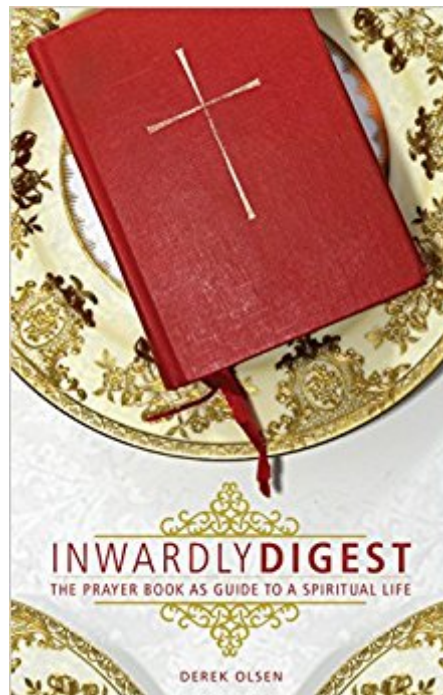




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# Inwardly Digest: The Prayer Book As Guide To A Spiritual Life



## Synopsis

Daily spiritual practice takes dedication and discipline, and we often wonder where to start and how to keep it from feeling like yet another task on our to-do list. In this grounded, practical book, author Derek Olsen uses The Book of Common Prayer for a template to a deeper spiritual life. Olsen explains the purpose and intention of the prayer book with fresh insight, offering practical applications for daily living.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is the book that Episcopalians have needed for the last forty years but hasn't existed until now--a true field manual for Prayer Book spirituality.--Daniel H. Martins, Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Springfield  
Too often, the [Book of Common Prayer](#) is open to a few familiar pages on Sunday and closed the rest of the days, with little regard to the deep, transformative spirituality inside. With humor, deep reverence, and academic insight that is anything but dry and boring, Derek Olsen reminds us of the breath of the Spirit, the lives of the saints, the love of Jesus, and the magnificence of God held in the words, silence, and worship of our Book of Common Prayer. Clergy and laity should read this to discover and re-discover the daring words and liturgies of our faith spanning eons and to engage the prayers and worship of our faith.--Laurie Brock, Episcopal priest and author of [Where God Hides Holiness: Thoughts on Grief, Joy, and the Search for Fabulous Heels](#)  
Derek Olsen is the patron saint of the overlooked; campaign manager of the undervalued; tour guide to the taken for granted. His patient, scholarly watchfulness and his gift for rendering complex ideas in clear, concise prose make [Inwardly Digest](#) an insightful

guide to "The Book of Common Prayer" and a sure and steady companion to Anglican spiritual practice.--Jim Naughton, Founder of Episcopal Cafe and partner of Canticle Communications  
Written in an engaging style that is both conversational and informative, "Inwardly Digest" is a timely invitation to life in the Spirit sustained by the patterns and rhythms of the Prayer Book.--Frank Griswold, 25th Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church  
With the spiritual foundation of the Book of Common Prayer, Derek Olsen shows how everyday Christians can grow closer to God through a "training regimen" that incorporates the spirituality of Anglican liturgy as a daily practice. In straightforward and accessible writing, Olsen provides a guide to Prayer Book spirituality for everyone.--Susan Brown Snook, Episcopal priest and author of "God Gave the Growth: Church Planting in the Episcopal Church"

The 1979 Episcopal Book of Common Prayer is a powerful tool for rooting and grounding individuals and communities in the Body of Christ but is rarely recognized as such. Here, Derek Olsen provides a detailed introduction to the 1979 BCP as a personal training guide for our souls. There is a great deal of theological depth to this book, but I suspect that a non-theologically astute reader will get great benefit from it. Marion Hatchett's Commentary on the 1979 BCP tells you where the book comes from. Olsen's book is its logical companion. It tells you how and why to use it. The audience I most recommend this book to is those who are in charge of confirmation classes, catechizing teenagers, or parenting children. Kids want to know why we do what we do. Teenagers want to know that Christianity is something of depth and interest with real impact on their everyday lives. This book will help parents, teachers, and catechists explain why. (But don't give it to them as homework. Read it with them or to them.)

This is the best book about a book I have ever read. Olsen offers a fresh perspective on the Prayer Book that I found enlightening and surprising upon every turn of the page. Honestly, I was hesitant to read this book, because I've studied the prayer book on an academic level (MAR in Liturgics/Anglican Theology) and have used it in a very wide variety of settings as a priest for years. I'm glad I took the plunge, or, to follow the book's recurrent analogy, I'm glad I went on this run. Side note: this book is also a great primer for how endurance sports (running and cycling) can inform our spirituality and visa-versa. I plan to revisit this book whenever I sense my prayer book based worship growing dull.

I highly recommend this book for all Episcopalians (and anyone else who is interested in using the

Book of Common Prayer as a resource for prayer). INWARDLY DIGEST not only guides one through the intricacies of the Book of Common Prayer, but it does so in a deeply spiritual manner. There are so many insights that will enhance the way you approach your prayer life. The author has a clear and practical understanding of not only the purpose of the BCP, but of the state of the soul and how to utilize deeply grounded spiritual practices in a way that enhances the use of the BCP. INWARDLY DIGEST is a valuable book you will want to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest, not only for yourself, but even more so in a study group where you can discuss and implement the content by sharing your thoughts with one another without rushing. You will learn a lot about the Book of Common Prayer from this book, but even more important, It will deepen your prayer life! I know I used some form of the word "deep" at least 3 times. That simply means "very enriching." But deep expresses it best! I have been an Episcopal priest for over 3 decades and this is the best resource for the BCP I've come across because it provides for the state of the soul as well as the mind.

I am learning so much about the Book of Common Prayer. I am a 60 plus life long Episcopalian lay person and it is amazing how many twists and turns of which I was unaware. The depth of spirituality is truly amazing. I wonder what the future holds. More good things, I expect.

I was nodding along with Olsen as he went through the structure of the BCP, the church year, the offices. But when he broke down the structure of a collect, it was pretty much world-shifting. I'm starting to look at prayers I've heard my entire life in an entirely new way. Rarely do I read a book and think how nice it would be to read it with other people. This book just begs to be used as a study guide by every Episcopalian that can get his/her hands on it.

Derek Olsen's beautifully written, wonderfully accessible, and theologically astute guide to the Book of Common Prayer takes its rightful place on my bookshelf next to Hatchett's "A Commentary on the American Prayer Book," and Mitchell's "Praying Shapes Believing." I've been an Episcopalian all my life, and even as a priest, I fall victim to the trap of thinking the Prayer Book is a book of services primarily used on Sunday. Where Olsen leads us, however, is into the somewhat embarrassingly obvious waters of looking at the Prayer Book as a tool, a program, a guide for spiritual growth and spiritual development. His writing is witty, smart, clear, and fun to read. Episcopalians and non-Episcopalians alike will get a lot out of this book. If you know someone looking for more in their life, someone who has expressed an interest or desire to know God and be known by God, get

them a copy of the Book of Common Prayer and this book.

This is so helpful on studying the "The Book of Common Prayer"

A good book. Honestly my biggest complaint with the volume is the printing itself. It's oddly dense and the pages and cover are pressed together in a way that I haven't seen in paperback books before. Nitpicking perhaps, but it's a bit odd to read. I'd consider gifting the ebook version before the print version as a result. In terms of the title itself, it's good, not great. A lot of old information for those familiar with the Prayer Book, great for a newbie though.

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