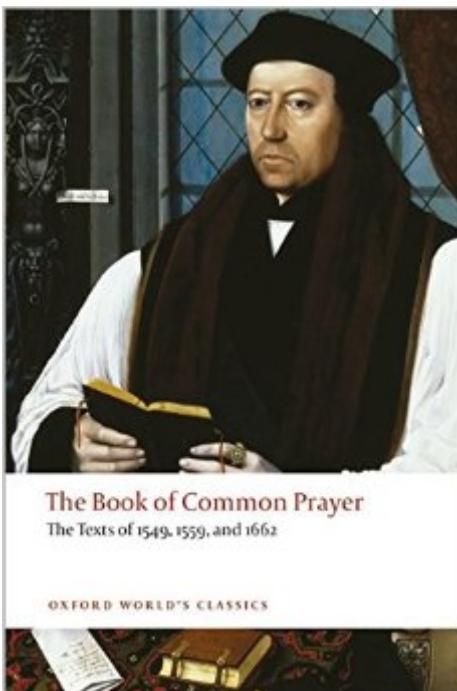


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The Book Of Common Prayer: The Texts Of 1549, 1559, And 1662 (Oxford World's Classics)



Synopsis

'In the midst of life we are in death.' The words of the Book of Common Prayer have permeated deep into the English language all over the world. For nearly 500 years, and for countless people, it has provided a background fanfare for a marriage or a funeral march at a burial. Yet this familiarity also hides a violent and controversial history. When it was first produced the Book of Common Prayer provoked riots and rebellion, and it was banned before being translated into a host of global languages and adopted as the basis for worship in the USA and elsewhere to the present day. This edition presents the work in three different states: the first edition of 1549, which brought the Reformation into people's homes; the Elizabethan prayer book of 1559, familiar to Shakespeare and Milton; and the edition of 1662, which embodies the religious temper of the nation down to modern times. About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

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Customer Reviews

Before I get into the literary content, I must mention that the physical book is very well designed and

attractively bound, with a handy ribbon. So now, the Book of Common Prayer is of course a marvelous work in all its classical editions, but I was most mystified by some of the choices made here by editor Brian Cummings. The introductory matter states "An ideal edition of the Book of Common Prayer would include all this [1662] material in its varieties, and also those of 1552, 1604, and 1928. This edition is not that ideal." So at least it's honest, admitting it's not ideal. And I can understand why it's not practical to put in every possible text. But some omitted sections make it severely lacking as a tool for comparative liturgy. The 1549 BCP is missing the Introits, Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, under the excuse that this section is substantially identical to that in the 1662 text. But this is very regrettable, because the 1549 book used (along with those of 1552 and 1559) an entirely different and older scriptural translation from the Authorized Version used in 1662. It would be very instructive to compare these, but this volume does not afford us that opportunity. Additionally, since the BCPs after 1549 did not include Introits at all, I don't understand why Cummings couldn't have at least included a little table telling us which psalm went with which day in the 1549 lectionary, even if he was unwilling to print them all out. Neither of the two Edwardine Ordinals is included, which is a real shame since they changed a lot compared to the one in 1662. The 1552 BCP is entirely absent, but I don't mind this omission too much, since no one ever really used that book for long.

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