

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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Editorial

The orchestrated campaign to prevent the ASB and other modern services driving out the BCP from the parishes is now turning towards the Theological Colleges. As this touches me very personally, readers will not be surprised if I use my opportunity this month to squeal a little.

There had been dark mutterings about the Colleges not using the BCP way back last Autumn. But the mutterings took formal shape when a question was tabled in General Synod in February as follows (the answers given are in brackets after each):

'In how many theological colleges is:

- | | |
|---------------------------|------|
| (a) Holy Communion 1662 | |
| (i) Used regularly | [6] |
| (ii) Used occasionally | [4] |
| (iii) Not used | [4] |
| (b) Holy Communion Rite B | |
| (i) Used regularly | [1] |
| (ii) Used occasionally | [4] |
| (iii) Not used | [9] |
| (c) Holy Communion Rite A | |
| (i) Used regularly | [13] |
| (ii) Used occasionally | [1] |
| (iii) Not used | [0] |

This in turn led to the House of Lords, in that famous debate on 8 April, using these figures as though they exposed something *causal*—that is, that the Colleges were failing to inculcate a love of 1662 into their ordinands and thus the clergy of the Church of England were not equipped to give that vigorous lead in the use of 1662 which the 1980s require.

Once again, the erroneous presuppositions which underlay these ignorant attacks are legion. I touch on them in passing below. But the immediate outcome is that the House of Bishops (to whom apparently the Standing Committee of Synod referred the matter) have decided that a little bit of mild rebuke to the Theological Colleges is the way to get the Lords and Commons off our back. I believe in this they are quite mistaken, and that they are almost pleading 'guilty' to the charges made by Parliamentarians, simply saying 'Let us off this time and we will do better in the future'—i.e. by pushing the Colleges round a bit.' The text of the communication from the bishops to the Colleges was released on 3 July, and is included below and on pages 3 and 4.

I made my own protest in the debate on the Standing Committee's report on the agenda at the opening of the July session of Synod (a session in other respects reported elsewhere in this *NOL*) on Friday 3 July. My

complaint was that the issue is *not* 'pastoral' (as the bishops say). It is not even liturgical. It is *constitutional*. It is a question of where powers lie. Parliament devolved all power over liturgy to Synod in 1974-5, and at the same time gave incumbents and PCCs the joint choice of which forms of authorized services should be used. Parliament on 8 April was seeking to over-rule the powers of Synod by naked aggression, and Synod should have been acting to defend its powers. Yet the Standing Committee had put no debate or motion on the agenda for July, had reported in its report no action it had taken towards Parliament on behalf of Synod, had not even reported the action of Parliament to Synod as a bare report (surely Synod ought to have been provided with the text of the Prayer Book Protection Bill—for which see *NOL* for April?)—and finally had not reported to Synod why it had done nothing, if it had done nothing. Standing Committee were failing in their trusteeship for the powers of Synod.

The chairman of the Business Sub-committee, Archdeacon Peter Dawes, did reveal that Standing Committee had referred the matter to the House of Bishops for that blessed 'pastoral' handling (see the Bishops' letter again), and in effect he told COB not to get excited about it! COB unexcitedly replies, in words used by the same Archdeacon on another occasion in Synod, that the House of Bishops is not the Synod, and it is action on behalf of *Synod* which was required, and was wholly lacking.

During questions that same evening the Archbishop said that the House of Bishops was simply trying to help 'some troubled people' in their troubles. This, to my mind, is to ignore the fact that the 'troubled people' are *legislators*, and were trying to pour their 'troubles' into unacceptable and arbitrary *legislation*. However, in repeating that the issue is centrally constitutional I suppose I also imply that it should not be central to *News of Liturgy* all the time, and so I pass on to the Bishops' letter.

It appears that parishes retain their liberties. Bishops certainly retain theirs (the House of Bishops does not seem to have bound itself to use 1662 confirmations and ordinations in a set proportion *irrespective of what the actual worshippers and participants prefer*). But in the Colleges the authorities must take certain steps (admittedly not numerically quantified) to ensure that worshippers use 1662. The Canons do not seem to touch on where powers lie in College worship, so it is easier for the Bishops to crack the whip in that direction than in any other, where the powers and duties are already defined. Well, so be it, but . . .

- (i) Colleges are in part a prophetic sign to the church about the future. They must not be wholly out of touch with reality (and I do not think they are), but if they are not ahead of where the generality of church life is, then where will vision for the future be injected regularly into ongoing church life? Colleges are the servants of the church that is, but they are also trustees for the church that is to be.
- (ii) ordinands have nowadays been formed (often converted) and called in the 1970s, very frequently in parishes using modern services. Yes, they may need 'exposure' to 1662, but it is unlikely to be other than a museum-piece encounter for them.

- (iii) training parishes (which are the ones which take deacons) may sometimes have the odd 8 a.m. 1662 communion, but in general they are using modern services either exclusively or nearly so. If there were 1662-only training parishes in any quantities, then of course curates would be formed for a devoted ministry with the 1662 Prayer Book come across them. And it is the training parishes which shape liturgical preferences amongst curates.
- (iv) the syllabus factors in teaching Christian worship are becoming intolerable. Twenty years ago Colleges (or at least some Colleges) worked their way through the Prayer Book. Now they have a second substantial book requiring the same treatment (indeed, surely, more?). But in addition to that we have been awaking to the fact that worship is far more than the text of the authorized services (see the weighting of the Grove Booklets' titles), and that there must be time given in a syllabus to handling questions of principles of architecture and setting, music and singing, ceremonial, mission, teaching in worship, spirituality, etc. etc. So, the syllabus becomes harder and harder to keep balanced. If pressure upon time given to official texts comes upon Colleges, which should yield time—1662 or ASB? What do we think the clergy of the future are going to need in 1990 and in 2000?
- (v) the actual worship in College chapel should have an authenticity related to the people, the surroundings, and the resources assembled. Our students (for instance) annually produce a new musical setting for Series 3 or Rite A eucharist. The same creativity does not attach to 1662 (it's all been done—and done better than we can do—in the past). So which should we use?

On this issue, see also the *St. John's Newsletter* (circulated with *NOL* at Christmas) in which I wrote on this, and the latest one in which Tom Smail wrote.

The unkindest cut of all is that in the days when this College was strictly BCP and nothing else, various Colleges never used the BCP and Parliament and the Bishops never seem to have interfered at all . . . But I would rather keep the response general: Bishops, however velvet-gloved your letter may be, yet you are making the Colleges the whipping-boy for the 'troubles' of the Parliamentarians, and it would be far easier to accept if you had simultaneously encouraged the Standing Committee, or yourselves led the Synod, in making an open, robust, and unmistakably undefensive rejoinder to the constitutional threats posed by Parliament. Yes, we will teach and use 1662 (we are loyal to the Church of England)—but look where the problem is really coming from.

Colin Buchanan

THE BISHOPS' LETTER TO THE COLLEGES

[An opening and a closing paragraph refer to the date of release of the letter, and to its confidentiality prior to that date. The rest of the letter reads as follows. It is signed by the Secretary-General]

The house believes that the issues raised in the Parliamentary debates can best be dealt with pastorally. The Bishops propose to discuss the matter

with their Bishop's Councils, and they have asked that a fresh edition of *The Worship and Doctrine* guidance leaflet, authorized by the Synod's Standing Committee should be prepared, and given the widest possible circulation. In view of the focussing of attention on the theological colleges, they are also asking that Governing Bodies and Principals should consider the matter, with a view to securing the use both of BCP and ASB in teaching and in worship. I am to emphasize that the Bishops are fully seized of, and are sympathetic to, the special position and needs of the colleges and courses in this matter, and took account of this in the wording finally adopted. The motion carried by the House of Bishops is as follows:

That this House:

- (i) having received reports on the deliberations in both Houses of Parliament on the use of the Book of Common Prayer and having given attention to the issues raised, resolves to deal with them as matters of pastoral concern and to discuss liturgical developments and the use of the Book of Common Prayer and the Alternative Service Book with the Bishop's Councils in their respective dioceses;
- (ii) asks the standing Committee of the General Synod to prepare a fourth edition of the leaflet *Worship and Doctrine: A Guide for Parishes* and asks that this be given a much wider distribution; and
- (iii) notes the information given by the Chairman of ACCM to the General Synod in February 1981 regarding the use of the Book of Common Prayer in theological colleges etc. and asks that Governing Bodies and Principals pay attention to this matter with a view to ensuring the use both of the Book of Common Prayer and of the Alternative Service Book in teaching and in worship.

FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE LITURGICAL COMMISSION

It gives me great pleasure to respond to the editor's invitation to express something of my aspirations for the new Liturgical Commission, not least because, after the publication of ASB there are those who think it hasn't anything to do!

We are of course answerable through the House of Bishops to the General Synod. It is anyone's guess what, in the course of time, they will refer to us. Already we have received a request to provide a form of private service following the remarriage of the divorced. This of course may be overtaken by further developments. We may well be asked to provide services for institutions and the consecration of churches. These occasional services are often unsatisfactory and are best not left to private initiative. On the whole family services and much else of the kind seem to me best left to local experiment and I think we would resist becoming a universal provider.

On the ecumenical front we are plainly in for a period of renewed activity. The Commission will nominate two of its members to the Joint Liturgical

Group which is looking at services for Holy Week. It will also participate with other churches of the English-speaking world in a reconstituted ICET. Much is happening, from which we can learn, in Australia and the U.S., not least in the revision of the lectionary.

But the production of the solid-looking ASBs does not end our work on the liturgy itself by any means. Listening to grass-roots reaction, monitoring the 'separates', preparing for long-term revision will have to be at the forefront of our minds. For in the modern world liturgy that is petrified is dead. My guess is that we shall not long be left in peace. I have a personal hope to be able to make such dispositions that the ASB can be used as alternative to the BCP and therefore with it, rather than a total replacement of it.

Whatever we have to do, I am confident in the membership of the Commission itself. It is strong and it is already showing cohesion and a sense of purpose. It will be the weightier that Geoffrey Cuming has willingly agreed to serve as a consultant and it will work closely at times with the Doctrinal Commission. I already feel an exhilarating breeze.

Douglas R. Jones, Durham

... and the actual further news from the Commission is

that there are two more new members not specified last month: The Rev. Colin Hickling, Lecturer in New Testament at King's College, London
Miss O. D. G. Wade, USPG area secretary for Peterborough and Leicester dioceses, and a lay member of General Synod.

Also, at its first meeting last month, the Commission agreed to co-opt Geoffrey Cuming as a consultant (*NOL* cannot conceal its great pleasure about this), and to seat a Roman Catholic observer when he is nominated.

Early in July Mr. David Jarrett, after some years as the secretary of the Commission, departed from Church House to join the Church Commissioners. He has of course done not only the donkey-work for the Commission, but much of the hard grind of servicing the Revision Committees of Synod in the 'seventies, and the Church of England owes him a debt of thanks. He is replaced by Mr. Keith Reading as secretary to the Commission.

LAUGHTER IN LITURGY (IN SYNOD)

The debate on the Services for the Sick produced two memorable if not very liturgical contributions:

From Roy Williamson: 'I have no great problem with communion by extension. My difficulty is with Harvest Festivals by extension—taking the worm-eaten apples and the faded blooms on a Monday morning to people who do not actually want them . . .'

From Don Humphries: 'There I was in hospital, and unconscious. But I threw off my bedclothes, disclosing my birthday suit, and, as there were women in the ward, a nurse rushed across and said "You mustn't do that, Mr. Humphries"—to which I apparently replied "It's all right, I'm a vicar".'

This month's booklet . . .

. . . is Worship Series no. 77, *Intercessions in Worship*, by Michael Vasey. This is intended to assist (as each of this year's Worship booklets is) in the presentation of liturgy to-day, but it draws upon history and gives a very three-dimensional and invigorating approach to improving the quality of intercessions. Strongly recommended.

. . . and next month's

is Pastoral Series no. 7, *What we are about to receive*, by David Newman. This is a study in the experience of the Spirit in initiation.

. . . and News of Hymnody

will now definitely begin in January 1982. It will be similar to *NOL* in format and will appear four times a year under the editorship of Robin Leaver. Its inception is due to the provision of finance from SPCK, a part of the vision for the project is attributable to them. We anticipate that it will take its place alongside *NOL* as 'NOH' and have a secure role in the future. Would-be contributors are invited to write to Robin Leaver from now on at The Priory, Cogges, Witney, Oxon.

. . . and prices in 1982

will be as follows: for subscribers to booklets *NOL* will be 14p in 1982, and *NOH* will also be 14p. By post on their own, *NOL* will be £3, and *NOH* £1. But if both are taken a combined subscription will be £3.50. Airmail, multiple, and dollar rates will be quoted in the Autumn catalogue, and with renewal slips.

. . . and the Spirituality Series

will begin in February 1982.

. . . and the report on the Charismatic Movement

entitled *The Church of England and the Charismatic Movement* will be published on 11 September by the Church Information Office at £1.95. If any readers want to receive this on the day of publication, then we will delay the August despatch in order to achieve that arrival. Alternatively, send us a separate 9 ins. by 6 ins. addressed envelope with 15½p in stamps on it, and we will send it on the right day anyway.

. . . and the annual stuff

of *The Lectionary 1982* (S.P.C.K./Mowbrays) should also be available (pocket size 55p both alternatives and desk size £1). The *Church Pocket Book and Diary* from S.P.C.K. is £3.50.

. . . and 'separates'

are announced from the publishers of the ASB (no prices yet): Rite B (ASB 22) Funeral Services (ASB 60) and Confirmation (ASB 40) in September—others later.

12p per copy (£2.70 by post for the year 1981)

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THE ROYAL MARRIAGE RITE

Just as our June issue came off the press, the Palace announced details of the order of service—and, because the June Liturgical Study was late coming from the printers, we ourselves despatched late to many recipients, and thus last month's forecasts now look like so much wastepaper. The problem has been no easier this month, as we know a certain amount in advance (for which please read on), but cannot possibly guarantee to get the issue into readers' hands before 29 July, so again it would look old hat. Instead we are doing a two-stage report. First comes the material written at leisure in advance. Then we are planning to leave certain space to be filled at page-proof stage early on the morning of 30 July—and then we hope to be despatching by 31 July as usual.

Advance intimations

The press releases mentioned above show that the first half of the marriage will be Series 1 (akin to 1928), whilst the prayers will be from the ASB (or in line with the ASB written by the couple themselves perhaps). The press quoted the Archbishop as saying that they asked for something which he told them no couple in any ordinary parish church could have, and they sportingly did not insist. Reading between the lines of this remark, it seems likely that they wanted the ASB preface with the Series 1 provision for the vows and giving of the ring. We congratulate the Archbishop on his scrupulosity in advising the couple that they cannot mix bits of different services.

On the other hand, what has happened to *NOL*'s forecast that he had got them to St. Paul's so as to force the ASB rite upon them, and give not only them but also it a boost in the light of pressure upon the defenceless services from Professor Martin and the Lords and Commons? Readers are welcome to take their pick from the following possible reasons why it all fell apart:

- (i) The Archbishop simply asked them what they wanted instead of making his ASB proposal first.
- (ii) Some relative of the groom cracked the whip.
- (iii) As after all there will be a Bishop of London (even if unthroned) by 29 July, the Archbishop did not risk an appeal to the ordinary of St. Paul's, and climbed down when they objected to the ASB.
- (iv) *NOL* got it wrong in the first place.

Retrospect the morning after

Well, it all went off marvellously—no more liturgically newsworthy items than both bride and groom making tiny verbal fumbles, the Archbishop invoking the Eastern tradition that bride and groom at any wedding are king and queen for the day, and the bride's choice of hymn being 'I vow to thee, my country' (which must be, and ought to be, rare at weddings). *NOL* was not invited to a press seat at St. Paul's so joined the crowd outside the palace. There the sound broadcast of the wedding led to tumultuous applause when each partner duly said 'I will' and again when the Archbishop pronounced that 'they be man and wife together'—none of these being actually the operative part of the service! And we all sang the national anthem, having failed to cope with 'I vow to thee'. And we sang 'Charley' to the tune of 'Amazing Grace'—a relief to sing the same word over and over when no-one knew more than odd snatches of anything. But for St. Paul's, watch the repeats . . .

GENERAL SYNOD AT YORK—THE JULY SESSION

Services for the Sick (GS 471)

Donald Gray, the Rector of Liverpool, is chairman of the Steering Committee handling both this report and GS 472 reported below. He therefore presented the report to Synod, commending the principle of communion by extension and speaking pastorally about the other needs of the sick (including anointing and laying on of hands). Hugh Craig, who had dissented from the whole provision, spoke about the four heterogeneous reasons he had for dissenting:

- (i) he did not think that pastoral provision of this sort needed the full three-stages-in-synod treatment.
- (ii) he had some residual problems about reservation, as the policy has all along been that proper treatment would be given to this question when providing for communion of the sick—but instead it was handled tacitly only.
- (iii) the provision for 'The Reconciliation of a Penitent', being separated from the services for the sick, could not now claim to be simply the continuing of the 1662 provision for absolution in the visitation of the sick.
- (iv) the sick often have small reserves of strength to take in what is being said—it is important for ministers to direct attention away from themselves, but instead the services are rather ministerially self-conscious ('I anoint you' etc.).

A vigorous and positive debate followed (a couple of gems from which are included under 'Laughter in Liturgy' on page 5). A warm welcome came especially from the Bishop of Southwark of the Hospital Chaplains' Council, though he expressed sorrow that the provision had not been in time to get into the ASB—which would have been much more of a symbol to all Anglicans that this ministry to the sick—including a ministry of healing—is a normal feature of ministry and of our services, and not something bizarre or eccentric. The services were given a virtually unanimous favourable vote on 'General Consideration', and were remitted to the Revision Committee which the Standing Committee has since appointed.

The Blessing of Oils and the Reconciliation of a Penitent (GS 472)

These were debated on the Sunday also. I had tabled a Question for Friday to ask the Secretary-General whether he had read *NOL* for May, and whether it affected his opinion about the 1662 service for the Visitation of the Sick as expressed in his synodical answer in February. His answer this time was cagey—he was sure his interpretation of the formularies could still stand, but was not absolutely sure mine was wrong. The formularies might allow both . . .

Donald Gray presented it in a lowkey way, though he tried deftly to disarm (or perhaps embarrass) me by informing the Synod of my appearance as a preacher at the Liverpool cathedral 'Blessing of the Oils' on Maundy Thursday this year. As this did not bear on the only matter I was querying—the indicative absolution in the 'Reconciliation' provision—I remained unembarrassed. I got my chance, and suggested three major reasons of

principle for stopping the provision at the outset of its synodical journey:

- (i) It is *not* 'alternative' to anything in the BCP, and therefore does not need synodical authorization (and this gave me the chance to come back again at the secretary-general, who had propounded the nearly unbelievable tenet that the 'reconciliation' is 'alternative' to the Visitation of the Sick in the BCP).
- (ii) It is undignified for Synod to go through the motions of authorizing that which we are told will be used in exactly the same way even if it is not authorized.
- (iii) The Liturgical Commission and the Synod have for years drafted and authorized on the basis of agreeing all alternative forms jointly, and eschewing all provision of a 'one for you, one for me' set of alternatives.

I then went into the reasons why theologically the indicative absolution is hard to justify. I was duly attacked by many doughty fighters, and at the end only about 25 members raised their hands against 'General Consideration'. So now we go to the Revision Committee. At the same time, I have been encouraged by sympathetic attempts to find ways through the apparent impasse.

The 'Filioque'

The Archbishop of Canterbury on Monday introduced his own report to find the mood (or mind) of Synod on the Filioque. No decisions were in view. The theologians—varying between East and West in their stances—pitched in, and a deeply searching seminar resulted. However, at the end of the day, there is not only the text of the ASB at stake, but also that of the BCP (and some kindred documents as will appear). Christian Howard articulated in debate what difficulty this would involve. *NOL* now goes a stage further and, purely to be helpful to the Archbishop of Canterbury, has done some drafting. The solutions he needs are as follows:

- (i) Re the ASB. Synod would have to pass a motion, by at least a two-thirds majority in each House, deleting the words 'and the Son' from Rites A and B in the ASB, and would have to issue an instruction to all existing Books should be corrected accordingly.
- (ii) Re the BCP etc. Here there are two choices (both involving Parliamentary):
 - A. *The Church of England (Deletion of Filioque) Measure*. This Measure would have to go through Synod, and then on to Parliament (which would certainly enjoy itself on the matter). It would have to prescribe the deletion of 'and the Son' in Article V of the Thirty-Nine Articles, in the Communion service and the Litany in the Book of Common Prayer, and even (at great risk to the already trite metre) in the alternative version of the *Veni, Creator* in the Ordinal. Thus three separate formularies would all need changing, with implications for all future printings and for the correcting of existing printings.
 - B. *The Church of England (Worship and Doctrine Devolution) Measure*. This would remove the Prayer Book, Articles, and Ordinal from the Parliamentary entrenched status they still enjoy, and would devolve all powers over their texts to General Synod. Then a further stage would be a revision of their texts in General Synod, in accordance with these powers.

Archbishop, for what our advice is worth, we do not say you should not do it. We merely say you have embarked on a task of heroic magnitude. And you do run the risk—well articulated in Synod—that at the end of the day, when from a particular Sunday every worship book in every parish church has to have pen-corrections made in it, the people will want to know what changes it has made in our beliefs, and the clergy may not easily be able to tell them. Fortunately, the verb 'proceed' has not lent much help to the hymn-writers, so there are probably few hymns which would need altering. Readers who can think of any are invited to put the words of the difficult verses on a postcard and send them to Lambeth Palace. The Archbishop was asked by Synod to produce more documentation for the next debate on this issue, and every postcard will help him.

The Marriage in Church of Divorcees

The last day of the session, Tuesday, was given over almost exclusively to this issue. At the end of the day Synod passed the following motion: 'That this Synod

- (a) believes that marriage should always be undertaken as a lifelong commitment.
- (b) considers that there are circumstances in which a divorced person may properly be married in church during the lifetime of a former partner; and
- (c) asks the Standing Committee to prepare a Report setting out a range of procedures for cases where it is appropriate for a divorced person to marry in church in a former partner's lifetime, for consideration by the Synod before any action is taken to repeal or modify the relevant existing regulations and resolutions of the Convocations.'

This was voted on as follows:

	Yes	No
Bishops	27	7
Clergy	134	58
Laity	135	49

The result is fairly amazing—all previous votes on the issue, both in General Synod and in the dioceses, have tended to come up with a fifty-fifty split. So, although there is not yet any actual change in the regulations (regulations which not all clergy view as binding anyway), yet there has been a clear turning-point established in the life of the Church of England.

FINAL BITS AND PIECES

We omitted in Liturgical Study 26 last month to indicate the appointments held by the contributors. Stephen Platten is tutor (in charge of extra-mural studies) at Lincoln Theological College, David Tripp is a Methodist minister serving in the Manchester (Cheetham Hill and Prestwich) circuit, and Bryan Spinks is chaplain of the chapel of Churchill College Cambridge.

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