The Prayer Book at 30 Lecture Series
The Zabriskie Lecture Series for 2009-10

The 1979 Book of Common Prayer Then,
The 1979 Book of Common Prayer Now.

On September 12, 1979, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church approved the 1979 edition of the Book of Common Prayer for final adoption. Unlike its predecessors the 1979 edition included a paradigm shift designed to meet the different needs and hopes of a late Twentieth Century Church.


Each of the lectures in the Prayer Book at 30 series will focus on innovative aspects of the Book of Common Prayer 1979, comparing expectations with actual experience, and looking for emerging trends in its continuing use.

**Event 1: Lecture and Panel Discussion**
**Lecture: Reformulating Rites of Initiation for a Post-Constantinian Age**
The Rev. James W. Farwell, Ph.D. Professor, Bethany College, Bethany, West Virginia
Wednesday, September 30 • 4PM
Lettie Pate Auditorium
Dinner • 5:45 PM at the Refectory • $12

The drafters of the 1979 edition argued that American Christians no longer lived in an age in which secular values and the Christian faith coincided. Late 20th century Christians were in a situation more similar to that of Christians of the 3rd century, holding values that were distinctly different from those of the society in which they were a part. As a result, Christian baptism needed to be emphasized in a new edition of the prayer book and made more dramatic; it was no longer a pastoral rite expected of good citizens, but rather a marked transition from one kingdom to another, whose full connotations could only be fully grasped by adults. The best guides for reformulating the rites were third-century liturgical documents. The lecture will focus on the past experience and future trajectory of the rites of initiation in the Episcopal Church.

**Panel Discussion: Sin, Grace, and Forgiveness in Liturgy.**
Wednesday, September 30 • 7PM
Lettie Pate Auditorium
Panelists:
The Rev. Kate Sonderegger, Ph.D. Professor of Theology, VTS
The Rev. Joyce Mercer, Ph.D. Professor of Practical Theology, VTS
The Rev. Andrew Merrow, Rector, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, Arlington, VA

The panel will focus on different aspects of sin, grace and forgiveness found in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. “The tone of all the English Books and the first American Book was deeply penitential. Sucessive American revisions of BCP has tended to mitigate this tone of unrelieved penitence and unworthiness” and the process of revision that led up to the 1979 edition “carried this mitigation much further” (Introducing the Draft Proposed Book, in Prayer Book Studies 29 series by Charles Price, New York: Church Hymnal, 1976). The framers of the 1979 edition “hoped that the text that would become the 1979 Book of Common Prayer] will be found to permit also the expression of Christian joy in the confidence of God’s full and free pardon through Jesus Christ” (p. 13). One result of this reworking was an increased range of options. The Holy Eucharist allowed for occasional omission of confession or relocating the confession to a preliminary penitential office. The 1979 edition was the first prayer book to include a full rite of Private Confession with two possible forms.

**Event 2: Lecture and Worship**

Lecture: Non-Eucharistic Worship since 1979
Sister Jean Campbell, OSH
Thursday, December 10 • 4PM
Lettie Pate Auditorium
Dinner • 5:45 PM at the Refectory • $12

From the mid-19th to the mid-20th century it was common for Episcopal congregations to celebrate Morning Prayer as the major Sunday morning service and to schedule midweek celebrations of the Eucharist. The authors of the 1979 edition of the Book of Common Prayer attempted to reverse this pattern by asserting that Holy Eucharist is “the principle act of Christian worship on the Lord's Day” and by stressing the importance of Morning and Evening Prayer as regular weekday offices. Some, like scholar H. Boone Porter, predicted that this reordering of the place of the daily office would lead to a flowering of new spirituality. Sister Jean Campbell will explore what has happened to the daily office in the intervening years.

Evening Prayer
Chapel • 7PM

**Event 3 Reflection and Dialogue**

Lecture: Reflections on the Centrality of the Eucharist in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer
The Rev. Patrick Malloy, Ph.D. Professor of Liturgics, The General Theological Seminary
The Rev. Geoff Price, Interim Rector, Abingdon Church, White Marsh, VA
Friday March 12 • 9AM • Cost $40
(Part of Fridays at the Seminary)
Lettie Pate Auditorium
Lunch • Noon • Refectory
To register for this event, go to Fridays at the Seminary on the ICFL Registration page.

Dr. Malloy will focus on the current implications of a Eucharistic-centered worship, followed by a reflection by Rev. Price about the changing character of worship for a parish priest since the adoption of
the 1979 prayer book. Prior to the 1979 edition many Episcopal congregations celebrated Morning Prayer as the primary Sunday service. The 1979 prayer book pointed in a different direction, declaring that “the Holy Eucharist [is] the principal act of Christian worship on the Lord's Day and other major Feasts” (p. 13). This simple statement contributed to a major realignment in Episcopal Sunday worship.

Dialogue
Friday March 12 • 1:30PM
The Rev. Patrick Malloy
The Rev. Geoff Price
The Rev. John Runkle, Conservator, Washington Cathedral

Architect John Runkle, in pictures and words, will describe the way Eucharistic worship has affected the art and architecture of Episcopal congregations, followed by a dialogue with all three speakers.

**EVENT 4: LECTURE AND DIALOGUE**
**The Future of Common Texts: The Convergence and Divergence of Ecumenical Cooperation on the Liturgy**
The Rev. Ruth Meyers, Ph.D. Professor of Liturgics, Church Divinity School of the Pacific
Wednesday, April 7 • 4PM
Lettie Pate Auditorium

The 1979 Book of Common Prayer included 12 texts that had been translations into contemporary English by the International Consultation on English Texts (ICET) made up of scholars from Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, Baptist, Methodist and Congregational churches. Later developments, however, resulted in a regression from this original level of cooperation. Not all of the participants in ICET, which existed from 1969 to 1973, agreed with the attempt of that body’s successor—the English Language Liturgical Consultation (ELLC)—to create texts that avoided use of male pronouns. The lecture will focus on both the extraordinary cooperation of the 1960s and 1970s and the prospects of future cooperation.

As part of the Zabriskie Lecture Series for 2009-10, The Prayer Book at 30 is presented in thanksgiving for the ministry of Charles Philip Price (1920-1999), a long-time faculty member at the Virginia Theological Seminary who served on the Standing Liturgical Committee (the body entrusted with preparing the 1979 edition) from 1968 to 1985. Price authored a commentary on the 1979 prayer book on behalf of the Standing Liturgical Committee and acted as the chaplain to the General Convention’s House of Deputies for seven years, including the critical 1979 session.