

A COMPANION TO  
MORNING PRAYER



*An introductory guide to Morning Prayer from  
The 1662 Book of Common Prayer:  
International Edition*

## PRELUDE

Morning Prayer nourishes the soul, not with bouts of intensity, but with a steady, calming simplicity. All you need is a prayer book and a Bible. All you have to do is show up, ready to hear God's word and to walk along a path of prayer that has already been laid out for you.

This is a guide to Morning Prayer as it appears in the classic Book of Common Prayer; the edition used here is *The 1662 Book of Common Prayer: International Edition* (IVP Academic, 2021). In this guide, a page from Morning Prayer appears on the left, and brief comments appear on the right.

Many of the words you are about to read are from the Bible. There will be individual verses, as well as larger passages. Twice you will say the Lord's Prayer (each time with a different implicit theme because of the prayer's surroundings). And there will be many other biblical phrases and paraphrases, especially from the Psalms.

All the other words in Morning Prayer are treasures either from the ancient undivided church or from the Reformation. From the first centuries of the church come the Apostles' Creed, the *Gloria Patri*, the songs of praise called the *Te Deum* and *Benedicite*, and some very old Greek and Latin prayers. From the Reformation, and especially from Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, come other parts of the service – the exhortation, confession, and absolution – as well as skillful English translations of the ancient sources.

At first all this may seem daunting. In C.S. Lewis's analogy, reading Morning Prayer is like learning how to dance. At first you will be counting steps, but then it will become familiar, and before you know it, you are dancing.

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## The Order for Morning Prayer Daily Throughout the Year.

¶ At the beginning of Morning Prayer the minister shall read with a loud voice one or more of these sentences of the Scriptures that follow. And then he shall say that which is written after the sentences.

**W**HEN the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. *Ezekiel 18:27.*

I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. *Psalms 51:3.*

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. *Psalms 51:9.*

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. *Psalms 51:17.*

Rend your heart and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. *Joel 2:13.*

To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him, neither have we obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in his laws which he set before us. *Daniel 9:9-10.*

O LORD, correct me, but with judgement; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. *Jeremiah 10:24; Psalms 6:1.*

### THE SENTENCES

The first instruction (the red letters) says ‘the minister’ is supposed to read something ‘with a loud voice’. Who is ‘the minister’ and why is this person shouting?

When you read Morning Prayer by yourself, you say all of the spoken parts (the black letters), including ones marked ‘minister’ or ‘priest’. There is a possible exception we’ll get to in a moment. But having that word *minister* at the beginning is a reminder that although you can read Morning Prayer alone, it’s designed to be read with other people.

And the shouting is not quite what it seems. ‘With a loud voice’ is in contrast to silently, in a quiet murmur, or just for the gathered clergy. In the late medieval church, with the services mostly in Latin, the priest would say prayers that were inaudible to the people, and unintelligible even if they had heard them. But the English Reformers rejected that practice. They wanted the services from the Book of Common Prayer to ‘edify’ (or build up) the people, and that could happen only if the people heard and understood. That is why the services are in English; that is why the minister’s words are said ‘with a loud voice’.

And what are you to read? ‘One or more of these sentences of the Scriptures’ – the short Scripture portions on pages 1-2. Choose one or two of these sentences, and read them.

## MORNING PRAYER

Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. *St. Matthew 3:2.*

I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.' *St. Luke 15:18-19.*

Enter not into judgement with thy servant, O Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. *Psalms 143:2.*

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. *1 John 1:8-9.*

**D**EARLY beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in sundry places to acknowledge and confess our manifold sins and wickedness, and that we should not dissemble nor cloak them before the face of almighty God our heavenly Father, but confess them with a humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient heart, to the end that we may obtain forgiveness of the same, by his infinite goodness and mercy. And although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God, yet ought we most chiefly so to do, when we assemble and meet together to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul. Wherefore I pray and beseech you, as many as are here present, to accompany me with a pure heart and humble voice, unto the throne of the heavenly grace, saying after me,

## THE EXHORTATION

Read this exhortation, which points back to the sentences you just read ('the Scripture moveth us in sundry places') and looks forward to the following prayer of confession. The exhortation contains in outline the major themes of Morning Prayer: confession and forgiveness of sin, thanksgiving, praise, hearing God's word, and prayer.

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¶ A general confession to be said by the whole congregation after the minister, all kneeling.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; And we have done those things which we ought not to have done; And there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent, According to thy promises declared unto mankind In Christ Jesu our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, That we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, To the glory of thy holy name. Amen.

¶ The absolution or remission of sins to be pronounced by the priest alone, standing, the people still kneeling.

ALMIGHTY God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness and live, and hath given power and commandment to his ministers to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins: He pardoneth and absolveth all those who truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel; wherefore let us beseech him to grant us true repentance and his Holy Spirit, that those things may please him which we do at this present, and that the

## THE GENERAL CONFESSION

Read this confession, which has a two-part movement. The descent has verbs like *erred*, *strayed*, *followed*, *offended*, with the downward movement finally bottoming out with ‘And there is no health in us’ (which means ‘we are not well’ and ‘we cannot cure ourselves’).

Then comes the ‘But’, just as in Ephesians 2:4. Now the focus shifts from us to God, and the verbs are about divine action on our behalf: *have mercy*, *spare*, *restore*, *grant*. A special form of intimate address for Jesus is used, *Jesu* (in English pronounced *JEE-su*).

## THE ABSOLUTION

The absolution is a declaration of divine forgiveness. There are various practices regarding it, and instead of telling you what to do, this guide will simply note two of them.

One view is that this prayer can be said only by a priest. After all, the instruction does say ‘the priest alone’, and absolution is a ministry committed only to those ordained as presbyters in Christ’s church (see page 610). On this view, unless you are a priest, you should skip it.

A second view is that anyone can say it, and you should. Elsewhere the word *priest* does not exclude a deacon or lay person from reading (as on pages 4-5 and 13), and so ‘the priest alone’ simply means that this is read only by the person leading the service; the congregation, which read the previous prayer, does not continue reading (compare ‘the

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rest of our life hereafter may be pure and holy, so that at the last we may come to his eternal joy, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- ¶ The people shall answer here and at the end of all other prayers, Amen.
- ¶ Then the minister shall kneel and say the Lord's Prayer with an audible voice, the people also kneeling and repeating it with him, both here and wherever else it is used in divine service.

**O**UR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

- ¶ Then likewise he shall say,
  - O Lord, open thou our lips.
  - Answer.** And our mouth shall show forth thy praise.
  - Priest.** O God, make speed to save us.
  - Answer.** O Lord, make haste to help us.
- ¶ Here, all standing up, the priest shall say,
  - Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
  - Answer.** As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

minister alone' on page 361). Moreover, this form of absolution, unlike others in the prayer book, simply describes the conditions of God's forgiveness ('He pardoneth and absolveth all those who truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel'), and encourages you to pray for the grace to fulfill them, something any Christian can and should pray for. Whichever view you follow, you will be in good company.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Read the Lord's Prayer. In line with the absolution's encouragement to pray for the grace of 'true repentance', it has words of repentance: 'And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us.' It also points forward: having confessed your sins, you are about to ask God to open your lips in praise, but one more thing is needful, namely aligning your desires and purposes with God's: 'Thy kingdom come. Thy will' – not mine – 'be done.'

## VERSICLES

Read the short alternating lines that begin 'O Lord, open thou our lips' and continue through 'The Lord's name be praised' on the next page. The first pair of lines is from the Psalms (51:15), as is the second pair (70:1). The third pair of lines, which begins 'Glory be to the Father,' is the *Gloria Patri*. This is an ancient Christian prayer that expresses our faith in the Trinity; it also encourages us to read the following psalms as Christian Scripture, and for this reason is repeated after each psalm. The fourth pair of lines (on page 5) repeats the note of praise that is so pervasive in the Psalms.

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**Priest.** Praise ye the Lord.

**Answer.** The Lord's name be praised.

¶ Then shall be said or sung this psalm following, except on Easter Day, upon which another anthem is appointed (p. 135), and on the nineteenth day of every month, when it is read in the ordinary course of the Psalms.

*Venite, exultemus Domino.* Psalm 95.

COME, let us sing unto the LORD; \* let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.

Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, \* and show ourselves glad in him with psalms.

For the LORD is a great God, \* and a great king above all gods.

In his hand are all the corners of the earth, \* and the strength of the hills is his also.

The sea is his and he made it, \* and his hands prepared the dry land.

O come, let us worship and fall down, \* and kneel before the LORD our maker.

For he is the Lord our God, \* and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

Today if ye will hear his voice – 'Harden not your hearts \* as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness,

When your fathers tempted me, \* proved me, and saw my works.

Forty years long was I grieved with this generation and said, \* "It is a people that do err in their hearts, for they have not known my ways";

## THE VENITE (PSALM 95)

Read Psalm 95. Called by its first word in Latin, *Venite* (pronounced either *vi-NI-tee* or *vi-NEE-tay*), it contains a three-fold exhortation: to praise (verses 1-5), to pray (verses 6-7), and to hear (verses 8-11). These are the three actions central to Morning Prayer: you are here 'to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul' (page 2). The *Venite* is frequently quoted in the New Testament (especially Hebrews 3-4), and it is placed here, before the psalms and lessons, as a reminder of what the stakes are when we hear God's word read or preached.

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Unto whom I swear in my wrath \* that they should not enter into my rest.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, \* and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, \* world without end. Amen.

¶ Then shall follow the Psalms in order as they are appointed (p. 362). And at the end of every psalm throughout the year shall be repeated,

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, \* and to the Holy Ghost;

*Answer.* As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, \* world without end. Amen.

¶ Then shall be read distinctly with an audible voice the first lesson, taken out of the Old Testament as is appointed in the calendar (p. xxxiv), except if proper lessons are assigned for that day (p. xxix). And he who readeth shall so stand and turn himself as to be best heard by those who are present. And after that shall be said or sung, in English, the hymn called *Te Deum laudamus*, daily throughout the year.

¶ Note that before every lesson the minister shall say, Here beginneth such a chapter (or verse of such a chapter) of such a book; and after every lesson, Here endeth the first (or the second) lesson.

*Te Deum laudamus.*

**W**E praise thee, O God; \* we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.

## THE PSALMS APPOINTED

Read the psalms. The ones for the morning and evening of each day of the month are clearly marked in the Psalter (pages 362-561). The Psalms speak of Christ (St. Luke 24:44), and in them, St. Athanasius said, you will find ‘all the movements of your soul, all its changes, its ups and downs, its failures and recoveries’. Further instructions are on page xxi.

## THE FIRST LESSON

Read the first ‘lesson’ (= reading). You can find it by looking at the tables and calendar before Morning Prayer. The tables give lessons for certain special days, but we will focus on how to use the calendar, which is used day in and day out. Start by turning to page xxxiv, and if the current month is not January, keep going until you find the right month. The left-hand page is for ‘Mattins’ (= Morning Prayer), while the right-hand page is for ‘Evensong’ (= Evening Prayer). Look at the left-hand page; find the day of the month; the column titled ‘1 Lesson’ gives you the reading. Now read that lesson. It isn’t printed in the Book of Common Prayer – you’ll need to read it from your own Bible. If you aren’t sure what the abbreviation for the name of the book means, there is a table of abbreviations on page xxviii.

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All the earth doth worship thee, \* the Father everlasting.  
To thee all angels cry aloud, \* the heavens and all the powers therein;

To thee cherubim and seraphim \* continually do cry,  
'Holy, holy, holy, \* Lord God of Sabaoth;

Heaven and earth are full of the majesty \* of thy glory.'

The glorious company of the apostles \* praise thee.

The goodly fellowship of the prophets \* praise thee.

The noble army of martyrs \* praise thee.

The holy church throughout all the world \* doth acknowledge thee:

The Father \* of an infinite majesty;

Thine honourable, true, \* and only Son;

Also the Holy Ghost, \* the Comforter.

**T**HOU art the king of glory, \* O Christ.

Thou art the everlasting Son \* of the Father.

When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man, \* thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.

When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, \* thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

Thou sittest at the right hand of God \* in the glory of the Father.

We believe that thou shalt come \* to be our judge.

We therefore pray thee, help thy servants, \* whom thou hast redeemed with thy precious blood.

Make them to be numbered with thy saints \* in glory everlasting.

Although the first lesson is usually from the Old Testament, sometimes it is from the Apocrypha. For Anglicans and other Protestants, the Apocrypha is not read as Scripture (the word of God), but merely as wise books that have been read by the church since ancient times. According to the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Apocrypha is not read 'to establish any doctrine', but rather 'for example of life and instruction of manners' (630).

## TE DEUM LAUDAMUS

Read the *Te Deum laudamus* (pages 6-8), a Christian hymn from the fourth century. It is called a 'canticle' (= song of praise). It is the first of two canticles that you will say or sing. Each canticle appears right after a lesson, offering a standpoint for thinking about the lesson you just read; the *Te Deum laudamus* does that by presenting God as judge and saviour.

## MORNING PRAYER

**O**LORD, save thy people, \* and bless thine heritage.  
 Govern them, \* and lift them up for ever.  
 Day by day \* we magnify thee,  
 And we worship thy name, \* ever world without end.  
 Vouchsafe, O Lord, \* to keep us this day without sin.  
 O Lord, have mercy upon us, \* have mercy upon us.  
 O Lord, let thy mercy lighten upon us, \* as our trust  
 is in thee.  
 O Lord, in thee have I trusted; \* let me never be con-  
 founded.

¶ Or this canticle.

*Benedicite, omnia opera.*

**O**LL ye works of the Lord, bless ye the Lord: \* praise  
 him and magnify him for ever.

**O**YE angels of the Lord, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him  
 and magnify him for ever.  
 O ye heavens, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and mag-  
 nify him for ever.  
 O ye waters that be above the firmament, bless ye the  
 Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.  
 O all ye powers of the Lord, bless ye the Lord: \* praise  
 him and magnify him for ever.  
 O ye sun and moon, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and  
 magnify him for ever.  
 O ye stars of heaven, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and  
 magnify him for ever.  
 O ye showers and dew, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him  
 and magnify him for ever.

## BENEDICITE, OMNIA OPERA

For now, skip the *Benedicite, omnia opera*. It is an alternative that can be said instead of the *Te Deum laudamus*. The *Benedicite* (which is pronounced *ben-i-DICE-i-tee*) presents God as creator, and it has been used in morning prayers in the East and West since the fourth century. It is part of an apocryphal addition to the Book of Daniel found in the ancient Greek, Latin, and Syriac versions.

## MORNING PRAYER

O ye winds of God, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye fire and heat, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye winter and summer, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye dews and frosts, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye frost and cold, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye ice and snow, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye nights and days, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye light and darkness, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye lightnings and clouds, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

**O** LET the earth bless the Lord: \* yea, let it praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye mountains and hills, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O all ye green things upon the earth, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye wells, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye seas and floods, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

### MORNING PRAYER

O ye whales, and all that move in the waters, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O all ye fowls of the air, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O all ye beasts and cattle, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye children of men, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

**O**LET Israel bless the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye priests of the Lord, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye servants of the Lord, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye spirits and souls of the righteous, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye holy and humble men of heart, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

O Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, bless ye the Lord: \* praise him and magnify him for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, \* and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, \* world without end. Amen.

¶ Then shall be read in like manner the second lesson, taken out of the New Testament. And after that the hymn following, except when it shall happen to be read in the chapter for the day or for the gospel on Saint John the Baptist's Day.

### THE SECOND LESSON

Read the second lesson, which you find in the same way you found the first one: turn to the calendar on page xxxiv, locate the month, look at the left-hand page, find the day of the month, and look at the '2 Lesson' column.

## MORNING PRAYER

*Benedictus*. St. Luke 1:68-79.

**B**LESSED be the Lord God of Israel, \* for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

And hath raised up a mighty salvation for us \* in the house of his servant David,

As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, \* which have been since the world began:

That we should be saved from our enemies, \* and from the hand of all that hate us,

To perform the mercy promised to our forefathers, \* and to remember his holy covenant,

To perform the oath which he sware to our forefather Abraham: \* that he would give us,

That we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, \* might serve him without fear,

In holiness and righteousness before him \* all the days of our life.

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, \* for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways,

To give knowledge of salvation unto his people, \* for the remission of their sins,

Through the tender mercy of our God, \* whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,

To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, \* and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, \* and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, \* world without end. Amen.

## BENEDICTUS

Read the second canticle, known by its first word in Latin, *Benedictus* (pronounced *bin-i-DIK-tus*). It presents God as the one who fulfills his covenant with Abraham, through Jesus Christ, the hope of all the prophets of Israel. Just as the *Venite* had a divine oath of judgment, so here there is a divine oath of salvation. These two oaths, the judgment taken for us and the salvation given to us, both in Jesus Christ, sum up the law and the gospel. The *Benedictus* continues the imagery of light and darkness that was introduced in the first canticle and which will culminate in the last collect of Evening Prayer (page 24).

## MORNING PRAYER

¶ Or instead *Jubilate Deo*, Psalm 100.

¶ Then shall be sung or said the Apostles' Creed by the minister and the people standing, except on such days as the Creed of Saint Athanasius is appointed to be read (p. 27).

**I**BELIEVE in God the Father almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty. From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, The holy catholic church, The communion of saints, The forgiveness of sins, The resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting. Amen.

¶ After that, these prayers following, all devoutly kneeling, the minister first pronouncing with a loud voice,

The Lord be with you.

**Answer.** And with thy spirit.

¶ **Minister.**

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Christ, have mercy upon us.*

Lord, have mercy upon us.

## THE CREED

Read the Apostles' Creed, a summary of Christian belief. Most of its phrases are from the New Testament, though the creed itself was not written by the apostles. It can be traced back to the fourth century, and this exact form can be traced back to the eighth century.

## THE SALUTATION AND KYRIE

Read the rest of the spoken text on page 12. You are now ready to move to the final part of Morning Prayer, which is a series of prayers for 'those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul' (page 2). But because we cannot even pray without God's help, we start by asking for his presence and mercy.

'The Lord be with you' and the answer are an ancient Christian salutation taken from passages in the Old Testament (including Ruth 2:4).

The three lines that begin 'Lord, have mercy upon us' have been part of Christian worship since at least the fifth century. The italics for the second line indicate that when Morning Prayer is read in a group, this line is a response.

## MORNING PRAYER

¶ Then the minister, clerks, and people shall say the Lord's Prayer with a loud voice.

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. Amen.

¶ Then the priest, standing up, shall say,

O Lord, show thy mercy upon us.

Answer. And grant us thy salvation.

Priest. O Lord, save them that rule.

Answer. And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Priest. Endue thy ministers with righteousness.

Answer. And make thy chosen people joyful.

Priest. O Lord, save thy people.

Answer. And bless thine inheritance.

Priest. Give peace in our time, O Lord.

Answer. Because there is none other that fighteth for us,  
but only thou, O God.

Priest. O God, make clean our hearts within us.

Answer. And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

¶ Then shall follow three collects: The first of the day, which shall be the same that is appointed at the Communion (p. 49); the second for peace; the third for grace to live well. And the two last collects shall never alter, but daily be said at Morning Prayer throughout all the year, as followeth, all kneeling.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Read the Lord's Prayer. The first time you said this prayer, it had the longer ending ('For thine is the kingdom, &c.') and preceded praise. Here it is placed among our petitions, and the shorter form is used (as is typical in the prayer book). It is not entirely clear why the short form of the Lord's Prayer is used in some places and the longer form in others.

## THE SUFFRAGES

Read the short petitions that begin 'O Lord, show thy mercy upon us'. Most of these are taken from the Psalms (85:7, 20:9, 132:9, 28:10, 51:10 & 11; also 2 Kings 20:19 and Joshua 23:10). The themes sounded here – prayers for grace, peace, and the Holy Spirit, and prayers on behalf of rulers and ministers – will recur in all the remaining prayers.

## THE COLLECTS

A 'collect' is a short prayer. Three are said here. The first is the collect of the day. The usual pattern is that on each Sunday of the church year there is a new collect, which is said as the collect of the day for the following week. If you happen to know what last Sunday was in the church year – was it, for example, the First Sunday in Advent? – then you can look up the appropriate collect. The collects for the church year are found on pages 49-205, with additional collects on pages

## MORNING PRAYER

### *The Second Collect, for Peace.*

**O** GOD, who art the author of peace and lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom: Defend us thy humble servants in all assaults of our enemies, that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### *The Third Collect, for Grace.*

**O** LORD, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day: Defend us in the same with thy mighty power, and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger, but that all our doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always what is righteous in thy sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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¶ In choirs and places where they sing, here followeth the anthem. Then these four prayers following are to be read here, except when the Litany is read (p. 31), and then only the last two are to be read, as they are there placed.

### *A Prayer for All Those in Civil Authority.*

**A**LMIGHTY God, whose kingdom is everlasting and power infinite: Have mercy upon this whole land, and so rule the hearts of all in authority, [*especially —,*] that they, knowing whose ministers they are, may above

205-240 for certain special days that commemorate saints or events in the life of our Lord. If you do not know what the collect of the day is, skip over it for now.

But make sure to read the second and third collects. These are Archbishop Cranmer's translations of Latin prayers at least as old as the eighth century. In these collects, God is addressed as the bountiful giver of good gifts – the author of peace, the giver of eternal life, the one who protected us through the night. Both pray for divine defense, either against external foes or against our own faults and folly. Now, with God's peace and grace, you are ready for 'this day'.

## CONCLUDING MORNING PRAYER

After the collects, you come to a horizontal line. At this point, you can end Morning Prayer. The subsequent prayers are required only in 'choirs and places where they sing' – that is, in cathedrals and other churches with trained singers. Or you can carry on and read the next four prayers (pages 14-16). In other words, there are two ways you can end Morning Prayer: with the third collect, for grace (page 14); or with the prayer that begins 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ' (page 16). Either is a fitting close, turning our end back to our beginning, reminding us of our constant need for the grace of God.

## PRAYER FOR ALL THOSE IN CIVIL AUTHORITY

Read one of the prayers for all those in civil authority (pages 14-15). Although these particular prayers are drawn from later prayer books (US 1928, Ghana 1960), the practice of praying for civil authorities goes back to the earliest days of the church (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

## MORNING PRAYER

all things seek thy honour and glory; and that we and all the people, duly considering whose authority they bear, may faithfully and obediently honour them, according to thy blessed word and ordinance, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

¶ *Or this.*

**A**Lmighty Father, whose kingdom is everlasting: We beseech thee of thy mercy to direct and prosper the counsels of all those who bear authority in this land, that in humility and honesty they may faithfully serve the people committed to their charge. And grant, we pray thee, that religion and piety, peace and unity, truth and justice, may be established among us for all generations, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*A Prayer for the Clergy and People.*

**A**Lmighty and everlasting God, who alone workest great marvels: Send down upon our bishops and pastors, and all congregations committed to their charge, the healthful Spirit of thy grace; and that they may truly please thee, pour upon them the continual dew of thy blessing. Grant this, O Lord, for the honour of our advocate and mediator, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

*A Prayer of Saint Chrysostom.*

**A**Lmighty God, who hast given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplications unto thee, and dost promise that when two or three are

## PRAYER FOR THE CLERGY AND PEOPLE

Read this prayer, which is another very old Latin prayer translated by Archbishop Cranmer. It picks up and changes themes from the confession at the beginning of Morning Prayer. In the confession, we said ‘there is no health in us.’ But now – forgiven, instructed, waiting – we ask God to send his ‘healthful Spirit’. There we were compared to lost sheep, erring and straying. Now our souls can be refreshed like land that receives the life-sustaining dew (Psalm 133:3, Hosea 14:5).

## PRAYER OF SAINT CHRYSOSTOM

Read this prayer, also translated by Archbishop Cranmer, this time from a fifth-century Greek liturgy attributed to St. John Chrysostom.

## MORNING PRAYER

gathered together in thy name, thou wilt grant their requests: Fulfil now, O Lord, the desires and petitions of thy servants, as may be most expedient for them, granting us in this world knowledge of thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

2 Corinthians 13:14.

**T**HE grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

¶ Here endeth the order of Morning Prayer throughout the year.



- ¶ Instead of O Lord, save them that rule *may be said* O Lord, save the Queen.
- ¶ Instead of the prayer for civil authorities *may be said the prayers for the Queen's Majesty and royal family* (p. 48).

## THE GRACE

Read this final prayer, a benediction from the Apostle Paul.

## COMMONWEALTH VARIATIONS

The prayers in this edition of the 1662 prayer book can be used in any country, no matter what its form of government. As an alternative, however, these instructions indicate how to say the prayers for the Queen and royal family in use in England and Commonwealth countries.

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## POSTLUDE

Morning Prayer offers a structured way to pray and read the Bible. As you use these words, and as you immerse yourself in the Scriptures, you know that you are praying and reading not just by yourself, but with the church.

The language of Morning Prayer is beautiful. True, ‘the sonorous cadences’ and ‘elegant repetitions and antitheses . . . may strike some as cold; yet they may be perfect if you need not so much to have your ‘heart warmed’ as to have your ‘racing mind calmed’. That is why, ‘for many who have felt themselves at the mercy of chaotic forces from within or without, the style of the prayer book has healing powers. It provides equitable balance when we ourselves have none.’ (Jacobs, *The Book of Common Prayer: A Biography*, 105-106.)

The pattern of Morning Prayer is simple. Many of the words are consistent from day to day. The psalms, lessons, and collect of the day will change. You can vary the sentences. You can choose the alternative to the *Te Deum* or the *Benedictus*. About once a month, the Apostles’ Creed is replaced with the Athanasian Creed. And you might choose to add a prayer or two before the prayer of Saint Chrysostom.

But even with these occasional changes, the path you are walking – in summer and fall, winter and spring – will be the same path. J.I. Packer once said that you should think about the services of the 1662 prayer book, whether Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, or Holy Communion, as an ‘adventure’ of a certain kind: ‘It will be a route that we’ve followed before, no doubt, but when you take a walk through luscious woodland you never appreciate all of it the first time around. The walk is one that you enjoy taking again and again and again because there is always something new to see and yet it is the same woodland and the same path.’ (Interview with Julie Lane-Gay, *Anglican Studies Program*.)

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And the path of Morning Prayer always begins with the gospel story. We begin as the prodigal son, saying ‘I will arise and go to my father’, confessing that ‘there is no health in us’. But the story does not end there. Holding on to God’s ‘promises declared’ in Jesus Christ, we ask with confidence for God to ‘have mercy upon us’. We say with confidence that all who ‘truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel’ will ‘come to his eternal joy’. Just as the father ran to meet the prodigal son, so we know that if we turn to God, he will ‘make speed to save us’ and ‘make haste to help us’.

Morning Prayer’s language is enticing. Its simplicity is sustaining. But above all else, it is true. The prayers, the psalms, and the lessons speak without flinching about us and our condition. Yet they also assure us of God’s love, as demonstrated beyond all doubt by the gift of his most precious Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

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