



Common Prayer Canada Mobile App

Report submitted to the PBSC National Council Meeting and AGM, 28 May 2022

The Common Prayer Canada mobile app has been downloaded 1,634 times on iOS (819 in the past year) and over 1,000 times on Android. It is currently installed on 492 Android devices.¹ The app has received 18 ratings with unanimous 5 star reviews on the App Store and 25 ratings with a 4.7 star average review on Google Play. We do not collect exact usage data for the web version, but a rough estimate would be 500 sessions per month.

The app has been publicly endorsed by several bishops across the Anglican Church of Canada and profiled in Diocesan newspapers including the Toronto Anglican and the Arctic Journal. Feedback received through our Facebook page has been enthusiastically positive and most of the features added after the initial release were suggestions from users.

Recent developments

Privacy policy

Our privacy policy has been slightly amended to allow us to track the number of times each Bible version is accessed by users. This change was made as part of our licensing agreement with the Canadian Bible Society (CBS), as they are interested in knowing how many users are accessing the newly added Eastern Arctic Inuktitut Bible (EAIB), which they publish. We will provide CBS with this figure annually. Since we started tracking this data one month ago, 61% of users have been using the KJV, 20% NRSV, 16% ESV and 3% EAIB.

We collect no other data and wish to maintain a stringent privacy policy for the comfort of our users. You can read our privacy policy in the 'About' page of the app.

New liturgical features

- *Hide Rubrics* - improves the experience of those using the 'Text-to-Speech' or 'Speak Screen' Accessibility feature on their iOS or Android device.

¹ The difference between Android downloads (1,000+) and current installations (492) is because of users getting new phones and downloading the app again, or uninstalling and reinstalling, or uninstalling because they don't use it any more.



- *New interface for the Prayers and Thanksgivings* – users can now customize their selection of prayers and thanksgivings by the weekday, as well as the time of day. This allows users to plan their selection of prayers ahead of time, reducing the time needed to set up each individual liturgy.
- *Gloria Patri after the Psalms* – users can now choose whether the Gloria Patri will appear after each Psalm, or only once at the end of the entire set of Psalms.
- *Litany, Supplication and Confession* – each of these can now be pre-set to appear on Fridays at Morning and Evening Prayer.

Proposed future developments

Languages

The following parts of the liturgy are now available in Inuktitut: the Opening Sentences, Psalms, Bible lessons, Acts of Praise, and most of the Canticles. The Diocese of the Arctic is in the early planning stages of digitizing the Eastern Arctic Inuktitut BCP. As this work progresses, I hope to add bits and pieces of the Inuktitut liturgy to the app along the way, beginning with the Gloria Patri, the Grace and Lord's Prayer.

As for other Indigenous languages, early plans are in the works to add the newly digitized Innuinaqtun BCP from the Central Arctic and the Horden Cree BCP from the eastern James Bay region.

We have also had a recent request from a lay member of the Diocese of Montreal to add the 1967 French language Canadian BCP. This project would require a committed team of at least two or three bilingual persons who are familiar with the Prayer Book.

Music

Digitized audio recordings of the sung liturgy, recorded in the 1960s at Grace Church on-the-Hill, are currently posted on the PBSC website. These could be added to the app very easily.

My dream is to commission a cantor, organist and choir to make new recordings of the canticles, as well as the entire Psalter. Once the recordings are made, adding them to the app will be simple and inexpensive.



The cost of commissioning musicians and sound engineers to make and edit the recordings could be considerable, but I imagine that certain supporters would be keen to donate to this endeavour.

Biographies of Saints

Numerous users have requested that on Saints' Days, users be given the option to open a link to learn more about each saint and his/her life and witness to Christ. This could also include an image of the saint and links to other resources, such as the saint's theological writings. I think this is a great idea and adding such a feature would be quite straightforward. If agreed, National Council will need to decide upon the best resource(s) to use for this purpose.

If there is interest in pursuing any or all of these potential new developments, I will propose them to Fr. Greg, who will provide itemized cost estimates.

Conclusion

I am thankful for the many faithful users who regularly submit bug reports and offer their suggestions for improvements. This project has truly been an effort of 'common prayer'. We are grateful to Alicia Brown and the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada for granting us permission to use material from the Book of Occasional Offices. We are especially thankful for our developer, Fr. Greg Johnston, for his diligence, his openness to adding new features, and his excellent work at a very reasonable price. Working with him has been a joy and we look forward to a continued partnership with him over many years. Grateful thanks are also due to our donors who have given generously to this project and to the National Council of the PBSC for their ongoing support.

The Common Prayer Canada Daily Prayer app has been more successful than we could have ever asked for or imagined. That being said, we should not rest on our laurels, but continue to improve the app to the glory of God and for the edification of His people.

Sincerely,

Chris Dow
Dean of the Arctic