

# The Psalter and the Book of Common Prayer (American 1928)

*All we Christian people are indeed duty-bound to give great and undying thanks to the holy prophet David who so diligently left us in writing his most devout psalms for us and our posterity to read. And he did so, it seems to me, chiefly for three reasons: first, that the minds of sinners might be raised up and excited by these holy psalms, as by a sweet melody, to receive and grasp the study and learning of virtues; secondly, that if any man or woman had fallen into great and abominable sins, they should not despair but put their entire and steadfast hope of forgiveness in God; thirdly, that they might use these holy psalms as letters of supplication and efficacious prayers to obtain the remission and forgiveness of sins from almighty God.*

Saint John Fisher, *Exposition of the Seven Penitential Psalms*  
Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1998, page 73

## Psalms in the Book of Common Prayer

The recommended usage of Psalms for Morning and Evening Prayer is described in “The Use of the Psalter and Lectionary” on pages vii-viii of the *Book of Common Prayer* (American 1928). Lectionaries list extracts of Scripture appointed to be read in worship and have been used in the Church since the 4th century.

You can recite Psalms according to Cathedral Usage (daily selections provided in lectionaries for use with Morning and Evening Prayer) or Monastic Usage (the thirty-day cycle of sequential readings in which the Psalter of the *Book of Common Prayer* is divided).

You can also pray Psalms by themselves or as part of personal, extemporaneous prayer. The Prayer Book provides a “Selection of Psalms” on page ix that divides the Psalms into twenty-eight categories, such as Psalms appropriate for use when contemplating peace, trust, penitence, thanksgiving, hope, our Lord’s Incarnation and Passion, or God’s glory and wisdom.

## Psalm Readings: Cathedral Usage

The Prayer Book provides several lectionary courses in which the reading of specific Psalms is coordinated with scripture readings assigned for Morning and Evening Prayer:

The lectionary “Psalms and Lessons for the Christian Year” (pages x-xli) prescribes specific morning and evening psalm and scripture readings for each day of the week based on the liturgical kalendar – starting the church year with the First Sunday of Advent through the Sunday Next Before Advent of the following year.

The lectionary “Psalms and Lessons for Special Occasions” (pages xlii-xliii) prescribes specific morning and evening psalm and scripture readings for such special occasions as patronal feasts, national holidays, or ordinations.

The lectionary “Psalms and Lessons for the Fixed Holy Days” (pages xliv-xlv) prescribes specific morning and evening psalm and scripture readings for the eves of fixed holy days, which are not listed in the lectionary “Psalms and Lessons for the Christian Year”.

## Psalm Readings: Monastic Usage

This table of readings follows the thirty-day cycle into which the Psalter is divided for the *Book of Common Prayer*, pages 345-525.

Day	Morning Psalms	Evening Psalms
1	1-5	6-8
2	9-11	12-14
3	15-17	18
4	19-21	22-23
5	24-26	27-29
6	30-31	32-34
7	35-36	37
8	38-40	41-43
9	44-46	47-49
10	50-52	53-55
11	56-58	59-61
12	62-64	65-67
13	68	69-70
14	71-72	73-74
15	75-77	78
16	79-81	82-85
17	86-88	89
18	90-92	93-94
19	95-97	98-101
20	102-103	104
21	105	106
22	107	108-109
23	110-113	114-115
24	116-118	119:1-32
25	119:33-72	119:73-104
26	119:105-144	119:145-176
27	120-125	126-131
28	132-135	136-138
29	139-140	141-143
30	144-146	147-150

**St. Stephen's Anglican Catholic Church**

800 Timothy Road, Athens, Georgia 30606 (706-543-8657)

[www.ststephensathens.org](http://www.ststephensathens.org)