

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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Editorial

Women inevitably top the news this month. I fear many of them would view that itself as a scandalous, blinkered, male-solipsist, way of writing. My apologies, sisters – I really am rooting for you, and if you read on you will see how. Last month I started off with the exposure of a legal non-event – this month it is all for real.

Firstly, there is General Synod. Synod meets in York over the first weekend in July (we do hope we can get this to you first), and it has to respond:

- (i) to a procedural document about ordination of women to the presbyterate – this will ask the Synod whether it wants a one-liner for legislation or a complex series of alternatives which provide for compensation for clergy who view themselves as expropriated by the legislation, or even the division of the Church of England into two: the legislation will then be drafted in the light of the Synod's decision, and brought for its own first stage in Synod in February.
- (ii) the Women Ordained Abroad Measure comes for final approval, and thus requires two-thirds majorities in each House of Synod – the first head-on trial of strength on this issue for this Synod. (A note elsewhere in this issue records first action in parallel with the provisions in Australia – but here in England, if Synod approves, it still has to go to the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament, and on to the Lords and Commons, before any such women presbyter could legally preside at communion.)
- (iii) as we noted in our 'Stop Press' last month, the Deacons (Ordination of Women) Measure was referred back by the Ecclesiastical Committee. On inspection, it proves that the reference back derived from nothing in the Measure itself, but only from the provisions of the accompanying draft Canon which allowed that the post-communion collect in 1662 ordination rites 'may' be omitted when women are being ordained. If this account is correct, our Stop Press was incorrect in thinking that the final rubric about '... admitted ... to the order of Priesthood' was the stumbling block – it was in fact the canonical provision to alter the rubric above the post-communion collects (rubrics in the BCP can be altered by Synod – and by Canon is one way of doing it – whilst the text cannot without recourse to Parliament). The Canon has to return for its final approval, to be taken on a different text from that approved a year ago, and standing orders will require a three-quarters majority of the whole Synod to do this (the angels must laugh because it is unimaginable that 1662 ordination service will be used for any woman becoming deacon – and the Measure might almost have provided that 1662 itself should not be used in such cases, and this would have hurt no-one).

Grove Books Limited is making its own contribution to the debates by publishing an extra Pastoral Booklet, no. 27 entitled *Biblical Headship and the Ordination of Women* by Colin Craston. This will be distributed on the usual inertia-sell basis to standing order customers, but (obviously) anyone who reckons this is over and above contract is welcome to return it for credit (and postage credit also). It will be recalled that the 'headship' factor has been touching evangelical responses to the question of ordaining women – probably more than it has been touching anglo-catholic responses (for anglo-catholics might well think that only a bishop has a true headship, and also that the question is more fundamentally ontological than being simply about how ordained ministry is exercised). On the other hand, it is likely that the ground of the debate has shifted towards evangelicalism quite a bit since the early 70s, and that a better understanding of some key scriptural factors is more than timely.

But women are also in the news because of the 'inclusive language' question. This is pointed up in England by our Grove Liturgical Study this month, no. 46, *Count Us In: Sexist Language and Liturgical Revision* by Vivienne Faull and Jane Sinclair (the latter of whom is now a member of the Liturgical Commission). This argues both principles and practice, and sets out in some detail the inadequacies of the ASB from the authors' points of view. So far, so good – and it is doubtful if the extension of the ASB's licence till 2000 will in fact stick – my guess is that it will be under denunciation on all quarters on the particular issue at stake here by the mid-1990s. However, there is a strong counter-blast from down under. There, David Frost, erstwhile of the English Liturgical Commission and latterly of the Australian one and translator of the Modern Liturgical Psalter, has resigned from the Australian Commission on this issue. He has made public his letter of resignation and a more weighty memorandum backing it up – and his protest is against both an Australian General Synod guideline to do away with 'exclusive' language, and also against the findings of the Australian Consultation on Liturgy (ACOL), which has recommended the dropping of 'man, me, he, sons, brethren, brothers, fathers' in their generic sense. As his protests have been made public, we may be in position to publish them in due course – but they are long, and I am currently in correspondence with David Frost to see how wide the gulf between him and the Australian Commission is – and I want to get this clarified before saying more. Suffice to note that his material is weighty and witty – he includes 'You may also recall that the Mayor of New York was forced to ask his council to reverse their decision to rechristen "manholes" "personholes", on the grounds that reports of the change had made the city ridiculous throughout the world! He is very keen not to be heard as anti-women, or as prejudiced in any way – except as in favour of keeping the richest possible use of the English language in liturgy. He is even ready to go some of the way to soften that which sounds inappropriate or even offensive on women's (some women's, he would say) ears. But he is not ready for a total ban. We have sent him a copy of the Faull/Sinclair Liturgical Study, and hope the debating there can be fruitful. But at this stage I grieve in my own person (as do many in both England and Australia) at David Frost's removal from the official liturgy-writing scene. We have not heard the end of *that* matter yet. He ends his letter of resignation with the robust 'And I hope an Australian may yet be found to throw off these trans-Pacific shackles, and stand up

for good sense!' But where is 'good sense' to be located? *NOL* itself, grieving over the squeeze in which David Frost has felt himself to be, and grieving too at the loss of his liturgical creativity with the English language, is yet not able to stand with him. That is in itself a further grief.

Colin Buchanan

GENERAL SYNOD JULY 1986

Apart from women's ordination, there is little of liturgical interest (though, with both South Africa and the *Nature of Christian Belief* on the agenda, much of interest). There is the next stage in allowing the ordination of persons who have been divorced and have married again, and there is a FOAG report on 'priesthood' which we review soon.

COB's LITURGICAL SCRAPBOOK

May: (18) Pentecost, and there are three separate occasions of baptisms and confirmations, very varying. In the morning, a couple in their seventies are being confirmed, and the wife is also being baptized – after it is over I discover that the husband had only been dedicated under the Sally Army banner – in the evening at the Bullring I am pursued as I minister the bread by no less than *three* cups, and keep expecting them to ask my goodwill to 'play through'! At the door I am thanked for functioning without a mitre (I have in mind some Christianized Robbie Burns – 'The hat is but the guinea-stamp – the man's the dross for a' that'): (22) a midweek Polesworth deanery event with ten adults for baptism, and fifty in all for confirmation – again, some amazing stories: (25) Trinity Sunday and I do my first submersions for ten years – at St. Paul's Balsall Heath which has a sunken tank at one end – we go near to the spirit of the ASB rite, taking the 'Decision' in the front row, then singing as the two baptizands and five confirmands (and one renewing vows) are led to the tank – I 'bless' the water then beckon the two baptizands down into it, with the others standing 'on the brink' immediately above them, as I interrogate them all about their faith – so the two respond from a place *in the water* – then I step down beside them, tip them backwards under the water thrice each, and deliver them up the steps for the sign of the cross and the giving of the candles – then they and I flee to change, whilst the rest sing their way back to the front row – all goes smoothly and I am back in action, fully dry, and in liturgical best dress, by the time the chorus-singing is over; that evening is 1662-style evensong at Clare College, Cambridge, and the music might almost have been King's: (28) Institution at South Yardley, and we are still working on de-sexing the collect from ASB page 339 – '... all in their vocations and ministries may be instruments ...': (29) funeral of David Howell, son of Denis Howell, MP, killed in tragic road accident whilst a student at Bristol Poly – I am sitting at back at St. Paul's, Birmingham, and all are determined (and Christianly determined) to make the occasion one of thanksgiving, and of gratitude for his life – a long address by a girl contemporary of David's full of down-to-earth vignettes of the sunshine of a much-loved lad, along with 'Thine be the glory' and 'No more we doubt thee ...'

June: (1) first confirmation at which I have not preached – in an LEP with Methodist preacher; evening preaching at a parish evensong – I am congratulated by one woman on singing hymns without looking at the book (but then I do go to church quite a bit); (2) working party on diocesan teaching conferences planned for this Autumn (22 October and 13 November) on *Lent Holy Week and Easter* – it begins to look as though we may be going to have a demo agape; (3) off to a Hospice chapel to give conditional baptism, confirmation, and first communion to a woman with a few days to live – high church vicar has shipped me in, so we get oiling at both baptism and confirmation – candidate is thrilled, relatives torn between joy and sorrow, and I, not looking closely at (specially-typed) service sheet, manage to omit 'N. if you are not already baptized ...' – thus putting my head on the line, I guess; (4) evening baptism and confirmation – and reception into Church of England of a Roman Catholic woman whom I already know, in which she also renews her baptismal vows with the confirmation candidates; (5) Church Schools presentation of *Pilgrim Cantata* (would have given Bunyan a fit) prior to our 'Canterbury Pilgrimage' on 21 June – it is not exactly liturgy, and I appear in cassock, real shepherd's crook (!), and knapsack on back ...; (6) breakfast time with a parish eldership to look at ways of holding on to those who want a 'second' baptism (I refer 'em to Worship Series no. 91 ...) – then see off a pilgrim walking to Canterbury, praying with him in front of the cathedral; (7) confirmation at Weoley Castle – first time I've met Merbecke adapted by organist for Rite A words; (8-12) diocesan clergy school at Swanwick – I take my place presiding at first eucharist – liturgically notable for being scripted by the planners for the school with those Roman 'Offertory Prayers' knocked down to dimensions I can swallow, and without a blessing (I rarely gave a verbal blessing at the end of the eucharist in my St. John's days – and re-emphasize here that it is optional – but such items seem to come a bishop's way more often than a principal's) – I also put up the January-May scrapbook entries from *NOL* on the wall for all Birmingham clergy to see – I have 'come out' ...; (13) preach at Crowther Hall – communion in a library room, president a Zairean bishop – I had been asked to choose hymns in advance, and had defaulted – just as well, as I could never have foreseen we should sing mostly in Swahili – and the actions with the songs led naturally into a formation of about ten persons (international in character) bringing in money, bread and wine, in a slow-moving dance to the chorus we were singing – beautiful, as my less

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cerebral friends would say; (15) a rare chance to do baptisms and confirmations according to the ASB structure (at Bourneville), as the 13 confirmation-only candidates are all marched down to the West End font with the 9 for baptism and confirmation (and two under-ten-year-olds for baptism only), and the whole lot make their profession of faith there – and all return, the newly baptized holding their candles high; then at 5 p.m. the vicar of St. James' Aston and I walk over the ground at Bishop Latimer Church, Winson Green, in preparation for a baptism-by-submersion there next Sunday afternoon – and the candidate (a 17-year-old Afro-caribbean) comes along later to rehearse the event with us (it will include testimony, and renewal of baptismal vows by the congregation, and then return by hired bus to St. James' for the eucharist – but all will be reported next month).

WOMAN PRESIDES AT COMMUNION IN AUSTRALIA

Apparently the Australians have now settled their legal position, and the first visiting New Zealand woman presbyter to preside legally at communion duly stood to her (temporary) duties in Melbourne on Sunday 1 June. There are London-like mutterings from Adelaide about division of property in the event of a Disruption . . .

AND AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION NEWS

The meeting of the Australian Liturgical Commission at the end of May considered not only the 'inclusive language' question (concerning which see our editorial this month), but also did work on producing flexible outline structures of services to meet the needs of different cultures in Australia, and informal situations. This sounds as though the Australians may be moving towards the concept of a 'Directory', such as was aired in GS 698 *The Worship of the Church*, in the Church of England. The Australians have determined to let the AAPB run to holding of the 1993 General Synod, but it may then be adapted, enriched, or even superseded, by materials which will be given trial usage first.

ANGLICAN ORDINATION RITES

As one project for the future 'Alcuin/GROW' publishing (see May *NOL*), we are keen to put together a complete collection of modern Anglican ordination rites. Texts in the new authorized comprehensive service-books (as in Canada, ECUSA, and Australia) are relatively easy to acquire – but less accessible are those in duplicated or small-booklet form in less wealthy, or less publicly-conscious, Churches and Provinces. Can readers in remote parts please forward us information – or, better still, texts. We will gladly pay costs – please send to editorial address set out on page 4.

NEW ZEALAND PLANS

We were wrong to say in April that a new New Zealand Prayer Book would replace 1662. It will not, as 1662 is entrenched, and we apologize humbly for spreading misinformation.

Book Reviews

It is time for us to catch up on various 1984 and 1985 publications which we have culpably overlooked thus far. There is J. G. Davies (ed.) *Liturgical Dance: An Historical, Theological and Practical Handbook* (SCM, 1984, pp.xviii/262, £9.95 paperback) – a solid work with three major parts corresponding to its subtitle. It is fascinating in its historical glimpses (not least of the nineteenth century Shakers), and strong on principles ('we dance not only to express joy but to become joyful'), whilst the practical side interacts usefully with the spontaneously developing groundswell to be found in many congregations today. We also have Michael Botting's *For All The Family* (Kingsway, 1984, 254pp., £5.95) – a follow-up to his *Reaching the Families* (Falcon, 1973). Here are 78 outlines of illustrated addresses, often built around the blessed OHP, expounding the scriptures, marking special occasions, and addressing parents and children alike. The contributions are signed – and the owners of the signatures may well have robbed themselves of some of their best homiletical treasures once they have shared them with us . . . The Archbishop of Canterbury writes a Commendation for Cameron Butland's compilation on behalf of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, *Work in Worship: A Treasury of Prayers, Readings, and Hymns* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1985, 208pp., £5.95). This is a serious attempt to provide materials for worship which will stand close to our 'daily work' (and to unemployment), and thus express a truly incarnational form of worship. Some of it is meditation, some halfway between that and overt prayers (Quoist-of-the-eighties?), some is straight readings, and some is hymnody of the city. Cameron Butland is a curate in the Lichfield diocese, and he has done the wider church a considerable service with this book. We also received a 1986 reprint of *The Homilies* (Focus Christian Ministries Trust, 1986, 434pp., n.p.), which has a Foreword by David Samuel commending the Homilies for today. Well, I have always revelled in Cranmer's 'Let us diligently search for the well of life in the books of the Old and New Testament, and not run to the stinking puddles of men's traditions, . . .'. But I suspect that reprinting is not going to meet a great demand in the market-place. We also have Gerard Austin *The Rite of Confirmation: Anointing with the Spirit* (Pueblo, USA, imported to England by Shand Publications, the Annexe, St. Mary's, Mill Hill, London NW7, 1985, n.p.) which we hope to review more fully next month. Oxford have sent us three new Church of Scotland service booklets, launched at the General Assembly at the end of May: *Three Orders for Holy Communion*, *An Order for Holy Baptism*, and *Pastoral Guidelines and a Funeral Service for Stillbirths and Death in Early Infancy* (no price printed on any of them). The eucharistic orders are (i) a highly responsive one (with Words of Institution read prior to the Eucharistic Prayer), (ii) one for the household (which apparently might have no Words of Institution at all), and (iii) one for use 'at a family service when young people are present'. This last includes the information that Jesus 'poured wine' at the Last Supper (which would take some demonstration,

but shows how even protestant liturgy can affect scripture . . .), and also has the intercessions as a post-communion. One non-protestant point is the cross-heading '*The Great Entrance*', which would certainly have mystified the Presbyterian forefathers of the Kirk. The baptismal service is altered by the placing of the question about the upbringing of the child after baptism (all designed to express the primacy of grace – but suppose the parents give the wrong answer . . .). We note that the Evangelical Press is advertising (though without prices) J. K. Davies *Babies, Believers and Baptism*, Eric Lane *I want to be baptized*, Ernie Kevan *The Lord's Supper*, and Brian Edwards *Shall we Dance?* (which we hope to review in due course) – and this is matched by a Collins Liturgical title *Time to Dance* by Martin Blogg (£4.95 – plus cassette at £2.50 plus 37p VAT). The Council of Churches in Wales has published a bilingual worship resources book *God's Family at Worship; Teulu Duw yn Addoli*, edited by Margaret Harvey (erstwhile Grove Booklet author) at £2 – again a set of simple office outlines and prayers, meditations, and hymns – produced for the Wales 'God's Family Festival' at the May Bank Holiday, but with considerable mileage still to run. The Joint Board of Christian Education (JBCE) of Australia and New Zealand published in Melbourne in 1985 *Communion in Australian Churches* (edited by Robert Gribben – 157pp., sterling price perhaps £6), which is one-third historical and introductory articles, one-third descriptions of eucharistic practice in the various Churches (there is even a – short – Quaker chapter), and one-third reflections on general issues facing the Churches for the future (such as young children and the reception of communion). Next, Kenneth Stevenson – never too shy to keep us in the picture – sends notice that Pueblo are soon publishing his *Eucharist and Offering: A Liturgical Study*, which will be available in Britain through T. Shand Publications mentioned earlier in this column. Finally, we have another advance notice – SPCK will publish on 31 July 1986 Ronald Jasper and Paul Bradshaw *A Companion to the Alternative Service Book* (500pp., £15 until 31 October, and thereafter £19.50). We shall give a full review next month.

THE CANADIAN BOOK OF ALTERNATIVE SERVICES

We have advertised this in the past, but have been slow to report new supplies in stock. We now have both the soft back at £5.50, and the hard back at £6.50. We believe that the soft back is being discontinued. We also still have copies of the New Zealand 1984 Eucharistic Rites at £1.50.

CHANGES AT GROVE BOOKS LIMITED

After some difficult months, in which Julia Pounder, our sales assistant, became unwell, and unable to continue work, we have now reached what we hope is a resolution of our problems. Pat Morris who first started work for C.O.B. in 1974 to help with Grove Books is now back with the Company overseeing distribution on the St. John's premises in Bramcote. She is being assisted by a newcomer, Marcus Titley, who will handle much of the day-to-day nuts and bolts.

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