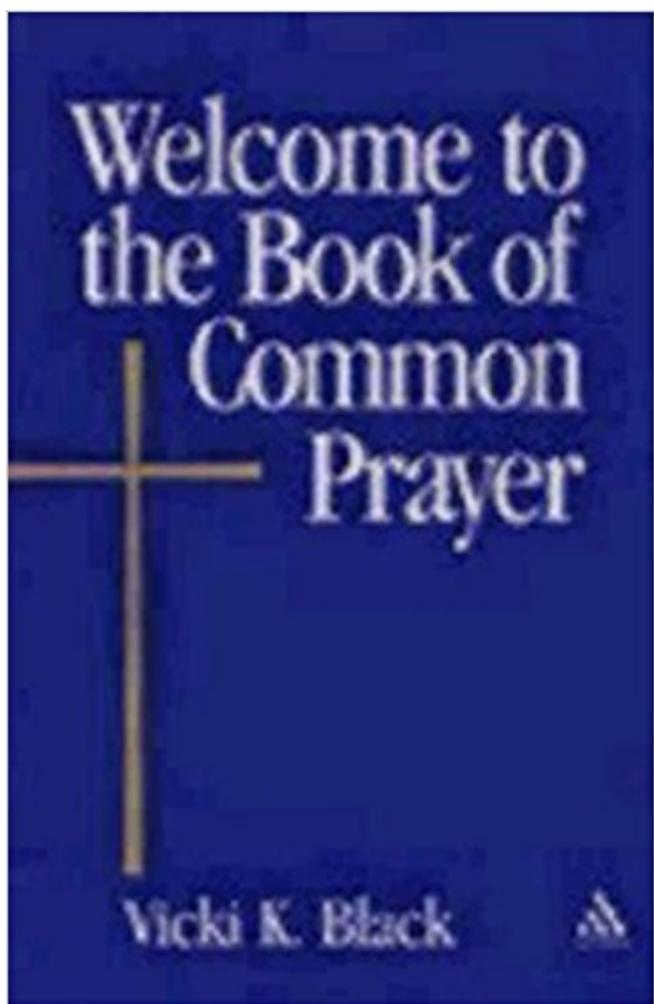


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# Welcome To The Book Of Common Prayer (Welcome To The Episcopal Church)



## Synopsis

In this guide for newcomers as well as lifelong Episcopalians, author Vicki Black helps readers navigate the currents of Anglican liturgy and discover its richness and beauty. As we use the Book of Common Prayer, Black says, “we discover we are not alone, and this liturgical current of worship, prayer, and praise will indeed take us where we want to go.” *Welcome to the Book of Common Prayer* shows readers everything from where to find the Sunday collect to how to pray the Daily Office. But it’s more than a how-to. It offers history and background that help make the prayer book a more meaningful part of the worship life of individuals and congregations. With thoughtful reflection questions, this is a perfect volume for parish study groups.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Vicki K. Black is an Episcopal deacon who has served in the dioceses of Massachusetts, Milwaukee, and Washington, where she has worked in publishing, parishes, and in coordinating retreats. She resides in Bethesda, Maryland, with her family.

We converted from another denomination and wanted to understand the Book of Common Prayer and its role in Episcopal worship/use. I found this book most helpful and an interesting read. I even highlighted portions of it for reference later. This book was recommended to me by a priest as an

introduction to understanding the Book of Common Prayer and how we can incorporate it into our daily lives as well as use it in worship services. I also purchased the Welcome to the Episcopal Church and found it very helpful and enlightening. My sister is converting to the denomination and I've ordered both of these books for her for Christmas. Would highly recommend both of these books for a new Episcopalian or existing ones who would like a review of their faith and practices.

The Book of Common Prayer is one of those books that helps shape my life and spirituality. I was once asked to list books that have most influenced my life, vocational discernment and spirituality - I had a list of important books I'd read, but I also inserted a subset of books that continue to be of importance on a regular basis; in this small collection of books, the Book of Common Prayer shared pride of place with the Bible as one that I most frequently read. I have collected editions of the Book of Common Prayer (with origins in the 1500s, it continues to be updated in various guises in various parts of the word; the touchstone is still is the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, but my most frequently used edition now is the 1979 Book of Common Prayer edition by the American Episcopal church), and also collect books about the Book of Common Prayer. Vicki Black's text is part of a series done by Morehouse Press, a publisher of Episcopal titles, who have introduced a 'Welcome to...' series to help both newcomers and established members better understand different aspects of the church. Black's book is short and accessible, and follows the 1979 BCP in structure. There are sections of this book that provide introduction and commentary for each of the major sections of the Book of Common Prayer: Baptism, Eucharist, Daily Office, Church Year, Making Vows (Confirmation, Marriage, Ordination), Pastoral Offices, and the 'extra bits'. While the BCP is arranged in a different order from Black's chapters, the arrangement of chapters in Black's book follow the criteria of 'most-used' - there are parts of the book that are more frequently used than others. Each chapter in Black's book can be read independent of the others for the most part, which makes this a very useful tool for Lenten studies, church groups and others who might want to follow a different sequence. Black's first chapter opens with a comparison of the Episcopal church in practice to a scene in 'Finding Nemo' - I knew I would love this book at that instant! The main fish characters, Marlin and Dory, are swept up in a current that draws them along, together with a host of others, and it is both the stream and the community that transforms them in their quest. This is analogous to the way the liturgy and the community of the church should draw people in and carry them forward - 'we discover that we are not alone, and this liturgical current of worship, prayer, and praise will indeed take us where we want to go - to union with the God we seek to love.' After giving a brief, informative and honest history of the origins of the Book of Common Prayer (including some of the

political issues that no longer inform the reason for the BCP), Black proceeds to examine the different parts of the book in seven additional chapters. Included in this is a bit of theological analysis, liturgical practice, biblical basis, historical underpinnings, and questions for reflection and discussion (this latter piece is far from comprehensive, as the questions are open-ended to permit further questions to develop). Each of these implicitly draws into an idea of scripture, tradition and reason as the pillars of the Anglican system. This is a very informative and useful guide, both for those who are new to the Book of Common Prayer, and those who have held the book in their hands through many editions all their lives.

As a new Episcopalian I have read several books about the faith. If you only read one, this one is the best.

I like all of the books in the Welcome to the Episcopal Church series. They are clear, concise books that are perfect for helping people understand the Episcopal/Anglican tradition. I use them to help people who want to go a little deeper - these books allows them to go a little deeper. I recommend them to anyone who wants to know more about the Episcopal Church.

Very detailed explanation and review! Good reading.

What I need is "The Book of Common Prayer for Dummies." I thought this was going to be that sort of thing, but it's not. It's good as far as it goes, just not the nuts and bolts guide to using the BCP that I had hoped for.

.... as a new Anglican. I still have problems deciding how to choose my morning and evening prayers but this book really clarified a lot of things I didn't know. I feel i am finally getting it now!

Very thorough.

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