

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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Editorial

I have been reading the *Hansard* reports of the famous Parliamentary debate on the Worship and Doctrine Measure of 4 December 1974. I offer some details, some quotations, and some brief assessment.

The whole debate lasted virtually seven hours, and included at least 34 speakers, with any number of interruptions on points of order, points of fact, and points of sheer disagreement. At the end of the day 145 members voted for the Measure, and 45 against. But these 45 were a notable feature of the passing of the Measure. The 1965 Measure had passed through the Commons with no votes against. The 1974 Measure had only a handful against it in the General Synod, and none in the Lords. Why then were there so many in the Commons? Surely it was not just the persistence of the Prayer Book Action Group, which has been insisting:

- (i) That the BCP enshrines catholic doctrine.
- (ii) That the BCP is being dispossessed by the new Measure.
- (iii) That the services which are coming in its place are not catholic.

There seems in fact to have been little of this in the parliamentary argument. Basically the argument seems to have had three parts to it. These were:

- (i) The Church of England is the established Church, and Parliament is the proper repository for powers in such a situation.
- (ii) General Synod cannot be trusted to protect the desires of minorities.
- (iii) The new services in the Church of England do not merit support (and are indeed instrumental in keeping loyal churchmen away from church).

Despite the typical clarity of Mr. Enoch Powell's advocacy, one is left with a suspicion that none of these is self-evidently true, and possibly all three fall to the ground. Certainly they indicate confusion. The debate seems to have drawn into intervention a large number of occasional worshippers amongst our representatives at Westminster.

Quotes

'We are having two debates . . . but so far none has distinguished them. We are having a debate about the language of the Christian faith and a debate about authority in the Church of England' (Mr. Nigel Spearing)

'I am sorry that . . . no Church authority thought fit to place a copy of Series 3 in the Library of the House. Unfortunately, as I do not have a copy, I have been unable to study it.' (Mr. Jerry Wiggin)

'[In the new services] There is a dinginess which takes over from majesty and a gloominess which takes over from mystery' (Mr. Patrick Cormack).

'The former Archbishop of Canterbury . . . said . . . "The Church should have the right to order its own worship". That statement seems to be treated as though it were a self-evident verity. It certainly is not so, historically . . . The very catholicity of the Christian Church is the stamp which was placed upon it by the imperial authority of Ancient Rome in the fourth century' (Mr. Enoch Powell)

'It is the nature of innovation that it will not stop . . . the body which could pass Series 3, for which there has not been a friend almost throughout the debate, will almost surely pass Series 4, 5 and 6, and will pass them all the faster . . .' (Mr. Enoch Powell)

'Parliament, with the Queen, is sovereign over the Church. Let us therefore say to the professionals and to those who want to take over our Church: "We are the people. It is our Church. You shall not have it."' (Mr. Ivor Stanbrook)

'In my constituency [Gloucestershire South] . . . We accept literally the description of the Almighty as . . . "lover of concord"' (Mr. John Cope)

'I shall not vote for it. I am not sure whether I shall vote against it. . . . the General Synod and the general organisation . . . are out of touch with the man in the pew. I regard myself as the typical man in the pew.' (Mr. Andrew Bowden—he did vote against it)

'If we could introduce a little more . . . humour . . . into our church services, the churches would not be so empty to-day.' (Mr. Richard Crawshaw)

Conclusion

The whole seven hours leaves one amazed at the zeal of members, equally amazed at the ignorance of many (both for and against), and even more amazed at the half-submerged Church of England when it actually stands up and describes the Church and its worship in this way. I have long felt on theoretical and doctrinal grounds that it was wrong, in a post-Christendom situation, that Parliament should have final control over worship. But I now find the sheer a posteriori *pragmatic* argument even stronger. The vaunted attempt to speak for 36 million people left each one speaking only for himself. C.O.B.

Postage Increases

We are provisionally reckoning to absorb all postal increases, as a goodwill gesture. It *does* help with small orders if SAE is enclosed. And we may have to put up prices from August onwards. But NOL itself, whether delivered @ 6p with the monthly booklets or the subject of a year's subscription in advance, will last out the year without increase. That we guarantee. Retail books are all sent postfree from Grove Books, and we commend to your attention those advertised this month. We welcome the confidence of our first advertisers.

SERIES 3—MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER

(As amended by General Synod in February, 1975)

This report could be epitomised as basically a 'tidying-up job', bringing Morning and Evening Prayer into line with Series 3 Holy Communion as far as language is concerned. The Liturgical Commission itself in its introduction described the services as being 'in substantially the same and traditional form as in Series 2 Revised . . . but with the language modernised'. In addition to updating all the archaic English of the earlier services, the Report also adopts the versions of the Lord's Prayer and the Gloria in Excelsis used in Series 3 Communion and the translations of the Creed and the Gospel Canticles recommended by the International Consultation on English Texts; Macintosh and Frost's *Twenty-five Psalms* is used for the psalms, and other scriptural passages are taken from whichever of the authorised modern translations furnished the version considered best for the verses concerned.

Other changes are deliberately only slight. The alternatives in the penitential sections have been dropped, and the confession and absolution from Series 3 Communion introduced as the only forms, which makes the opening of the services look neater. The Canticles have been shunted around a little, but the pattern is the same. The familiar versicles and responses after the Lord's Prayer are amended in the Report, and further amended in the revision presented to the February sessions of the General Synod, where 'O Lord, save thy people . . .' is universalised into,

O Lord, make your ways known upon the earth.

Let all nations acknowledge your saving power.

These are certainly gains, creating a set of supplications more meaningful in the modern world. In the opening versicles and responses, 'O God, make speed to save us . . .' is rejected as incapable of satisfactory translation, and in the latest revision the final pair, which now read,

Let us worship the Lord.

All praise to his name.

are moved to precede the Gloria. These new proposals also insert an optional introduction to Morning Prayer, briefly summarising the 1662 Exhortation, which will be appreciated by many.

The remaining small alterations in content and order do not appear to be of any great significance. The shorter forms of Morning and Evening Prayer are now described as such, and explicitly stated to be primarily for weekdays, as opposed to the full-length forms primarily for use on Sundays. The translation of traditional Collects, both within the services and in the 'Prayers for Various Occasions' provided at the end (most of which are revised forms of the 1662 Post-Communion Prayers), are conservative but usable, though with some 'to know you is eternal life, to serve you is perfect freedom' will probably grate a little.

Those who are conservative enough to retain Morning and Evening Prayer, yet sufficiently up-to-date to use Series 3, will no doubt give a welcome to this Report. Certainly the traditional services have been enhanced with probably as much variety and depth as they are capable of bearing. Others may question how much value there is in continuing to tinker with the inherited forms.

Tony Bishop

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This month's booklet is our first 'Grove Liturgical Study' (at 55p)

Sacramental Initiation complete in Baptism

Canon Whitaker was brought up from his youth on 'Mattins, Litany, and Ante-Communion', and was early convinced of the necessity for liturgical revision. His studies in liturgical history have been carried out against a background of pastoral ministry in the Carlisle diocese. As a pastor he has found the Prayer Book service of infant baptism so acutely embarrassing that his special interest has been the rites of initiation.

In this essay Canon Whitaker surveys the wide field of confirmation studies, biblical, patristic, and liturgical, both past and present. He attempts to make clear to the layman matters which are usually the subject of learned and academic works, and to justify the conclusion which is implicit in the title. In one important section he carries a stage further the argument which he has already published in his *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy* (second edition), that the early Syrian Church had no rite of confirmation: and he indicates the conclusions which this seems to imply.

. . . and next month's (Grove Booklet on Ministry and Worship no. 35) *Drama in Worship* by Andy Kelso tackles the questions: 'Is it really valid?' 'What are the basic responsibilities and requirements necessary for undertaking it?' 'What sort of material can one use, and how does one present it?' 'Where can one find good material?' The handling of these questions constitutes an exciting challenge to the local church.

Official Revision—The Chart of Progress

The chart opposite is designed to show diagrammatically what is described in Grove Booklet 14A (*Supplement for 1973-4 to Recent Liturgical Revision in the Church of England*) on page 13. It enables the 'outsider' to understand what is being reported when it is said, for instance, that a certain service has received 'provisional approval' (or suchlike). The progress with various services is as follows:

Series 3 Funeral: 17 (18 in May, 19 on 1 June)
 Series 3 MP/EP: 13 (14 and 15 may be skipped, 15 comes in July)
 Series '1½' HC: 6 (7 may come in November—see February *NOL*)

Series 3 Collects: 5 (6 comes on 10 April—see February *NOL*)
 Series 3 Matrimony: 4 (5 will come in a few months)
 Series 3 Bapt/Conf: Between 3 and 4, awaiting outcome of initiation debate (but Infant Baptism is being handled before others)

Series 3 Ordinal: 2

Please keep the chart by you—future editions will refer back to it.

Review

'*Made fully perfect*'—a critique of *An Order for Holy Communion Series 3* by Michael Moreton, Church Union, 1974, 39pp. 70p.

I believe it is the Labrador which has proved the most successful in sniffing out the presence of hidden drugs. In this booklet Michael Moreton plays the Labrador for the Church Union and tells us how successful he has been in sniffing out the insidious intrusion of evangelical eucharistic theology into the Series 3 Order of Holy Communion.

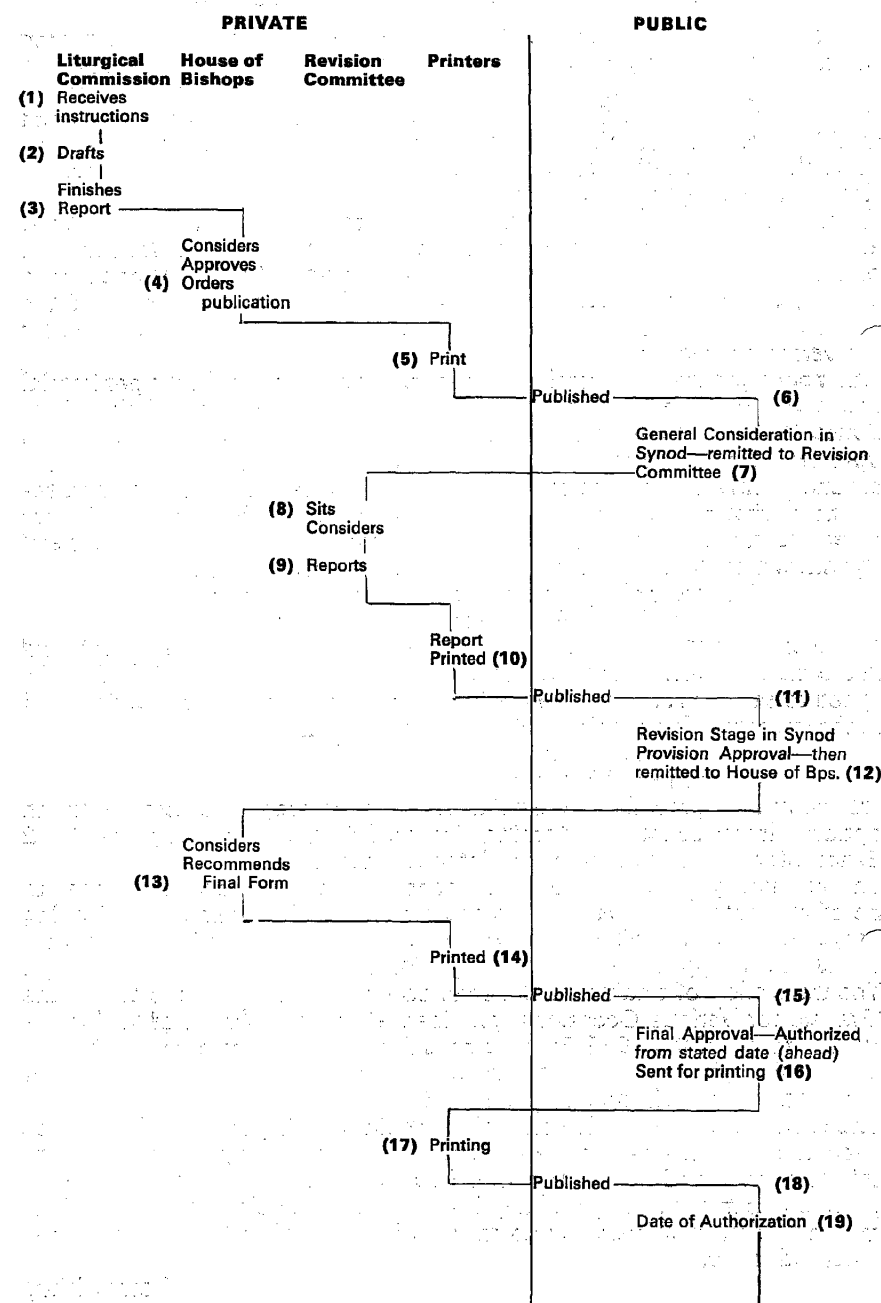
Fr. Moreton would have us believe that Series 3 is a complete sell-out to the evangelicals. That it may be said of Series 3 in relation to Series 2, what was said of the 1552 Prayer Book as against that of 1549: Series 3 is Series 2 'made fully perfect'.

If he is to be believed, there are few points in the service to which this influence has not percolated and the agency for this cunning plot is the Liturgical Commission which has successfully been infiltrated by these conspirators. And when *their* courage has failed, there has always been the General Synod ready to finish off the job and guarantee that a sufficiently protestant document has been provided.

It is a great pity that Fr. Moreton's considerable scholarship has had to be absorbed by this kind of negative approach. His whole approach is an historical one and the conclusions he draws from his detailed and systematic analysis will not be recognised in the many catholic strongholds which, he admits (to his surprise, and no doubt disgust), find that the Series 3 order does indeed incorporate all those insights into the Holy Mysteries which have daily sustained them.

Donald Gray

CHART OF PROGRESS IN LITURGICAL REVISION



Liturgy for Civic Chaplains (by Trevor Lloyd)

The ritual of a man in a cassock fumbling for his prayer book and muttering a couple of collects does little to help local councils on their way through their business. It does even less for the image of God and his Church. A civic chaplain has at least two ministries. First, a prophetic ministry to express the relationship of God to the life of the borough (or whatever!)—God's sovereignty, his love, his care for individuals as well as for those who operate the bureaucratic machine, his resources, his law. The chaplain should express this in as direct a way as possible, by looking at the agenda, knowing the issues confronting the council and applying God's word and promises to them in prayer. His second ministry is a ministry to the councillors themselves. This involves knowing them as human beings, with their tensions, achievements, frustrations—and being prepared to pray openly to God about the things that matter to them. Given a bit of boldness, humour and faith, these two ministries can be combined in a way that will be appreciated by those of other faiths and no faith at all, and that will demonstrate involvement with individuals and the life of the borough. Here are some examples:

A prayer for members of the Education Committee, the Director and controllers and others involved in education administration in the borough during the change to a comprehensive system:

Lord God, we praise you, because you are a God who from the beginning has brought order out of chaos. Help with your almighty power and wisdom those whom you have called to positions of responsibility in our educational system, that there might be order and justice in our plans for future of our the schools. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, **Amen.**

Two prayers for the meeting. (The second is heavily adapted from one in *New Prayers for Worship* by Alan Gaunt.)

Lord God, We bring before you tonight all the life and work of our Borough. Thank you because you know it all so much better than we do; because you know the needs and yearnings of every individual, young and old. Give us your wisdom tonight in all we say and decide, so that our actions might bring about your purposes for our Borough. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lord God, teach us to listen. Teach us to listen with patience to each other with a real desire to understand each other and your purpose for us all. Give us a sharp ear to hear what you are saying in the tread of feet about the town, in the shuffle of queues, the ringing of the cash register, the clatter of machinery, the roar of the crowds, and the noise of traffic. Help us to hear you above the noise, even when our debating tonight is noisy: Come to your noisy world, Lord God, and silence it with the silence of your peace. **Amen.**

Another area of liturgy in which the chaplain is sometimes involved is an annual civic service. If this is a special service (as distinct from the mayor and corporation attending a regular Sunday service) there is no reason why Morning or Evening Prayer should be used. Consider the following order, for instance, used in a fairly traditional borough, and introduced by a 'Programme note': In the first part of the service, we 'take in' God's word through the readings, psalms and sermon. Then in the second part we respond to God in Thanksgiving and Confession for the past, and Prayer for the future, as we bring the life of our Borough, and our own personal lives, before God.

Introduction.
 Hymn of Praise.
 Reading 1: Micah 6.6-15
 Psalm 15
 Presentation of a Bible to the Mayor by the BFBS
 Reading 2: 1 Peter 2.13-17 and 3.8-18
 Jubilate Deo
 Sermon
 Thanksgiving: O Lord, open thou our lips and R.
 Hymn of thanks
 Prayer of thanksgiving
 Confession: O Lord, show your mercy upon us and R.
 Prayer of Confession
 Prayer: O Lord, save the Queen and R.
 Prayers.
 Trust: The Creed.
 Hymn: Thy hand, O God, has guided
 Blessing.

Prayers of Thanksgiving, Confession and intercession may all be specially written, such as the following thanksgiving:

Almighty God, we give you thanks and praise for your guiding hand upon us in past years, for our preservation and prosperity. We thank you for all those who work in the Borough, both volunteers and paid officers, for the dedication, inspiration and strength you give them. We thank you for every right decision, for human lives made happier, and for everything that has been done to your glory, Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

A bit more imagination and vision might lead to the participation of one or more local musical groups, an interview with the Mayor or some official on what God had to do with civic life, or a visual prayer sequence with intercessions backed by slides of local dustcarts/harrassed officials/schools/parks, etc.

Late Again!—But *Further Anglican Liturgy 1968-75* is through the printers, to be published 9 May, 1975 @ £9.75.