

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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Editorial

There was published on 8 March 1985 the report of the Dorchester working party (called 'the Joint Group on Funeral Services at Cemeteries and Crematoria'). The report is entitled *Funerals and Ministry to the Bereaved: A Handbook of Funeral Practices and Procedures* (CIO, 1985, £2). Its 32 pages are modest in style and coverage, but they represent an ecumenical concern which is not just between the Churches, but takes in undertakers, crematoria authorities, and others—all with a view to a genuine ministry to the bereaved.

Brief, one-page, chapters tackle the role of the officiating minister, the choice of minister, the role of the funeral director, financial arrangements, design of chapels, furnishings etc. There is one paragraph on music, and another one-page chapter on 'other faiths'. The most solid chapter is that on 'Liturgical Aspects' (eight pages), but this includes much on registration, memorials, bodies donated for medical research, deaths abroad, etc., and not very much on liturgy itself. The relevant pages list available resources, and give little actual coaching (which may not have been the intention anyway). Another third of the booklet is taken up with death grants and appendixes.

I suppose my paragraphs above betray a slight air of disappointment, perhaps because, having known of the existence of the group for some years, I had hoped they would produce something far more substantial. True, it is written by Norman Autton, well known for his previous writings on ministry to the sick and the bereaved. He is well qualified to write authoritatively in this area, and I would trust all the information here contained. But my problem is to know whether this 'Handbook' is truly a 'report' (as I have called it) of the Group, or simply a passing spin-off which arises in the pursuit of a greater design. I have read and re-read the Preface to learn whether the Group continues in existence and will or will not be producing something bigger, and I think the answer is that the Group continues, but makes no promises about what it may do in the future. The reference to the Group on page 26 suggests that it has an ongoing consultative task, but unless or until it is accountable to some body, it is difficult to know how anyone else would know what role it serves. I had only heard of it myself by rumour and by asking questions, and, sure enough, although the Handbook tells me of its address in Church House, Westminster, *The Church of England Year Book 1985*, also published by CIO, has no mention of it in its index or list of organizations. So it is difficult for outsiders to get the feel of the Group's role, or to know what help might be expected or requested from it.

One should add some short-term, middle-term, and long-term puzzles, which the Handbook does not really bring to the fore:

- 1 Short-term: how can cemeteries and crematoria be persuaded to help visiting clergy? So often the destruction-line process is so

fixed that the minister has minimum opportunity to meet the bereaved, as well as minimum opportunity to lead other than a most skeletal liturgy. I have even found myself conducting a cremation service not so many years ago, on behalf of a vicar who had been taken ill, where neither crematorium nor funeral director provided name and address of the chief mourner, and treated this information as confidential, not to be released to someone who was fulfilling no more significant role than that of a bus-conductor (or should it be ferryman?).

- 2 Middle-term: is a crematorium *in* the Church of England or not? On page 13 the Handbook speaks of the withdrawal of 'authorization' from the 'short official form' once provided by the Church of England (in the old 'tumble book'); it then goes on to list the authorized services today. But the 'short' service was never 'authorized' by Synod, only by the Archbishops, and the list is a list of those authorized by Synod. So what status does a cemetery or crematorium have? Is it possible that it is a kind of ecumenical area outside the Church of England? Certainly it is not usually viewed as 'in' the parish where geographically it lies, or the parish priest would have to be consulted about every Anglican service which took place there—and it is unclear how it would be known to be Anglican! Here is a legal knot for the Registrar of Synod to untie whilst he is solving the other problems set him on page 5 below.
- 3 Long-term: what is the future of disposal of remains by Anglican clergy? Should a vicar of a parish of over 25000 people not only be spending much of his time giving terminal services, but also, it may be, *by that very fact* become an incumbent ill-placed to train a curate, or simply unattractive to a potential assistant (of any sort) who might be considering joining him? Is there any way—pastoral, constitutional, ministerial—by which the Church of England can solve this problem?

I should not be read as advocating a shrugging off of the unbelieving family just like that. But I am concerned not only for ministers' workloads and priorities but also for the element of proclamation that Christ is risen from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died in him. The Easter triumph—just ahead of us in the church year as I write—is the theme of every Christian burial or cremation. We are not to sorrow in the way that those do who are without hope.

Colin Buchanan

ASB IS THE NORM?

In the recent ITV serial *Cover Her Face* a funeral was shown taking place in a lovely country churchyard, with a lovely country church in the background and a dear old vicar with snow-white hair and pink cheeks. 100 to 1 on the service being BCP would have seemed a safe bet, but amazingly, it was ASB! This is quite a breakthrough: normally ASB is only mentioned to be grumbled about. Can readers supply other examples of ASB appearing on TV or radio without comment, as the natural thing? (Other than broadcasts of actual services, of course.)

Geoffrey Cuming

GROVE BOOKS—A PERSONAL STATEMENT BY COB

The alarm bells about the lack of capital for Grove Books originally rang in Autumn 1982, and I have tried since then both to keep readers of *NOL* aware that the problems were not yet solved and also not to clutter these pages, which are supposed to be about liturgy, with covert appeals for help, or repetitive news that the difficulties continue. Now, however, I can report that the constitutional change is in sight. The company, Grove Books Limited, has quietly come into existence, and will be announcing itself with special brochures in the Grove Books April mailing. It will begin trading on 1 July 1985, and from that point onwards I will cease to do any public commerce in my own name, but will be passing my stock over to the company, and then acting on behalf of the company in all public transactions.

The company will be asking next month for financial contributions to enable the trading to begin on a good capital basis. Because it is a charity, it will be able to claim tax refund on four-year covenants, but it will also be requesting loans on interest-free or low-interest basis. The company will invite those sympathetic with the aims of Grove Books to join the Association, by paying a minimum subscription of £25 per annum, and (as with St. John's College) the Association membership will in time elect the Board of Directors of the company. Donations of any size will be very welcome too.

In essence, Grove Books productions will continue as before, and the average standing order customer will feel no more of a bump than he does when passing from England into Scotland in a car. But he will in fact be in a country different in some legal respects. The invoicing every six months will continue, and, even across 1 July, the six-monthly payment can be made on a single cheque to a single payee.

The company is already able to receive gifts, donations, and loans, and any such immediately available will be a great help. The brochures next month will contain details about covenants, as also the kind of financial targets which will launch the company into trading most healthily. If you have valued Grove Booklets (and *NOL* etc.), then would *you* help? Not only will such help lift a great financial burden from my own shoulders, but it should also enable more reprinting of much-needed titles to be undertaken.

There is one immediate publishing consequence. This March printing is late. And the sheer task of getting the brochures printed and distributed has led to a change in the programme. There will be *no* Worship booklet in April. In the catalogue there is announced for April an 'extra' (unnumbered) instead—*A Liturgical Glossary*, by Michael Sansom. This will be delayed, but *will* be published during the Summer, and will be sent (as an extra) to all who take Worship Booklets or Liturgical Studies on Standing Order.

Do let us hear from you about the company. I shall be writing separately to authors, distributors, lenders, members of the 1983 Consultation, and others who have expressed interest. Please help secure this enterprise for the years ahead.

Colin Buchanan

This month's booklet . . .

. . . is Liturgical Study no. 41, *Anglican Eucharistic Liturgy 1975-1985*, by Colin Buchanan. This Study is intended to fill a dual role: firstly, to give a general survey of the deployment of eucharistic rites round the Anglican Communion; and, secondly, to act as a specific introduction to the texts contained in *Latest Anglican Liturgies 1976-1984*, the imminent large volume of texts collected by COB, and published by SPCK/Alcuin. Whilst there is no *need* to have the large volume to benefit from the Study, the two do cohere nicely. The large volume can be ordered from Grove Books to be sent postfree anywhere in the world on publication at the sterling price of £25, or of US\$35.

. . . and next month's

is a blank in the Worship series (see page 3). There will be an Ethics booklet on *Sex Therapy* by Richard Burrige. And when the 'extra', *A Liturgical Glossary*, does come, it will be sent to all Worship *and* Liturgical Study standing order customers.

. . . and reprints

include: already published, *Evangelical Anglicans and the ARCIC Final Report* drafted by John Stott for CEEC (50p); and, coming in April, Ministry and Worship 42 *Christian Healing in the Parish* by Michael Botting.

. . . and running out of print

are nos. 44, *Exorcism, Healing and Deliverance* by John Richards; 54, *Celebrating Christmas* by Richard More; 74, *Preaching at Weddings* by Ian Bunting; and Pastoral 6, *A Place in the Family* by three authors; Pastoral 18, *What Me! A House-Group Leader!* by Patsy Evans.

. . . and herewith

there should be a St. John's College *Newsletter*. Next month there will be Appeal brochures for 'Grove Books Ltd.'

. . . and New Zealand importers

will be G. W. Moore Ltd., P.O. Box 26 222, Epsom, Auckland. New Zealanders should order from them in future (apart from standing orders). They should have stocks by 30 June.

LAUGHTER IN LITURGY

Simon Bessant admits to the following intercession in church at the height of the miners' strike in Britain:

'Father, bring reconciliation to the minefields . . .'

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GROVE BOOKS

BRAMCOTE NOTTS. NG9 3DS (0602 251114)

DID YOU SPOT IN THE HOLY WEEK SERVICES . . . ?

- 1 The provision entitled 'A PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION', subtitled '*which may be used for quieting of the individual conscience*'.

Its text runs:

'God the Father of all mercies through his Son Jesus Christ forgives all who truly repent and believe in him: by the ministry of reconciliation which Christ has committed to his Church, and in the power of the Spirit, I declare that you are absolved from all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.'

This is on page 39 of GS 643, its main interest is not so much the theological one, as the canonical one. (On theology it seems that evangelicals would not raise objections to it, and might even use it occasionally—anglo-catholics would smile condescendingly at those who used it, whilst preferring something stronger that may or may not mean the same thing . . .)

The canonical point is this: the House of Bishops have been advised by the Registrar of General Synod that the rites can be authorized under Canon B.4 as not alternative to the contents of the BCP, and the House is apparently (see earlier *NOLs*) at least open to 'commending' them right outside the whole provision of the Canons. But the same Registrar wrote a famous 'Legal Opinion' for the debate on final approval of the service for 'The Reconciliation of a Penitent' in February 1983, which was meant to demonstrate that no alternative to the provision for the dying in the Visitation of the Sick in 1662 could be used unless it had been authorized as an alternative service under Canon B.2. At the time the Legal Opinion was drafted to undercut a motion by COB in the Convocation of York, which would have asserted that such services were *not* alternative to those in the BCP. So, *NOL* now asks, where does the Registrar now stand on the matter? Prebendary John Pearce urged strongly in the February 1985 debate in General Synod that the Holy Week and other services in GS 643 are 'alternative' to BCP provision, and was solemnly informed from the platform that the legal advice was that they are not. No one raised the question of this provision for absolution for the '*individual conscience*'. But the Registrar must have an Opinion, surely? Has he changed his mind since he issued the 'Legal Opinion' in February 1983? *That* would be well worth hearing about.

- 2 On page 47 Palm Sunday is 'often now called, more appropriately, Passion Sunday'. This is a covert way of saying that Lent 5 should *not* be called 'Passion Sunday'. But is this credible or possible? Would even a determined effort to call Lent 6 'Passion Sunday' do other than confuse?

These questions are asked for sheer fun. Some readers did spot the two oddities on page 70:

- 1 The doggerel:
At the eucharist we are in the upper room,
at the cross, by the empty tomb:

- 2 The inversion of bread and cup lower down (following 1 Cor. 10 and the Didache?) .

The next steps with GS 643 are that it is being revised by the Liturgical Commission in the light of the February debate and submissions made since. It goes to the House of Bishops in June for their commendation (failing the Archbishops' 'authorization'), and it will then presumably be published in time for the Keble conference 24-26 September. (Have readers spotted this change of Keble dates?). What will have happened to the issues raised above by then is anyone's guess.

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Colin,

May I offer you a thoroughly unscholarly tribute about the bishop's staff, prompted by your note about how Croydon was given to Southwark?

I am depressed about the Anglican temptation to put jurisdictional meaning into this harmless object. The argument that the staff originated in Celtic lands is persuasive. The bishop who was a monk used such a staff to lean on during the long psalmody of monastic worship and used it as a walking stick on his visit. Italy and Rome appear to have been the last western lands to have adopted the staff. I know nothing of its history in Greece though the Greek bishop's staff is now topped with two serpents, and looks not in the least pastoral.

In the Middle Ages jurisdictional symbolism was imposed upon this practical accessory. The Renaissance rules of Rome forbade the use of the staff outside a bishop's own diocese. They also forbade the bishop to carry the staff at a funeral because he had no jurisdiction over the dead person. I am told that Geoffrey Fisher disapproved of this attitude, and said the staff should be regarded as a sign of episcopal ordination—not of jurisdiction. I cannot give chapter and verse for his statements.

Rome changed her mind in the decree of 21 June 1968 (I have occasional pretensions to accuracy!). The staff, given to every bishop at his ordination, is now allowed for use by any bishop anywhere, provided the bishop of the place approves.

You might be surprised to learn how often I am warned (though never by a bishop) not to take my staff outside this diocese. People are sensitive about these things.

There is no doubt that people like to see their bishop using a staff—and I mean using it as a walking stick, not having it borne aloft like a mace. Congregations have an instinctive feeling for the pastoral meaning of the shepherd's staff. Surely, this is the only meaning which is in any way acceptable?

A shepherd's stick is a working stick and a walking stick. I gather it is more often used to keep the sheep in the flock for good order or to turn them over by hooking a hind leg so that medication can be applied, than for rescuing them out of deep ravines and brambles—for which purpose, in practice, a staff is not often well adapted. It was pleasant in Korea to find that the ordinary words for mitre and staff were 'hat' and 'stick'. In some pompous Church of England ceremonies I have been led to reflect that it is regarded as bad manners to put your hat and stick on the dining table. . .

Yours ever,
Richard Rutt, Bishop of Leicester

Reviews

Scottish Ordinal 1984 (General Synod of the SEC, 21 Grosvenor Crescent, Edinburgh EH22 5EE, 75p).

The Scottish Episcopal Church has been catching up with modern English in liturgy in recent years, and two rounds of revising the eucharistic rite led to *Scottish Liturgy 1982*. Now ordination services are published to go with the eucharist. The booklet is notable for putting the rites *not* in the order the individual undergoes them (as in the ASB and elsewhere) but rather with the ordination of bishops first, presbyters second (and they *are* 'presbyters' in this Church), and deacons third.

Standard features recur—presentation, interrogation, supplication, and the laying on of hands. The assent of the people comes after the interrogation, and the heart of the ordination is, as is usual in new ordinals, the laying on of hands in the context of petitionary prayer. Curiously, although the prayer asks for Spirit to come upon the candidate and make him a presbyter or deacon, there seems to be a lack of parallel in the ordination of a bishop, as the prayer is that he may have power and authority to shepherd the flock, but not explicitly that he may be made a bishop.

One factor in the ordination of bishops at which the English could well look, is the expectation that a new diocesan bishop will be consecrated in his own cathedral and will himself preside at the eucharist. One assumes that something like installation or enthronement is happening at the time, as the bishop '*proceeds to his chair*', straight from receiving his *instrumenta*.

Another feature of the rites is that the *porrectio* includes a Bible for the deacon, Bible, paten and chalice for the presbyter, and Bible, staff and ring for the bishop. The newly ordained may be anointed by the officiating bishop, and '*vested according to custom*'.

It is all much in line with the particular Scottish tradition, and will repay close examination. The difficulty in Scotland is apparently not lack of rites, but rather shortage of candidates.

COB

The Church of the Province of New Zealand *The Liturgy of the Eucharist 1984* (Genesis Publications, Christchurch, NZ, 80pp, n.p.).

This was mentioned in *NOL* (and a eucharistic prayer from it published) in June 1984, when the rites had only just been authorized and still lacked confirmation from the diocesan synods in New Zealand. Now it is available in a glossy cover, and a well-spaced attractive presentation. Its text will also be in *Latest Anglican Liturgies 1976-1984*, advertised elsewhere in *NOL*.

The New Zealanders have produced *three* rites, of which the second is itself arguably two-in-one, as there are themes ('Thanksgiving and Praise' and 'Creation and Redemption') for two separate ministries of the sacrament, though they share a single ante-communion. The third rite is similar to the 'Order for Celebrating' in the American Book, and offers the same skeletal structure with an open flexible outline of a eucharistic prayer added. Many features of the rites look original and creative (I say 'look', because sometimes one only discovers imitation at a later stage when stumbling across a recondite source . . .!). Some Maori responses are maintained, even in the English-language text, wholly 'inclusive' language is used

(and one text for the Peace says 'Christ is the end of all false barriers, even of race, class or sex'): new writing has been done even at well-known points (like a Sanctus which reads 'Holy, holy, holy: God of mercy, giver of life; earth and sea and sky and all that lives, declare your presence and your glory'): and there is one epiclerus 'Send your Holy Spirit upon us and our celebration'. Putting these bits and pieces of illustration together does not do full justice to the integrated, sustained, and yet highly varied provision these rites make. I am prejudiced about New Zealand, but for a Church which is in total smaller than many English dioceses here is a most joyful, creative and forward-thrusting set of eucharistic liturgies—probably ahead of anything else in the Anglican world.

How to get it? Well, if you want one by air, then write to the publishers or to the General Synod office in Christchurch. If you can contain yourself, then Grove Books has ordered a bulk purchase to enable us to distribute. But we do not know the price yet. Copies should be here by the end of May.

Duncan Forester and Douglas Murray (editors) *Studies in the History of Worship in Scotland* (T. & T. Clark, 1984, 178 pp, price uncertain).

This book is a great treat. The history of the Scottish Churches provides natural milestones to mark of the chapters provided by different authors, and each one delights the reader. The milestones are: beginnings, middle ages, reformation, covenant, revolution, disruption, union. Further chapters on post-reformation episcopalian and Roman Catholic worship make the point that it is worship *in Scotland*, not just in the Church of Scotland, which is the theme; and James Whyte adds an illuminating chapter on architecture, matching that by David Read on Scottish preaching.

What does the inexpert learn by all this? Well, Ian Muirhead (on 'Beginnings') denies that there ever was a 'Celtic Christianity' (snuffed out by Whitby). What there was was less a liturgical subculture (and certainly not a Scottish vernacular!) and more an administrative oddity in that abbeys and monasteries ran the church, with bishops available on demand as need required, but without authority. Gordon Donaldson with the post-reformation era re-emphasizes the liturgical and sacramental ideals of Knox's liturgy and the successors to it. From the Scottish point of view, he continues in the next chapter, the Westminster *Directory* was a 'lower' church book than the Scottish were used to, and a sideways dig at the English points out how stupid it was to be 'lining out' psalms in congregations which were in fact *literate*, as the Scots were and the English were not! The facile picture of communion four times a year in each parish in the post-1689 period exploded—many seem to have had it barely once a year. And the changes of the nineteenth century make a fascinating study—not only the recovery of an awareness of a liturgical heritage, but also the beginnings of musical instruments and song, and the slow change from a preaching event to a more full-bodied worship, and from the use of 'tables' for communion to that of pews. Oh yes, and the individual cups are very late arrivals on the scene—the 1930s was the peak of the introduction of that symbol that the neighbour was seen as a source of infection rather than fellowship, the individual communion cup' (p.159). There are new and captivating glimpses of a multi-coloured history in every page, and it does English Anglicans no harm to be self-critical in the light of them.