

The Prayer Book Society of Canada Newsletter

Michaelmas 2022

Rare and Unique Prayer Books

(By the Revd. Dr. Gordon Maitland, National Chairman of the PBSC.)

As we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the 1962 Canadian Book of Common Prayer this year, it would be appropriate to look at some very rare and unique Prayer Books that are a part of our past. In this article I would like to highlight four such books that are a part of my own private collection.

The first photo shows the cover of a Prayer Book/Hymnal combination that was published by Eyre and Spottiswoode in 1910 as a tribute to the late King Edward VII. It is richly embossed and includes a monogram of the sovereign on the cover; it is slightly smaller than the pew edition 1962 Prayer Book used today. As you can see in photos two through four, reproductions of services used at the King's lying-in-state and funeral were inserted into the front of the Prayer Book. They were done in purple ink and included photos of the events commemorated. As this book was published shortly after the sovereign's death, the state prayers in the services still refer to King Edward VII, Queen Alexandra, and George, Prince of Wales. There is another interesting thing about this edition of the BCP. While the BCP itself is the 1662 edition, the hymnal bound with the Prayer Book is the first edition of Common Praise, the hymnal authorized by the Church of England in Canada in 1908. When the

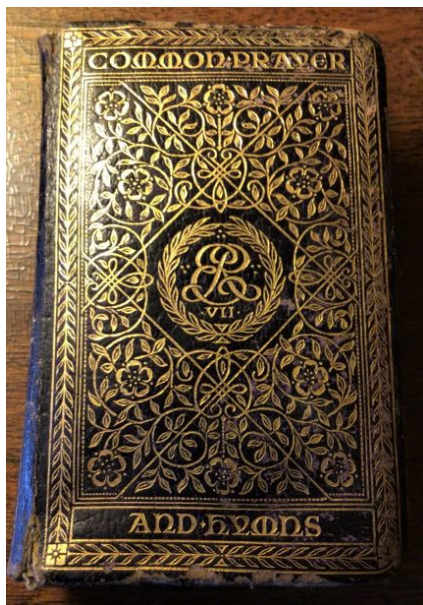


Photo #1

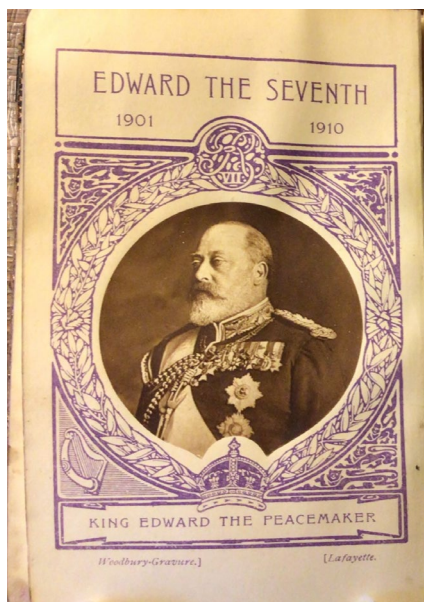


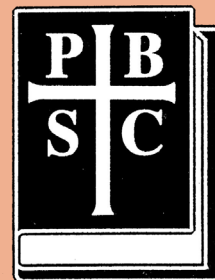
Photo #2

I N S I D E

4
**Bursaries
Available**

5
**Supplementary
Old Testament
Lections**

7
**"These Our
Prayers"**



-Continued from page 1

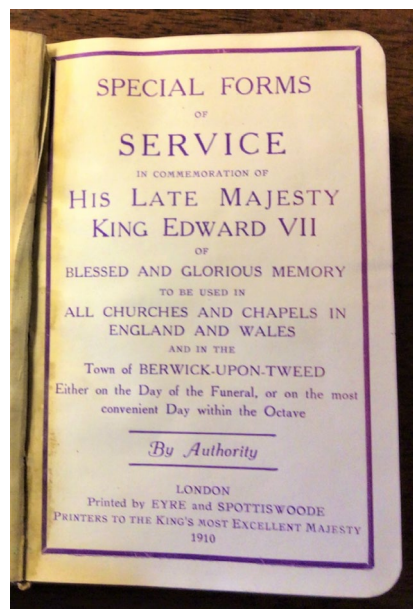


Photo #3

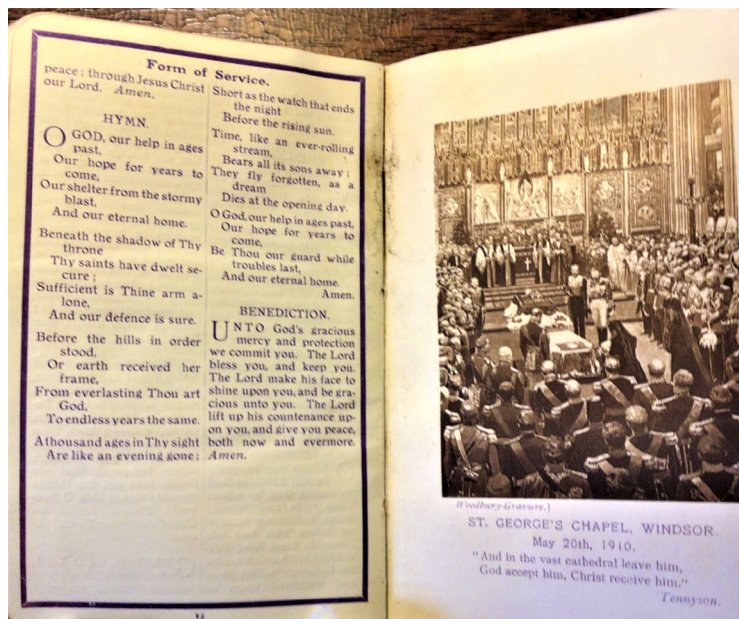


Photo #4

Church of England in Canada (as it was then called) became autonomous from the mother Church of England at the first General Synod in 1893, the Canadian Church was free from state control and could publish its own edition of the Prayer Book. However, the newly independent Canadian part of the Anglican Communion chose to produce a common hymnal rather than start on a revision of the Prayer Book. This was due to party strife between the Anglo-Catholic wing of the Church and the Evangelical wing. The former party wanted a more "catholic" edition of the Prayer Book, and the latter party feared that any concession to the high church folks would result in a surrender of Reformation principles. It was thus thought safer to produce a hymnal for the Canadian Church rather than attempt any Prayer Book revision. Since the new hymnal was authorized in 1908 and the King died in 1910, this combination of 1662 BCP and Canadian Common Praise is one of the earliest examples of it. It would appear that the Canadian Church produced such combinations between 1910 and 1922 as a first step towards a truly Canadian liturgical expression of Anglicanism.

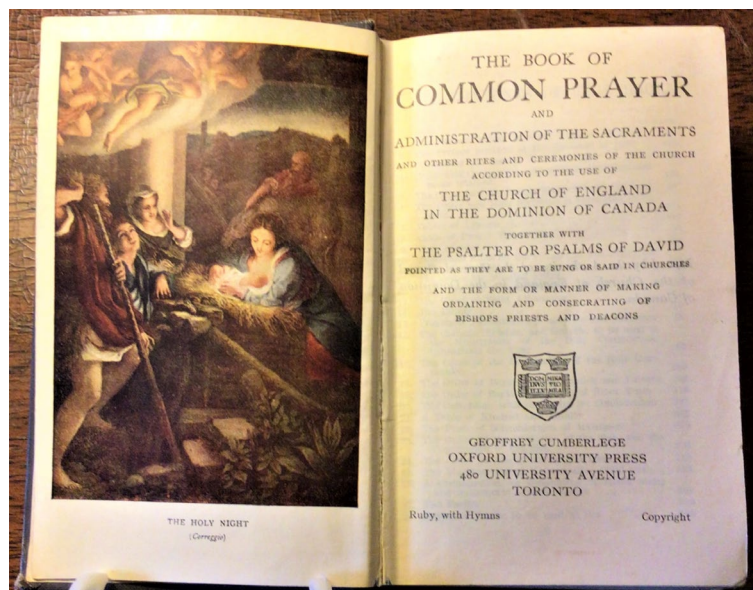


Photo #5

The second item that I would like to highlight is a Canadian 1922 Prayer Book/1938 Hymnal published by the Oxford University Press. As can be seen in photo five, the title page refers to "The Church of England in the Dominion of Canada". The name of our Church was changed to "The Anglican Church of Canada" in 1956. The state prayers in the BCP refer to "Elizabeth our Queen". Thus, this Prayer Book was published sometime between 1952 and 1956. The remarkable thing about this book is that it is illustrated with more than a dozen reproductions of paintings of the "Old Masters", as can be seen in photos five through seven. I think it was a nice touch that a painting of St. Cecilia (the patron saint of music) was placed opposite the title page to the Hymnal, as can be seen in photo seven. So far as I know, no other Book of Common Prayer has ever been published by any province of the Anglican Communion as

-Continued on page 3

-Continued from page 2

an illustrated book like this one. I have seen BCPs with line drawings or woodcuts, but none (other than this) with reproductions of Renaissance paintings scattered throughout. What was the reason for its publication? Was it meant to commemorate the coronation of Elizabeth II? Or was it a marketing ploy to encourage people to purchase such a book as a gift for confirmations and other special occasions? It does not appear to have had more than one print run, and I have never seen any other copies of it except the one in my possession. Perhaps one day some researcher with a lot of spare time could dig through the archives of the Oxford University Press offices in Toronto to find out more about this edition of the BCP. If any of you reading this article have seen such a BCP yourselves, or possess more information about it, I would very much appreciate hearing from you.

In photo eight is a picture of a standard pew edition 1962 BCP, but in this case it is stamped in gold on the cover with the crest of the Anglican Church of Canada superimposed over the Canadian centennial logo from 1967. The inside cover is marked with an ink stamp, "Saint Paul's Anglican Church, Windsor, Ontario". I don't know whether this commemorative BCP was sold by the Anglican Book Centre to the general

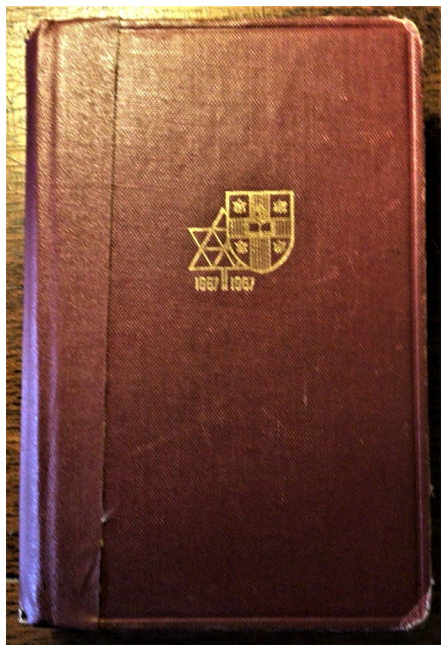


Photo #8

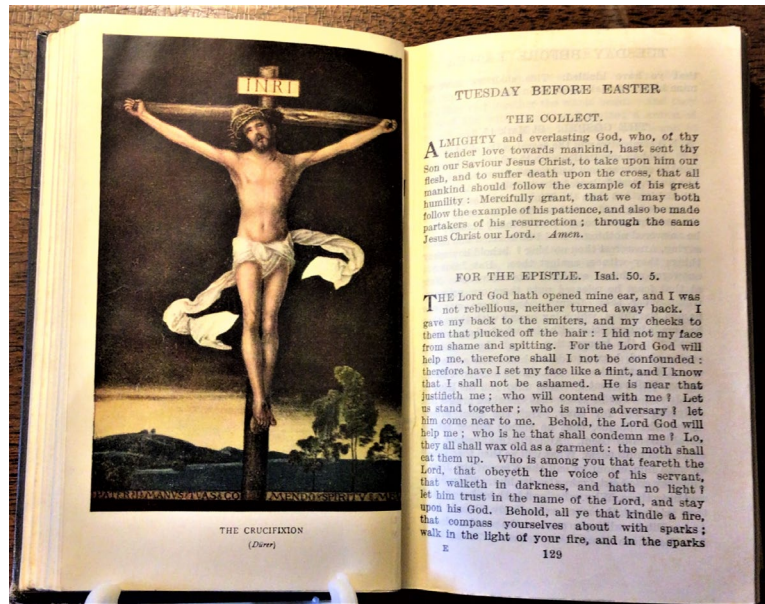


Photo #6

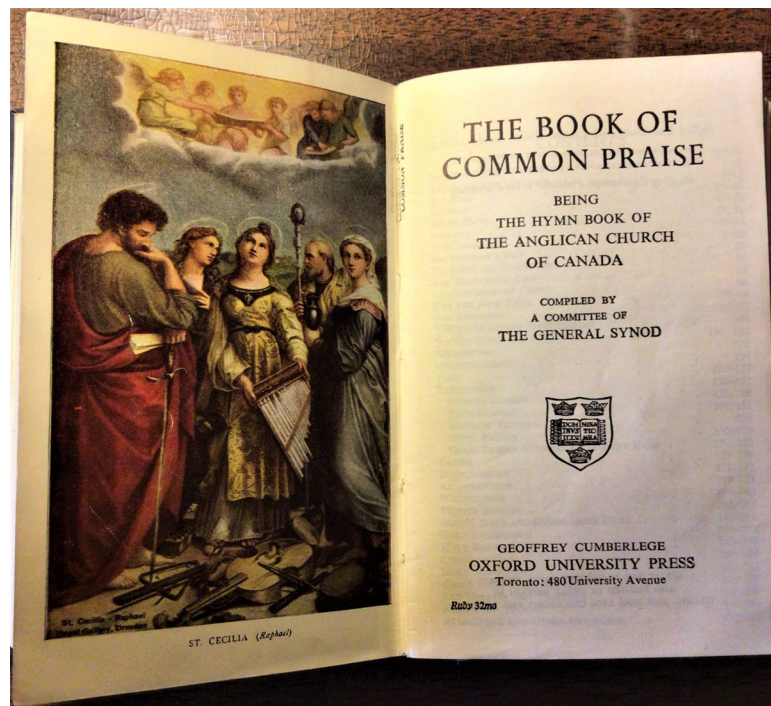


Photo #7

public, or if it was a private parish initiative on the part of St. Paul's Church to celebrate Canada's centennial. St. Paul's was closed several decades ago, and the book in the photo was discovered on a shelf outside the chapel of Canterbury College, the Anglican college affiliated with the University of Windsor. Again, if anyone knows anything more about such a BCP I would be very interested in hearing from you.

-Continued on page 4

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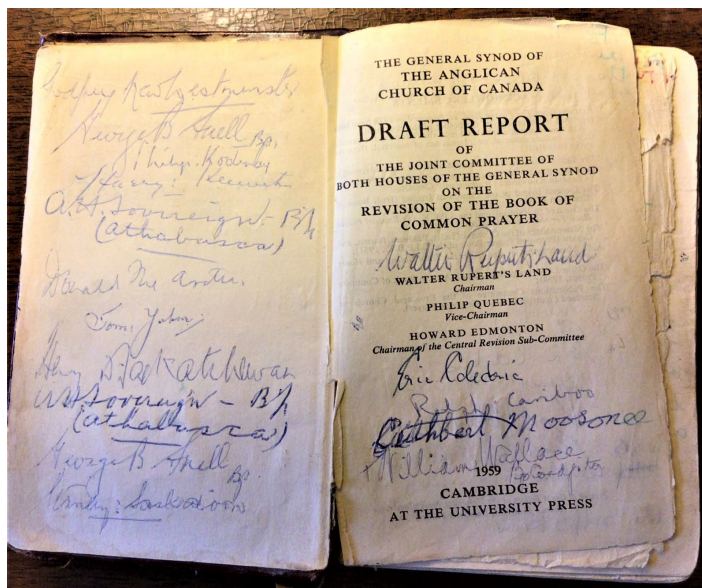


Photo #9

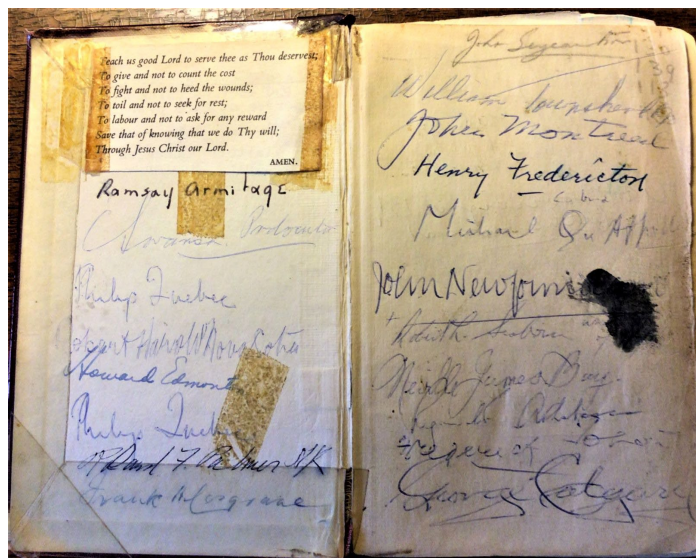


Photo #10

The last book to be considered here is a recent acquisition sent to me by a long-time member of the Prayer Book Society of Canada, Mr. John Serjeantson of Cowansville, Quebec. It is very much worn from long use, but it is priceless nonetheless. As a young man, Mr. Serjeantson was present at the 1959 General Synod held in Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec, where delegates were to vote on whether to accept the new Book of Common Prayer. Each delegate received a draft copy of the BCP, so that they could see what they were voting on. Mr. Serjeantson took the initiative to go around and have every bishop present (and some others) sign his copy of the draft book. As you can see in photos nine and ten, this is the only copy of the Prayer Book in existence that has the signatures of the bishops who actually voted to approve it on September 3, 1959. I am indebted to Mr. Serjeantson for this unique memorial of Canadian Anglican history.

It is written in the Scriptures, "Of making many books there is no end ..." (Ecclesiastes 12.12). While this is certainly true from an eternal perspective, it is also the case that old books can give us tangible evidence of past events that can be found nowhere else. The rare and unique books presented in this article are a record of both civil and ecclesiastical events that have shaped the history of our Church and nation. It is my hope that they will be seen and enjoyed by generations to come.

BURSARIES AVAILABLE. Each fall, the PBSC makes available a limited number of bursaries of up to \$1000, for Anglican students engaged in religious studies who value the Book of Common Prayer, use it in their daily prayer life, and wish to support its continuing use in the Anglican churches in Canada. Students in the ordination stream are particularly encouraged to apply. This year, the deadline for applications is November 4th. Students wishing to be considered for one of these bursaries should submit a copy of their curriculum vitae and the names, addresses and phone numbers of two references, together with a covering letter explaining their interest in this bursary and in the Book of Common Prayer, to the chair of the PBSC Bursaries Committee, Dr. Diana Versegby, at the following email address: diana.versegby@sympatico.ca. Candidates will be interviewed by the Bursaries Committee via Zoom in mid to late November, and awards will be made in mid-December.

Supplementary Old Testament Lections for the BCP Eucharistic Lectionary

(The PBSC has recently launched a project to compile a set of optional Old Testament readings to complement the traditional Epistle and Gospel readings at the BCP service of Holy Communion.. The Revd. Benjamin von Bredow, who is rector-elect of the Parish of Shelburne, Nova Scotia, is the the chairman of the committee undertaking this work. In this article he explains the rationale underlying this endeavour.)

The eucharistic lectionary of the Book of Common Prayer, which the 1962 BCP transmits to us with minor modifications, is one of the concrete ways in which classical Anglicanism sought to preserve “the godly and decent order of the ancient fathers”, as the preface to the original 1549 edition expresses it (reproduced on pp. 715-717 in our BCP). Whereas Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, the chief architect of the BCP, judged that the daily office lectionary desperately needed a reform, the eucharistic lectionary received a much gentler revision. Cranmer zeroed in on the daily office’s failure to expose the people of God to “all the whole Bible” – but the eucharistic lectionary, which uses a very small portion of the Bible over the course of the year, escaped the same criticism. Why? Because its purpose was not to provide continuous and thorough reading of Scripture. Instead, it was to complement the daily office lectionary, shaping the people’s biblical literacy into doctrinal and spiritual clarity. Thus, the daily office invites us into the Bible, and the eucharist instructs us from it.

The 1962 BCP, unlike the books and resources that followed it over

the subsequent decades, is unique for preserving this two-stream approach to the Scriptures: that is, with continuous reading at the offices running parallel to thematic and doctrinal reading at the eucharist. The Revised Common Lectionary, which is used in most eucharistic services today, represents an attempt to simplify this system in favour of continuous reading of the Old and New Testaments at the Sunday



The Revd. Benjamin von Bredow

eucharist only, casting aside the ancient lectionary with its doctrinal structure. Besides its failure to deepen biblical literacy in the pews, and its innate inability to achieve its primary goal – over three years, it reads only 25% of the scriptures, not the reputed 100% - its essential problem is its lack of coherence. It is not designed as a repeatable program of essential catechesis.

The Prayer Book Society has written on many occasions about the failures of the RCL, so I need go no further in this vein. But now the

PBSC has undertaken a project to approach the BCP lectionary from a pastoral perspective. In view of the need for the people of God to be formed by the scriptural catechesis of the traditional eucharistic lectionary, how can the PBSC promote its use?

I suggested this question, and a possible answer to it, at the October 2021 meeting of the PBSC National Council. I argued that the biggest barrier for priests who would like to transition their congregations to the BCP lectionary is that it does not include an Old Testament reading. For all of its other inadequacies, the RCL has effectively fostered an expectation that the Old Testament will be read and preached on Sunday mornings, and this is not an expectation which a BCP Anglican ought to resist. Until the flourishing of the Parish Communion Movement in this country only a few decades ago, BCP Matins always included an Old Testament reading. Moreover, the 1962 revision of the BCP provides rubrics for the merging of the first half of Matins with the Communion service, effectively creating a three-lesson eucharist starting with the Old Testament. After all, Anglicans believe that the Old Testament is “God’s word written” just as much as the New.

That is not to say that the BCP is deficient because it does not prescribe a three-reading eucharist. Two-reading eucharists are the liturgical heritage of both Eastern and Western Christianity, and an Epistle and Gospel are perfectly sufficient for providing the doctrinal formation which is the eucharistic lectionary’s special genius. Since the daily office uses the Old Testament quite

-Continued on page 6

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thoroughly, the Prayer Book cannot be accused of neglecting the Old Testament overall.

If a priest could not transition his congregation back to the BCP eucharistic lectionary without an Old Testament supplement, I argued that preserving the purity of the two-reading pattern was not worth denying him that opportunity. So long as no guidance for supplementing the traditional lectionary was available, using it in a congregation which loves the Old Testament – and can any BCP Anglican blame them for that? – remained unviable.

So the work began in January 2022. We formed a committee of people with three different kinds of expertise: biblical scholars, liturgical scholars, and regular preachers of the traditional lectionary. So far, these participants have been Dr. Daniel Driver of the Atlantic School of Theology, Dr. Jesse Billet (currently on leave) of Trinity College, Toronto, the Revd. David Butorac, rector of St. Alban's Cathedral in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Fr. Ted Williams, rector of All Saints' Church in Melfort, Saskatchewan, and the Revd. Gavin Dunbar, rector of St. John's Church, Savannah and president of the Prayer Book Society of the U.S.A. Meeting every two or three weeks, we began first by studying the received lectionary from historical, theological, liturgical, biblical, and hermeneutical perspectives. We quickly realized that our theoretical foundations would become clearer when applied to particular cases, so we dove in by following the calendar beginning in pre-Lent.

Supplementing the BCP lectionary caused us some trepidation, because we did not want to alter its character by filtering it through the logic of our Old Testament choices. Although the rationale for the whole project was to preserve the thematic coherence of

each set of propers, it would have been tempting to use an Old Testament lesson to over-specify the meaning of the other two readings. If the received Epistle had themes A, B, and C, and the Gospel had themes B, C, and D, by suggesting an Old Testament reading to echo only theme B we might have proposed something with coherence, but which limited the dynamism of the received lectionary. So we are not looking for “puzzle pieces” or “keys” in the Old Testament which will “solve” the hermeneutic puzzle of intertextual reading in the New.

Instead, we have used the analogy of “companionship” to describe what we are looking for. We are seeking Old Testament readings which, when they accompany the BCP lectionary, engage in fruitful conversation with it about the themes of the occasion. The supplemental lessons should amplify the conversation which is already happening between Epistle and Gospel, making contributions to that conversation using its distinct theological idiom. For this reason, and out of a respect for the integrity of the Old Testament as holy scripture, we have tended to avoid the obvious type-antitype or prediction-fulfillment modes of relating the two testaments, which, although sometimes appropriate and theologically interesting, more often “erase” the Old Testament by treating it as a footnote or proof-text for the New. We have kept in mind that the lectionary is a catechetical document, so we ask ourselves, “When we see the Epistle and Gospel teaching x, how would the Old Testament approach that same idea?”

Here are two examples to illustrate our approach. In Lent, we have proposed readings centring around the figure of Moses, the Book of Deuteronomy, and the wilderness wanderings and entry into the promised land. On Lent 2, when the Epistle concerns abstinence from fornication and the Gospel describes the healing of the Canaanite woman,

the conversation is about conditions or bounds of God's grace. Does God's grace extend beyond the Jews? Does God's grace extend to the sinful? Yes, but sinners and Gentiles alike must receive grace with humility and repentance. So we have suggested the story of Rahab, another Canaanite woman and a prostitute, who in the fear of God appeals for a crumb of mercy from the God of the Jews, and is saved from the destruction of Jericho.

Then, on Lent 3, we receive a stern warning to leave behind the “ways of darkness” in the Epistle, and in the Gospel Jesus warns us about evil spirits and the danger of purifying one's heart only to have “seven spirits more wicked than the first” return. We have recommended Deuteronomy 12:1-7, in which Moses commands the people to utterly destroy the altars of the seven nations of Canaan, lest, having taken possession of the land, they fall victim to the same idolatry. It is a lesson about the need for total devotion to the Lord alone, and the peril of tolerating spiritual darkness.

The work will continue. Having taken a summer break, we will resume in September, and continue throughout the next year at least.

We welcome new participants, not only to help with the work, but because we have found that in our bi-weekly discussion the lectionary has deepened our appreciation for the challenge and reward of intertextual, doctrinal reading of scripture. In short, it's a great Bible study. If you or someone you know has relevant expertise as a liturgical or biblical scholar, or if you are a regular preacher of the one-year lectionary, or even if you have a committed interest in the project, please do get in touch! Your presence will be warmly welcomed, and will be a great help and encouragement.

May God bless this endeavour to the edification of his church.

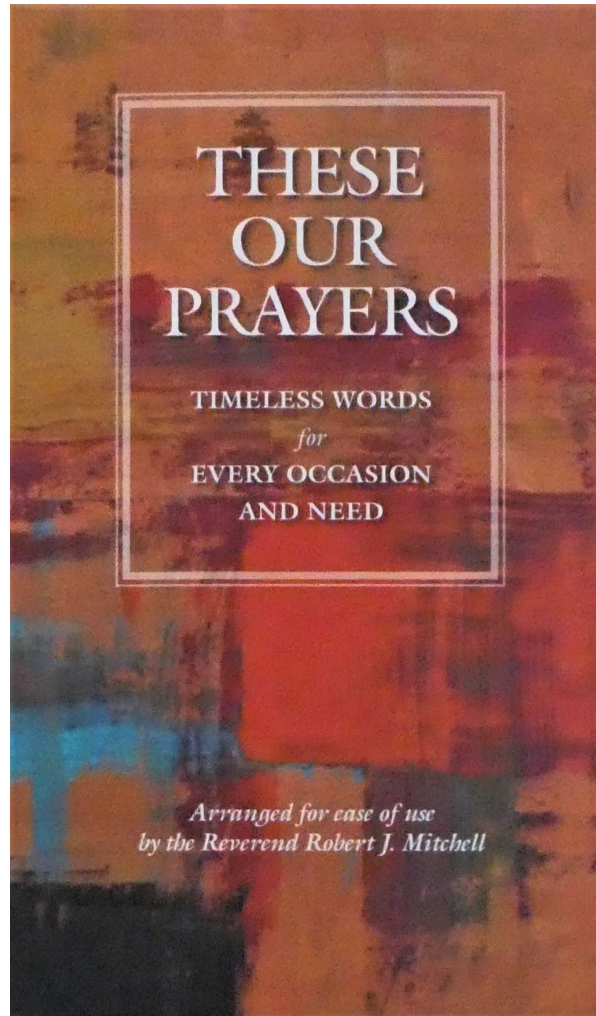
“These Our Prayers”

(A book review by Diana Versegby, PBSC Newsletter Editor.)

The Book of Common Prayer, as most readers of this article will know, is a great treasure-house of prayers that are appropriate to a wide variety of occasions. The long section of “Prayers and Thanksgivings”, contained on pages 37-61 in the BCP, is no doubt familiar to many. But perhaps some of us may not always be aware of the other riches that it contains. Some of the best gems can be found in rather unexpected places. For example, one of the prayers that I have often returned to in my own private devotions is the “Prayer for Steadfastness”, found on page 635 - under the “Forms of Prayer to be Used at Sea”, of all places. (It is said to have been composed by Sir Francis Drake, the first English captain to complete a circumnavigation of the globe in the year 1580.)

Now, however, for those of us who sometimes search for a prayer for a particular occasion or need but don’t know where to find it, a new resource is available. It has been compiled by the Revd. Robert Mitchell, the rector of St. Olave’s Church, Swansea (in the west end of Toronto) – one of the few remaining churches in the Diocese

of Toronto where all of the worship is still conducted entirely according to the Book of Common Prayer. This attractively produced book, called “These Our Prayers”,



contains a comprehensive collection of hundreds of prayers, thematically arranged, for a variety of occasions. As the summary on the back cover puts it, “Whether it’s a time of anxiety, sickness or celebration, you will find a tried and tested prayer for any need in this collection.”

The prayers are almost all drawn from our 1962 Canadian BCP. Many come from services that are relatively little known, such as the Penitential Service (p. 613), the Service for Young People (p. 622), and the Order for Compline (p. 722). The compendium includes the Sunday collects, since although they were originally designed to complement the BCP lections for each Sunday, they are often very suitable for other occasions or needs. Some prayers are taken from the Canadian Book of Occasional Offices (which was published in 1964 and is widely accepted as a supplement to the Prayer Book). A few come from the 1918 Canadian BCP; a few more are original compositions of Fr. Mitchell’s; and the collection also includes the Advent “O Antiphons” from the 1933 English Hymnal.

This project was funded in part by the PBSC, and we are delighted to see how well it has turned out. The book can be ordered directly from St. Olave’s for pick-up at the church, through the parish website: <https://stolaves.ca/these-our-prayers/>. The cost is \$25, and proceeds of all sales go to St. Olave’s. Or, it can be ordered for delivery through the online Lulu book store, <https://www.lulu.com/shop>, at a cost of \$22.99 plus tax, shipping and handling. It would make a marvellous Christmas gift!

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