Eleven scholars reveal how the Church of England’s *Book of Common Prayer* of 1662 has been perceived and received, revised and superseded. Diarmaid MacCulloch reminds us that the Restoration Prayer Book resulted in the Great Ejectment of Nonconformists and the strengthening of Old Dissent. But we look back on 4,800 editions or derivatives of the Prayer Book in practically 200 languages. Disliked by almost everyone in its first form of 1549, it was twice declared heretical by the State – once by Roman Catholics and once by Protestants. It has had one glorious life with unsurpassed cathedral music and another sustaining the spirituality of countless parish churches which have thrived on simple ‘said’ services.

Stephen Platten reflects on the Prayer Book’s formative impact on English society. Many who have not known its Sunday liturgy have lived, loved and died comforted by the heart memory of its occasional offices. Across the centuries it has offered but one eucharistic rite to rehearse the entire mystery of salvation. It has condensed the monastic hours into two transcendent services and provided a liturgical Psalter accessible to all. Gordon Jeanes reminds us that before the Reformation the English clergy required access to a missal, a breviary, a manual, a processional and bishops also to a pontifical. The laity survived on the elevation in the Mass, some vernacular intercession and kissing of the Pax. The one new Edwardian use for the whole realm relied on the vernacular, the printing press and the Tudor government machine. With the Bible, the Prayer Book and the Homilies came the denial of the sacrifice of the Mass and of the real presence. The 1559 Elizabethan version of the Prayer Book sat ill for some, accompanied by vestments and wafers. Three times in fifteen years the ‘godly’ and reformed wing of the English church sought in vain for Parliamentary recognition of the liturgical portions of the *Genevan Service Book*. Throughout Elizabeth’s reign it was possible to celebrate the Prayer Book rite in a Catholic and priestly fashion or in a Protestant manner with a presiding minister.

Hannah Cleugh analyses the role of the Prayer Book in early Stuart society. The Hampton Court proceedings on the accession of James I and VI brought only two significant changes: the adding of sacramental topics to the Catechism and the provision of Private Baptism; and it marked the end of the road for the liturgical hopes of more rigorous Elizabethan Protestantism. All was set for the gradual rise of Laudian Anglicanism. Alas, the myth of Hooker’s triad of Scripture, church/tradition and reason is still quoted, even though it...
owes more to the writings of Francis Paget than to the scholarship of Richard Hooker. Lancelot Andrewes is justly celebrated as the real patron of Cosin and Laud. Laud's communion theology would re-emerge in 1662 and reappear in nineteenth- and twentieth-century revisions. Peter McCullough devotes a chapter to 'Lancelot Andrewes and 1662'. Andrewes’ Notes on the Elizabethan Prayer Book of 1559 were made sometime between 1609 and 1619. They aided a 'Laudian' celebration of the Prayer Book rite either in St Etheldreda's, Ely Place or Winchester House, Southwark (or possibly both). Andrewes loved the 'Great Service' (with its Eastern flavour) of an integrated Matins, Litany and Communion with the sermon after the Litany as in the Mass of the Catechumens. He kept appropriate vigil fasts. Incense, gospel responses, coloured silks for chalice and paten, communion wafers and washing of priestly hands were all present. Clear roles were assigned to the deacon: all in all a perfect example of the written text and the celebrated form being two rather different things.

Brian Cummings concentrates on the publication of '1662'. No copy of The Book of Common Prayer was printed between 1645 and 1660, but it could still be found in a third of parish churches and perhaps only a quarter of churches possessed the new Directory, which was intended to replace it. At the Savoy Conference of 1661 Bishop Sheldon wrong-footed the Presbyterians by letting them list their preferences first. They objected, among many other things, to the brevity of the collect form, to lack of provision for extempore prayer, to holy days, ceremonial, absolutions and the presumption that the congregation was regenerate and destined for heaven. Sheldon's Answer to the Exceptions argued that common prayer was the key to common order, so extemporary prayer before and after the sermon was undesirable. Responsals were to be preferred to 'long and tedious prayers' continually interrupted by loud 'Amens'. Sheldon also 'outmanoeuvred both Cosin and Baxter'. Cosin was not to see the restoration of the 1549 Prayer of Consecration and Baxter lost out to a three-fold ordinal. The King James Bible was to be used for the lections, but the Apocrypha stayed. The result was more of an old book than a new one.

William Jacob's 'Common Prayer in the Eighteenth Century' reveals the longings for a liturgy enriched by Wren architecture, organs, hymns and metrical psalms and more frequent communion. Wheatley had urged public baptism, the 'dipping of the child' and the congregation 'nearer the table'. Prayer Book revisers included 'Nonjurors' attracted by 'primitive antiquity', Unitarians wanting to purge the Prayer Book of its Trinitarian formulae and John Wesley introducing British and American Methodists to the preferences of Baxter and the Savoy Conference. Bryan Spinks provides accounts of the