

# ACNA's Book of Common Prayer 2019 Beautiful, Historical, and Significant

## **Don't Pass Up the Cover**

By  
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When the news of a new prayer book spread around our church, excitement began to surface. We knew we had a rare opportunity to formally introduce a new Book of Common Prayer 2019 (BCP 2019) and give it the importance it deserves as it is phrased into our corporate and personal worship.

The idea was to have everyone know how to use the BCP 2019 for corporate and personal praise, worship, and prayer. Why? Most lay persons have never been taught how to fully utilize our prayer books in the past.

Prior to receiving my copy, I saw a picture of the BCP 2019 on the ACNA web site. I was excited to get my hands on my personal copy. The day it arrived at our home I could hardly wait to open the package. Finally, in my hands I had this beautiful red book with five gold embossed crosses. Normally I do not spend much time studying the cover design of a book. This was not the case with my new BCP 2019.

During the development of a study guide for a BCP 2019 class I had a brief discussion with a member of our congregation. He believed the cover crosses represented a Jerusalem Cross. I had no knowledge of the Jerusalem Cross. Sort of embarrassing. Time to do some research.

The first topic for our class turned out to be the external design and the five crosses and red color. I admit I am taking some liberty in terms of the color purpose. That being said the red color represents energy, passion, action, desire, and to focus attention. Of course, the color red is highly recommended for all to wear on Pentecost Sunday to celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The gold embossing of the Jerusalem Cross pointed to the richness and purity of the contents.

Now for the five crosses on the cover. Several viewpoints exist as to what the crosses represent. They are:

- Four crosses surrounding the large center cross represent the four Gospels, Matthew, Mark Luke, and John. The large cross symbolizes Christ.
- The four crosses represent the four corners of the earth to which we are to proclaim the Gospel as commanded by Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20. The large cross represents Christ.
- The large cross symbolizes Christ and the small crosses represent the four nail wounds of Christ at His crucifixion.
- Global Anglican Futures Conference (GAFCON) was formed in 2008 in Jerusalem. Consequently, or perhaps by God's design the birthplace of Christianity and the birthplace of GAFCON. The Jerusalem Cross in a way represents both new beginnings.

- The Publisher clarified the graphic design this way, "Today people refer to the Jerusalem Cross as representing the Gospel spreading from Jerusalem to the four corners of the world."

The point is The Jerusalem Cross makes a great statement for Christians around the world. How appropriate for Anglicans around the world.

Keep in mind that when picking up the prayer book we are picking up a part of God's word as inspired by the Holy Spirit. We can begin to see Christ at the center of the cover. We realize The Holy Spirit will be a part of our prayer and praise time and that each of us is to spread the Gospel to the four corners of the earth. We are entering into His presence.

The more we understand about the outside the more we can deepen our relationship with Lord using the information on the inside. Why? Because we are better prepared to spend time with Him. Why? Because the more we get to know Him the more we want to spread His love to others.

Take advantage this special time in our history to introduce our new prayer book that is *Beautiful, Historical, and Significant*. Pray that our members will learn it, love it, and use it on a daily basis in order to develop a deeper personal relationship with Jesus and share His love with others.

