

# The Development of the American Prayer Book

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Class 1

6 March 2009

## What we will discuss in this class - 1

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- How the Eucharist came to be the “property” of the clergy.
- How the reformation began to restore worship to the people.
- How the prayer book tradition developed in England.

## What we will discuss in this class - 2

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- How English politics affected Anglicanism in Scotland, and the independent track the prayer book took in Scotland.
- The influence of the Scottish Prayer book on the American prayer book tradition.
- The development of the first American prayer book.
- Revisions of the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer.

## Resources

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- The class web page:  
[http://www.williamgstroop.com/Sunday%20Classes/Development%20of%20the%20Prayer%20Book/Devel\\_of\\_PB\\_Home.htm](http://www.williamgstroop.com/Sunday%20Classes/Development%20of%20the%20Prayer%20Book/Devel_of_PB_Home.htm)
- Books
  - Marion J. Hatchett. Commentary on the American Prayer Book. San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco. 1995.
  - Jeffrey Lee. Opening the Prayer Book. Volume 7 in The New Church's Teaching Series. Boston, MA: Cowley Publications. 1999. pp. 40-83.

## Early Codification of Liturgy - 1

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- Prior to the Edict of Milan in 313 CE that “legalized” Christianity, liturgical practices were not uniform.
- After thousands began to convert, the Church had a need to develop a uniform liturgical form.
- The Church and the state also merged into one as the Roman Empire collapsed.

## Early Codification of Liturgy - 2

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- Although the patterns of Eucharist, Baptism, and daily prayer were essentially the same, liturgical and ceremonial practices varied. The liturgy in Gaul was not the same as it was in Celtic Britain.
- During the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> C, popes began to sponsor and collect liturgical documents and assembled them into sacramentaries and *ordines*. One of the most notable was the 4<sup>th</sup> C pope, Gregory the Great.

### Early Codification of Liturgy - 3

- Under Greg the Great, St. Augustine came to England, bringing the “Roman” liturgy and church calendar to the English Celtic Church.
- The 6th and the 11th C saw the rise of the papacy and the consolidation of Church power in Rome.



### The Work of the People Became the Work of the Clergy - 1

- The word “liturgy” means work of the people. But by the middle ages, serious preparation for Baptism, characteristic of the earliest church, had been lost, and the doctrine of “original sin” had gained ground.
- Baptism began to be seen as a cleansing rather than an entrance into a distinct society.

### The Work of the People Became the Work of the Clergy - 2

- When Baptism ceased to differentiate, something else did: ordination and an entry into the monastic life.
- The ordinary person became a consumer of services provided by a religious elite class: the priests and Bishops.
- Sacraments became the property of the clergy, and daily prayers became part of the monastic life.

### The Eucharist - 1

- During the 11<sup>th</sup> C, the theology of Eucharist began to be seen “transactionally” through the work of Thomas Aquinas and others.
  - Meal that had been shared as a community experience of the redemptive death and resurrection of Jesus became to be seen more as a sacrifice for sin.
- The doctrine of “transubstantiation” grew, and so did debate about the nature of the transformation of the bread and the wine.



### The Eucharist - 2

- The people became removed from the liturgical action of the Eucharist.
  - The priest turned his back away from the people and spoke inaudibly and archaic Latin.
  - The original home dining table and the central table of the Roman basilica were replaced by a wall altar.
  - Priests were required to say daily masses whether people were present or not.
  - Private masses said for the dead became common place.
  - The monastic office grew to huge proportions – unattainable by lay persons.

### The Early Liturgical Priest Books

- Liturgical texts were assembled and their use enforced by ecclesiastical authority (Popes or Bishops).
- Six – seven or more books were required
  - The missal (invariable parts of the mass)
  - The breviary (daily office)
  - The manual (special services like Baptism, marriage, etc.)
  - The Pontifical (services done by a Bishop)
  - The Processional (music)
  - The lectionary lessons
  - Other manuals governing feast days, other music, ritual directions, etc.

## The Early Liturgical Laity Books

- Wealthy and literate laity had access to a series of devotional prayer books: primers or “books of hours” (prayers and psalms)
- By the 14<sup>th</sup> C, these were used to guide the laity as they attended the liturgy (laity doing one thing; priests doing another). The church had forgotten that the *people* were the primary ministers.

## The Reformation and the Return of the Liturgy to the People

- Luther was a conservative liturgist: if what was done was not incompatible with scripture, then it could stay (estments, architecture, and ceremonial), as long as it was done in the vernacular.
- Calvin was more radical (although he did allow some remnants), and in the reformed churches preaching assumed supreme importance.

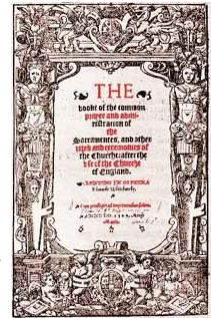
## Reformation in England

- Henry VIII allowed only cautious changes to liturgy, and by his death worship was still largely medieval in form, except that services were in English.
- When 11 year-old Edward VI became king in 1547, ABp Thomas Cranmer, appointed by Henry after Thomas More, had likely already begun work on the English prayer book.



## The First English Prayer Book - 1

- In 1548 a committee of “learned men” was charged with producing a “godly order” for worship in England.
- January 1549, the Act of Uniformity was passed by parliament making *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Ceremonies of the Church, after the Use of the Church in England* the official order of worship.



## What was Special About The First English Prayer Book?

- First book to see the rites of the church as *common* prayer – for everyone.
- It was liturgically conservative – pretty much the same rites as before, although simplified.
- Like every PB after, the 1549 PB did not satisfy everyone!