

# News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

Issue No. 6

June 1975

## Editorial

The Open Letter on exorcism (quoted in full in the May *NOL*) caused more than a brief flutter in the Church of England in May, and not without reason. Some of the issues raised by it are as follows:

- i) Have the 65 got their Anglican history straight? Or, to be accurate, have they presented it clearly? For the Canon 72 of the 1604 Canons specifically requires the Bishop's licence for casting out devils, and this provision, whilst not formally denied, was undoubtedly evaded in the text of the Open Letter. Evidence as to the *practice* of exorcisms may be patchy, but the historical Canon ought to have been admitted.
- ii) Do those who believe in a personal devil (or lesser devils) really suggest that the Church's belief in God is 'on the same level as' occultist beliefs? I would hardly have thought so—there is no dualism or quasi-dualistic parallelism involved in the acknowledgment of evil spirits.
- iii) What is the 'theology of redemption' (so opposed to the Church's understanding of the Gospel), which the 65 think the practice of exorcising teaches?
- iv) The Open Letter ran into quite a bit of trouble with its sweeping 'the Church has never expected that her members must necessarily share all Jesus' beliefs'. This hermeneutical principle took the discussion far beyond the question of evil spirits. And the 65 may find that what 'the Church has expected' is a frail basis of faith than what the Jesus of the Bible believed—even if this particular wedge can be driven between them.
- v) Lastly, one must raise the question whether the Letter, if successful, would not in fact be wholly self-defeating. The Charismatic Movement in particular has tended to produce some indiscriminate exorcisms, and the abandoning of all regulations would not end such exorcisms, it would only multiply them. Not of course that having regulations has always restrained them—not all evil spirits prove to be Anglican ones, amenable to the Bishop's say-so, and immature lay exorcists are hardly likely to ask themselves about the Bishop's permission before practising exorcism. But the existence of regulations has some restraining force, and is a witness in principle not only to the actual need on occasion for this ministry, but also for some control to be placed upon it.

In short, though none of us should look for evil spirits round every corner and under every stone, yet the solid testimony that exists as to possession—testimony which accords with the Scriptures—should *at the very least* leave our minds open on the question. The 65 seem to have their minds firmly made up.

I was at Bishop David Sheppard's 'Installation' the other night, and have two comments. The first is that, in with the real welcoming of the new Bishop and his first address to his diocese, the service included much beautifully done non-event. The mandate (with the 'dignities, rights and appurtenances') the vesting in a cope, and the conducting (hand-in-hand with the Dean) to the episcopal 'stall' (still called a throne by the lawyers), took a lot of time and added up to very little. The entry of the Bishop on his own, without chaplains, batmen or apparitors, was most moving and effective—but not these other bits.

Secondly, the Bishop's sermon opened 'Are we all here merely play-acting?' He went on to point out how we talk in such a service about power and authority, but really the Church has little in today's society—and then indicated how it might yet have power. It struck me then that to call liturgy 'play-acting' is pejorative and dismissive—whilst, paradoxically, to call liturgy 'drama' is to invest it with great power and solemnity. (Both would possibly be 'hypocrisy' in Greek!) Here is a tension in liturgy. But *why* is 'acting' pejorative, whilst 'drama' is complimentary?

We note that at least three diocesan synods have voted on initiation. St. Alban's accepted early admission to communion, and apparently would wear 'infant confirmation' to precede it. Chester is against all change. And a letter from Chichester (which was also apparently cautious) says 'my overall impression of the debate was one of utter confusion . . .'. We would very much like to have *hard details* from Diocesan Synods—resolutions *verbatim* and voting figures also.

I was in Canada for a fortnight at the end of May. The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada was about to pronounce on both initiation and a new eucharistic text. This will be reported in our next issue.

Colin Buchanan

## 'LOOSENING UP SERIES 3'

A future booklet in the Ministry and Worship series plans to examine the use that can be made of flexibility in the Series 3 service of Holy Communion. The amount of optional material and flexibility permitted by the rubrics means that every parish using the service has been able to evolve 'their version'. The aim of this booklet is to illustrate the scope that the service does give and to share ideas. For instance how a service on Maundy Thursday might differ from one on Easter Day. Areas covered will include the use of the service at the different seasons of the Christian year; use of the service with different groups, such as when children are present, with a youth or student group, or a PCC. Also there will be an examination of the possible ways of presenting sections such as 'The Prayers', The Peace, the Taking of the Bread and Wine, and The Giving of the Bread and Cup.

The editor of the booklet would be most grateful to hear from readers of *NOL* with examples and ideas of how they have adapted the service in particular situations from the ordinary to the way-out (whether technically legal or not!).

Contributions should please be sent to the Rev. Richard More, 10 Regent Avenue, Macclesfield, Cheshire. SK11 8JQ.

## NEWS ON THE OFFICIAL FRONT

The final session of the current General Synod of the Church of England is to be held from 30 June to 4 July, at the end of which the Synod will be dissolved, to be elected again in October, and meet in November.

In view of previous remarks in *NOL* it will come as a surprise to find that all the new reports from the Liturgical Commission are due to receive general consideration during this session (stage 7 on the chart in the March *NOL*). These are '1½' Holy Communion (published on 2 January 1975), Collects (published 10 April 1975), and Series 3 Infant Baptism and Wedding services (published 29 May 1975). These are to be remitted to revision committees (stage 8), and will then come back for their revision stages (stage 11) in the new Synod. The following problems will need to be watched:

- (i) Members of the revision committee could lose their seats in the Autumn elections. This would distort the process.
- (ii) Members moving amendments before the committee might lose *their* seats, so that the committee would be responding to amendments which could not be moved at the revision stage.
- (iii) Members newly elected in the Autumn would be unable to move amendments before the committee, *unless* the revision stage were delayed until February 1976 and new members were allowed by special provision to table amendments.

If a large turnover of members occurred in the Autumn elections a somewhat unreal situation could result—the debate in July having set in train revision of one sort, whilst the new Synod wanted revision of another.

In addition to the new liturgical material being introduced into Synod, there are also the 'Final Approval' stages (stage 16) for Series 3 Morning and Evening Prayer, and for the extension of the period for Series 2 (Revised) Morning and Evening Prayer. The former should be published (stage 18) in late September, and authorization (stage 19) is from 1 November 1975 till 31 December 1975.

One further provision relating to liturgy is to come before Synod. A new draft Canon (4A) is proposed 'Of the approval of Collects, Lectionaries, and Table of Rules to Order the Service'. This detaches the particular materials from having to relate (as up till now) to specific services, and allows them to be authorized for general use. The various proposals under the Canon will ultimately need two-thirds majorities under the provisions of the Worship and Doctrine Measure. The Canon itself will go to a revision committee after the July Session of Synod if it is 'generally approved'. We shall report on progress with this Canon.

The working party on a 'People's Service Book', discussed in the editorial in the May *NOL*, has sent a questionnaire to selected parishes, and will report to the Synod in February 1976. We shall report on this as news becomes available.

### Point from a Letter

Sir,

With regard to Trevor Lloyd's article on 'Easter Carol Services' in your issue No. 2, may I suggest the use of *The Cowley Carol Book* (Mowbrays) as well as *The Oxford Book of Carols*. The former contains no less than 28 carols for Eastertide, of which 4 or 5 are regularly used in the carol service at Westminster Abbey each Easter Monday.

May I disagree with Mr. Botting for suggesting a processional hymn to start a service. The Royal School of Church Music, which seeks to set a fairly standard pattern of musical worship, recommends that a choir should enter with only organ music and that worship should start when all are assembled. If a procession is desired at the Greater Festivals it should be the climax of the service and should start and finish in the chancel. And please, no recessional hymn either, where the choir often disappears into the vestry before the last verse!

Yours faithfully,  
Colin Scull.

### Some small points

We congratulate Dr. Ronald Jasper, now Archdeacon of Westminster, on his appointment to be Dean of York. He has been chairman of the Liturgical Commission since 1964, and was a founder member of it 20 years ago.

*Further Anglican Liturgies 1968-1975* rises in price in England from £9.75 to £10.75 on 1 August. We hope in September to publish a list of small corrections to the volume, and would be grateful for any which could be sent before the end of August.

We mentioned in May that we were entering a loose friendship with *Christian Celebration* (published by Mayhew-McCrimmon). We now sadly have to report its forthcoming demise. Rising costs have defeated it.

We can also supply postfree the four productions in the 'Canadian Anglican Liturgical Series' mentioned indirectly in the editorial:

1 <i>Towards a Renewed Understanding of Christian Initiation</i>	85p
2 <i>Membership: Its Meaning and Expression</i> (Study Document)	85p
3 <i>Institution and Induction: An Alternate Form</i>	25p
4 <i>The Holy Eucharist: An Alternative Canadian Use</i>	2

We also have available postfree (and will soon review the first three):

<i>Contemporary Parish Prayers</i> by Frank Colquhoun	£3.25
<i>Worship and the Child</i> by Joint Liturgical Group	95p
<i>Prayers we Have in Common</i> [the 1974 ICET texts]	65p
<i>King of Glory</i> Setting of Series 3	80p & 30p
<i>I Believe in the Holy Spirit</i> by Michael Green	£2.25
<i>Australia '73</i> (The new Australian Communion Service)	30p

6p per copy. £1.20 per annum by post.

GROVE BOOKS

BRAMCOTE NOTTS. (0602 251114)

### SERIES 3 FUNERAL—TWO COMMENTS

(AS 360 is 16p, AS 362 is 35p)

At the February sessions of the General Synod, final approval was given to *Series 3 Funeral Services*, which are authorized from June 1st for four years. The new services largely retain the structure and atmosphere of the Liturgical Commission's report *Series 3 Funeral Services* (GS 147), of 1973. But, as often happens with the Commission's reports at the hands of the General Synod, there have been changes in a more traditional direction. For instance, 'We brought nothing into the world . . .' returns to the opening sentences; the opening collect is two lines longer to accommodate traditional (1928) material; and, more importantly, the historic 'Man born of a woman . . .' returns as an alternative immediately before the committal. This last is generally to be welcomed because of its realistic appraisal of death, speaking clearly of judgment for sin by a holy God. The 'translation' is modern, with two additions to the Latin text: 'Holy and immortal', and 'forgive us our sins', the latter introducing a welcome note of hope.

But, more than these things, the general impression of the services is moved in a more traditional direction by substituting the RSV idiom in the Bible passages for the NEB and Jerusalem idiom which seemed prevalent in the Commission's text. Thus in John 14 we have 'believe' instead of 'trust' and the unhelpful 'rooms' instead of 'dwelling-places'. Some may wish to question whether it is really right, in these longer passages of scripture, for the church to pursue the policy of taking bits and pieces from all translations (and none at all), rather than sticking to one authorized translation for a whole reading. It certainly makes preaching from one of these readings more difficult to prepare! Thus in John 14, as well as RSV words noted above we have 'Set your troubled hearts at rest' (NEB) and 'after I have gone and prepared . . .' (Jerusalem). And in 1 Corinthians 15.23 we have the peculiar 'But each in his own rightful place' with its obvious spatial connotations.

There have been some small changes in the structure and layout of the services. Grouping the scattered footnotes into a section of 'Introductory notes' is a great improvement. Some are new: The 'Service in Church', for instance, need not be held in the Parish Church. Presumably this covers services in crematorium chapels and at the graveside, but also opens the door to the whole of this part being held in the home, if circumstances demand it. There is provision for a fuller service if needed at the committal of ashes, and the provision for burial at sea clearly spelt out. The Committal may be taken before the prayers, but the suggestions here are messy and would not be easy for a congregation to follow in the booklets: it would be much better to allow for the movement of whole sections of the service, such as having 'The Committal' before 'The service in Church' for those who wish for a church service of praise, prayer and ministry without a coffin present. The last sentence in note 10 allows this specific reversal, but only in the case of cremation: why? A wider measure of flexibility, with suggestions for different situations, would be more helpful.

There is a slight change in the order of the prayers before the committal, so that additional prayers follow the Lord's Prayer before the prayer of

commendation, which is now almost immediately before the committal—a psychological improvement. In this prayer 'entrust' is replaced by the more standard 'commend' and 'now' is left out (perhaps reflecting a little uncertainty as to when the actual entrusting takes place?). Other helpful improvements in the services include the provision of 1 Thessalonians 4.13-18 as one of the readings (but why leave out 2 Corinthians 5-110 even from the list of alternatives?), the addition of Ephesians 3.14-19 (on the love of Christ) to the readings at the funeral of a child, the replacement of Wisdom 3.1-5, 9 by Isaiah 25.8-9 as the reading printed for the Old Testament lesson at Communion, the suggestion for using Easter seasonal material in the Communion, and two very good prefaces to be inserted in the Series 3 Eucharistic Thanksgiving, the second of which borrows freely from the Roman Catholic preface.

To have an agreed modern English funeral service in use in the Church of England is something of an achievement, for which we should be thankful to God as well as to those who have slaved over it. This new service, though it has a few faults, will add to the clarity and ease with which both the challenge and the comfort of the Gospel are ministered to the many who come to Church of England Funeral Services.

Trevor Lloyd

### SERIES 3 FUNERAL—TWO COMMENTS

(AS 360 is 16p, AS 362 35p)

For many years, having despaired of using the 1662 service, or the so-called improved version of 1928, I have been using my own variety of funeral service, which has been a jumbled amalgam of Frank Colquhoun, South India and Nathaniel Micklem. Two years ago the original version of series 3 appeared, and I now use that more often than not. I maintain that the 'atmosphere' of a funeral service is far more important to the close family mourners than the actual words that are used, nevertheless I have had favourable comments about the form of service. The only unfavourable comment has come from an assistant at the local crematorium, who has commented that the 'old' service is more comforting, with the familiar wording. But as the majority of those who attend funerals are not familiar with the 'old' service, this comment seems particularly irrelevant! Series 3 seems to me to express in a very real way the Christian hope of eternal life, based as it is very firmly on the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and not on vague sentimental wishful thinking about the immortality of the soul. There are a sensible number of selections of scripture readings, although I am not over-enthusiastic about the apocryphal Wisdom, and I am not entirely convinced that Revelation 21 is in context, however comforting the wording may be to the relatives of those who have died after much pain.

Some will no doubt be unhappy about 'commending' the dead to God as suggesting prayers for the dead, and even more explicitly in the additional prayers. They can take heart from the fact that whatever the synod may decide, individual clergy will still do their own thing.

I am pleased to see separate services for the interment of ashes and for use before the funeral. I am also convinced of the appropriateness of Holy Communion at a funeral service. It expresses better than any words can 'the communion of the saints'.

J. J. Hamilton-Brown