was, at first, only authorized for a ten year period, after which a revised book was supposed to replace it. However, by 1995 the decline in Anglican parishioners and a failed National Church fundraising campaign meant that money to develop a new book was gone. It was also clear that the (apparently) unforeseen resistance to the BAS meant that clergy and people no longer had the will (or the money) to replace all their service books again in the space of a decade. Other than the replacement of an older form of the common Sunday Eucharistic lectionary by the Revised Common Lectionary, the BAS has remained unchanged for thirty years. This is in contrast to the Church of England which replaced its 1980 Alternative Service Book (ASB) by a much superior Common Worship book in the year 2000. A hymn book to go with the BAS (Common Praise) did not appear until 1998, thirteen years after the BAS, its publication long delayed by issues of copyright in regards to contemporary music.

Over the course of the next few newsletters we will look more closely at some issues surrounding the Book of Alternative Services thirty years after its publication. We will look at the outdated liturgical scholarship which

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informed the BAS and consider the fact that the “contemporary” liturgical prose used in that book has now been abandoned by the Roman Catholic Church which gave us those liturgical texts in the first place. We will also consider how the desacralized and

secularized way in which the BAS is used fails to speak to a younger generation now attuned to a post-modern world. Make no mistake about it; unlike the perennial character of the Book of Common Prayer, the Book of Alternative Services now resembles those ugly

A-frame churches which were built in the 1960s and are now objects of scorn because they were dated almost the moment they were built. Those who love the Book of Common Prayer may yet get the last laugh.

Book Review:

“Why I Am Still an Anglican”, ed. Caroline Chartres (Continuum, \$30.95)

By Peter A. Scotchmer

In recent years, divisions within the worldwide Anglican Communion have arisen over such issues as liturgical change, the inerrancy or otherwise of Scripture, the sexual status and proclivities of candidates for ordination and the episcopacy, and the vexed question of same-sex marriage. Controversy has led many Anglicans to stop going to church altogether or to leave for other denominations. The road to Rome is rutted with the footprints of traditionalist refugee Anglicans, from Cardinal Newman to Tony Blair, and including, most recently, the congregations of a number of parishes in the “Continuing Anglican” churches in Canada and the United States, welcomed with open arms, together with their Prayer Books and married clergy, by way of a special papal dispensation. (This latter event, it should be noted, occurred after the publication of Mrs. Chartres’ book).

Defectors who have crossed the Tiber speak of a church in terminal decline, fatally riven by internal dissension and presided over by a series of well-meaning but haplessly ineffective archbishops of Canterbury, powerless to stop the rot. Even the inclusion of the word ‘still’ in the title of this book

is a tacit acknowledgement that to stay rather than to leave the Anglican Church is an occasion for the raising of a skeptical eyebrow.

The fifteen Church of England contributors to Caroline Chartres’ lively *Why I Am Still an Anglican* are well aware of this bitter conflict and recognize the church’s shortcomings without overstating them. This is not an uncritical anthology, but it is a corrective to the hand-wringing jeremiads all too often heard in traditionalist Anglican circles. Conversion is a two-way street. Converts to Anglicanism include T.S. Eliot (Unitarian), Michael Nazir-Ali (Muslim), Benjamin Disraeli (Jewish), John Howard the Australian Prime Minister (Methodist), as well as several of the contributors to this survey. Its editor, a cradle Anglican herself, is the wife of Richard Chartres, Bishop of London and Episcopal Patron of the English Prayer Book Society. She has included contributions from two Jewish converts, the late Hugh Montefiore and Nicky Gumbel, the latter famous for his championing of the Alpha Course now up and running in many Christian denominations in 154 countries around the world. Another is from the biologist and parapsychologist Rupert Sheldrake, who was raised a Methodist, and there is yet another

from the militant feminist novelist and screenwriter Fay Weldon, who writes, gratifyingly and unexpectedly, that the “Synod would do better to court tradition than popularity” and that “awe” not “ordinariness” is what “brings you to God”.

So what brought them all to Canterbury, and what, more importantly, keeps the rest of us this side of the Tiber? Most contributors have spent all their lives as Anglicans, like most of us. To defect is to them unthinkable, and many say so. The journalist Edward Lucas, married to the Roman Catholic former editor of the “Catholic Herald”, Cristina Odone, speaks for most of them: “Leaving the Church you are brought up in is like severing relations with your own family.” Anglicanism is lauded in this anthology repeatedly for its tolerance, its inclusiveness, its freedom to dissent, its freedom from dogma, and its “open-minded enquiry”. We are a “broad church”. In an age of diversity, this is a great strength. With its inherited Catholic and Reformed traditions, the Anglican Way has long been seen as the *via media* between the obdurances of Rome on the one hand, and the solipsism of Protestantism on the other.

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Fully half of the contributors explicitly acknowledge the centrality to Anglicanism of the Book of Common Prayer. Several recall being profoundly affected by the beauty of Evensong. P.D. James is a well-known writer of detective novels and a Patron of the English Prayer Book Society. She sums up the appeal of Anglicanism thus: "For many people, religion is less a matter of absolute certainty than a lifelong searching for God, and many thousands over the centuries have undertaken this pilgrimage within the Church of England, believing what they can believe and taking comfort from the order and dignity of the services, the incomparable beauty of the liturgy, and the all-embracing charity."

At the heart of this Church is what Edward Lucas calls an "ambiguity" which for him represents "a witness to humility in the face of the unknowable". A veritable cloud of unknowing. John Stott, another contributor, continues in the same vein by quoting Alec Vidler: "...a church ought to hold the fundamentals of the faith and at the same time allow for differences

of opinion and of interpretation in secondary matters, especially rites and ceremonies." These fundamentals, Stott is careful to make clear, are the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-Nine Articles, "which affirm the supremacy of Scripture for salvation and the justification of sinners by grace alone, through faith alone. These ... doctrines ... are plainly affirmed in our Anglican Articles."

Notwithstanding this pointed reminder of our doctrinal spine of steel, it is easy to forget that the very tentativeness of Anglicanism was forged in the crucible of sixteenth-century religious intolerance and had to be tempered with prayerful compromise then and since. That tentative spirit can be traced back to Queen Elizabeth I's words on the nature of the eucharist itself:

"Twas God the Word that spake it,
He took the Bread and brake it;
And what that Word did make it,
That I believe and take it."

This is not waffling, but practical wisdom.

As nearly all of the contributions are from Church of England

members living in England (an exception is the Nigerian diplomat Emeka Anyaoku), their perspective is largely limited to that country. Thus Frank Field, a Labour Member of Parliament, for example, confines most of his comments to his constituents in a deprived area of Birkenhead. Yet the glimpse into his life, and similar insights into the lives of the other contributors are endlessly fascinating. Most contributions are very personal memoirs full of disarmingly chatty observations about the power of prayer, the unexpectedness of a conversion experience and the compensations and consolations of a Christian private and public life. Anglicans elsewhere in the world need their own versions of Mrs. Chartres' book. I look forward to *Why I Am Still a Canadian Anglican*. We will need contributors, of course, but also an editor with Caroline Chartres' balance, optimism, cheerful good humour, and sound common sense. It goes without saying that he or she should value the Book of Common Prayer. Are there any takers?

PBSC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Prayer Book Society of Canada will be held on Saturday, May 2, 2015, at the Church of St. Stephen the Martyr, 11725 93 St. NW, Edmonton, beginning at 2:00 PM. The annual Chairman's and Treasurer's reports will be presented, and the meeting will elect up to fifteen Councillors to serve as members of the National Council alongside the officers and the branch chairmen.

Nominations are invited for the positions of National Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Recording Secretary. Nominations for these positions must be received by April 25, since these officers are elected by the branch chairmen. Nominations are also invited for the positions of Councillor and Honorary President, and these may be either submitted beforehand or presented at the AGM. Nominees for all positions must be members of the PBSC, and nominations require a mover and a seconder, both of whom must also be members of the PBSC. Nominations are to be sent to the national Recording Secretary, Ronald Bentley, at 737 Hot Springs Way, Gloucester, ON, K1V 1W8 (rwbentley@sympatico.ca).

Remembering P.D. James

Phyllis Dorothy James passed away on November 27, 2014, at the age of 94. The author of over 20 books, she was best known around the world for her popular mystery novels. She was also a patroness of the English Prayer Book Society, and was a lifelong user and defender of the Book of Common Prayer. In the most recent issue of the quarterly *Journal* of the English Prayer Book Society, past chairman Anthony Kilmister writes:

“Phyllis loved the Book of Common Prayer from early infancy to her life’s end. She was born in Oxford in 1920 and her parents would wheel her to Evensong in her pram. Later, at a church school in Ludlow, Shropshire, she was required to learn the Collect each week. As she said many years later, ‘There could have been no better preparation for a writer.’ Of the BCP she added, ‘... here is the faith of the Church of England, Catholic and Reformed, unambiguously set out, rooted in scripture and tradition, the faith into which I was baptized and confirmed, and in which, by God’s grace, I shall die.’”

“Speaking to a PBS gathering in Blackburn some years ago, she said, ‘The corporate worship of the Church should be orderly, expressed in words written to be spoken aloud by priests or congregation and in language of such nobility and grace that it has some claim to be worthy of the God it worships. And I am always interested to find how my private and spontaneous prayers either use the words of the Book of Common Prayer or echo those words. Early in the morning I like to say the morning Collect just as at night I do not fall asleep without that incomparable prayer, ‘Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord ...’”

In an interview published by the English *Church Times* in April 2009, she commented:

“My love for the Prayer Book began in very early childhood, before I could read - when I could only listen to it. Of course, it was the only book used then. Later, when I could read, during long, boring sermons I would read it and specially loved the instructions – for instance, those to priests for giving Holy Communion in time of pestilence. That conjured up pictures in my childish mind of the priest walking with the sacred vessels through the almost deserted village, almost certainly to become ill himself; or the prayers for when in danger on the sea, knowing that they would have been read by everyone on board, and the ship would almost certainly founder.

“There is so much history, romance, and great beauty in it. And the prayers like the General Thanksgiving and the prayers after Communion are so superb that they meet my need in praying much better than my own words do, and I still use them in private prayer.

“I enjoy services in other denominations, like those of the Reformed Church, or going to a Roman Catholic mass with a friend – but what is essential to me is an atmosphere of devotion and concentration on God. If there's a great deal of happy-clappy singing and announcements of birthdays, and so on, I can see that it binds people together, but I don't personally find it's useful to me. I want silence, so I can concentrate on God – not just talking to him and giving him a list of my requirements.”

Anthony Kilmister concludes, “Phyllis James was a kind, splendid person and a doughty Prayer Book champion. We shall miss her and shall always be immensely grateful to her.”



Parish Vacancy

The Church of Saint John the Baptist, a BCP parish located in Pointe-Claire, QC (a suburb of Montreal), is seeking a new incumbent. For the parish profile, see our web-site at www.stjtheb.ca. Interested applicants should contact the Diocese of Montreal as soon as possible at bishops.office@montreal.anglican.ca.

Inspired by Julian of Norwich

By Marjory Webster

God grant me this:

To be transported from this time and space
And stand there on the hill of Calvary;
To see the sweat and anguish on Thy face,
To fully know Thy pain and agony.
Grant me to feel the sorrow that was felt
By those who walked with Thee so long ago;
To pray with them as tearfully they knelt,
The depth of their astonished loss to know.
I love Thee, Lord. I know it was for me
You gave Your life – surrendered unto death,
And yet I would experience and see
The spending of Thy latest earthly breath
That I more fully know how much You gave,
More deeply understand how great the cost.
E'en if it lead me to my own deep grave,
Show this to me before the chance is lost.

If this can only be in sickness found
Then break my body to the utmost place
Where death becomes more real and pains abound,
And there show me the fullness of Thy grace.
And should I from this bed of illness rise
Still daily feel the depth of suffering
That I may glorify to human eyes
My dear Redeemer, Lord and gracious King.
And yet I only want this if You choose
To bring me this way closer to Thy side.
Deny me if this prayer would make me lose
Thy nearer Presence – Please forgive my pride.

Then I saw the red blood that freely ran
Beneath the crown of thorns upon His brow –
For He is fully God and fully man;
As both He suffered though I know not how.
And as the revelation filled my heart,
The Trinity became more real to me.
I understood the joy heaven will impart
Where Father, Son and Spirit I shall see;
Then “Blessed be the Lord” became my cry
Since God, revered and feared, would really show
His love here on the earth though throned on high
And be this intimate with one below.



(This poem is the third prize winner in the poetry contest that was sponsored by the PBSC Ottawa Branch last year. Marjory Craig Webster was born in 1932 in Plaster Rock, NB, and her family moved to Toronto, ON, in 1937, where she was educated at Parkdale Collegiate and the Toronto Normal School. She married Donald Webster in 1958; he died in 1989. They have three children: Roy, Janice, and Victoria (Paul Mizzi). She is a member of St. Paul's Anglican Church, Bloor Street, Toronto, and of the Toronto Branch of the Prayer Book Society of Canada.)

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Opinions expressed in this
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