

Script for Common Prayer Release Party Slideshow

Thanks so much for gathering friends to introduce Common Prayer. This little script is a way to walk folks through the PowerPoint slideshow we've created. Hope it's some help. Feel free to ad lib or go off script... it's just a little aid so you know what the slides show.

Slide 1: Welcome to the Prayer Party

We're so glad you could join us. Over 150 prayer parties are have happened across the United States and in 12 other countries, celebrating the work of dozens of communities to create a new resource for praying together—Common Prayer: Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals.

This project is about more than a book... it's about a way of life. So we're going to have some time to fellowship, reconnect with old friends and maybe even meet some new ones. We'll all get together again a little later to hear a couple recorded messages from Shane Claiborne and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove who were sorry they couldn't be with us, but wanted to say howdy by video. We'll take a virtual tour of the book, sing some of its songs together, and say evening prayer together. Then we'll have a little drawing to see who gets free copies of the book to take home. Again, so glad you're here. Hope you enjoy!

[Announcements: This would be a good time to tell people where the bathrooms are, how you're going to do food if you have it, whether you have copies for sale, etc.]

Video greeting from Shane available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaPkCSXRaWk>

Shane Claiborne from The Simple Way in Philadelphia is one of the compilers of Common Prayer. Here's a little message he recorded to share with us....

Slide 2: Credits

As Shane was saying, literally hundreds of people have their fingerprints on this book. This is one of the reasons we're celebrating it together this week in so many different places—it's a labor of love by communities for communities. It's hard to even remember everyone who contributed prayers and songs and quotes that are written on their walls and on their hearts, but we're grateful for each one of them. We're especially grateful to these folks who poured hours into making this happen—from making sure that it was true to the church's long tradition to making sure it remembered our contemporary saints; from notating the songs to drawing the original art work; from arranging old prayers to writing new ones for our time—these folks have been the midwives welcoming Common Prayer into the world.

[If anyone of these folks are at your gathering, this would be a good time to recognize them/have them say a few words.]

Slide 3: Francis Icon

This is Rick Beerhorst's icon of St Francis. It's a great example of the original artwork that was done to make Common Prayer a beautiful resource to hold in our hands. "The world will be saved by beauty," Dostoyevsky said. We need more beauty in our neighborhoods and in our world, and what better than the saints and the Scriptures to inspire it. Common Prayer has icons for each section drawn by Jesce Walz and icons for each month of morning prayer by Rick Beerhorst and Joel Klepac. So be sure and check those out when you're thumbing through...

Slide 4 & 5: Introduction

This is a resource for people who love liturgy and for people who've never heard of liturgy. We hope it has something fresh to offer everyone. But that means it also needs a little explanation... So there's about 20 pages at the beginning about what liturgy is, how it works, why we remember the saints, and how we put our prayers into action. If you're thinking about using Common Prayer in your community or in your church, you might want to have a look at these pages. They raise some of the questions that your friends will probably ask you.

Slide 6: Contents

So, here's the book at a glance. It has evening prayers for every night of the week, morning prayers for each day of the year (that's a big chunk on the book), and a midday prayer that's the same every day. Then there are occasional prayers to use as they're needed and a songbook with music and words for the 50 greatest hits from the churches first 2000 years. We'll sing some of those together in a few minutes...

Slide 7: Month at a Glance

But first... Here's a little 'month at a glance' page for December. There's one of these for each month, and each one focuses on one of the '12 Marks' of new monasticism. These intros highlight important things to remember in the church and in the world at this time of year and tell stories of faithfulness to inspire hope where we are. They also suggest a few books that can help us think more deeply about themes will be touching on in our prayers.

Slide 8: Feb 1

One of the things Common Prayer does is help us remember the saints—our heroes and heroines of the faith who've shown us what it means for God's love to be put into action in different times and places. Here's an example from the morning office for February 1: [read from slide]

Slide 9: Aug 16—This Day in History

These morning prayers work hard to root us in the church's memory and its peculiar sense of time. That's why the year starts in December, not January. Our time has been interrupted by Jesus getting born into the world. So we don't count time quite the same... But this doesn't mean that we're so heavenly minded we don't pay attention to what's happening here on earth. So our morning prayers also recall important dates in world history—some glorious and some tragic, but all of them events that should lead us to pray for God's kingdom to come right here on earth as it is in heaven.

Slide 10: Note for Columbus Day

Since Common Prayer is something like a cookbook, offering up recipes for a life of prayer and action, it also includes a slew of little sidebars and boxes to help us think about why we pray the way we do or how we can become the answer to our prayers today. Here's a little example from October 12, which is when Americans remember 'Columbus Day.'

Slide 11: Holy Week Insert

Since morning prayers in this book are organized by calendar date, it makes it a little difficult to remember church seasons that move around each year (like Lent and Easter). So there's a special set of morning prayers to pray for Holy Week and Easter—the highpoint of the Christian year when we remember how Jesus laid down his life for us... but that wasn't the end of the story. He got up from the dead, which is why we can be crazy enough to keep getting up again and again and singing the songs of Zion that celebrate God's victory, even when things aren't looking so good.

Slide 12: Midday Prayer

Most of us start and end our days at home—with family and friends, often—but a lot of us are on the go in the middle of the day—at work or taking care of the kids or meeting someone for lunch. So midday prayer is the same every day and pretty easy to memorize. Folks might gather to say it at the office or on a street corner. Or, you might just sing it to yourself while you're making a sandwich, knowing that thousands of brothers and sisters around the world are praying with you. Midday prayers ends by passing the peace. If you're alone, you might kiss the earth under your feet or greet a stranger with a smile or send a note to a friend you haven't heard from in a while. Somewhere in the middle of every day, we ask God to make us instruments of Christ's peace.

Slide 13: Evening Prayer

Evening Prayers are on a weekly rotation, and they're each laid out in the book with a beautiful border by Jesce Walz, wrapping each page in the Lord's Prayer in the eight most commonly

spoken languages of our world. We're going to pray the evening prayer for today here in a minute, but here's a little glimpse of what the pages look like.

Slides 14-16: Occasional Prayers

Here's some examples of the prayers that are included for special occasions. So, you might use these to have a special house blessing for a friend who just got their first home. Or maybe your family is adopting its first child. Or maybe someone has been killed in your neighborhood and your organizing a prayer vigil. This section of the book has prayers for the sort of occasions that come up when we follow Jesus way of abundant life in a world still marked by death.

Slides 17-20: Songbook

St. Augustine said, "Whoever sings prays twice." At the heart of Common Prayer is the conviction that we're invited now to sing the song that goes on forever around the throne of God. So the book ends with a hymnal that could very well stand on its own—a greatest hits from the church's first 2000 years. These are the songs that we sing as part of morning prayer each day. But they're also songs that the people of God should sing anytime we're together. So, since we're gathering here today, let's sing...

Navigable Song Book

You might want to invite someone to lead the singing. Feel free to sing as long as you want...

Choose Evening Prayer for today

Let's join our voices and our hearts together for this evening's prayer:

Read from slides for the day you're gathered

Discussion and Time to Give Away Books if you want to

[Let people know how they can buy copies of Common Prayer, and encourage folks to help get the word out about this resource. A few ideas: blog about it, write a review on amazon.com , email pictures from this event to commonprayer@yogile.com with 'ordinaryradical' (all one word) as the subject, give your pastor a copy for Christmas...]

Benediction from Jonathan available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y77tFVScUaA>

Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove from the Rutba House community was one of the compilers of Common Prayer. He recorded this little video to share with us tonight.

Go in Peace....