

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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Editorial

PROPOSALS FOR THE COVENANT

The next step towards a new relationship between the Churches in England is marked out by the publication on 26 June of *Towards Visible Unity: Proposals for a Covenant* (Churches' Council for Covenanting, Church House, Westminster, £1.75). Behind these proposals lie eight years of tortoise-like movement by the Churches:

- 1972 End of Anglican-Methodist Scheme—fruition of Presbyterian-Congregationalist union in the United Reformed Church
- 1973-74 Talks about Talks
- 1974-76 Talks, leading in January 1976 to 'Ten Propositions on Unity'
- 1976-78 The Churches debate the Ten Propositions, and five Churches (the Church of England, the Methodist Church, the U.R.C., the Moravian Church and the Churches of Christ) give a qualified acceptance to the 'covenant'. (The Church of England's reply, which is formative of the shape of the liturgical proposals, was printed in *NOL* in August 1978).
- 1978-80 The Churches' Council for Covenanting works to produce the report now published.

Still to come, before the 'Covenant' can be inaugurated, are the following steps (to give the Church of England's draft timetable, which is probably slower than any other Church's!):

- July 1980 First debate in General Synod
- February 1981 Provisional Approval in Synod, and reference to the dioceses
- July 1982 Final Approval in Synod
- November 1982 Measure and Canon come to Synod for General Approval
- December 1982 to June 1983 Revision Committee Stage
- July 1983 Revision Stage in General Synod and reference to the dioceses
- February 1984 Results of the reference to the dioceses, and reference to the Bishops
- March-June 1984 Consideration by Bishops (and possibly by the Convocations and House of Laity sitting separately)
- July 1984 Final Approval in Synod
- November 1984 Parliamentary Approval of Measure
- December 1984 Royal Assent
- February 1985 Promulgation of Canon
- Later in 1985 Inauguration of Covenant

This timetable comes from the Church of England's Board of Mission and Unity, which has produced a report for Synod called 'Introducing the Covenant' (GS 451) in which the timetable as above is set out. My first reaction is to wonder whether simultaneous action could not be taken

during the first stages (i.e. till July 1982) to produce not a Measure, but an Act of Parliament which (without all the previous stages internal to the Church of England) would 'enable' all the Churches to take the necessary constitutional steps. This could be done, I imagine, by a simple resolution in the General Synod requesting such legislation, and then probably only one reference to the dioceses would be required (though, of course, a Canon would still be necessary). There was an Act of Parliament in 1969 to meet the needs of the Churches generally—the Sharing of Churches Act—and it was anticipated that an Act would be needed for the old Anglican-Methodist Scheme. I am probably out of my depth, but I would have thought that up to two years of the timetable could be saved this way.

The Liturgical Proposals

As mentioned last month, the heart of the scheme is a liturgical service of Broddingnagian dimensions. Here is the outline pattern:

Part 1: Preparation, inc. opening Declaration and greetings from non-covenanting Churches

Ministry of the Word (as for the eucharist)

Presentation of Documents

Confession of sin, and declaration of forgiveness

Promises to work at the common forms of Church life contained within the concept of the covenant

An Act of Reconciliation, with members of each Church accepting each other by affirmation

(at the end of this all say:

'This is the Covenant which we make.

We declare it before God.

We are one in Christ.

We go forward in the Spirit.)

RECESS

Part 2: Ordination of new Bishops for the various Churches (following the Series 3 text)

The Blessing of Episcopal Ministries (to unite them)

Ordination of Presbyters (following the Series 3 text)

The Blessing of Presbyteral Ministries (to unite them, which involves the 'recognition' in the original Ten Propositions, and, obviously, does *not* include a laying on of hands—the bishops stretch out their hands towards the (several thousand!) presbyters present)

The Blessing of Diaconal and other Authorized Ministries

Reaffirmation of Baptismal Promises, including the Nicene Creed (with Filioque!) and the Peace

RECESS

Part 3: The Lord's Supper

I was myself present as a liturgical adviser at the meeting of the sub-committee which laid out this ground plan, and I believe it to be entirely fair to that response of the Church of England made by General Synod at York in July 1978 (and I found myself actually invoking the text of it during the work of the sub-committee), and also entirely fair to the integrity of the other Churches. However, all is not plain sailing. There is a

Memorandum of Dissent

Three members of the Church of England's team on the C.C.C. have dissented. They are the Bishop of Truro, Canon Peter Boulton, and Mr.

Oswald Clark—three very eminent anglo-catholics. Their grounds for dissent (which involve a chapter of 15 pages length) are:

- 1 The concept of episcopacy has been altered by the provision that in the URC existing ministers, already having 'episcopal ministry', need not be ordained bishop. This is a deviation from the pattern anticipated in 1978. (And it is).
- 2 This calls in question the acceptance of the historic episcopate by the other Churches, and inhibits 'recognition' of their presbyteral ministries.
- 3 The ordination of women in the other Churches is an obstacle not only to true 'recognition' of such presbyters, but also to the sharing in ordination with them which the Covenant requires. This problem would be much greater if a woman were presented to be made a bishop (and it is entirely fair to make this point, because all debates about the ordination of women are in the last analysis about whether they can be bishops!).

So there is trouble ahead on this score—presumably reaching into the elections to General Synod in September this year. The six Anglicans who did sign the report have responded with a lengthy commendation of the proposals, entitled 'On Behalf of the Covenant'.

Finally, the Eucharistic Prayer, and a Personal Statement

In all the hassling over the structure and wording of this marathon service, one piece of important liturgy escaped criticism when it should have received it. This is the eucharistic prayer (pp.32-34), for which, for reasons which entirely elude me, someone on the C.C.C. drafted for the liturgical sub-committee the eucharistic prayer from the Scottish Episcopal Church's 1977 'Orange Bookie'. The controversial parts run as follows:

'Here we set forth his death and passion, his victorious resurrection and ascension until his coming in glory. United with him we offer you these holy gifts and ourselves with them, one holy living sacrifice.

'Hear us, most merciful Father. Send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this cup; that . . . they may be to us the body and blood of your Son . . .'

At least some Anglicans—of whom I am one—would want to oppose

- (a) The offering of the gifts to God
- (b) The stating that they are a 'living' sacrifice (yes, it does say that, which is not what Rom. 12.1 says, and it goes beyond almost any statement about eucharistic 'signs' which I have ever seen)
- (c) The offering of ourselves to God by means of offering the gifts to him (and, indeed, the self-offering in the eucharistic prayer at all)
- (d) The invoking of the Spirit upon the elements, which has been carefully avoided in the Church of England since the 1928 disaster.
- (e) The Eastern position for the epiclesis.

If the Church of England were to accept this eccentric compilation as *the* eucharistic prayer in which we could agree with all other denominations, then this would become *the* ecumenical eucharistic prayer for the future—and furthermore every controversy over the form of the eucharistic prayer since 1966 would have been a waste of time. All internal agreements of the Church of England, now finding expression in Rite A, would be undercut by this production.

How then did I let it go on the liturgical sub-committee? The answer is that I did not know I had. My first reaction when I learned of this text (which I learned by the most extraordinary freak of fortune, viz. that the fellow seeing the material through the press rang me up to ask to whom acknowledgment should be made for use of this copyright material!—and you could have knocked me down with a feather when I was told what the text was!) was that I had never seen it. My recollection was that the sub-committee had been asked to produce words not previously used by any of the covenanting Churches, and that we had not reached the text of the eucharistic prayer before it all sent back to the main Council. (I had in fact missed the last two meetings of the sub-committee as dates had been fixed without asking me, and documents for them only arrived on the day of the meetings, such was the rush). I ventured to tell folk that I had had no knowledge of the eucharistic prayer, and that it had gone in without my being consulted.

So I said, but I was wrong, I checked back and there it was—in one of the documents which reached me on the morning the sub-committee was meeting; and, in ploughing through reams of earlier material (we had at that point no Series 3 ordination services, but a completely new set of ordination proposals which I had to go through and ring the sub-committee about), I had never reached the eucharistic prayer. But there it was. So I tacitly and unknowingly, but nevertheless culpably, let go that which I should have resisted very solidly. I offer my public apologies to the C.C.C., and to those who had reason to expect me to oppose such material. My omission has obviously wasted a lot of time and trouble for large numbers of people, and I deeply regret it.

The B.M.U. in GS 451 mention the eucharistic prayer on page 8. There they say 'We understand that the C.C.C. had no intention whatever of proposing a rite which might prove divisive . . . this matter has now been raised with the chairman of the Council, with the request that it be considered at the next meeting of C.C.C. . . . we have his assurance that the matter will be considered. The Council will certainly not wish this matter to divert the Church of England from giving its attention to the primary ecumenical issues . . .'

With this help from the B.M.U. I am content and grateful. I think it must be got right. But equally it must not divert energies or attention from the main point.

Colin Buchanan

Epistola

Care Coline

Sedes singulares commodae sunt, sedibus autem in rigidis sedere possunt plurimi. Hic et illic (praesertim hic!) sunt ecclesiae in quas multi ut adorent congregantur.

Vale

Georgius

(Sancti Bartholomaei, Penn)

Respondeo: Ruat caelum, ceterum censeo sedes rigidas iam esse delendas.

10p per copy (£2.25 for the year 1980)

GROVE BOOKS

BRAMCOTE NOTTS. (0602 251114)

THE GALLUP OF THE HEAVY BRIGADE

It is clear that Professor David Martin does not intend to slacken his attacks upon the encroachments of modern-language liturgy. One wonders whether he somehow hopes that the *ASB* might yet go away . . . At any rate he has found an ally in Gallup, and the outcome of the Gallup poll was the subject of a Press Release from (wait for it) the Prayer Book Society on 11 June, and the heart of continuous further correspondence in *The Times* and elsewhere thereafter. The Prayer Book Society's Press Release was headed:

'GALLUP POLL SHOWS CHURCH OF ENGLAND LEADERS OUT OF TOUCH WITH THE MAN IN THE CLAPHAM OMNIBUS PEW' which suggests that they would do better if they themselves stuck to sixteenth century prose . . .

At any rate the poll's findings were that, of 2117 people interviewed, 1178 (56%) identified themselves as 'C/E'. Of these a smaller proportion (one radio report said 25%, but the Press Release does not tell us—I wonder why not?) are 'practising in some degree' (i.e. they go to church at least once or twice a year). This latter group was then itself sub-divided into geographical areas (we learn that over the whole country 29% of this group wanted the traditional services 'always', but in the Midlands it was 42%), and also into age-groups (of the 16-24 year olds 24% want the traditional services 'always') and into weekly attenders and others (24% of the weekly attenders want these services 'always'). At the time of writing we are awaiting the Gallup print-out, but the reactions to the Press Release which invite themselves are a comment on the sheer numerical absurdity of the data we are being served. No other comment on this seems to have been tabled, so it is doubly worth a mention here. In substance the comment takes this form:

- (a) If 25% of the 'C/E' respondents are those who 'go to church' (at least sometimes), then we have a figure of 294 people on whom all the data are based. And this is absurd as a sample for *any* opinion-polling of any sort where a national response from all classes, ages, areas, and intelligences, is desired. It is clearly hopelessly unrepresentative, as it amounts to nearly 14% of the total number polled—which would suggest that in an English population of around 40 million there were nearly six million who counted themselves churchgoers of the Church of England!
- (b) No correction of the 294 will avail. If it should be larger, then the six million becomes larger and shows yet more clearly how wildly unrepresentative the poll was. If it becomes smaller, then it may be more truly representative, in relation to the total population, but it becomes an ever more useless sample for statistical purposes as it dwindles towards nothing. It seems very doubtful in fact whether more than five per cent of the population can be counted as even occasional Anglican churchgoers, and that would provide a basic figure of 109 as the sample from which conclusions were to be drawn.
- (c) The 40 million above includes children of all ages. Were they included in the polling? If not, then we are being told that one-seventh of the *adult* population reckons itself as churchgoing in the C/E. If they *were* included, then what was the minimum age sampled, and what is their opinion worth?

- (d) The 294 is further divided, let it be remembered, into sub-divisions of age, area, and frequency of attendance. It is likely that in each case the basic sample has thus become *less than 100 people*. And still the Press Release pontificates as though it had struck upon some national truth, setting out a great range of percentages. Thus the '16-24 year olds' responded about 'whether they hoped the traditional services were used' as follows:

Always	24%
More often	8%
Less often	4%
About like now	41%
Don't know	23%

Quite apart from the fact that 'about like now' would to most teenagers mean 'like in our parish church', rather than 'with the mix that already exists across the parishes of the land' (which means that many may have been answering on quite different understandings of the question), if the sample concerned was, as seems likely, less than 100 people (and that figure included many who only go to church very rarely), then any ten different young people might have loaded the answers very differently.

We hope to return to this (there is a vast auxiliary material to be handled). But, quite apart from the *form* of the questions (about which the Secretary-General of Synod, Derek Pattinson, told the press he would be sceptical), how can Gallup lend its authority to such a miserably incredible sampling as this? Come on, Professor—surely sociologists are slightly more scientific than this?

Reviews

Praying and Singing, by J. D. Crichton (Collins Liturgical Publications, 1980) 96pp. £1.80.

J. D. Crichton is a respected and authoritative Roman Catholic writer on liturgy, as his contributions to *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* and *The Study of Liturgy* reveal. But this book is of a different character than such writings. It is a simple and profound, non-technical discussion of music in the liturgy and how it promotes (or otherwise) prayer and devotion. The book began its life as a series of talks given to monastic musicians under the original title: 'Music and Liturgy: Problems and Opportunities'. The author addresses himself to the problems that have arisen in the Roman church since Vatican II and the introduction of vernacular services. But what he has to say is almost as applicable to the Anglican situation since the introduction of modern language services. He gently takes composers to task for their innate conservatism. He points out that they have continued to write mass-settings which are more appropriate to the old rite and have missed the opportunities created by the new one. He chides them for merely adapting traditional plainsong to the English texts without taking into account that English is not as singable as Latin. Two important themes run throughout the book. First, that composers should write music appropriate to the literary form of the liturgical text. Second, that the function or role of the texts in the liturgical celebration should be understood and undergirded by the music. It is a thoughtful and thought-provoking little book and ought to be read by all who exercise any kind of leadership in worship.

Robin A. Leaver

This month's booklet . . .

. . . is Liturgical Study no. 22 *E. C. Ratcliff: Reflections on Liturgical Revision*, edited by David Tripp. This study includes three little-known pieces by Ratcliff: a pair of articles in the Chichester *Diocesan Gazette* in 1935 about Cranmer and the Prayer Book; a paper to an anglo-catholic eucharistic congress in 1958 on revision of the eucharist; and a paper prepared for the Theological Committee of the Church Union in 1959 on ordination and schemes of union. David Tripp has added a short introduction, and at the same time brought up to date the existing bibliography of Ratcliff's works. The Study is a good supplement to the major collection of Ratcliff's writings made by Arthur Couratin and David Tripp in 1976.

This is probably the first time that a Grove Liturgical Study has stood at an opposite theological pole from that of Grove Books itself. Grove Books would like this difference of opinion to be registered even whilst commending the Study as not only throwing further light on Ratcliff (and on Cranmer!) but as also explaining some of the forces that were at work in the original production of Series 2 communion service. But Grove Books does *not* think Ratcliff is always right.

. . . and next month's

is Worship Series no. 73 *Services for the Home*, compiled by Michael Vasey and tried out in the homes of some friends of his. These are simple provisions for corporate 'table-prayers' (with the use of symbols), particularly for high seasons of the church's year.

Help wanted for future Grove Booklets

Michael Vasey, of St. John's College, Durham, is thinking of writing a Grove Booklet on the prayers and notices in public worship, and is keen to collect ideas and experiences. He would be very glad to receive suggestions, and particularly to hear of local experiments. Please write to him. Similarly, Charles Hutchins, of the Church Army Training College, Van-bugh Street, Blackheath, London S.E.3., is hoping to write on 'Retreats'. What puts you off, or what do you find helpful? Any ideas or suggestions (or testimony) would be appreciated. Please write to him direct.

VESTING AT ORDINATIONS

There is still some uncertainty around about 'vesting' at ordinations. *NOL* would be glad to know when this started in the post-Reformation Church of England (?1880 ?1900 ? 1920). It is certainly fairly recent. The Series 3 services make it clear that it is only to be done where 'it is agreed' (as the opening Note says). One new diocesan bishop the Bishop of Sheffield, has written to candidates as follows:

'I cannot seriously believe that I am expected to enter into discussion about what candidates wear at an ordination. But I'm not prepared either to say "Wear what you like". For . . . all are being ordained into the same ministry . . . the flaunting of "party badges" would be scandalous . . . Therefore I propose to avoid controversy (or make all equally cross) by ordaining you in a cassock and surplice only. I suppose I might be prepared to do otherwise if it was the unanimous wish of you all.'

And, once again *NOL* would like to add: have bishops yet come to terms with the place of vesting in the liturgical order in Series 3—it is before the Declaration, and *not* after the laying on of hands.

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THE SYNOD AGENDA JULY 1980

General Synod meets from 7 to 11 July for the last group of sessions before the new election in September. It is also the last group before the publication of the *ASB 1980*. Thus the business includes the following:

Final Approval: extension till 31 December 1985 of the period within which the Revised Catechism is commended for use in teaching.
Provisional and Final Approval: extension till 31 December 1985 of the authorization of:

Series 1: Matrimony, Burial
Series 2: Communion, Baptism/Confirmation
Series 2 (Revised): Morning and Evening Prayer
Series 3: Communion

Revocation of Lessons for Holy Days appended to Series 3 Morning and Evening Prayer

Rationalization of Tables of Lessons, Psalms and Rules to Order the Service

ASB 1980: debates on motions by Brian Brindley to allow a shorter version of the Book, and by Canon H. Williams to allow versions including hymnbooks and devotional aids, bound up with the *ASB* at the publishers' discretion.

LAUGHTER IN LITURGY

Michael Botting claims to have prayed (under the 1662 Litany) that God would 'eliminate all Bishops, Priests, and Deacons . . .

APOLOGIES

for a desperately late May despatch—June has seen a slight catch-up . . .