



Welcome to the Episcopal Church: An Introduction to Its History, Faith, and Worship

Christopher L. Webber , Frank T. Griswold III (Foreword by)

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The perfect book for inquirers and new members, as well as current Church members who may be unfamiliar with some of the Church's history, beliefs, and practices. This new introduction to the history, polity, spirituality, worship, and outreach of the Episcopal Church is written in an easy-to-read conversational tone, and includes study questions at the end of each chapter, making it an excellent resource for adult parish study and inquirers' classes."

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Charity says

Good introduction. I read it because I have heard random good things about the Episcopal Church and wanted to find out a brief version of the whole story. This book was perfect. I think it would be good in a discussion group, but without it, I think its small size allowed me to skim parts without really learning much. I would have liked more on the history part, I guess.

Lunar Snowflake says

Not a bad introduction to the history of the church, including an overview of the Reformation. It doesn't focus have much focus on the rituals and sacraments, or **why** the church partakes in the way they do.

Paul says

This is a great resource for those wanting to get a quick primer on the Episcopal Church, its history, practices and theology. Sometimes, it actually gets a little too brief, and other times it gets a little smug. It could also use an update, as despite the alleged 2017 copyright it's clearly about a decade old and missing discussion of the LGBT controversies that have become prominent in the denomination of late. But all that said, this does exactly what it intends: provides a concise and readable introduction to America's oldest Protestant denomination.

Gary says

The history of the Episcopal Church helps me because I am not of a Catholic or Anglican/Episcopal background.

I had assume with little knowledge or background of what the Anglican/Episcopal meant- either a Catholic or a Reformed (Protestant), when it was more of a "middle of the road".

I discovered through this book, there is more similarities then differences.

I was in search of a church denomination that accepts and encourages.

This book confirms my choice.

KATHLEEN MOORE says

Welcome to the Episcopal Church

This is all new information to me. I found it enlightening and to the point. Unity, worship and reaching out to mankind were easily understood in drawing people to God.

Goatville9 says

This book delivers in providing an introduction to the Episcopal Church. While most who seek out this book will have some background in Christian faith I don't find the need comment on worship, the Bible, ministry, mission, or spirituality.

To me the most interesting element - to a any reader especially fans of history - is how the Anglican Church in America had to evolve after the Revolutionary War. As Americans shed the political ties that bound them to England, a church descended from the Church of England had to reconcile itself.

Ian says

An Episcopal priest gave me this years ago, just got around to reading it. An informative and well-written introduction to that church.

Mac McCormick III says

As someone searching for a new church home, I found this book very informative. The Episcopal Church is one I've been curious about and in addition to a visit to a local church, it has helped steer me in that direction.

Brandon Stewart says

This book provided an excellent introduction to the history, faith, and worship of the Episcopal Church. I realize that is what the title said it would do, and, yes, it really did deliver. A great book, and I would recommend it to anyone who is seeking to learn about the Episcopal Church.

Merys Kelleher says

Pretty much delivers on what it promises. I'm sure that there will be folks who think it doesn't go far enough, just as there are those who feel that there is more information here than they really need. While this book repeats some of the information found in other volumes of the "Welcome to..." series, I personally found it to be a balanced exploration of the qualities and challenges of the Episcopal church, historically as well as in modernity. I was very impressed that the author didn't flinch from addressing contemporary challenges facing today's church. That kind of honesty and integrity reflects well on the church as a whole.

Jen says

One of the pastoral staff at the Episcopal church I'm attending gave me this book. Dry reading, but a good introduction to the history, theology, and current practices of the Episcopal Faith. For a Presbyterian like me considering changing denominations, it gives just the right amount of information. It would be nice if it were a little more engaging (as I mentioned, it's pretty dry) and included some organizational charts, but overall a good source of information.

Robert Owens says

This book really helped me reconnect with the church. I am one who needs to understand the prayers, the history, etc. of the service. This book helped explain the faith to me. A good and concise guide to the Episcopal church.

Beth says

The book's format indicated that it was aiming to simply the Episcopal Church's complex history, beliefs, and practice; however, having read the whole book, I find it very difficult to remember much of what I've read. I think that if I really want to learn the history of the church I need to not cheat and to read many books covering different periods in detail. If I had more details and stories to latch onto, I would perhaps remember more. I likely also don't remember as much as I would like because I wasn't surprised by much. This is good and bad. This is good because I'm not missing anything major; I know what's going on. This is bad because it's not what I wanted. And then I realized that this book is just not the one I wanted anyways. I wanted a book that expounded more on how to perform the practices of the church and how to be in the church. And I just need another book for that.

Kyle says

A great, thorough read. Very informative, and something good to have on hand for reference or sharing with others. Not as exciting of a read as other things, but definitely worth having, reading and keeping around.

Jana says

The amount of historical content isn't significant, but enough for someone like me who knows so little about these things. I was especially intrigued by the Celtic influences on the church, how early they were and the fact that they had female priests as early as the 7th century.

I'm getting quite a lot of information from this slim little book. I'm also learning some things about myself:

1. that I have never really understood Christianity, but have only somewhat understood Protestantism... which is not saying the same thing and not saying much (to my discredit)

2. most ideological problems I've had with Christianity were specifically with mainstream Protestantism... namely the emphasis on 'salvation' (which has never concerned me), literal readings of the Bible, the reinvent-the-wheel style over-democratization (which isn't really democratic), apocalyptic visions of a new heaven and earth rather than reformed visions, the right-wing politics and the anti-intellectualism

3. that I have a sincere interest in worship and mystery, which I wasn't aware were part of the Christian tradition (honestly)

Now, mind you, these things about myself are what I've thought about from reading the book... NOT what the writer has written about Christianity. I'm just pleased that such a seemingly straight-forward, information style book could prompt these thoughts.

Here's what I said previously, when I read the first half a couple of nights ago:

It's an easy read and full of information for people like me who have no grounding in traditional progressive (sounds contradictory, but not really) Christianity. I'm also finding that it's in conversation with those ideas I'd focused on in Siddhartha... namely going through experience and through the body.

In reference to the sacraments and the ceremonial movement of the body through the space, Webber wrote two things I found particularly interesting:

Human beings have misused created things so often that some forms of religion, even some forms of Christianity, are inclined to distrust and reject created things as inherently evil. (p.34)

Two people in love can sit at opposite ends of a couch and gaze soulfully into each other's eyes, but sooner or later most people will find it helpful to get closer and to use their bodies to say what their words can never fully express. "Platonic relationships" are inadequate.(p.35)
