

**THE AMERICAN BOOK OF CHURCH SERVICES:
WITH SELECTIONS FOR RESPONSIVE READING
AND FULL ORDERS OF SERVICE FOR THE
CELEBRATION OF MATRIMONY, FOR
FUNERALS, AND OTHER OCCASIONAL
MINISTRATIONS; ALSO AN AMPLE LIST OF
SELECTIONS OF SACRED MUSIC**

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EDWARD HUNGERFORD

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Preface.

THE Church Services which prevail most widely in this country have been developed out of the extremely simple worship first introduced by the Pilgrims and other early settlers of New England. The process of development is still in progress. In their present somewhat complex form they are indigenous to our soil, and, contrasted with those orders of worship which, imported from the old countries, have not been materially changed, they may be characterized as American.

The Pilgrims accompanied their preaching with extemporaneous prayers and the singing of psalms. Cotton Mather* gives the morning order as practised in New England in the first quarter of the last century. It consists of (1) The Long Prayer, (2) A Psalm sung, (3) The Sermon, (4) The Short Prayer, (5) The Benediction. He says that in the afternoon a second psalm was sometimes sung after the short prayer. The reading of the Scriptures as an act of worship had no place. Its introduction was a later innovation.

With choirs came a broader use of sacred music. The gradual expansion of the primitive method re-

* *Ratio Disciplina, etc.*, Boston, 1726.

sulted in making the following order of worship very common fifty years ago: (1) Anthem, (2) Invocation, (3) A Metrical Hymn, (4) Scripture Reading, (5) The Long Prayer, (6) Hymn, (7) Sermon, (8) Prayer, (9) Hymn, (10) Doxology, (11) Benediction. This order has since been enriched by interpolations, such as choir responses; the singing of anthems, among which the old church hymns, *Te Deum*, *Gloria in Excelsis*, *Gloria Patri*, and others have become conspicuous; reciting of the Lord's Prayer; the Apostles' Creed; the use of Responsive Readings. All churches now use some of these, some churches use all of them; but in their use there is no uniform order, nor does the arrangement of the service always reveal a careful study of the subject of worship, which, under the present tendency to enrichment, is becoming of sufficient importance to demand rank as a special department of the pastor's education.

The American Book of Church Services gives expression to this home growth while aiming to reduce its results to something like uniformity. The order adopted is in nearly every service that which has for a long time been customary in the greater part of the churches of this country, and an effort has been made to group into suitable form under that order those elements which have gradually come into use. The adherence of the book to the traditions of this indigenous order, and its purpose to present only a legitimate outcome of it, may, it is hoped, justify a title which might otherwise seem presumptuous. Such a title calls attention to the existence of a method of worship which has grown up under the conditions of our national life, and is crystallizing into definite

form, under the exercise of its liberty to adopt and assimilate to itself whatever is best in ancient or modern liturgical usage. In the midst of a wide discussion of the possibilities of a national liturgy, the title reveals the significant fact that a worship properly American has long been in process of formation under the natural law of adaptation to surroundings, and is now assuming a more rapid development by the introduction of varied material. In this growth we repeat the history of every national worship, which, when left free to express the spiritual wants of the people, presents upon the basis of Christian unity a superstructure that differentiates it from all others.

The services here offered to the churches lay no claim to perfection, though they are the result of prolonged study of the subject of worship in its ancient methods and in its adaptation to the wants of this stirring age. They are also the result of delightful experiences in the active pastorate. This is true of the Morning and Evening Services, which, substantially as here given, have been in successful use; and it is peculiarly true of the Fuller Communion Service, which has, in its main features, been tested in a church composed largely of laboring people, and has been proved by most happy results in respect of unanimity of endorsement and of spiritual enjoyment.

The book does not offer a special order for every Sunday of the year. It assumes that each church will adopt one order for the morning and another for the evening to be used continuously. Variable elements are left to the choice of pastors, who will usually prefer to select these parts, including anthems and other choir pieces, with special reference to the

theme of the sermon, which thus becomes the cause of a pervading unity of thought and feeling.

To meet the wants of the greatest possible number, two arrangements each for Morning and Evening Service are offered to the choice of churches. One of these is simple, the other more complex. With the same purpose, two orders for celebrating the Lord's Supper are offered, as is also a Vesper Service without sermon. For Baptisms, Marriages, and other Occasional Ministrations, forms have been prepared with sometimes an alternate.

Under the plan of printing in each order those parts which are constant or are likely to come into most frequent use, the repetition of anthems and other elements was not to be avoided. It was thought that pastors and congregations would prefer to have the material, so far as possible, printed in its proper place, rather than search for it in other portions of the book.

When services are complex, conscientious attention to details is essential. Pastors should request their congregations to observe the suggestions in regard to attitudes in worship. Of considerable importance is the conspicuous posting of hymns, choir calls, and anthems in sight of the congregation, that without other announcement the people may join in them by a spontaneous movement, or may devoutly follow the texts of them, which for this purpose have been printed.

Prayers.

In some of the services prayers have been inserted. They are not designed to exclude extemporaneous

prayer, but to aid and if desired to supplement it. To those who do not use them, they may be valuable as indicating, especially in the Communion Service, the proper subjects of prayer at each stage, and may become models. These prayers have been drawn from the most varied sources, in the Eastern and Western Church. In each case the source is indicated. Besides fresh translations from Renaudot's famous work on the Liturgies of the Eastern Church, some of Neal's translations have been adopted, and Bright's Ancient Collects has been a valuable aid. Available books of service have also been used. In comparatively few instances has it been thought desirable to propose new prayers, but the liberty of free translations, and even of occasional alterations, has not been refused when, in a prayer otherwise valuable, ancient phraseology seemed liable to be misunderstood, or where later errors of doctrine have found expression.

Litanies.

In behalf of the Litany should be said that it is above all others the prayer of the congregation. Its use cannot be too strongly urged. It helps the young to participate in public and private worship; it fosters the feeling of fellowship more than does any other form of prayer. But in our litany we must express the needs of our times. For this reason new litanies must be prepared for use in public and in the family as the conditions of life change. The litany is the cry of the people out of present necessity. These considerations have not prevented the insertion with others of the litany of the Episcopal Church, conse-

crated by long use. In furtherance of participation in prayers, the "Amen" has in these services been usually assigned to the congregation. The Collection of Prayers and Thanksgivings for Various Occasions is designed not only for public but also for family worship.

Responsive Readings.

In the arrangement of Responsive Readings for use in public worship historical and exegetical considerations must necessarily be subordinated to the devotional purpose. The Selections have been grouped under a few leading heads, which do not lay claim to exact discrimination, but may guide the minister to a choice in harmony with the theme of his discourse. He will be further aided by the title of each Selection, which usually expresses some dominant thought of that Selection. In some cases these headings and titles might, no doubt, be equally well replaced by others. The Psalms admit of only a loose grouping after the plan adopted. The heading "Didactic" is less satisfactory than the others, but on the whole nothing so well expresses the general impression left by reading many of the Psalms, whether they be prayers, or hymns of praise, or more direct recitals of ethical principles. The term must be regarded as only broadly indicative of this impression.

No definite rule has guided the breaking up of the Psalms into responses. The verses have to a great extent been followed, but where they too sharply interrupt the thought they have been disregarded. When the same response recurs in a Psalm care has been taken to assign it to the congregation. In gen-