

November 21, 2017

Dear Grace Church Family and Friends,

The *Book of Common Prayer* includes two prayers of “General Thanksgiving.”

The more traditional version was composed by Edward Reynolds (1599-1676), Bishop of Norwich, and reportedly, was inspired by a private prayer of Queen Elizabeth. It was added to the Prayer Book in 1662 under the heading, “A General Thanksgiving,” and preceded other prayers of thanksgiving for specific occasions.

When the first American Prayer Book was published in 1789, it required use of this prayer at every Daily Office, and then, in 1892, its use became optional, except on Sundays when the litany or Eucharist did not immediately follow.

“The General Thanksgiving” continues to appear in our 1979 version of *Book of Common Prayer*, and although we do not recite it very often, it remains one of my all-time favorite prayers.

*Almighty God, Father of all mercies,  
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks  
for all your goodness and loving-kindness  
to us and to all whom you have made.  
We bless you for our creation, preservation,  
and all the blessings of this life;  
but above all for your immeasurable love  
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;  
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.  
And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,  
that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,  
not only with our lips, but in our lives,  
by giving up our selves to your service,  
and by walking before you  
in holiness and righteousness all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.*

Happy Thanksgiving,  
Andrew