

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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Editorial

In the May 1976 issue of *NOL* I commented upon an editorial in *Theology* of the same month, in which one of the editors, the Rev. John Drury, complained that Series 3 Communion has a 'striking fondness for dogmatic pronouncements . . . Its sincere celebration either requires a firm belief in the Second Coming . . . or assent to a symbolic haze.' My comments were:

1. That this is the same problem as the Creeds present.
2. That the Liturgical Commission was softer on eschatology than the House of Bishops, and the Archbishop of Canterbury in particular.
3. That once we start 'reducing' Christianity, we have no criteria by which to function.
4. That in any case the liturgy ought to reproduce the biblical material, irrespective of what critics have then to go to work on it.

I sent this to Mr. Drury, and now have a lengthy reply from him which he has permitted me to publish.

26 The Close, Norwich
30-7-76

Dear Mr. Buchanan,

How kind of you to send me your comment on my *Theology* editorial. May I comment on the points which you made so clearly in turn?

- (1) Yes exactly. The creed is the place where the Church makes its corporate dogmatic pronouncement. My traditionalism is such that I would not monkey with that! But Series 3 has added so many more, when the business of worship should be more with praise, penitence, invocation and celebration. Orthodoxy or heresy aside, many people have found that the new services are all too often 'telling us things'. Further, I perhaps move in different Christian circles from you, and there find people to whom some old dogmas are of doubtful relevance. A longish evening course can rectify this, but not everyone has the time. They come to church for prayer and praise, repentance and peace in Christ. It is obviously harder for a committee to write the intimate-cum-dignified language which these require (though the commission has met with some real success in its *prayers*) than to lift statements out of the Bible and hang them on the (excellent) framework of the liturgy. As several people have suggested, such language could emerge if more freedom and more alternatives were to allow for a measure of spiritual creativity and choice. I have found (negatively) that the skipping of a few of the assertions in the thanksgiving (not, of course, including the words of institution) gives a clearer line which is more conducive to attentive recollection than

the present long and bumpy ride over so many pronouncements. I have found (positively) that the words of the old general thanksgiving, with 'you' for 'thou', can provide materials for the first part of the Eucharistic Prayer which are a refreshing change from the 'through him . . .' recitations.

- (2) Would that the bishops had not prevailed over the commission! The latter's version is richer and more relevant to me. Hardly anybody, old-timer or radical, has known for centuries *just* what to do with the second coming—save the millennial sects, and they are more of a warning than an example.
- (3) 'Reduced' Christianity is emphatically not my aim any more than *complacently* dogmatic Christianity. It is in fact the restricted field of Series 3 that bothers me, its *reduction* of Christian imagery and vision to the first four centuries—and even the implicit view that anything from there (the N.T. anyhow) *must* be appropriate: e.g. Christ as 'Great High Priest', when High Priests have been extinct for 1,000 years (so the devotional spiritual force of the metaphor is only recoverable by leisurely scholarship).

It is not that I 'dislike' the ascriptions of the comfortable words. It is that Biblical critics have found that Paul did not write 1 Timothy, and that the words attributed to Jesus in Series 3 are not necessarily attributed to him in John's text itself; and it is agreed by nearly all scholars that John does not, in any case, have the *ipsisissima verba* of Jesus so much as meditation on his nature. If this last is not true, then the first three gospels are pretty suspect. The results of critical labour may, as here, be small, but it is sharply disappointing and divisive when the commission turns its back on them and endorses the pre-critical sixteenth century 'view' instead. A new gap has been cut through Christian communications.

There is in fact no need for the attributions at all. The power is in the texts themselves—as I find when I leave the attributions out (which seems a sensible solution).

- (4) I wish that Series 3 were more reverent and appreciative in its use of scripture. It seems to regard it as a sort of builder's yard of unconnected materials to be raided at will.

This is 'traditional' I know, but not really very good. The great contribution of recent work on the Bible has been to see each book as having an inspired life of its own, drawing from its historical setting and contributing to it. In this way it sits under scripture more obediently and openly than those who pick out the plums and make medleys of '100 Best Tunes' or 'Gems from . . .' out of the symphonies. There is thus another form of traditionalism marked by a less buccaneering approach and greater patience. Further, there seems to be an *anxiety* in Series 3 about scripture under the surface. Whatever his faults, Cranmer made a splendidly free and allusive use of it—as can anybody (given the Spirit) who has it in his heart and

bones. This does not come by much quoting (which starts to look nervous after a while) but by long meditation. Lancelot Andrewes, George Herbert and Bunyan managed it. But can a commission? It would be traditional enough to hold that for such gifts the Church must wait (for quite a while, possibly) upon the Spirit's teaching of individuals within the community (and not necessarily within the commission) to whom he has given gifts of utterance. So, at least, Bunyan and company suggest.

I do not, then, as you plausibly guessed, 'regret that the Christian tradition continues to be believed by so many in so traditionalist a way.' I regret that the way is so *superficially* traditionalist and indifferent to the historical sense which traditionalism requires. I also regret that its idea of what constitutes tradition is so narrow.

Thank you for putting your views so kindly and courteously. I hope I've kept up that standard! Dispute like ours has always been held *within* the C of E which is a charitable allowance for the temporal finitude of all theological endeavours (and liturgical too?).

Yours sincerely,
(Signed) JOHN DRURY

It would be possible to publish my further reply to him, but I would prefer now to open this to our readers. Questionnaires on Series 3 are in preparation, and now is exactly the time when improvements should be, and can be, noted and incorporated into the service. What sticks in *your* throat? Or what would *you* view as too good to be touched up?

Colin Buchanan

Review

Liturgical Studies by E. C. Ratcliff; edited by A. H. Couratin and D. H. Tripp; (S.P.C.K., 1976), 250pp, £8.50.

This collection of major articles and conference papers by the late Prof. E. C. Ratcliff is a publishing event of major importance for all students of liturgy who are not fortunate enough to possess the original journals. It is further enhanced by the fact that one of the editors, Canon Couratin, has been in a position to indicate some of the unpublished conclusions to which Ratcliff's researches led him, particularly in connection with the development of the Roman *Canon Missae*.

The study of the early liturgy was always the chief interest of the former Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, and it is his contribution in this field which calls for comment, although it should be noted that this volume also includes significant writings by him concerned with the Ordinal and Book of Common Prayer.

The fact that Ratcliff did not write any big books on liturgy should not deceive anyone into belittling the importance of his contribution to the modern debate over early liturgical development: a debate which has had, and continues to have, an immense practical effect upon the forms of worship of the Church of England, particularly in the Alternative Services of

Holy Communion and the practice of Christian Initiation. It is true that Ratcliff has not carried the day with his view, argued in three of these papers, that the Sanctus formed the climax of the early anaphora; but the understanding of the spirit of the early eucharist on which he based this view has been widely accepted and applied in liturgical revision. But would he applaud from the heavenlies if there were to be a similar application of his suggestion that the original form of 'Addai and Mari' was intermediate between an agape and a mass, weak on links with the Last Supper but strong on communion with the risen Lord, to whom the prayers were addressed? To what extent should primitive equal normative?

Ratcliff and other scholars of his generation were able to make use of some exciting new discoveries in the field of early liturgical texts. The definitive books, however, could not be written, because this remains an area where, as he himself put it in one connection, 'probably the problems will never be satisfactorily resolved except by the discovery of a piece, or pieces, of decisive evidence at present unknown, and contained in a document not yet brought to light, if such there be.' To devote one's life to studying under these limitations is a kind of greatness.

John E. Tiller

This month's booklet . . .

is no. 45, *Equipping God's People: Present and Future Parish Training Schemes*, by Peter Lee. Pressures on the professional ministry, and a fresh appreciation of the body of Christ have given a new impetus to the Church's traditional role as an educator of its members. This booklet reports a survey of some current parish training schemes, and from them offers resources to other parishes.

. . . and next month's

is Liturgical Study no. 7, *What did Cranmer think he was doing?*, by Colin Buchanan. This is especially designed to be a cheap, easily available, successor to Arthur Couratin's *The Service of Holy Communion 1549-1662*, which is now out of print. The emphasis here is on the meaning of Cranmer's services *from within*, with due weight given to the later revisions of the service.

. . . and that price rise

All back numbers will go up to 30p from 1 September. Some shops may still have copies at 20p and 25p (as, for instance, the S.P.C.K. Bookshop do).

'LATIMER HOUSE LITURGY GROUP'

The group of authors who meet three times a year to plan and write the booklets has been accorded responsibility for planning the worship at NEAC, at Nottingham University, in April 1977. Readers are welcome to write in with suggestions about this, though we may not be able to acknowledge all separately. We shall print acknowledgements in *NOL* if we are swamped . . .

7p per copy. £1.60 per annum by post. (£2.30 by air)

GROVE BOOKS
BRAMCOTE NOTTS. (0602 251114)

ANGLICANS OVERSEAS

Australia: The draft of 'Australia '77' is now to hand. It is a revision of 'Australia '73', the text which was included in *Further Anglican Liturgies 1968-1975*, with an introduction by Bishop Don Robinson. The feedback from the use of the 1973 text has led to this new draft, and it is intended that comment on it in turn will enable a substantive rite to be included in the projected *An Australian Prayer Book 1977*. The Australian Liturgical Commission is meeting again 1-5 November 1976, and wishes to have comment by then. We are flying over a few copies in the hope that some readers will wish to take up the chance, but we must warn that our copies will be more costly because we have had to obtain them by air.

The crucial new material is a set of alternative eucharistic prayers. But it is first worth noticing the changes in the 1973 eucharistic prayer. The language has been altered in almost every sentence, and occasionally the sequence of thought has been changed. But overall it is closely related to the 1973 text. The most notable features are the points at which the distinctive Australian features of 1973 have been harmonized with the rest of the world! Thus the narrative of institution is all one piece again (having been previously split into two), and the acclamations come immediately after it (having previously followed the anamnesis). If *A Modern Liturgy* in 1966 was 'way out', yet by careful steps through 1969 and 1973 it looks as though *Australia '77* will be 'way in'. A pity . . .

The additional new eucharistic prayers are fairly unspectacular. The second prayer is Series 3, altered slightly in the paragraph before the narrative of institution. The third has a fixed preface, and a slightly shorter ending and some echoes of Hippolytus. The fourth draws upon the proper prefaces of the first prayer for its fixed preface. The third and fourth both include much material from the first one, and it looks as though creativity in Australia has been diminishing steadily ever since 1966! The only distinctive Australian uses that strike the eye are the giving of thanks 'for' the bread and the cup (which has survived all standardization), and the manipulating of the elements in the narrative of institution (even in the Series 3 eucharistic prayer). The rest of the service is little altered since *Australia '73*.

Wales: The Welsh Liturgical Commission has now produced its new rite. And surprise of surprises, it is a 'Thou' form one! In *Further Anglican Liturgies 1968-1975* there is a 'you' form 'study rite' produced in 1971, but apparently there has been insufficient groundswell, and no prompting from the House of Bishops, to continue in that vein. Instead the Welsh Commission has reverted to the 1966 rite, and has shortened the eucharistic prayer (and made some small alterations in the rest of the service). The main change is to bring mention of the Spirit forward from the anamnesis to the petition for consecration, and to alter 'set forth' in the anamnesis into the full old Roman 'we . . . offer unto thy Divine Majesty these thy gifts, this bread of eternal life and this cup of everlasting salvation . . .'

BOOKS THIS MONTH

As mentioned last month, we now have a few more copies of the PECUSA draft Prayer Book (the 'Groundhog Book') at £2.50. We also have another supply of the South African *Liturgy 1975* at £2.

The House Church by Philip and Phoebe Anderson (Abingdon £2.50) is an exploration of love and relationships within a 'house church' and the blurb claims 'The house church is by no means a separate entity; its style is a model for the church.' We were put onto it by Frank Lake's recommendation . . .

A Thematic Guide to the Anglican Hymn Book edited by Robin A. Leaver (Church Book Room Press, 1975, £1) is mentioned in Robin Leaver's Liturgical Study no. 6, and is here offered for the first time. It is only of use to users of the *Anglican Hymn Book*, but ought to be a boon (or a lazy man's corner-cutter) to them.

We have also been sent by Mayhew-McCrimmon an *Altar Servers Missal* (45p).

We have had one or two requests for (and we do stock) the new *The Churchyards Handbook* (second edition, 1976, C.I.O., £2.40). It is hardly liturgical, but having connections with both church buildings and art and symbolism (let alone epitaphs), it is worth a mention here.

SNIPPETS

Liturgy Newsletter, the Roman Catholic forerunner of *NOL*, is now no longer published by the St. Thomas More Centre for Pastoral Liturgy. 'The Bishops' Commission for Liturgy in England and Wales' has now established its own permanent office in London, and the Secretariat has taken over the editing of the *Newsletter*. There seems no suggestion that the *Newsletter* was getting too independent, and needed to be nationalized—nor will *NOL* be going to Church House . . . Correspondence about *Liturgy Newsletter* should now go to the Editor, the Rev. Jeffrey M. Christian, Liturgy Commission, 39 Eccleston Square, London S.W.1.

The Churchman, edited by a good friend of Grove Books, also has an article on liturgy in the current (Jul-Sep) issue. Douglas Davies, an expert in the sociology of religion, writes on 'Social Groups, Liturgy and Glossolalia.' Part of his concern is the tendency in both preacher and liturgy towards the 'idiolect'—the language which is in fact a private code. Series 3 yields an instance in its use of 'the body of Christ' (both at the Peace, and at the Breaking of the Bread). He says 'It is precisely in groups of elaborated code users who realise that they are not bound together in the reality of social life that statements concerning the unity of Christians are found.' His treatment of roles of language runs parallel to Tony Thiselton's *Language, Liturgy and Meaning*, (Liturgical Study no. 2), which itself gets a kind review in this edition of *The Churchman*.

Further to questions of *true* vernacular for localities of the British Isles, we learn of a Cumbrian vicar who has a Cumbrian dialect form for the blessing of horses. Text not yet available.

Further from *The Archers*. Apparently the Ambridge P.C.C. has adopted Series 3 Communion for the first Sunday of the month in the morning, which was previously a family service and was therefore one step towards less dignified liturgy anyway! 6 June (Whitsunday) was the first occasion and Doris Archer made her protest by abandoning the morning and going to the Prayer Book Evening Prayer—late! Her reasons for being late would be obscure in most parishes, but were well declared on the air . . .

There has been a rumour of a lion loose in the Nottingham area. A local curate, Michael Lumgair, chanced upon an interesting fact. He writes, 'Ever looking out for relevant hymns, I was intrigued to note in Brian Edwards' *Through Many Dangers* that the visit of a lion to Olney provided John Newton with material for a hymn. Can any reader tell us which hymn that might be?' (It is probably too late for local consumption in Nottingham, as the police say the 'lion' was a hoax—but we would still like to know.)

FUTURE LITURGICAL BUSINESS IN SYNOD

One item which we had no room to report in the July *NOL* was the report of the Standing Committee of Synod entitled *The Future Business of Synod: 1976* (GS Misc. 52) which was circularized with other documents prior to the July Session of Synod, but not debated at York. The chart opposite collects together the liturgical items which are listed for the various sessions of Synod in the report. However, the July session has already made some of the material out-of-date:

1. The initiation debate was not finished, so its conclusion should come in November.
2. Thus far there is no reason to expect a new Canon on initiation, so the provision for that (in November 1976, July 1977 and November 1977) is not included here.
3. The Calendar, Lectionary and Rules to Order the Service were not reached on the July 1976 agenda so are included here in brackets for November 1976. This makes it very unlikely that they will be ready for the Revision Stage by February 1977.

One cannot repeat too often that the Standing Committee's expectations are frequently not fulfilled. The July 1976 session of Synod is a fair example of this, and the later sessions will probably have the same degree of dislocation. Such forecasts have roughly the same degree of accuracy as long-range weather forecasts.

FUTURE LITURGICAL BUSINESS IN SYNOD

	General Consideration	Revision Stage and Provisional Approval	Final Approval	Other Related Business
November 1976	(Calendar, Lectionary and Rules to Order the Service)	Series 3 Wedding	Series 3 Collects Series 3 Holy Communion (extension) Series 3 Funerals (extension)	Integration of Ministries Conclusion of initiation debate
February 1977	Series 3 Ordinal	Calendar, Lectionary and Rules to Order the Service	Series 3 Wedding	
July 1977	Series 3 Alternative Canons	Series 3 Ordinal	Calendar, Lectionary and Rules to Order the Service	Report of Marriage Commission
November 1977	Series 3 Holy Communion Revised Series 3 Initiation Services	Series 3 Alternative Canons	Series 3 Ordinal	FOAG report on baptism
February 1978			Series 3 Alternative Canons	Progress Report on Alternative Service Book
July 1978				