

# News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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## Editorial

### SOUTH AFRICA

Women had their innings last month – and the General Synod eventualities are duly reported elsewhere this time. But the arrival of a liturgical text from South Africa (of which more below) enables me to get in a word at a most fraught time in the history of that pitiable country. I have never been there (there were some overtures about visiting in this current year, but my own move last year scotched that). I have always been fearful of going there to lecture on liturgy. I have agonized at the expectation of being torn in half between making political reference (as proper Christian witness) and not making it (as proper for visitors who lack first hand experience, and also do not have to live with the consequence of their own utterances). So I have sensed deeply in myself that liturgy and politics could not be kept apart. But this month they do come together.

First, politics. Christians cannot but condemn apartheid, do their utmost to live without traces of it in themselves as they minister in their own countries, and thus endeavour with integrity to bring pressure upon the minority (and racist) South African regime. An Englishman cannot but grieve at the unseemly scramble of Mrs. Thatcher first to evade the call of the Commonwealth premiers for sanctions and get the Eminent Persons Group (which, from an Anglican point of view, included the ex-Primate of Canada) set up. And now she is similarly wriggling to evade the recommendations of their report, and has sent Geoffrey Howe on what looks like a pointless mission. Even on an unwanted level of naked prudence (and there is some attempt in this editorial at more), one wonders how a future Tory government, if such there be, can hope to deal with a future black South African government. We are surely very near to the start of a Vietnam kind of situation in South Africa, and the only hope of peaceful transition is political change that is both *massive* and *swift* – anything else is a recipe for violent and sustained guerrilla action. The effect on the Commonwealth Games is quite incidental.

Secondly, liturgy. There has come to hand a liturgical text published by the SACC as a Memorial Service which was in fact used in South Africa on Monday 16 June – the tenth anniversary of the Soweto killings. It is subtitled 'A theological rationale and a call to prayer for the end to unjust rule'. So the service has a 1500-word introduction. The text itself runs as shown overleaf. This use of the imprecatory Psalms leaves no ifs and buts about where God's righteousness lies, or the position of the regime.

*NOL* will not often be in these fields. But we would be less than true as Christians in both politics and liturgy if we omitted the above now. Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika.

Colin Buchanan

P.S. Yes, the Royal Wedding did happen – report next month.

## June 16 Memorial Service

### Prayer Service for the end to unjust rule

**They talk of peace while increasing their production of arms,  
They openly rumour of negotiation and reform, whilst  
secretly planning ever more violent oppression . . .**

CONDEMN AND PUNISH THEM, O GOD;  
MAY THEIR OWN PLOTS CAUSE THEIR RUIN.  
DRIVE THEM OUT OF OUR PRESENCE  
BECAUSE OF THEIR MANY SINS  
AND THEIR REBELLION AGAINST YOU.  
BECAUSE OF YOUR GREAT LOVE  
WE CAN COME INTO YOUR HOUSE . . .  
MAKE YOUR WAY PLAIN FOR US TO FOLLOW.  
PROTECT THOSE WHO LOVE YOU **and your justice.**

#### Suggested Scripture Readings:

*Is. 3.9-15; Micah 2.1-5; Rev. 15.1-14.*

#### Hymn

#### Suggested Scripture Readings:

*Luke 1.46-55; Luke 4.1-21; Matt. 25.31-46;  
Matt. 10.32-49 (Suggested Readings)*

**L & P: May your Word become Flesh in the  
struggle of your people for justice and peace.**

#### The Sermon

#### The Apostles Creed

#### Hymn

#### THE RESPONSE

#### Prayer for the end of unjust rule.

*L:* As we pray our minds are filled with pain:  
Of the thousands who have died in the struggle for true freedom,  
Of the lives that have been disrupted by detention,  
Of the mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters whose tears mourn  
the dead,  
Of the many who have been forced into unwilling exile,  
Of our leaders who have been incarcerated for more than twenty  
years,  
Of the disrupted and inferior education of our children,  
Of the dehumanized victims of forced removals,  
Of the hunger and thirst of the poor.

**P: Out of the depths we cry  
Remove the root of our pain – the oppression of  
apartheid**

*L:* We are also angered:

At the continued repression of our people,  
At the intransigence of those who presume to be our rulers,  
At the apathy of those who continue to live in comfort,  
At the consistent and continued abuse of power  
and the denial of justice and freedom.

**P: Out of the depths we cry  
Remove from power the abusers of authority.**

*L:* You alone are God,  
You alone are worthy of our obedience and loyalty.  
You have seen the suffering of your people.

Close the gates of Apartheid.

Support us in resisting the structures of injustice.

Give us strength in liberating both the oppressors and the  
oppressed.

Liberate the oppressors from their fear.

Enable them to turn away from violence.

Teach them to respect the human dignity of all people.

Empower the oppressed in their quest for liberation.

Open the doors of Justice and Freedom.

Renew the life of your afflicted people.

**P: Out of the depths we cry:**

**End this unjust rule and replace it with a rule of Justice.**

#### The Lord's Prayer

#### Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika

**Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika  
Maluphakamiso phondo lwayo  
Yiva nemithandazo yethu  
Nkosi sikelela, thina lusaphalwayo. (x2)**

**Yisa moya sikelela nkosi sikelela  
Yisa moya sikelela nkosi sikelela  
Yisa moya oyingcwele  
Nkosi sikelela, thina lusaphalwayo.**

**Morena boluka sechaba saHesu  
Ofedise dintwa lematswenyeho. (x2)**

**Osiboluke osiboluke  
Osiboluke morena 'siboluke  
Sechaba saHesu  
Sechaba saAfrika.**

**Makube njalo, makube njalo,  
Kude kube ngonaphakade  
Kude kube ngonaphakade. (x2)**

**Lord, in your mercy bless Africa,  
Lift up the horn of her power and strength.  
In your love and kindness hear our prayer,  
Father, look on us, and bless your family.**

**Come, Spirit, come – come and bless us  
Come, Spirit, come – come and bless us  
Father, look down, and bless Africa,  
Father, look on us, and bless your family.**

**Lord save our people (nation)  
End wars and suffering**

**Save it  
Our people.  
People of Africa.**

**May it be so always,  
for ever and ever.**

#### Dismissal

## Book Review

Gerard Austin *The Rite of Confirmation: Anointing with the Spirit* (Pueblo, New York, 1985 – imported by T. Shand Publications), 178pp.

The new Grove Books Ltd. catalogue will show that I am reckoning to produce a Liturgical Study on Anglican Confirmation, so readers can imagine I seize a title like this fairly avidly. I noted last month that the book has three parts: 'The Tradition', 'The Reforms' and 'The Future'. Each of them involves a fairly thorough, if rarely innovative, tour of the subject – and each of them functions loyally within a Roman Catholic framework of thought. On the New Testament evidence Austin concludes that all have won and all shall have prizes (some not-very-rigorous thinking here), and he then goes on to give one prize only – and that he awards (as have so many) to Hippolytus. From then on we are looking hard at more-or-less necessary post-baptismal ceremonies. That iniquitous and ubiquitous word of the historians, 'disintegration', then enters the scene (p.17) and subtly establishes Hippolytus as canonical *post factum*. It is hardly surprising we have 'a practice seeking a theory' (p.23) – and the *robur ad pugnam* solution emerges. The most that post-Reformation Roman Catholicism has done is to fiddle with this, though the twentieth century has seen some sighing to make it truly initiatory. Austin wants initiation to be a unity – and naturally he never questions the place of 'confirmation' within that. The discussion of the new rites brings this out – there is a tour of the normal minister (Anglicans alone require a bishop in all cases), of the matter, of the form, of the age of the candidate, of the sequence with baptism and first communion, but the rite itself is non-negotiable. Nevertheless, there is some passing fun in this, as on page 45 he inspects the 'matter' question, and asks whether the laying on of hands is requisite. Rome's answer is, apparently, that it *is* necessary, but it is manifested within the action of anointing (Austin comments that this is 'incredible' and his book makes the adrenalin run for a minute – he almost says the imposition of hands is both requisite and missing, which would be a thoroughly Gilbertian 'pretty kettle of fish'). His third chapter is a descriptive account of ECUSA's rites, and his fourth of 'Confirmation in Protestant Churches' – the latter touches on WCC statements (including Lima), but seems unreceptive about the contradictions built in at the core of such statements. He then goes on to discussing the blessing of and use of oils, and in a following chapter produces 'Guidelines'. He favours 'complete' initiation for infants, wants some baptismal discrimination, discountenances 'First Confession' at the age of seven, and believes the insistence on having a bishop physically present has sacrificed the unity of the rite in the West. Finally he has a chapter called; 'The Future of the Spirit', which is as much a winding down as it is a prophetic clarion-call. It is the old problem – how far can a Roman Catholic stretch and re-expound that which is, and how far must he hail 'the tradition' as being by definition what God has prescribed? A good hard look back at scripture would help him a lot.

COB

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#### THE PREPARATION

##### Opening prayer

Lord of history  
You share our joys and our crushing sorrows  
You hear the cries of the afflicted.  
You fill the hungry  
and you set free the oppressed.  
On this solemn occasion we come to offer you our worship  
and prayer for the end of unjust rule.  
Inspire us with the parental love of God,  
Challenge us with the sacrificial love of Jesus,  
Empower us with the transforming love of the Spirit,  
That we may live and be free!  
**Amen.**

##### Hymn

##### Act of Confession

*L:* Lord, our hearts are heavy with the sufferings of the ages,  
From the crusades and holocausts of the past  
to the agonies of the people in our townships.  
The blood of the victims is still warm,  
The cries of anguish still fill the night.  
To you we lift our outspread hands.

**P: We thirst for you in a thirsty land**

*L:* In your presence:

We confess our failure to live before you as your children.  
We mourn our divisions,  
We acknowledge our fearfulness,  
We admit our arrogance and self-exaltation  
We are ashamed of our pursuit of self-interest.

**P: We long for hope in the midst of despair**

**L & P: Break us where we are proud  
Make us where we are weak  
Shame us wherein we exalt ourselves  
Affirm us when we need confidence and trust.  
That we may be humble, yet bold  
In proclaiming the Gospel of Truth.**

##### Hymn

#### THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

##### Scriptural Affirmation\*

**L & P: LISTEN TO OUR WORDS, OH LORD, AND HEAR OUR SIGHS**

**Listen to our protest.  
For you are not a God who is friendly with oppressors,  
neither do you support their devious ways,  
nor are you influenced by their propaganda.  
For you despise their arrogance;  
YOU CANNOT STAND THE SIGHT OF these PROUD people;  
and you hate their systematic repression.  
One cannot believe all they say.  
Their official pronouncements ARE FULL OF DEADLY  
DECEIT,  
and they cannot be trusted.**

\* (Roman Caps indicates direct quotation from Psalm 5 – TEV)

## GENERAL SYNOD IN JULY

The most important decision of General Synod was the vote on Final Approval on the Women Ordained Abroad Measure on the Saturday. The voters came out thus:

	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Noes</i>
Bishops	28	12
Clergy	128	95
Laité	147	88

It failed to get its two-thirds majority in both Clergy and Laité, and was thus defeated.

The question of re-opening the issue in respect of the Canon concerning the ordination of women as deacons was decided, by the vote of more than three-quarters of the Synod which is necessary for suspending Standing Orders. Then the alteration was made, requiring (rather than permitting) the omission of the post-communion prayer in 1662 (see *NOL* for June) and the retouched Canon then received Final Approval as follows:

	<i>Ayes</i>	<i>Noes</i>
Bishops	37	1
Clergy	141	41
Laité	165	41

The Canon now ceases to be an impediment to the Measure, and the latter will again be considered by the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament (who should, presumably, dub it appropriate for now laying before Lords and Commons). There might even yet be actual women deacons sometime in 1987. Yes, there might.

The House of Bishops took steps on the Tuesday to avoid a showdown over the ordination of women to the presbyterate (not so much on the central principle, but on the hypothetical unseemly consequences of proceeding with such a proposal without a consensus in favour), and asked the Synod to defer decision-making until the House of Bishops had considered the report on their own (which they had not yet done) and had reported – not later than February, Synod concurred.

In Question time the Rev. Peter Hobson asked what work the Liturgical Commission would be doing over the next five years and was told:

- problems about the use of 1662-type liturgy
- work on devising and commending the concept of a 'Directory' (with Urban Priority Areas and Family Services particularly in view)
- a set of rites for 'Advent to Presentation'
- The production of a new report, comparable to *The Worship of the Church*, for the next Synod to consider in 1990.

The questioner, perhaps slightly surprised at not only the apparent priorities being set, but also a glaring omission from the list, asked a supplementary about the pursuit of 'inclusive language' and got an assurance that this would be in view also.

The same questioner asked about baptismal discipline, and was told from the platform to table a Private Member's Motion. We hope to comment on this next month.

## COB'S LITURGICAL SCRAPBOOK

**June:** (18) Institution whilst England play World Cup tie (I apologize to congregation, saying we would never have fixed date then had we guessed England would survive initial rounds – incumbent manages to announce England leading 1-0 when he gives out his notices) – I also distinguish myself unhelpfully by taking wrong document into church with me, so have to return to vestry at the point of institution to collect correct Deed to read out (am regaled by others with acute memories with an alleged story of Mervyn erstwhile of Southwark instituting a man by going through the motions of reading the words of the Deed but in fact looking at the back of a wine-list he had in his pocket – I cannot do that as I do not yet know the words by heart . . .); (21) Diocesan pilgrimage to Canterbury, liturgy involved in my leading services on the train in both directions, and in the festival eucharist with the Archbishop presiding and preaching in Canterbury cathedral – the train services involved a short office taken in each open compartment in turn with guitarist accompaniment – when we came to closed separate compartments we chivvied them into standing in a clump in the guardsvan and praying and singing whilst standing shoulder to shoulder there – the cathedral eucharist involved 3000 people standing throughout the service and receiving communion on a catch-as-catch-can basis, but the 'Stancliffe' pattern of assistants standing round the communion table holding the silver with the elements throughout the eucharistic prayer and then turning to go to various parts of the cathedral without having to queue to pick up vessels ('cake-stands rather than co-consecrators' in the Stancliffe phrase) – that went well – and, oh yes, a little bit of the Archbishop's ceremonial noted before became very apparent to me up at the sharp end – he left his crook lying on the Table, and took the primate cross in his hand when he spoke the blessing (should there be a publication called *Archiepiscopal Services?*); (22) start a parish Visitation at St. James' Aston with the baptism mentioned last month – a double-decker bus takes a chorus-singing (largely black) congregation from Aston to Bishop Latimer Memorial Church in Winson Green, and there we begin up the front with hymns and the word and the Decision, then march down to the South-West corner where the sunken tank has been replenished with warm water – Angela, the 20-year-old candidate, gives testimony about her conversion and she is taken down into the water, makes the Declaration of Faith there, and is duly baptized: when the candidate and ministers have dried off in private, she is brought in at West end, met by wardens, and processes up the aisle, holding up her candle and is thus welcomed – and we go to a renewal of Baptismal Vows for all – then back into bus, and back to Aston with more singing, and there we have eucharist (and receive a Roman Catholic into the Church of England); (27) Farewell at end of year at Birmingham Bible Institute means service halfway between worship and prize-giving (I am preacher); (29) St. Peter's Day coincides with Petertide ordinations this year, as it falls on a Sunday – I assist at Birmingham cathedral, where a well-used pattern is followed, much of it notably good (as, e.g., the diocesan bishop walks along a line of kneeling ordinands, and lays hands on them where they are, thus minimizing the actual break in the ordination prayer).

**July:** (1) Institution in a Crown living, with Deputy Lieutenant in military blues (including spurs) to read Royal Warrant and present candidate – I

use the right Deed this time; (6) Festival at a Hamstead Church – we march round the parish (behind Scouts and British Legion bands, playing Scot Joplin . . .) before eucharist: in the afternoon there is a closing service of an 800-strong scout camp, though it looks as though the real ritual and real symbolism comes in lowering flags and handing them over for safe-keeping till next time: and in the evening I go to a District Church in Shirley, meeting in a school, for a (for them) first-ever evening service, non-sacramental and intended to quicken their sense of mission – 175 present respond to some home-grown liturgy I produce asking them whether they acknowledge themselves bound to witness for Christ in the world – they all say a demanding liturgical 'yes' and light candles from each other, hold them above their heads, and vow to shine as lights in the world (the numbers on this occasion do include many visitors, but it is still marvellous as the congregation was only formed twelve months ago); (11) I am presiding at eucharist for AGM of Regional Sponsoring Body of LEPs – in an ecumenical building – and get some practice in for *Acts 86* at the end of this month in leading a liturgy in which I can feel comfortable and not disloyal to C/E in ethos, but others are not feeling themselves hi-jacked by Anglican liturgical imperialism; (13) A morning confirmation has a nice touch at the Gospel, which is Mark 1.1-11 (ASB p.271) – the reader did not announce the Gospel separately, but pitched into 'Here begins the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God', and we *then* responded '**Glorify to Christ our Saviour**'; in the afternoon they have the Annual Memorial service at Birmingham Crematorium, with nearly 1000 people present for an openair service – all relatives of those cremated in the last year or so, and a marvellous chance to preach on death and resurrection when they are fractionally more detached from the pain than at the funeral itself – and presumably most are regular non-churchgoers . . .

## FROST'S RESIGNATION FROM THE AUSTRALIAN COMMISSION

We reported this last month. We now publish David Frost's letter of resignation to the secretary of the Commission. The letter was backed by a memorandum too lengthy for us to publish here.

To Canon L. Bartlett, Secretary of the Commission

Dear Laurie,

I am sorry to have delayed till the very day of a new Commission meeting before finally making up my mind what to do about my membership. As you know, I have made it clear for some while, in discussions and in written submissions to the Commission, that I would be forced into a resignation if the elimination of so-called 'sexist language' in the liturgy was insisted upon. In the last few months, a number of changes were made to collect I had prepared for the Anglican Church, against my advice; but you will remember that I eventually decided to 'live again to fight another day', rather than resign over a document which was only for experimental use rather than a formal part of the liturgy. However, the papers for this current meeting, particularly a report by Dr. Burge on a meeting of the international English Language Liturgical Consultation, make it clear that that body, together with the Australian Consultation on Liturgy and members of our own Commission, is so far committed to what I believe is a folly that the only honest course is for me to resign.

My opposition to what is proposed is based on the principle that worship of the Church should be in the language of the day, rather than that of any minority or pressure-group. Prescriptive attempts to change a language, however well-intentioned, are almost always doomed to failure. In this present case, the generic use of 'man' (I take one example only) is so entrenched in the language, in words such as 'craftsman' or phrases like 'man the lifeboats', that it is most improbable that even the most insistent lobbying will succeed in eliminating it. The pressure for such changes does not originate in a *Christian* movement, and it is based on the doubtful premise that you can modify people's attitudes by effecting changes in their expression. It is asserted, without evidence or convincing research, that certain language usages betray particular 'sexist' attitudes; and (with the usual technique of the revolutionary) those who question the intellectual basis or feasibility of the proposed changes find themselves pilloried as 'intransigent' – even, I fear, on the Commission. I believe the whole language-issue is deeply divisive, and distracts from genuinely Christian concerns; and if (as I suspect) the elimination of so-called 'sexist language' proves to be a passing fad, the Church may be left in fifteen years with an outmoded public liturgy, bearing the mark of yesterday's craze and impoverished to a degree in its sound, rhythm and meaning. I have put my objections at greater length in a document to the last Commission. I might add that, once the Commission and the Anglican Church embark on trying to placate a vocal minority, there will be no end to it. Once you commit yourself to an irrational course, on unexamined premises, there is no reason why you should stop at any point along the way. The pressure-groups will not be satisfied by an honest willingness to, say, look at any instances of the generic use of 'men' that could be easily read as excluding women. The debate is not about genuine misunderstandings, but about trying through language to engineer a change in human consciousness with regard to sex and gender. Already, we see attempts to eliminate 'paternalist' imagery from hymns and from the text of scripture; and the ELLC document suggests that the historic creeds will not escape.

So it is time for me to call a halt, after seventeen years working on liturgical revision. Most of what I myself have contributed, especially in the translation of the Psalms, would be damaged or swept away, if present trends continue. If that is the price of real progress, so be it; but at present I fear the Commission is in danger of undoing real achievements for the sake of doubtful gains.

All that said, I shall miss my friends on the Commission. And I hope an Australian may yet be found to throw off these trans-Pacific shackles, and stand up for good sense!

Yours sincerely, David Frost

## This month's booklet . . .

is Worship Series no. 96, *Extended Communion: An Experiment in Cumbria*, by David Smthurst. The author, who led a parish experiment and wrote it up for a thesis, here presents the more liturgical part of it as a Worship Booklet. It is not controversial, and COB adds a short essay by way of comment and context-setting.

## . . . and next month's

is Pastoral Series no. 28, *Preparing for Marriage*, by Margaret Stevens. . . and **Ethics 62 and Spirituality 17** also come in July and August.

## . . . and a catalogue (announcing reprints)

should also come in this mailing – and a St. John's College *Newsletter*.