

**A NEW DIRECTORY FOR THE PUBLIC  
WORSHIP OF GOD: FOUNDED ON  
THE BOOK OF COMMON ORDER  
(1560-64), AND THE WESTMINSTER  
DIRECTORY (1643-45)**

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# **FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND**

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A NEW DIRECTORY FOR THE  
PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD

Free Church

# A NEW DIRECTORY FOR THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD

FOUNDED ON THE BOOK OF COMMON ORDER  
(1560-64) AND THE WESTMINSTER DIRECTORY  
(1643-45), AND PREPARED BY THE "PUBLIC  
WORSHIP ASSOCIATION IN CONNECTION WITH  
THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND."

"Let all things be done unto edifying."—1 Cor. xiv. 26.

"Let all things be done in seemly form, and according to order."

—1 Cor. xiv. 40.



Edinburgh  
MACNIVEN & WALLACE

1898

## PREFACE

THE Association by which this Directory for Public Worship has been prepared, was formed at a Conference of Ministers and Elders of the Free Church of Scotland, held at Edinburgh in May 1891. The object of the Association, as stated in its Constitution, is "to promote the ends of edification, order, and reverence in the public services of the Church, in accordance with Scripture principles, and in the light especially of the experience and practice of the Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian system." The suggestion that such an Association should be formed, and the invitation to the Conference, were contained in a Circular signed by eighteen ministers, namely:—Drs Bannerman, Blair, Bruce, A. O. Johnston, Laidlaw, Macmillan, Reith, Ross Taylor, Salmond, Walter C. Smith; Messrs T. Crerar, Lewis Davidson, J. T. Ferguson, W. A. Gray, T. B. Kilpatrick, D. M. Ross, David Somerville, and George Steven.

In this Circular, those who signed it said they felt that the subject of the Public Worship of the Church called for special consideration at the present time, and that in connection with it there was room and need for improvement in various directions. Their desire was that all efforts for such improvement "should proceed upon lines in harmony with the past history, and best traditions of the Scottish Church in the matter of

worship, and should be—to use the language of the Solemn League and Covenant—‘in accordance with the Word of God, and the example of the best Reformed Churches,’ as represented, for instance, in the General Presbyterian Alliance. In particular, all of us hold strongly that the duty and privilege of *free prayer* in the public Worship of God should be jealously guarded and maintained, and that nothing in the least approaching to a compulsory Liturgy, as in the Anglican and Roman Communions, should be even proposed.

“In the event of union between our own Church and one or both of the other great branches of Presbyterianism in Scotland, which in our opinion is much to be desired, a Revision of the old Scottish Book of Common Order, and of the Westminster Directory for Worship, would probably have to be undertaken by the United Church. In view of such a work in the future, it is of great importance that the mind of the Free Church of Scotland as a whole, and especially of its ministers, should be seriously and prayerfully turned to this question, and that our Church should be in a position to take an intelligent and influential part in the ultimate re-adjustment and improvement of the common standards for worship.”

On these lines, the work of the Association has gone forward in a very harmonious and encouraging way for the past seven years. It has sought to call attention,—and has done so, it is believed, with good results—on the one hand, to the danger of hasty and ill-considered action, and of merely imitative movements in the direction of Anglican forms and usages; and on the other hand, to the need of improvements in various respects in the ordinary Public Worship and in the Special Services of the Church, and to the lines on



which such improvements may best be carried out, in accordance with Scriptural and confessional principles, and in the light of the practice and experience of sister Reformed Churches both in Great Britain, America, and the Continent of Europe. Papers have been issued yearly for private circulation among the members of the Association; but this "Directory for Worship" is its first publication for general use.

The two well-known Service-books of the Scottish Church, on which this little work is based, may be described respectively as an optional Liturgy and a Directory for Worship.

The Book of Common Order arose out of the form of service drawn up by John Knox, Whittingham, and others for the use of the English exiles at Frankfort in 1554. It was first published at Geneva in 1556, and used in the Church there, in which both Knox and Whittingham were ministers. After Knox's return to Scotland in 1559, "if not earlier, the Book of Geneva began to be used by some of the Reformed Congregations in this country. In the First Book of Discipline, adopted by the Church in 1560, it is said to be 'already used in some of our Churches,' and is spoken of as 'the Book of Our Common Order, called the Order of Geneva.' In 1562 the General Assembly enjoined its uniform use in 'ministration of the Sacraments and solemnisation of marriages and burial of the dead.'<sup>1</sup> It was reprinted in Edinburgh in that year with some additions. Between 1562 and 1564 it was modified and enlarged; new prayers were added from Continental sources, others, which had been used in Scotland previously, were incorporated with it, and the Psalter was completed. In this form it was printed in Edinburgh

<sup>1</sup> *Book of the Universal Kirk*, p. 13. Sess. V. Dec. 31, 1562.

in 1564; and the Assembly of that year 'ordained that every Minister, Exhorter, and Reader shall have one of the Psalm books, lately printed in Edinburgh, and use the Order contained therein in Prayers, Marriage, and Ministration of the Sacraments.'<sup>1</sup>

"The Book of Geneva, thus remodelled, is known as Knox's Liturgy or Book of Common Order; and it embodied the law of the Church as to worship from 1564 to 1645."<sup>2</sup>

The "Book of Common Order," however, is a better and more accurately descriptive name for the first Service-book of the Scottish Reformed Church than "Liturgy," which is apt to suggest a fixed and compulsory form of ritual. In "The Book of Our Common Order," the place and rights of free prayer are carefully vindicated and guarded, an outline of the order of worship is given, with specimen forms of prayer, confession of sins, thanksgiving, and intercession, which, "or such like," the minister is to use. We have an "Order of Baptism," "The Manner of the Administration of the Lord's Supper," "The Form of Marriage," etc., with examples of suitable exhortations, and prayers; and the officiating minister is enjoined to use "either the words following, or like in effect." "The minister exhorting the people to pray, saith in this manner, or such like." "The minister prayeth for the assistance of God's Holy Spirit, as the same shall move His heart, and so proceedeth to the sermon." "After sermon he either

<sup>1</sup> Calderwood, *Hist. of the Kirk of Scotland* (Wodrow Soc. ed.), ii. 284.

<sup>2</sup> See Sprott and Leishman's admirable edition of the Book of Common Order and the Westminster Directory, with Historical Introductions and Illustrative Notes. Edin. and London, 1868. Preface, p. xv.

useth the 'Prayer for all Estates,' or else prayeth as the Spirit of God shall move his heart."<sup>1</sup>

It is unnecessary to refer here in detail to the contents of the Westminster Directory, which may be assumed to be in the hands of our ministers generally. We may venture to say, in passing, that it deserves, and will repay, much more careful study on their part than it often receives. It is not indeed of full authority in the Church, and has no direct place in the Ordination vows of her office-bearers; but it contains a great deal that is of very high and permanent value, both in the way of guidance and suggestion in matters of worship. The Westminster Directory traverses, so far, the same ground as the Book of Common Order, but does not give the same amount of help as regards special services. It says nothing whatever, for example, of Ordination Services,—a lack which is somewhat inadequately supplied in the reference to the subject in the other Westminster document known as "The Form of Church Government." As regards the ordinary public worship of the Lord's day, however, the Directory furnishes a considerable amount of valuable material and suggestion for Confession, Adoration, Thanksgiving, Petition, and Intercession, so prepared and arranged that they can, with very little difficulty, be turned into direct forms of prayer.<sup>2</sup>

In the Directory for Public Worship now issued, we follow the Book of Common Order in giving specimen forms for certain parts of the ordinary service, *e.g.*, Prayers of Invocation, of Thanksgiving, and "for all

<sup>1</sup> See Dr Jas. Bannerman's account of the Book of Common Order, *Church of Christ*, ii. 414-420.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Spratt and Leishman's *Book of Common Order and Directory*, p. 325.