

Prefaces to the
First and Second Editions
of
The Book of Occasional Services

Preface to the First Edition

The Standing Liturgical Commission (SLC) of the Reformed Episcopal Church is pleased to present this Book of Occasional Services to the church. The SLC recognizes that there are many events and occasions commonly observed in the life of the church, for which the standard Book of Common Prayer does not provide a form for liturgical expression. In some cases, the canons of the church imply or assume the existence of these services, such as the Admission of a Communicant or the Setting apart of a Deaconess. The result is that clergy have been left to borrow forms from other traditions, or worse yet, to improvise by developing unique liturgical creations of varying quality. It is our hope that this book will satisfy the aforementioned need and provide a means for establishing a common expression of these services among our parishes. The language and style are traditional, so the book works well in the context of the classical common prayer tradition as found in the books of 1662 and 1928 usages which are foundational to the Anglican Church in North America and form the basis for the prayer book of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

The materials included in this project come from a variety of sources, but the book's primary structure is based upon the Book of Offices (3rd edition, 1960) of the Episcopal Church. Prayer books from the wider Anglican family have been helpful for certain services that historically have not been part of American revisions, particularly the contribution of the Scottish Book of Common Prayer (1929) and the Canadian Book of Common Prayer (1962) in the development of Prayer at Mid-day and Compline.

Preface

The Book of Occasional Services is supplemental in purpose and is not to be construed as a substitute for any portion of the Book of Common Prayer. There are no alternative services for those that are found in the prayer book, and its use is optional. Nevertheless, we believe that this book is sound, both in respect to doctrine and the canons, and we commended it as being beneficial for the edification and instruction of the church.

Finally, the SLC does not see this book as a completely finished product. The Commission continues to receive additional material and suggestions, which are sure to increase now that the present book is being published and disseminated. It is expected that further editions will be forthcoming and will build upon what has been produced thus far.

The Rt. Rev. David L. Hicks, Chairman
Easter 2011

Preface to the Second Edition

As anticipated by Bishop David Hicks in his preface to the first edition of the Book of Occasional Services, the Standing Liturgical Commission of the Reformed Episcopal Church is now, in this second edition, presenting the church with additional materials to build upon what has been produced thus far to supplement its liturgical life.

In particular, the SLC is providing in this edition an office for the Admission of Lay Readers, which was conspicuously absent from the previous edition. The ministry of the Lay Reader is an important and canonical ministry in the church, and it was decided by the Commission that a distinct liturgical form appropriate to that ministry was badly needed. A Litany for the Church, the availability of which was assumed by the offices for the Founding of a Church and the Opening of a Church, is also now being provided.

Additionally, several rubrical revisions have been made to the offices in the first edition to bring them more into conformity with the rubrics of the standard Book of Common Prayer, and to give greater clarity as to how the offices are to be performed.

Finally, the Way of the Cross found in the first edition of the Book of Occasional Services is now being presented in traditional language for the purpose of achieving the goal of making all the offices conform to the language and style of the classical common prayer tradition as expressed in the books of 1662 and 1928 used in our churches.

The Very Rev. Jerry D. Kistler, Chairman
Easter, 2020