

A Tribute to Harold M. Daniels

"Development of this service book has involved more people and a broader spectrum of the church than any of its predecessors. This is appropriate to the development of a book that helps form and express the prayer of the church." (Book of Common Worship (1993), p. 10)

Numbers, numbers, numbers.

13 years of designing, planning, reading, discussing, debating, writing, editing, formatting, field-testing, reviewing, and approving.

7 task forces comprising a total of 35 people—pastors, teachers, members, musicians—who produced 7 trial-use resources.

50-100 congregations invited to review drafts of each resource, and who returned scores of evaluations and suggestions for revisions of liturgical texts.

27 editorial consultants.

75 different people serving on various administrative committees throughout the entire thirteen year production, and 12 different staff serving those committees.

But, only 1 "project director and editor." Only 1 presider. Only 1 person with enough faith and fortitude to persevere from sketch pad to printed book—Harold M. Daniels, servant of Christ. Thanks be to God!

—Peter C. Bower

Few privileges have meant so much to me as that of having been a colleague with one of the church's most faithful, disciplined, and liturgically competent servants while this extraordinary Book of Common Worship was brought to its completion!

—George B. Telford

Harold Daniels and I have been associated with the development of the worship life of our denomination for many years, and I know the importance of his contribution. His guidance, encouragement, friendship, writing, and his other gifts have enriched the life of Presbyterians. Our church is grateful.

—James Rawlings Sydnor

We thank God for all your gifts as pastor, administrator, writer, poet, liturgist, editor, scholar, and friend. We celebrate the publication of the Book of Common Worship with gratitude for your contributions through every stage. May retirement open new vistas for your ventures in ministry.

—Donald Wilson Stake

Harold Daniels has led us as a Church into and through a liturgical renewal. He has done so with wisdom, patience, and quiet grace. His influence will be felt for generations to come.

—Thomas G. Long

Given the labyrinth of church committees, bureaucratic politics, ever-tightening program funds, resistance to "liturgy", and the sheer scope of the project, the publication of the Book of Common Worship is truly a monumental achievement in our time. Unquestionably, the guiding force and energy behind it was Harold M. Daniels. He is the one who nurtured this project from start to finish. Never despairing—even at times that warranted despair, ever watchful, through thick and thin, keeping the vision alive of what he firmly believed the church needed, he has made a tremendous contribution that will live on for years to come. What is the measure of a man who rises to such a calling? Harold is a man of extraordinary patience and perseverance; he has exceptional literary gifts and editing skills; he has a love for the liturgy and a scholar's command of the field; he has an unflagging commitment to our church; and last, but by no means least, he has a pastor's heart. All of these rare qualities came together to produce this book. Thank you, Harold. May God richly bless this next phase of your life and ministry.

—Craig Douglas Erickson

Let a flurry of Roman candles be fired, a dozen or more Presbyterian candles drip mightily, and as many of us old dudes as can stand at attention salute! Happy retirement.

—Fondly, Lewis A. Briner

I have recently received my copy of the Book of Common Worship. This is a treasure from which the Presbyterian Church will increasingly draw to the enrichment of its life and worship. We have now in our hands a book which is true to the heart of our traditions—catholic, reformed, and evangelical. There's an old Latin tag that applies to Harold Daniels, who coaxed and guided us to this point: si monumentum requiris, circumspice. Roughly translated, that means: "If you want something to remember him by, look around." All over our church now, Harold's work will be helping people to glorify God.

—J. Ross Mackenzie

Harold Daniels—always willing to share his wisdom, his understanding of how things have been done in the past, excited about future possibilities. Harold—steady through fifteen years of change in the worship office; his eye always on the goal—the new Book of Common Worship.

Harold—quiet in staff meetings, often offering just the right phrase to bring levity to a fairly intense group of people.

Harold—lunch time companion. We'd compare our bag lunches, inevitably his lunch was the more appetizing, and talk together about office "stuff", our lives, the church.

Harold—a man with deep passion for the church and its faithfulness.

—Debbie McKinley

For Harold, with apologies to FPG—

*For the feasts of Harold's musings,
thanks be to God!*

*For his wisdom, n'er confusing,
thanks be to God!*

*For his incense, sweetly scented,
for the prayers (some newly minted),
most of all, The Book is printed!*

Thanks be to God!

—Patty Fort

(Sing to EAST ACKLAM, not to AR HYD NOS, Austin Lovelace to the contrary notwithstanding.)

In a quiet, unobtrusive way, Harold gave us impetus and vision to a multitude of programs and projects.

—John Neely

Dear Harold,

Wherever the dream of the Book of Common Worship began, (probably in the Worship Committee of the Joint Administrative Committee of The Advisory Council on Discipleship and worship . . . see why we have a new structure!?), the dream quickly became your own. You nurtured it, worried about it, lobbied for it, and set forth the basic strategy and design. You recruited committee members for each of the SLR's, sat through their meetings, shepherded their work, and wrote the preface and much of the commentary to each edition. You sat through endless meetings, consulted with ecumenical authorities in liturgics. No, the meetings of Societas and the North American Academy of Liturgy were not just junkets to here and there! You worried, consulted and worked hard at liturgical language—and it shows. Then came the production discussions with Westminster Press, later Westminster/John Knox. Few but you know how many times major portions of this project were desperately close to being axed by the publishers' representatives. But you stayed the course, and they began to see the wisdom of the book. Finally, you recruited the computer committee of "how-many?" to serve as editorial assistants, though we all know who was truly the Editor. You presided over our rights, and helped make peace. Finally, it was proofreading, and layout which took up the last year of your ministry with the Theology & Worship Ministry Unit. Yes, all of that, since the 1980 Assembly in Detroit when the overture was approved to start this project. "Well done good and faithful servant." Enter into your much deserved credit and retirement. But most of all, bask in the gratitude of those of us who have been fortunate enough to work with you on this. As someone once said, the wonderful thing about working with people in the discipline of liturgy is that they are believers! Harold M. Daniels, you personify that truth.

—Fred R. Anderson

Not one in 10,000 Presbyterians even know who Harold Daniels is, and not more than two or three in 100,000 could pick him out of a line-up. But this gentle man, whose whole life and ministry have been marked by steadfast loyalty and self-effacing piety, ended up leading a liturgical revolution. That I do know Harold, and have been privileged to work with him, is one of the blessings for which I continually give God thanks.

—J. Frederick Holper

Dear Harold,

It was with a great deal of pride and affection that I listened to the many deserved accolades given to you at General Assembly. The presentation at the Assembly of the Book of Common Worship was a fitting cap to your service in the Church.

The story of the Office of Worship, where the BCW had its beginnings and Reformed Liturgy & Music was expanded, is a many faceted one. Your work there and its continuation into the Theology & Worship Ministry Unit will influence generations to come. "We came a long way Harold!" I am pleased to have shared a part of it with you.

As you continue your journey—"God Bless" and enjoy, enjoy!

—Fondly, Marion L. Liebert

It is certainly correct to call this new book of worship, the Book of Common Worship, but you could also call it "Harold's Book." For he more than any other person, or any group of persons, is responsible for its publication and its quality. It was his vision which drove the work of the committees and his determination that made it all possible. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will long be in his debt.

—Robert M. Shelton

Harold Daniels has been the prime mover for a revolution in liturgical resources for the PCUSA. His knowledge, expertise, and persistence has produced a corpus of works that will profoundly affect the worship of the next generation of Presbyterians. Thank you, Harold!

—Martha Smith Hopson

Harold Daniels incorporates two attributes not often found in one person: vision and tenacity. Both were required to guide the church down the long road leading to the Directory for Worship, The Presbyterian Hymnal, the Book of Common Worship, and Psalms and Canticles for Singing. Yet, his imagination never drifted into fantasy, and his persistence did not harden into obstinacy, for both were ruled by faithfulness to God and to the people of God. Harold has helped "the people's work" to be a joyful labor of grateful service. Thanks be to God.

—Joseph D. Small, 3rd

Harold Daniels made an immeasurable contribution to the worship life of the church in his conception and implementation of the Supplemental Liturgical Resource series, which was the basis for the Book of Common Worship. Throughout the process of meeting with task forces to develop the trial-use volumes, his dedication and inspiration was significant; his sustaining guidance over the past ten years was the major effort toward the development of "an instrument for the renewal of the church at its life-giving center"—the hope expressed by the 1980 General Assembly. Recognition and appreciation should also be mentioned of his strong support of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians, and the journal Reformed Liturgy & Music.

—Robert Stigall

As I sought to develop approaches to and resources for the baptism of children and their incorporation into the congregation, and the confirming and commissioning of young people, Harold Daniels has been a stimulating teacher, guide, and support to me. Harold's constructive influence pervades our denomination's resources on baptism and commissioning.

—David Ng

"Old men dream dreams and young men see visions." Seldom does one man have a vision which he sees accomplished in his ministry. The Book of Common Worship is Harold Daniels' dream become real. His ministry offered grace to all who worked on the production of the book which is itself a gracious gift to the whole church.

—Judy Kolwicz

Most pastors minister to one congregation in one place. Harold Daniels' ministry has been to an entire denomination through the richness of the publications he has prepared for the worship of the PCUSA. We will all benefit from his work for many years to come.

—John Weaver

Harold Daniels has brought us a new Book of Common Worship. The Presbyterian community owes Harold profound gratitude, not to mention a few, earnest "buzzabs!"

—David G. Buttrick

*Harold,
You and I have shared the journey together . . .
the journey from the first SLR to the publication of
the Book of Common Worship. As you lay down
the gauntlet of deep caring for Presbyterians and
their worship, others will now pick it up. Their
way will be clearer because the way is now fo-
cused. New lenses have been provided for now
and future generations to glimpse, and hopefully
see that which you have yearned for us to know.
Thanks be to God that you held to the vision and
cleared the path! The fruit of your labors will be
bountiful.*

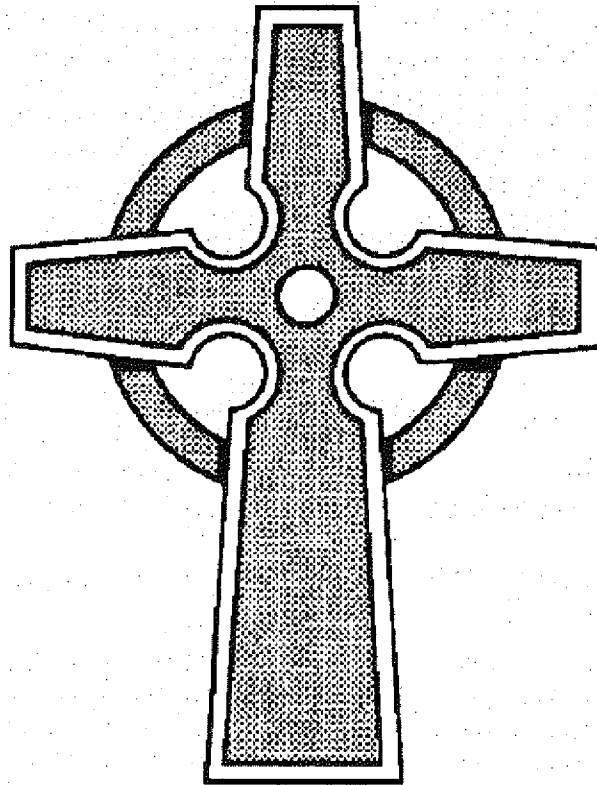
—David C. Partington

*Congratulations and deep gratitude to Harold
Daniels for a labor of love that will lead genera-
tions to come in ways of worship and praise.*

—Cynthia M. Campbell

*Harold Daniels' influence on worship in Presbyteri-
an churches cannot be measured. His insights, gift
for writing, love of liturgy, coupled with a tenacious
approach to his many projects has reaped rich bene-
fits for all of us who are interested in worship. I am
personally grateful for "the guiding light" he has
shown for the development of the Presbyterian Psal-
ter. Thank you, Harold!*

Hal Hopson



Celebrating the Book of Common Worship

A Twentieth Anniversary Tribute

Editor's note: In celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the publication of the 1993 Book of Common Worship, I asked a number of church leaders to share their reflections on the significance of this milestone in Reformed and ecumenical worship. Here are their responses.

THE EARLY YEARS

Wow! Great memories abound for me from early conversations during the 1980s about the “creation process” of the *BCW*. Conversations carefully evolved into realities as many of us served on liturgical committees and participated in the birth of the *Book of Common Worship*. What an exciting moment for each of us—especially for Harold Daniels—as the edited manuscript was approved by the Theology and Worship Unit in 1993, for which I was then serving as chairperson. Three years earlier the *Presbyterian Hymnal* had been published with ongoing connections between these two significant documents!

I can attest to the continual use and appreciation of the *BCW* from PC(USA) faculty and students. Personally I use the *BCW* so often that I keep at least one extra copy available, just to be sure that I am never without this valuable publication.

— Melva W. Costen, *worship and music professor emerita, Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Georgia*

My first encounter with the *BCW*, which was at the time not quite in print, was at a Montreat Worship and Music Conference, while I was a professor at the Toronto School of Theology. Don Saliers and Arlo Duba led the conference through Holy Week, ending with the Great Vigil of Easter using the forms that would be part of the *BCW*. That experience changed my teaching and much of my liturgical life. As soon

as the *BCW* was available in print I began to shape my music and worship classes around the Great Vigil as it appeared in the *BCW*. This in turn led me to work toward a recovery of the full rites of baptism leading to Eucharist and ministry, as well as a desire to move the church out of the prison of clerical ecclesiology into a new life founded upon a baptismal ecclesiology.

— Alan Barthel, *former executive director of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians*

When Harold Daniels invited me to serve as an “editorial consultant” in 1991, before the publication of the *BCW*, I was in Seoul, Korea. He introduced me to the use of a computer modem. This was before the Internet, and I was thrilled and fascinated to receive the whole draft of *BCW* (1993) via modem with beeping tones and blinking lights. Because of the international modem speed, it took me more than thirty minutes to receive the transmission in Korea, but I didn't mind waiting. It was the beginning of my liturgical study in graduate school and a career in teaching worship and music. It was worth the wait!

When the Korean Presbyterian Church decided to translate the *BCW* in 2001, I was once again asked to be the editorial consultant. I discovered that the marriage and funeral sections were omitted for cultural reasons. Another omitted section was the Psalms, but I was grateful that the very first Korean Presbyterian Psalter with music refrains was published as a part of *Come, Let Us Worship: The Korean-English Presbyterian Hymnal and Service Book* (Geneva Press, 2001).

— Paul Junggap Huh, *assistant professor of worship and director of Korean American Ministries, Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia*

I first became acquainted with the *BCW* when I was serving on the Theology and Worship Ministry Unit for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Our committee received the final report—and received it with gratitude. But the real gift of the *BCW* was to me and the staff of our church as we worked together on planning worship. People in the congregation began to comment on how everything in the worship service was tied together. This was the gift of the *BCW* and the lectionary for our congregation. Worship began to make sense.

— David Eicher, hymnal editor,
Presbyterian Publishing Corporation

RESOURCE FOR REFORM

I served on the local planning team that introduced the *BCW* at a West Coast festival at First Presbyterian Church in Portland, Oregon. I remember the excitement that surrounded the book's publication and our enthusiastic planning and leadership of the services. At the main eucharistic service, I stood in the front of the sanctuary to serve communion. It quickly became clear that we were going to run out of bread. As the pieces that we handed out became smaller and as others scoured the building for additional bread, we learned an important lesson about worship renewal: the gift of the *BCW* brings us together around basic patterns of Christian worship, but we must continue to work to embody and live out these patterns in wholesome and diverse ways.

— Paul Galbreath, professor of worship and preaching,
Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, Virginia

When I began work at the church I currently serve, The Brick Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, I found a congregation deeply committed to thoughtful liturgy. But their worship traditions had accrued into an odd assortment of diverse and sometimes disjointed liturgical elements over the years, resulting in worship that, though certainly formal and very structured, lacked cohesive theological shape. The *Book of Common Worship*, with which I was long and happily familiar, offered me and the worship committee not only a plethora of resources, but an overarching form around which the congregation could subtly re-form its worship traditions.

— Michael L. Lindvall, pastor,
Brick Presbyterian Church, New York

The *BCW* is a wonderful liturgical resource, a wealth of wisdom, a precious companion for congregations, an ecumenical feast in many acts. When used along with the Directory for Worship of the PC(USA), it opens up many possibilities for the church of Christ to create, explore, and express its faith in the world.

— Cláudio Carvalhaes, associate professor of
worship and liturgy, Lutheran Theological Seminary
at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

EUCCHARISTIC RENEWAL

The seminary taught me basic theology and equipped me to learn to think theologically. It was the *BCW* that taught me how theology and prayer serve one another. In particular, praying the Great Thanksgiving caused me, over time, to reflect more deeply about eschatology, about which seminarians learn and then try to forget lest they be mistaken for fanatics. To refocus the Lord's Supper from "Last Supper" to anticipation of the great banquet in the kingdom has not only transformed my theology of the sacrament, but helped me to understand the Christian hope on a much larger screen than just about who goes to heaven.

— Ronald Byars, professor emeritus of preaching and worship,
Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond, Virginia

I remember attending a gathering of *BCW* "consultants," at Harold Daniels's invitation, in the year or two before the *BCW* was published. Stan Hall was there, along with others way more seasoned than I in the work of liturgical theology. It was that gathering that solidified my interest in the church's patterns of eucharistic praying. My introduction, through the *BCW*, to the deep Trinitarian shape of the church's gratitude is a gift that has stretched my faith and grounded my practice of ministry for two decades. In fact, it was the structure of those *BCW* prayers, both the thanksgivings and the collects, that has taught me the most about how to pray as a pastoral leader of the church's worship. For that, I remain forever grateful.

— Marney A. Wasserman, pastor,
Trinity Presbyterian Church, Tucson, Arizona

THE EASTER VIGIL

If one is willing and spiritually hungry enough, it is possible to experience a transformation of faith and theology from the *Book of Common Worship*. This has been my experience. What the book asks is that we enliven it in the worshipping assembly. For decades I have tried to embody the liturgy, paying careful attention to the book's little red words. These rubrics insist that we embrace the liturgy, not as a set of texts to be read, but as ritual forms to be enacted. This insight has changed my life and ministry. Nowhere has it been more important than the celebration of the book's marvelous Triduum liturgy of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Paschal Vigil. What the 1993 *BCW* has done to reclaim the liturgical year for Presbyterians is a gift of incalculable worth. A year without the Triduum is as much a loss as a week without Sunday.

— David B. Batchelder, pastor,
West Plano Presbyterian Church, Plano, Texas

Born and raised in the Presbyterian Church, I graduated from college in 1993 and began discerning a call to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. It was then that I heard from my pastor about the publication of a new *Book of Common Worship*, but I didn't know enough to know what a big deal that was. I bought a copy but didn't know what to do with it or how to use it. It was simply something I thought I should have. It sat on my bookshelf for years. I opened it a few times during seminary and my first pastoral call. When I came to my present call as a solo pastor, planning and leading worship regularly, I began to hunger for meaning behind the liturgy around which we gather each week. In 2007, I introduced my congregation (and myself) to the Great Vigil of Easter. We did it strictly "by the Book" (*of Common Worship*). On that night, April 7, 2007, I was immersed in the dynamic reality of the church as a pilgrim people on the journey of faith together, formed and nurtured by the paschal mystery and our celebration of it as the focal point of all our worship. We now look forward to the Easter Vigil every year, and I give thanks for the richness of liturgy and prayer offered each week by the *BCW* as a gift of and for the church.

— Christopher Q. James, pastor,
New Hope Presbyterian Church, St. Charles, Missouri

DAILY PRAYER

My first encounter with the *Book of Common Worship* was a Reformed worship course I took in seminary with Jennifer Lord as my instructor. The *BCW* expressed in textual and rubrical beauty the richness of the Reformed tradition's continual response to God's grace in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. Every time I hold it in my hand, I sense a connection with the communion of the faithful in all times and in every place. In my congregation, where we celebrate weekly Eucharist, we don't have a written bulletin; we have a chancel wall board that cues the gathered assembly to the pages of the *BCW*. More recently, our congregation has been using the *BCW* Daily Prayer for our daily morning and evening prayer teleconferences, enabling us to connect in Spirit and in truth across time zones.

— Neal D. Presa, Moderator, 220th General Assembly,
PC(USA); pastor, Middlesex (NJ) Presbyterian Church;
and affiliate assistant professor for preaching and worship,
New Brunswick Theological Seminary

I remember, twenty years ago, being concerned that the liturgy in the *BCW* might make our worship more rigid, less authentic. My experience has been the opposite, that the *BCW* has given voice to our prayers in ways that was more limited *before* the *BCW*.

I am particularly grateful for the section on Daily Prayer, a resource that has led me personally and has led congregations of Christ's disciples to pray together "without ceasing." I believe that such praying has shaped us for the high adventure of living into Christ's reign among us.

— Laura Mendenhall, pastor, Presbyterian Church
of Lake Travis, Texas, and former president,
Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia

Having been one of the many contributors to the *Book of Common Worship*, I've been especially gratified by the acceptance with which it was greeted. Not only has it been used by Presbyterians, but many other Christians have shown enthusiasm for it. Most of all, I've found the *BCW* to provide for me models of prayer, new and ancient, from which to craft the liturgy for the next Lord's Day and to be a guide in Daily Prayer. It's a primary personal resource from which I continue to learn and grow.

— Don Stake, retired pastor and contributor to numerous
Presbyterian liturgical resources

I became a student of the liturgy many years before going to seminary due to the *BCW*. While a youth director at a Presbyterian church in Arkansas, I borrowed the pastor's copy of the *BCW* and found myself reading it from cover to cover. It was my introduction to a journey into the shape of worship—yearly, weekly, and daily—that caused me to live, pray, and worship with more depth and understanding. It encouraged me to mark time with the church, centered on the triune God and the fullness of God's salvation history which continues to unfold. Another gift of the *BCW* was as an introduction and sustaining resource to what I now know of as a liturgical and sacramental life. It was and continues to be a companion and guide to the journey of sacred living, not only for me but for all those who choose the path that follows this ecumenical pattern of life, shaped by a liturgy that gives us a structure with theological and biblical integrity for the living of these days.

— Chip Andrus, pastor,
South Salem (NY) Presbyterian Church

We were gathered at a lodge some ten thousand feet above sea level, twenty-five executive presbyters seeking to strengthen one another for our ministry. Day was done, and we joined our hearts before God in the service of Evening Prayer from the *BCW*. As we came to our closing hymn, I sat at the piano with my back to the group and played the evening hymn as they sang—and strangely their voices trickled away until almost nobody was singing the last verse. I turned to face them as the hymn's final notes drifted away, only to find most in tears, unable to speak—overcome with the sense of God's near presence. Did I mention that these were EPs?

— Sheldon Sorge, pastor to Pittsburgh Presbytery

PASTORAL MINISTRY

The *BCW* is an aid to my pastoral ministry in three ways. It serves as a literary resource when I select, edit, or compose parts of the worship service—Prayers of Confession and Illumination, prayers of Great Thanksgiving, and a wide variety of Scripture sentences. It serves as an educational resource when teaching and planning worship with staff and elders—often it is a Reformed resource in an evangelical culture. It directs my devotion and discipline as a sometimes busy and lonely pastor without the time or energy to compose my own prayers, and needing to pray with others not in the room but in my soul.

— Jerry Andrews, senior pastor,
First Presbyterian Church, San Diego

I was wandering in the wilderness of my second year in pastoral ministry when the *BCW* was released. Within the pages of the big blue book I found a map to follow. I embraced the Great Thanksgivings with particular delight. Sensing the congregation I was then serving would need to take small steps toward receiving the fullness of the Eucharist, I decided to begin using Great Thanksgiving H. It was also the first *BCW* text I committed to memory. Over the years, it has surely been for me the single most useful part of the single most useful resource for my ministry. I can't begin to count how many times I have offered that prayer in churches and hospitals and homes and wherever two or three have been gathered. "Let the heavens be joyful, and the earth be glad."

— John Wurster, pastor,
St. Philip Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

When I started attending a Presbyterian church, it was one in name only (they have since left the denomination). It wasn't until my second year of seminary that I was introduced to the *Book of Confessions*, and it was then that I mark my conversion to Reformed theology. It was with the *Book of Common Worship*, however, that I could say with Calvin that my heart was set aflame for God. The *BCW* tends to that fire and stokes those flames to this day. Thanks be to God!

—Tom Trinidad, pastor, Faith Presbyterian Church,
Colorado Springs, Colorado; and
Vice-Moderator, 220th General Assembly, PC(USA)

The *Book of Common Worship* is a centerpiece of both my professional and personal spirituality. It leads me in prayer when the community is dispersed. It offers words when I have none. It reminds me of the witness of the communion of saints, historical and present. By putting prayers and liturgies into the hands of the people, it fulfills a goal of the Reformation, but also challenges us to be active participants. These are not simply words to recite or memorize. These words are windows into worship. These words invite the people of God to gather together and praise the living God, “joining our voices with all the faithful of every time and place, who forever sing to the glory of your name: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!”

— Mary Margaret Flanagan, *hymnal advocacy and relations coordinator, Presbyterian Publishing Corporation*

The *BCW* has been a vital resource for me as a worship planner and leader. The *BCW* has also been a rich source of spiritual formation and growth for me personally. From my first use of the *BCW* as a twenty-five-year-old musician and Christian educator, through ordination as a minister of Word and Sacrament at thirty, and now halfway through my forties, I continue to be blessed and nurtured by the liturgies and prayers. I am thankful for the gift of the *BCW* and for its continued impact on me and on our church as we celebrate this milestone.

— Michael Waschevski,
First Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth, Texas

TIMES OF TRIAL

When I was doing my field education at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in the late 1990s, one of the elements of worship that I regularly led was the Call to Confession and Assurance of Pardon. The church's pastor, Fred Anderson, had worked on the *BCW* and insisted that I memorize the wording for the call and assurance. Having come from a less liturgical tradition, I chafed against it. But now, fifteen years later, the words “Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ, and Christ died for you, Christ rose for you, Christ reigns in power for you, and Christ prays for you” guide me into the light in my times of dark despair. I am grateful now in ways I would not have imagined all those years ago.

— Chip Hardwick, *director, Theology, Worship, and Education, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

When my husband died unexpectedly on a trip two years ago, I had the *BCW* with me. Its words were my lifeline to God in a time of death's utter destruction that held me up and kept me together during the next few days. Every couple hours, I stopped to draw from its strength by praying its prayers, for I could barely form words. The next few nights, my grown daughters gathered under my arms like they did when they were little, and we did evening prayer from it together. For weeks afterward, I slept with the *BCW* beside me, held fast in its Scripture and the prayers of the church.

— Teresa Stricklen, *associate for worship, Office of Theology and Worship, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

ECUMENICAL INFLUENCE

Though many in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America aren't aware of it, the *Book of Common Worship* has influenced and enriched its worship life in a number of welcome ways. Examples abound. The form of thanksgiving and intercession employed in the *BCW* daily prayer resources is visible in the Morning Prayer rite within *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (2006). The patterns that preface each *BCW* rite have their counterparts in ELCA worship resources, helpfully suggesting a more flexible architecture for worship rather than a linear list of things to do. And the evocative, image-laden, expansive language for prayer with which the *BCW* is infused has been liberally borrowed for Lutheran use and has inspired similar efforts from other contributors. Thanks be to God for the ways the *Book of Common Worship* has played a significant role in shaping much that North American Christians hold in common as they worship across various traditions.

— Martin A. Seltz, *publisher for worship, Augsburg Fortress, and general editor, Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

When the *Book of Common Worship* appeared, I found Presbyterian seminarians at our ecumenical divinity school in Rochester, New York, wanting to enroll in my basic liturgics course because the Presbyterian faculty members who had been accustomed to doing tutorials in worship for students of their tradition had no idea how to use it (and some of the older ones thought the *BCW* was “un-Presbyterian”). So, being ecumenically minded, we went forward from there.

I was bowled over when I first read the following rubric twenty years ago: “The Great Vigil of Easter is the brightest jewel of Christian liturgy . . .” (*BCW*, p. 294). “Wow!” I thought, “Things have changed!” But then, I had known Horace Allen too long to be too surprised!

A proud Presbyterian seminarian, knowing of my particular interests in Christian initiation, showed me the *BCW* at that particular juncture, and as I silently perused a service that highlighted signing the baptizand with the cross and even (!) using chrism, I started laughing. She was offended until I said, “No, no Deb. It’s wonderful . . . it’s just that my people and your people killed each other over these things in the seventeenth century!” She came to appreciate the irony.

I have yet to visit a Presbyterian congregation where the *BCW* is in the pews, though I’m sure it’s in most pastors’ studies.

— William H. Petersen, emeritus dean and professor
of Bexley Hall Seminary; interim director of
Anglican Studies, Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School;
and consultant to the Ecumenical Office,
Episcopal Church Center, New York City

TREASURY OF PRAYER

Henry van Dyke was the visionary who included a “Treasury of Prayers” in the 1906 *Book of Common Worship*. That Treasury was enlarged in the edition of 1932, and again in the 1946 edition. But the *Book of Common Worship* 1993 is, in its entirety, a treasury of prayers. Almost nine hundred prayers are documented in Harold Daniels’s *To God Alone Be Glory*, with the authors, history, and other information underlying those prayers. In addition, there are many more prayers, when one counts portions of litanies and propers in eucharistic prayers, for example. The book is a treasure trove of Christian devotion from throughout the centuries.

— Arlo D. Duba, professor of worship emeritus,
University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, and author,
Presbyterian Worship in the Twentieth Century:
With a Focus on the *Book of Common Worship*, 1993

The *BCW* appeared while I was in the early stages of my Ph.D. program at Union in New York City. There was no official liturgical studies track at UTS. I drew on Tom Driver’s explorations in ritual theory as an entry into liberating sacraments and, of course, on Janet Walton’s expertise in liturgy, arts, music, and feminist praxis as I developed as a scholar and teacher. The *BCW* was a welcome touchstone, not only in relation to Reformed worship but to the broader ecumenical liturgical conversation. As I explored the book and its riches, what struck me then (as still strikes me now) is the inclusion of not one or two or four but *ten* versions of the Great Thanksgiving. Here is ICEL (International Commission on English in the Liturgy). Here is St. Basil. Here is Hippolytus. Here is new language. Here, too, is room for improvisation and creativity—grounded, of course, in tradition and deep faith, still not exactly the first thing one might associate with the PC(USA). Through the *BCW*, we have again, like Justin Martyr describes in his *First Apology*, permission “to give thanks according to the ability of the presider.” While the audacity to pray thus is a weighty responsibility, I was, and am, and will always be, grateful for this space of inspiration and provocation.

— W. Scott Haldeman, associate professor of worship,
Chicago Theological Seminary

Blair Monie, pastor of Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church, Dallas, enjoys recounting this experience related to the *BCW*. He suggested that the Prayer for Illumination, No. 3, page 60, would be better sung than read. I memorized the text and waited for the muse to work. The tune came to me at an unlikely time and place, that is, while standing in line at the bank. This prayer is just one example of the countless treasures of ecumenical and timeless texts that are available in the *BCW*.

Also noteworthy is the Psalter section with its inclusive texts, appointed Presbyterian Psalm Tone for each psalm, and the beautiful psalm prayers after every psalm. The contribution of the *BCW* to the worship and music life of the church is immeasurable.

— Hal H. Hopson, composer

I appreciate the way large numbers of Presbyterians, through twenty years of use of the *Book of Common Worship*, have finally begun to embrace the possibilities in thoughtful, reflective, carefully worded, written prayers—and the value of saying the same written or memorized prayers more than once. I think we accomplished this feat partly because, happily, the *BCW* was published right at the opening of the digital age. The “cut and paste” approach that electronic versions of the *BCW* made possible dovetailed with the way most PC(USA) pastors do their weekly bulletin planning.

— Philip W. Butin, pastor,
First United Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville, Arkansas

BELLOVED BOOK

The binding finally broke and is held in place by clear packing tape, and, I must admit, is currently taped on upside down. The blue cloth is frayed. It never fails that one of my students says, “That’s a well-worn book!” when they first see me pull it out for class. But what I eventually show them are those spaces on certain pages where it is evident that names have been penciled in and then erased to make room for other names (I keep the list of all those names elsewhere). These places are on the pages for Christian Marriage, Baptism, and Service of the Witness to the Resurrection. I pick up my *BCW* and I am connected to all the people of my former congregations. I pick up my *BCW* and am connected to my former and current students. I pick up my *BCW* and I am tangibly connected to the church.

— Jennifer L. Lord, associate dean for academic programs (acting); and Dorothy B. Vickery Associate Professor of Homiletics and Liturgical Studies, Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Austin, Texas

I love to use the actual book, the leather-bound, gold-edged *Book of Common Worship*, especially when celebrating communion. I confess I sometimes change a word or two, even so. My associates prefer to print a script and put it in a binder, perhaps with larger print, for convenience. I’m not sure anyone really consciously sees what I am doing. For me, it’s all about the drama of the liturgy. I am hoping that at least a few people have learned that we have a beautiful book that is Presbyterian that guides and graces the work of the people.

— Rebecca B. Prichard, visiting professor of theology,
San Francisco Theological Seminary

The Book of Common Worship has been a teacher and a guide for me since its publication. It continues to teach me to love liturgy, the liturgical seasons, the variety of faithful responses from the gathered people of God in worship more deeply. It has especially been a mainstay and template for me as I have walked with people through the valley of the shadow of death, with Scripture, prayer and words of committal in the Service to the Witness of the Resurrection. My copy has the beribboned, marked-up, slightly frayed look of a beloved and well-used resource for ministry.

— Elizabeth Nordquist, honorably retired,
Los Angeles, California

GIFT TO GENERATIONS

For my generation of pastors, preachers and presiders, armed in our youth principally with *The Worshipbook* (1970), but with the memory of the *Book of Common Worship* (1946) still very much alive among us, it is very difficult to convey adequately how much the advent of the *Book of Common Worship* of 1993 meant to our leadership of worship. The theologically rich and often stunningly beautiful texts reminded us of the treasury of devotion to which we have access as Reformed Christians because the *BCW* lays claim to the various streams of Christian faith, reminding us that we are first and foremost catholic if we are truly Reformed. Every time I return to the *BCW*, I find my faith challenged and supported by passages that resound through twenty centuries of Christian faith and are grounded in the faith of the people of Israel.

The psalms are ever present, whether explicitly cited or not. The prophets have their due. Narratives and wisdom literature are woven throughout the texts. And the Gospels speak good news, even when only through allusions. John Calvin's piety stands beside that of Thomas Cranmer and John Chrysostom, as Sarum Rites and the Passover Haggadah echo through texts that reclaim time and space as God's own and remind us that the incarnation faith celebrates and consecrates as sacred that which others would call merely profane. The *Book of Common Worship* reconnects Presbyterians to the history of Christian worship in ways that nothing else has in my lifetime, teaching us that Justin Martyr, Augustine of Hippo, Erasmus, John Henry Newman, and Christina Rossetti stand shoulder-to-shoulder beside us as we locate ourselves in the vast cloud of witnesses who gather at pulpit, font, and table each Lord's Day.

Of all the things the *BCW* has taught me, perhaps the greatest lesson is connected with the greatest surprise of this book (for me, at least): the celebration of the Lord's Supper set in the midst of the funeral service. The witness to the resurrection is nowhere more powerfully communicated than in this conjunction of memorial service and Eucharist. When I first read this service, I fell in love with the text of the Great Thanksgiving (p. 929ff), and have used this liturgy again and again, especially as the text for Holy Communion on Ash Wednesday and during Lent.

A church is only as strong theologically and biblically as its liturgical resources and hymns allow. With the *BCW* as our companion in these past twenty years, we have been well served theologically and biblically.

— Michael Jenkins, president,
Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

BCW AS A VERB

After two decades of living with the *BCW* as a worshiper gathered with other worshipers, rather than a presider, the *BCW* has become more of a verb than a noun, and might best be called *Common Worship*, rather than *Book of . . .* When embraced more as a verb the *BCW* becomes other than a resource for preparing worship. It becomes the primary means to guide us into an encounter with God, to unite our spirits with Holy Spirit, to make us one with all the people of God from every time and place, to send us out to be ambassadors of the kingdom of God. In the birthing waters of baptism, we are made one with all God's people. The lectionary, shared in common, joins us globally as the Scripture is proclaimed. In consuming a morsel of bread we are made one with the One who is the Bread of Life for the life of the world. In the Daily Office, our spirits are joined in prayer with the saints across the ages. Indeed, when we assemble together to worship the one triune God, we actively engage our bodies, minds, and spirits in common worship that is both encounter and engagement.

— Harold M. Daniels, editor,
1993 Book of Common Worship