

## A Monthly Message from Pastor Mike and Mandy

Dear Parish Family,

The Common Service was prepared by three Lutheran Church bodies, the General Synod, South; the General Synod; and the General Council, all of which eventually became part of the Lutheran Church in America and later the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Churches from this “eastern Lutheran” tradition have been joining the North American Lutheran Church.

The primary rule for the preparation of the Common Service was stated in the *Preface to the Common Service, 1888*, “The common consent of the pure Lutheran Liturgies of the Sixteenth Century, and when there is not an entire agreement among them, the consent of the largest number of those of greatest weight.” (*Common Service Book with Hymnal*, p. 314)

The reform of the Western liturgy began with Luther’s own work. Conrad Rupff and John Walther assisted Luther in providing music for the German Service. Many principalities followed with the publication of their own orders of worship. The Common Service reflects a consensus with respect to the various church orders.

The church orders are rooted in the liturgy of the Western Church, which reaches back fifteen hundred years, and reflect the structure of the ancient Latin Service. Among the particular characteristics of the German orders, and thus the Common Service, are the importance of the sermon, the emphasis on the purity of doctrine, the importance of hymns, and the inclusion of a General Prayer (the intercessions).

The propers of the Service, Introits, Collects, Epistles, and Gospels, received final form in the reign of Charlemagne, and were included in the French and German Missals. The first Prayer

Book of the Church of England and the Common Service are in close agreement, because the Sarum Missal (Salisbury) and other Anglican books were very similar to the Missals used in Germany. (A Missal contains the prayers used in the Mass, Holy Communion). Archbishop Cranmer who led the Commission that prepared the Prayer Book was well acquainted with the Lutheran Service. He had spent much time in Germany conversing with theologians and princes.

The Common Service is a treasure of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Beginning in July we will be using a revised form of this Service. Kile and Jackie Smith have been working with us to produce this Service.

The ancient Collects, Prayers of the Day, will be included, but since there are fewer Collects in the ancient Service, which has only a one year lectionary of Bible readings, than are needed in a three year lectionary cycle, new prayers are being composed along with a revision of the ancient prayers. Pentecost Sunday began the use of these prayers

We hope that the Common Service will add to the beautiful worship of our congregation. Your comments about the Service would be most appreciated. It is a work that will continue to be revised as we come to new insights in the process of its usage at Holy Trinity. In the future this worship resource may be published for wider distribution.

Let us thank the Lord for inspiring the Lutheran Reformers to such good work on behalf of the Church catholic.

(Note: Much information was gleaned from the *Preface to the Common Service, 1888*, included in the *Common Service Book and Hymnal*).

In Christ,

Pastor Michael Tavella and Pastor Amanda Grimmer