Bible Study 80

June 7, 2023

 “The Book of Common Prayer “ II (continued)

The Table of Contents:

It is said that men, in general will not read the ‘instructions’ albeit for installing a garage opener; a Television or just about any other utility. This is understandable when you see the small print booklet that arrives with every product and often in a multitude of languages. However, one thing that College does teach you is that the body of knowledge is so great in every subject that it is best to both make use of ‘contents and index.’

Pages 9 through 15 are concerned with explaining, in the Preface, the value of the BCP and its place in the Episcopal Church. Well worth a read if you do not know the history of the church up till 1789 when the BCP was formerly adopted as the liturgy of the church.

Page 13 explains that the “Eucharist” is the central act of worship of the church. Together with Morning and Evening Prayer they make up the worship of the church. The BCP is set to place on record that The Eucharist, Morning and Evening Prayer plus any additional service prescribed by a bishop is a call to participation by the entire assembly of the Church. Within that call are individual roles to be dutifully observed by bishop, priest, deacon, laity and other ministers within the congregation.

The leader of worship is a bishop or a priest. Lay ministers may be licensed to lead for services of the Word including Morning and Evening Prayer.

The BCP makes it clear which hymns, anthems, are authorized and where and when music may be sung or played as opposed to ‘said’.

Lastly all readings are to be drawn from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible for holy scripture.

THE CALENDAR OF THE CHURCH YEAR:

People have argued about the date of Easter for years. It is hard to understand, but in paragraph 2 of page 15 the BCP explains:--- EASTER IS ALWAYS THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE FULL MOON THAT FALL ON OR AFTER MARCH 21. IT CANNOT OCCUR BEFORE MARCH 22 OR LATER THAN APRIL 25.

Once you know that date you count back six weeks to find ASH WEDNESDAY and before that EPIPHANY. Since Christmas is a fixed Feast namely December 25 we count back four Sundays to Advent 1 and the beginning of each new church year.

Besides the Calendar Year we only celebrate the following feasts liturgically: EASTER; ASCENSION; PENTECOST; TRINITY; ALL SAINTS; CHRISTMAS DAY; EPIPHANY.

All Sundays of the year are feasts of our Lord Jesus Christ. Within the Eucharist Service the following changes for each feast or Sunday: COLLECTS; READINGS; PREFACE; choose one of four EUCHARISTIC prayers; the HYMNS.

Any changes or celebration of any other event needs the permission of the bishop. There are minor Feast Days or Holy Days that may be observed on page 16-17. Irrespective of these feasts they are not observed on Ash Wednesday or any day of Holy Week where the Seasonal liturgy takes precedence. Ash Wednesday and Holy Week will be strictly observed in all churches of the diocese.

There are days of ‘Optional’ Observance on page 18.

Pages 19 to 30 will tell you all the commemorations and remembrances from each month of saints, bishops, missionaries and people of outstanding contribution to the church.

Pages 31 through 33 give you the Titles of Sundays and Feast days in any year.

Page 37 begins the Daily Office of the church.

Read 9 through 33