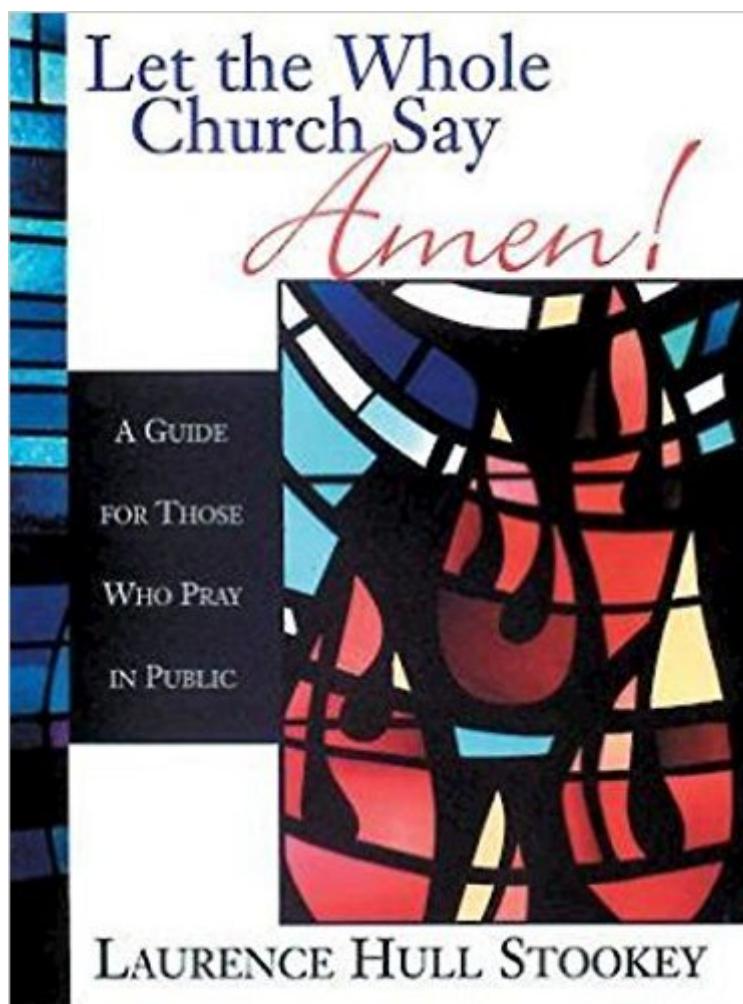


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Let The Whole Church Say Amen!: A Guide For Those Who Pray In Public



Synopsis

Stookey seeks to relieve the anxiety of inexperienced leaders of public prayer and the discomfort of those with and for whom they pray in this practical guide to the art of praying in public. Those who read carefully and complete the exercises will gain significant experience in crafting prayers to which the whole congregation can respond with an enthusiastic "Amen".

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is highly formal, using old fashioned language and concepts. I guess if you want a highly structured, highly formal "how to" book then this book is for you. If you are more of a free spirit who says what you are moved by the Holy Spirit to say when you pray, then you may feel constrained by this book. I did. It made me feel like all the prayers I have ever said before have been unworthy, it almost made me feel put down. Plus, the author must live in a bubble of "high etiquette" because he speaks as if life can always be "planned." For example, when discussing how to offer prayer before a meal, he says it is proper if you are asked in advance so that you are prepared to offer prayer. In today's world, who gets a written invitation to offer pray before a meal, even when it's a meal that is held in public with a large group of people? I felt like the life this author is coming from and my life couldn't be more different. I was given this book to read in advance of a course that I need to take. The publisher also did a terrible job with the way the pages are laid out. Imagine an 8.5" x 11" sheet of paper, with margins narrowed to fit as many words as possible on a single spaced sheet of paper. The font used is Times New Roman 11 (my guess), no spacing between lines, and narrow margins.

It was a terrible experience for me to read this book. The headings where the Bible verses are listed are printed in some type of ultra "fancy" font. It is a lightweight font and it's barely readable. I just hope this book gets republished in the future so that it is formatted better and the language is changed - it makes me feel like it was written in the 1950's. The copyright says 2001. This book would be much more effective if it was the language was modernized, the techniques were updated, and if the layout was more appealing. I will be on the hunt for a different book that is more modern and is written in the context of life that is not lived in high society.

This workbook is a fabulous resource for anyone who is leading worship or praying in a public setting. Each time I invite people to attend this Lay Servant class, I hear the same thing, "Oh, I don't believe that prayers should be written down or prepared in advance. I think they should be spontaneous!". Then, 10 hours later, at the end of class, they ALL say, "Wow! I had NO idea there were so many types of prayers. I could/should be doing this better!" If you are preparing prayers for worship - unison prayers, litanies, prayers of confession, etc. - you can't very well do them spontaneously! They must be thought out in order to be meaningful. And they must be written down. This workbook is wonderful! One of my favorite sections is "Praying to the God that is Present". It reminds us that we DON'T need to ask God to 'be with us' or 'Be with John . . .' He's ALREADY with us! And the section on the "Lord, we just wanna. . ." type of prayers will crack you up! From seasoned Christians to new people in the faith, this book will challenge you to put the effort into making prayer - public or private - more meaningful. (Just taught a class of 12 and they raved about it!)

Stookey has written a wonderful guide to public prayer to help worship leaders of every rank and stripe bring prayer to people in the spirit of Jesus. He takes prayer into the realm of really talking to God rather than to the congregation and distinguishes between actually praying and preaching with one's eyes closed. Stookey reminds us that prayer is more than murmuring religious cliches and phrases that we have heard someone else do for a lifetime and gives us a gentle but firm reminder of what my old homiletics professor told us about public prayer - "Remember Who you're talking to and remember who you are talking for." This book should be in the hands of every church leader, clergy and laity alike, and for any of those who are called upon to pray out loud.

I bought this book because it was a required text for a United Methodist Lay Servant course. I was pleasantly surprised by how good it is. The author explains that when we are praying in public, we

are praying on behalf of the group and he gives tips and advice to better pray on behalf of a group. The author also gives the Biblical basis for these tips. God knows our thoughts and the author reminds us that God won't necessarily hear us any differently if we use these tips. However, it has made me think more about my own prayers. The book is easy to read and very practical and straightforward. I highly recommend it.

Excellent suggestions for learning how to give public prayers. When I first saw the suggested structure for a simple prayer, I was a bit dubious. However, after working through the information and practice exercises, I saw the value of this basic and flexible form. When next I listened to a pastor give a prayer, it gave me new appreciation for how the parts worked together to support each other and make a more coherent and powerful message. There were many helpful insights into what to say and what not to say. I will now remember the importance of choosing words the everyone listening can truly say "amen" to. This book was chosen for a class I'm taking for laity to become comfortable and proficient with public prayer. It has been well received by the participants.

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