

kingdom does not advance by co-opting political or social power. It does not advance demanding moral fealty by non-believers. It advances by disciples making and developing other disciples” (p. 65). Allen consistently points his readers to Christ and the way the Lord modeled discipleship. This is the greatest strength of the book.

His attention to the significance of relationships is also noteworthy. “The core of culture change is from leaders in relationship, helping people to comprehend and to want to come along on the journey of a body of believers aimed at biblical discipleship” (p. 246). As Allen notes in several passages, this important truth often gets overlooked in the busyness of many local church ministries. Leaders would do well to heed Allen’s advice here. *The Disciple Dilemma* additionally offers a strong emphasis on disciples living and working among unbelievers to be salt and light. The Christo-centric understanding of lordship and the primacy of mission recommends this book to leaders trying to discern what it means to make disciples.

Jeremy Bohall

Samuel L. Bray (Editor), Drew Nathaniel Keane (Editor)  
**The 1662 Book of Common Prayer: International Edition**  
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In recent years, perhaps decades, Christians from free churches have shown a renewed interest in liturgy. Several friends and acquaintances of mine have, purposefully or incidentally, found their spiritual home in the evangelical episcopal churches. Then, some understand the importance of prescribed and historically grounded liturgy but are prevented by their theological beliefs from abandoning their traditions solely for liturgy. It is important to note that every church has a liturgy, regardless of how elaborate or spontaneous it may be, and even spontaneous and “Spirit-led” worship in some churches amounts to liturgical expectations that should not be violated.

In this context, several decades ago, a Croatian document titled *Bogoslužni red baptističkih crkava* (Liturgical order of Baptist Churches) was created to foster a more liturgical style of worship. It was authored by Dr. Jasmin Milić, now the Bishop of the Protestantska reformirana kršćanska crkva in Croatia, and further refined for use in Baptist churches by pastor Giorgio Grlj (2022, email). Nevertheless, Baptist pastors mainly use it for special occasions such as ordinations, baptisms, weddings, or funerals.

It is possible to approach this phenomenon as we would approach many evangelical fads. It is true that until recently, many swore that the church growth movement would change the world. So it is possible to become infatuated that liturgical renewal is the missing ingredient for our individuals and churches to become spiritually more mature. Yet, just because something is not a magic bullet, it does not follow that this is not important for the church's life. According to Dr. James K. A. Smith, a Pentecostal philosopher (Smith 2010, xii), liturgy is an integral aspect of life and worship in churches and other Christian institutions since thoughtful Christian liturgies can counter the powerful influence of secular culture, which often molds us into adopting worldly worldviews and mentalities through its own "cultural liturgies." Christian liturgies can positively shape us into more Christlike individuals since forming Christian disciples involves more than the intellectual aspect of discipleship. Smith, therefore, encourages the development of liturgical habits, the use of rituals (such as the Sacraments), and immersion in the story of Christianity (Smith 2013).

An important aspect of this immersion in the story of Christianity—which should not be identified and reduced only to the biblical story—is immersion in historical Christian words and practices. As Croatian Baptist theologian, Enoh Šeba (2022, 63) pointed out, our "acts of worship (should be) woven from decades or centuries of practice." In such liturgy immersed in history, believers can find "the security of order," as opposed to the sermon which, according to Šeba, brings the needed "variation in the existing order."

In other words, it is comforting to know that parts of our prescribed worship were used by Christians for centuries. As we recite the Lord's Prayer, we unite with fellow Christians of all denominations and collectively address God as "*Our Father*." Moreover, the recitation of one of the revered Christian Creeds which passed down through generations and resounded the walls of both Church Fathers and the Reformers, serves as a poignant reminder of our shared faith and heritage.

I trust this clarifies the purpose behind a Baptist theologian reviewing an Anglican liturgical guide. There is value in studying other Christian traditions and the strengths they possess. We can also integrate certain elements that align with our traditions, using them to inspire growth and progress.

In 1549, the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, authored and released the first edition of *The Book of Common Prayer*. Over time, various changes in monarchs, and thus the Heads of the English Church, led to the book being prohibited and causing disputes. Therefore, it underwent multiple revisions until it reached its current version in 1662, long after Archbishop Cranmer's death as a martyr in 1556.

Cranmer wanted to create a prayer book to bridge the gap or better keep the best parts of Catholic and Protestant liturgies. Indeed, he envisioned it as liturgical

“via Media” (Jacobs 2013, 90). He achieved this by introducing a prayerbook written in beautiful and dignified English rather than Latin. However, he also drew from various sources to create its forms, much of which had ancient roots (Jacobs 2013, 17). This innovative approach caused Cranmer and his book to face both persecution from Catholic monarchs and rejection from more radical Protestants of the time (Cummings 2018, 3).

The book commences with a preface from 1662, which presents the latest edition of the work and elucidates certain modifications made to the text to ensure its relevance to modern times. It then guides readers on utilizing the Book as a tool for “Morning and Evening Prayer on Sundays and other holy days throughout the year” (p. xxix). Subsequently, readers will find a collection of morning and evening prayers (p. 1–26), the Athanasian Creed (pp. 27–30), the Litany, and its concluding prayers (pp. 31–48).

These chapters are followed by prayers and readings from the Epistles and Gospels for use on various holy days throughout the year (pp. 49–240). The prayerbook then follows the ordinary course of human life, supplying ministers and believers with a Catechism and the order of services for the Lord’s Supper (pp. 241–270), public baptism of infants, and those of “Riper Years” (pp. 271–299), Confirmation, matrimony, visitation of the sick, burial of the dead, and thanksgiving of women after childbirth (pp. 300–352). Finally, there is a liturgy of commination to be recited after the Litany, which invites sinners to repent of their sins by reading “the general sentences of God’s cursing against impenitent sinners,” followed by prayer for forgiveness (pp. 353–361).

Cranmer extensively used the Psalter (Jacobs 2013, 37). He divided it into 30 daily readings for each day of the month, to be repeated annually (pp. 362–561). As England was emerging as a maritime power in 1662, the committee introduced “Forms of Prayer to Be Used at Sea” (pp. 562–577) for morning and evening services, as well as for extraordinary occasions and dangers (Jacobs 2013, 89). These prayers are followed by “The Ordinal” (pp. 579–625), which guides ordaining and consecrating “bishops, priests, and deacons,” indicating that Anglicans value the trifold order and apostolic succession. Finally, thirty-nine “Articles of Religion” (pp. 628–645) serve as the theological foundation of Anglicanism.

The book concludes with a letter from the modern editors (pp. 648–653) and five appendices. Appendix I is titled “The Homily of Justification,” Appendix II contains “Additional Prayers & Thanksgivings,” Appendix III provides “Additional Rubrics” (or alternate readings), Appendix IV presents “An Alternative Table of Lessons,” and Appendix V is a “Glossary.”

Cranmer and those who edited his work were careful to address Christian life from several sides. As noted, the prayer book follows the ordinary flow of human life, from baptism to funeral. It also addresses its many diverse circumstances,

giving us prayers to utter in times of joy, repentance, and weeping. Of course, it follows the church calendar year as well. Some Protestant readers will be surprised by how many holy days the prayer book celebrates. It starts on January 1<sup>st</sup> with “Circumcision of our Lord,” and some of the holy days are “Epiphany of our Lord” (Jan 6<sup>th</sup>), “Conversion of St. Paul” (Jan 25<sup>th</sup>), “All Saints’ Day” (Nov 1<sup>st</sup>), and then the year ends with four holidays “Christmas Day,” “St. Stephen, First Martyr,” “St. John, A. & E.,” and “Innocents’ Day” (Dec 25<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>). Most surprisingly, with its Morning and Evening Prayers (Mattins and Evensong), the book also addresses every day of the month and prescribes worship twice a day, which was Cranmer’s simplification of earlier canonical hours, namely, “Matins (midnight); Lauds (3 a.m., or, more commonly, dawn); Prime (6 a.m.); Terce (9 a.m.); Sext (noon); Nones (3 p.m.); Vespers (6 p.m.); Compline (9 p.m.)” (Jacobs 2013, 39).

We noted that the book is steeped in historical Christian forms, yet it also prescribes a rich and extensive use of the Bible itself. Jacobs (2013, 37–38) notes, “For Cranmer, regularization of the actual liturgy was important, but thorough knowledge of the Bible—by which alone people could be ‘stirred up to godliness’ and enabled to ‘confute them that were adversaries to the truth’—was more important still.” Not only was the whole Psalter read once a month, but every Communion service had four readings from the Scriptures: a passage from the Old Testament, a Psalm, a passage from a Gospel, and a passage from some other part of the New Testament.

Therefore, *The Book of Common Prayer* has many things to commend, while critiquing a book that has withstood the test of time and has tremendously influenced the spiritual life of English-speaking societies would be inappropriate. Belonging to a different tradition is probably the only reason one would disagree with it. Nonetheless, at first, I was disappointed with this *International Edition*, as I was surprised that its language was not simplified to the extent that I was expecting. The modern editors have stated that their “linguistic updating has been modest,” for they sought “to preserve the prayer book’s linguistic character (which was already consciously old-fashioned in 1662).” They explain that the prayers are meant to be read aloud and in community, prioritizing the ear over the eye (pp. 648 – 650). The book’s purpose for non-English speakers is more educational than instructional, making their decisions understandable. “International” in this context means “pan-English.”

*The Book of Common Prayer: International Edition* provides us with a framework, igniting ideas on enhancing our worship services with liturgical elements that will draw from biblical and historical prayers, reflections, and creeds. However, we should avoid imposing these elements on our typically impromptu services awkwardly or unnaturally. It would be beneficial if we, theologians and ministers of free churches, would create prayerbooks or guides relevant to our

traditions, culture, and time. This endeavor requires wisdom, discernment, and guidance from the Holy Spirit. In light of this, I will conclude with a beautiful prayer for illumination from Appendix II of *The Book*:

O Lord God, who has left unto us thy holy word to be a lantern unto our feet and a light unto our steps: Give unto us thy Holy Spirit, that out of that word we may learn what is thy righteous will, and frame our lives in all holy obedience to the same, to thy honor and glory and the increase of our faith, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen* (p. 691).

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Timothy Keller

### **Forgive: Why should I and can I?**

London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2022, pp. 272

Forgiveness is a word that we as Christians use very often. However, it is a practice that sometimes we tend to avoid. Forgiveness is a complicated subject, a complex theme and it is a theme that is at the same time frightening. I say it in this way because the biblical perspective on forgiveness starts with Christ, his forgiveness, and it gets complicated when we start to hold grudges and bitterness against