

# Daily Prayer

**Background** Michael Perham has written “Common Prayer is part of the Church of England’s heritage.

In his book “Company of Voices” George Guiver sets daily prayer in the context of the prayer of the Church. He writes

“Christian prayer is one. The prayer of the Church is the total prayer of all Christians. The separate prayers of all the members of the one Body make up a single whole, whatever form they might individually take. This prayer is Christ praying in his Church.

The varieties of prayer are many, but three categories are outstanding :

- (a) the sacraments, above all the eucharist ;
- (b) daily liturgical prayer, which can be offered individually or with others;
- (c) the intimate prayer of individuals.

Daily liturgical prayer has three modes :

- (a) the daily office of the local church, which normally consists of two services, at the beginning and ending of the working day;
- (b) the monastic office, which divides the day into more frequent gatherings for prayer ;
- (c) subsidiary liturgical prayer, celebrated by individuals and groups, which is inspired by the daily office and often consciously associated with it, and which can be twice or more per day according to circumstances. “

Since the Expiry of the *Alternative Service Book 1980 (ASB)*, the Church of England has had only two authorised forms of the Daily Office: the order for Morning and Evening Prayer in the *Book of Common Prayer (BCP)*; and 'A Service of the Word', an outline service first authorised in 1994. The latter service was originally seen as an outline for non-eucharistic services on a Sunday, but it soon became clear that it would provide a good framework for the Daily Office on weekdays. This structure enables a number of forms of daily prayer to be brought into the category of authorised services. Perhaps the most widely used of these forms of prayer is ‘Celebrating Common Prayer’ (CCP). This 1992 publication is based upon the Daily Office of the Society of St. Francis. CCP allows considerable flexibility and enables those who use it to follow the structure of Morning & Evening Prayer as set out by Cranmer in the BCP (and later adopted by the ASB) or the structure of the Roman Catholic Divine Office

## Cranmer BCP Structure

Opening Praise  
Psalms  
Old Testament Reading  
Canticle  
New Testament Reading  
Canticle  
Prayers

## RC Divine Office Structure

Opening Praise  
Psalms and Canticle  
Reading  
Gospel Canticle  
Prayers

CCP has long been out of print and in 2002 the Common Worship (CW) Daily Prayer Preliminary Edition was published. This volume was published in a preliminary form for two reasons. Firstly to allow time for work to be completed on a new CW Weekday Lectionary and also to provide an opportunity for material to be tried and tested before the final texts are produced. The final version of CW Daily Prayer is due to be published ..... This will be a hardbound volume with ribbon markers!

# Common Worship Daily Prayer

The publication of CW Daily Prayer has enabled the inclusion of material to reflect upon and celebrate the seasons of the Church's year (something lacking in the BCP & ASB). In addition to including an order for Morning and Evening Prayer the opportunity has also been taken to include other forms of service that would meet a wide variety of differing needs. Thus CW Daily Prayer should not be seen merely as a service book for use in church by the clergy, but also as a resource that has the potential to help all Christians to deepen their prayer life.

Daily Prayer contains within it four patterns of prayer, each of which follows a basic pattern which allows adaptation to meet individual needs.

**Prayer During the Day** -is the most flexible order and can be used as an outline for personal Bible reading, a simple form of Midday Prayer or as the basis for a personal pattern of prayer. It contains the three essentials of daily prayer - praise, Bible reading and intercession. It has the following structure :-

- Preparation
- Praise
- The Word of God
- Response
- Prayers
- Conclusion

**Morning and Evening Prayer** - Draws upon the traditional structure provided by the BCP which can be simplified or enriched to meet local need. These services can include a rich array of seasonal material. The structure of these services is:-

- Preparation
- The Word of God
- Prayers
- Conclusion

Within each section there is a variety of material for optional use. Although the structure constant a distinction is made between Seasons and Ordinary Time. During Ordinary Time different material is included for each day of the week, whilst during the seasons each day of the week uses the same material appropriate for that particular period of the year.

**Night Prayer** - Is derived from the simple office of Compline which came at the end of the monastic day. The structure follows the same four-part pattern as Morning and Evening Prayer:-

- Preparation
- The Word of God
- Prayers
- Conclusion

The content of each section is more focussed with fewer choices, although there is the option to include daily and seasonal material.

**Further Information** - on the development and implementation of new liturgy can be found in

The Renewal of Common Prayer : Ed Michael Perham  
Church House Publishing & SPCK 1993 ISBN 0-281-04712 - £7.99

Using Common Worship - Daily Prayer : Jeremy Fletcher & Gilly Myers -  
Church House Publishing 2002 ISBN 0-7151-2065-4 £9.95

A historical account of the development of Daily Prayer and its importance within life of the Church can be found in

Company of Voices - George Guiver CR -Canterbury Press 2001 ISBN 1853113948  
£14.99