

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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Editorial

I had made a mental vow to try to keep the ordination of women question out of these columns on at least every other month, but it is proving difficult. I was encouraged in this direction by a self-imposed rule of silence on the issue which *Church Scene*, the Anglican weekly in Australia, recently managed to observe for some weeks. But the issue will not quietly go away. In particular it has been precipitated this month by a celebration of communion at an MOW meeting at (of all places) *Church House Westminster*, with a woman priest presiding, on 4 October 1986. The matter has some odd angles, so here is a patient attempt to winkle them out (or whatever one does to discover angles).

- 1 No advance warning was given to anyone that the programme would include a celebration of communion. Thus no advance interest or enquiry occurred. The MOW organizers really rather hoped it would be an event private to their own members – more or less behind closed doors. (No other commentators seem to have asked about this question of what was known in advance.)
- 2 When the meeting occurred, an hour's warning was given of the celebration, and all present were urged to leave if they felt compromised or unhappy at being present – no-one in fact left, and one suffragan bishop, Peter Selby, Bishop of Kingston, was among those who communicated. He later wrote an article in *The Times* (11 October), urging that bishops should be allowed to have consciences and individual convictions and actions of their own.
- 3 The organizers had not got anyone's permission to hold this service, but then, whose could they have got? It looks as though the bit of territory they were actually on belonged to the Crown, but monarchs do not make far-reaching decisions on their own account nowadays, and no-one knows Her Majesty's own view.
- 4 In the aftermath, there were expostulations from the Registrar of General Synod, and a deprecatory statement from the Archbishop of Canterbury who was in the USA. The organizers mildly wondered why illegality about texts (even the trial run agape at Church House in May 1984 was strictly illegal) is dubbed 'experiment', whilst illegality about the persons presiding is illegality *tout simple*. Even the Bishop of London had a go: 'The women's action is a challenge to the authority of the Church of England'. This latter was thought of interest as the Bishop of London was (and is) having his own problems about the limits of authority – and the character of territory which is *in* a diocese (and *his* case in Oklahoma), but is argued to

be not of it. It would be highly paradoxical – enough to make the angels laugh – if the Bishop of Hong Kong (where Joyce Bennett was ordained) had authority in Church House Westminster comparable to that which the Bishop of London was supposed to be exercising in Tulsa . . .

- 5 One of the old problems highlighted by this event is the question as to where the limits of the Church of England, and the boundaries of its law, are to be found. Does the law only relate to clergy officiating in their own parishes on Sunday mornings – or does it encompass all the hours of the week, and all the territory of England?
- 6 There is a suspicion that the supporters of the ordination of women may yet *want* to break the law, rather than want to remain inside it, or redefine its scope so as to be untouched by it. There is an analysis around that only by law-breaking does the Church of England ever get its law changed.
- 7 But there is also a question as to what the law of the Church of England *is* on this point.

Meanwhile the Measure to ordain women as deacons went through the Commons on 28 October, the voting was 303 to 25, and the Measure goes to the Lords on 4 November. And Birmingham was not awarded the 1992 Olympics.

Colin Buchanan

GENERAL SYNOD NOVEMBER

General Synod meets from 11 to 13 November, and has little directly liturgical business to conduct. BEM and ARCIC reach final voting in General Synod, though the thorniest question there is the Authority package – even 'convergence' begs the issues. In addition that wretched FOAG report, *The Priesthood of the Ordained Ministry*, is to be moved for approval by Henry Chadwick, with the motion:

'That this Synod welcomes Chapter XIII of GS 694 as a contemporary Church of England expression of the Anglican understanding of the priesthood of the ordained ministry.'

I expressed my own mind on this in my editorial in August. I remain firmly of the opinion that, if the Church of England wants to indicate that it sits light by scripture, then approving the sleight-of-hand way in which this report delivers the rabbit of the 'priesthood of the ordained ministry' out of the hat of history and illogic is a good way to do it.

Synod starts the process for diverting Commissioners' money to the Urban Church Fund (hooray – but not liturgy), and fourth on the list of Private Members' Motions stands Peter Hobson's attempt to remove the requirement of liturgical dress from ministers.

FROM THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER, CHAIRMAN OF THE LITURGICAL COMMISSION

One of the first concerns of the new Liturgical Commission is the vexed question of Prayer Book variations: though I hope that this will not detain us for too long. Both common sense and pastoral sensitivity require that some way of accommodating within the law those variations in the use of the Prayer Book which are well established in local custom. The purpose would be to sanction existing usage and custom but not to promote favoured variations where they are not already in use.

The *Faith in the City* report urged the Liturgical Commission to pay close attention to the needs of the Church in Urban Priority Areas. And this we shall do. Yet the demand for greater freedom in style and content of worship than the authorized rites allow is not confined to UPAs. And so our work will extend to the 'Family Service' field, though the Commission feels that this is too limiting a description for the simplified, more participatory, and less structured forms of Sunday worship (both eucharistic and non-eucharistic) that are being requested.

It is already known that we are planning a publication on the lines of *Lent, Holy Week and Easter* to cover the Christmas cycle. We hope that the results of our work will be published and available for use before the Commission's membership is due for renewal in March 1991.

No doubt other work, at present unforeseen, will come our way. We are already engaged in looking at and commenting upon draft revisions of the ICET texts which have been prepared by the new international body ELLC. It has always been part of the Commission's terms of reference to 'exchange information and advice on liturgical matters with other churches'.

There are three other matters to which I must allude, even though only briefly.

- 1 The Commission is very keen to promote and encourage the work of diocesan liturgical committees. We believe that they have a crucial role in developing liturgical understanding and fostering good practices.
- 2 The questions raised by the words 'inclusive language' have implications not only for existing and future texts, but also theological implications for the interpretation of Scripture and the ascription of gender to God. We shall not be blind to these fundamental issues even though our published work may be confined to references to our fellow human beings.
- 3 There is also the issue of authority. The procedures of the General Synod must ultimately be invoked, but there are strong arguments for making material available for comparatively early use and in a form which is capable of modification in the light of experience.

+Colin Winton 13 October, 1986

Footnote to the above: The chairman of the Commission has also gone public with a letter that asks for copies of services designed for the 'Advent to Candlemas' period (but not your average Nine Lessons and Carols!) – copies to the Rev. Dr. G. Rowell, Keble College, Oxford OX1 3PG, please.

MORE ON PETERTIDE ORDINATIONS

At the York Petertide ordination one candidate stood up after the central petition of the ordination prayer and responded 'thank you'. Is this grace (gift), works (prize giving) or inculturation? Another development was that a number of the clergy greeted or congratulated 'their' priests at this point. Compare this with the practice when the Archbishop was at Durham of only the particular supporters stepping forward from the college of priests to join in the laying on of hands.

THE SOCIETY FOR LITURGICAL STUDY

The sixth biennial conference of the Society for Liturgical Study took place at St. John's College, Nottingham, from 15 to 17 September. The theme of the conference was Liturgical Formation, and papers were presented by Gordon Wakefield, Edward Matthews, Michael Perham and Alan Amos. Three shorter papers on other topics were also presented, and the guest speaker was Canon Harold Winstone. The President of the Society is the Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Cuming, and the Chairman is the Rev. Bryan D. Spinks. Membership of the Society is interdenominational and consists of specialists in liturgy and persons holding official appointments in the field of liturgy and worship.

From the Secretary, Dr. Donald A. Withey

This month's booklet . . .

is Worship Series no. 97, *Celebrating the Agape Today*, by Trevor Lloyd, a member of the Liturgical Commission. This booklet is a rewriting and expansion of his treatment in no. 19, *Agapes and Informal Eucharists*, published in 1973. Much wine has flowed in many vessels since that was written, the Liturgical Commission has added its own recipes, and the time for reassessment (and perhaps for more actual practice) has come. So here is the Gourmet's Guide to good religious eating (with some sane history, and useful coaching).

. . . and next month's

is Pastoral Series no. 29, *Management in the Church*, by Brian Pearson.

. . . and reprints include

Pastoral Series no. 9 (yes, again), *Good News down the Street*, by Michael Wooderson, and Spirituality Series no. 7, *Creative Prayer*, by Jane Hadfield (now Jane Keiller, but we are keeping her maiden name going).

. . . and the Alcuin/GROW Joint Editorial Board productions

are fully on stream, and will have four monographs in 1987 roughly following the pattern of slightly fuller Grove Liturgical Studies. Next month or the month after there will be a brochure with the whole 1987 programme on it. Slightly better terms for standing order customers will come through joining the Alcuin Club, as the monographs are likely to cost £2.50 each, whereas a year's sub (payable in advance of course) to the Alcuin Club will be £8 in 1987.

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COB'S LITURGICAL SCRAPBOOK

September: (21) Morning confirmations, followed by helping out local incumbent who is taking his daughter off to College by presiding at 1662 Communion at 4 p.m., followed by a whoopee inner city initiation event – two adults submerged in the paddling pool to which I referred last month, giving testimony on the water's edge, followed by the three-year-old daughter of one of them, followed by confirmation of six adults, reception of two from Church of Rome and welcome and prayer for two renewing baptismal vows after conversion – it all came across as truly missionary; (23) Institution at Acocks Green – reminds me that I learned (at Springhill Institution last month) that Geoffrey Beaumont used to be regularly in Birmingham in his composing days, and has tunes titled 'Springhill' and 'Acocks Green' (and also one called 'Napier' I gather – but that was a Springhill pub now demolished!) – I also note that (by sheer providence) I am putting a steam buff in next door to the local railway museum . . .; (25) my first wedding since coming to Birmingham – two folk in their forties (on a parish Standing Committee in which I have been involved) asked me to officiate at a week's notice at what proves to be a very private event with 11 present – they have duly written their own prayers; (29) my first true 8 a.m. 1662 Communion since coming here, in my own parish half at my own invitation – I do fine, bar starting with 'Our Father in heaven' and having to swallow hard; then there are Michaelmas ordinations (last ever deaconess, we hope), then mid-afternoon I meet candidates for a forthcoming confirmation, and in the evening in Coleshill (with real farmers present) begin the four-week harvest season which temporarily over-rides confirmations; (30) during the day walk over ground for diocesan agape and Easter rites presentation in six weeks' time, and in evening demonstrate Rite A for two parishes (in our rural patch) which have reached the legal end of Series 3, the green booklet.

October: (2) more harvest – this time at a Church School with well-acted parable of sower, which I expound and query (not for first time) whether we should let passages using harvest as a *metaphor* get through into the lectionary; (4) preach at a harvest evensong (with a sideswipe about stewardship) prior to enjoying the parish harvest supper; (5) morning at a family service for harvest – figuring two enormous Dunlop tyres, as the produce of the chief industry of that parish; evening, begin parish Visitation with eucharist in one of our few medieval buildings; (7) Licensing of Team Vicar in an ecumenical District Church (Hawkesley) in a Church School – Church and School both celebrating tenth anniversary of opening; (8) baptisms, confirmations and communion in parish local to my home – largely black candidates and congregation – incumbent is a member of the preaching school I am running on Tuesdays, and gently indicates I could well benefit by learning some of the lessons I am teaching – and he is right (but we all have our hard luck stories); (11) preaching at Diocesan Synod eucharist – incumbent mentioned above tells me this was marginally better (I agree with that too); (12) the harvests continue – one a joyous (semi-charismatic?) family service at one of our two parishes on edge of Tamworth, the other 1662 evensong (which I have to lead myself as there is currently no incumbent and the Reader (to my surprise)

(where four dioceses stop short), and where real local farming produce – e.g. six or so 40kg mangol wurzles – is displayed in the porch; (13) communion for hospital chaplains in the morning, and enormous high jinks at night – the ninetieth anniversary of the church building at St. Aidan's Small Heath, one of the famous anglo-catholic centres of East Birmingham which bared their teeth and resisted the illiberal Barnes for many years in the twenties and thirties – there is now a 'concelebration' for the anniversary, and they have asked me to preside and preach – readers will know I am still ignorant as to what concelebration *is*, but I fulfil the presidency role and various folk do various similar things alongside me without interrupting or disrupting, so I have no complaint – my sermon may have been near the brink for such an event, and I get a letter of protest after from one of the clergy; (14) off to Southampton for Winchester diocesan *Lent Holy Week Easter* conference – fairly restrained poker-faced four-washing, over which *their* Bishop Colin presided (and washed), and Easter liturgy as my responsibility (without actual communion), which took on a more cavalier style (lights went up at the wrong moment, but then there were surprises at the initial Easter . . .); (16) Feast of the Martyrs Latimer and Ridley, not actually acknowledged in ASB, but I give them a mention at a deanery chapter eucharist, and in the evening go in a tie to be a member of the congregation for our diocesan 'Renewal Eucharist' – we pray in small groups at the intercessions and lay hands (on instruction of Bishop Ban It Chui, ex-bishop of Singapore, our preacher and worship-leader at this point) on those with stiff necks (this was to be taken literally, not as in Acts 7); (17) Licensing a new priest in charge in Sparkbrook – he, having undergone our diocesan launching service only three months before in the next-door parish, to which this one is now being added, commented on the presentation of 'Symbols of Ministry' that we would do better to bring in a needy old lady and serve her up as a good symbol of the ministry which belongs to the whole congregation . . .

Book Reviews

R. C. D. Jasper and Paul Bradshaw *A Companion to the Alternative Service Book* (SPCK 1986) 500 pp., £19.50.

Despite its astonishing price this should prove a very useful book. It describes itself as a 'more comprehensive replacement' of the Liturgical Commission's Commentary and as a sort of Proctor and Frere for ASB. It provides detailed commentary on virtually every part of the ASB that will satisfy the curious and may, please God, encourage preaching on its text, services and prayers as the church takes the ASB into its bloodstream. Each part of the ASB is provided with a well-shaped historical introduction that gives gentle guidance through scholarly controversy and deals thoroughly and clearly with the earlier Church of England services. It helps make sense of the Rules to Order the Service; has a fine appreciation of the Litany; will tell every liturgy student all he or she wants to know about the history of the Office; explains the background to the ICET texts and the Psalter; etc. The two authors cover their tracks well and avoid excessive repetition or contradiction. (Can the reference on p.39 to Archbishop Grindal joining Morning Prayer, Litany and Holy Communion in 1571 be reconciled with the more common view on p.167?).

And yet . . . It is not just that I doubted the occasional fact or judgment. The book doesn't somehow do justice to the theological passion and diversity that shapes how the Church of England worships and is too content with ASB. Can the theological themes of the Reformation be reduced to 'They sought to return to the model of the worship of the New Testament' (p.10)? The emergence of forms of worship is not a smooth untroubled process and folk will have to look elsewhere to understand it. I missed the theological passion of Michael Sansom in *Common Prayer in the Church of England* and the irreverent documentation honesty of COB. The treatment of the eucharist hardly encourages imaginative presentation, never explains that Preface doesn't mean foreword, has surprising confidence in 'the Anglican concept of priesthood' (p.180), contemplates no criticism of the eucharistic prayers, 'the entire Preparation of the Gifts, or the Offertory, as it was called in 1662' (p.120) will hardly do! William Temple's lovely blessing is attributed to the Liturgical Commission (p.144) and the contribution of the JLG to individual collects is underplayed. On initiation there is little to suggest that Dix's view of confirmation might be in decline and no mention of children at communion. Another example of its tendency to treat ASB as the conclusion of a process is the absence of any mention of the *Lent, Holy Week, Easter* services. I will encourage wealthy friends and students to buy it – and not to believe quite all they read.

Michael Vasey

H. A. Kelly, *The Devil at Baptism, Ritual Theology and Drama* (Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London, 1985) 301pp. £23.50.

E. C. Whitaker in *The Baptismal Liturgy* commented that on exorcism and other apotropaic devices 'very little . . . has been written about it'. This new book by Kelly has filled that gap. The study deals thoroughly with the antidemonic in the liturgy of baptism, particularly examining the origins and development of the exorcisms, renunciations, and the apotropaic rites. The contrast is drawn of the early Syrian liturgies with their lack of exorcisms and the Roman rites which give exorcism an important place. The latter is seen as a response to gnostic demonology and the influence of Jewish-Christian notions of sin and demons in Rome. The authority of the Apostolic Tradition and its diffusion in the East is seen as one of the factors in the development of the exorcisms there and their elaboration is the response of the church to the desire to dramatize in the liturgy the salvation of Christ. Perhaps a little disappointing is that the Reformation and the modern Roman Catholic rites are only briefly covered in one chapter. Nor did I find the plea for the restoration of exorcism, on the basis that it would restore the drama of the rite but can be interpreted allegorically, convincing. If the translation of the exorcisms in Ireland was resisted because of their embarrassing assumption that the child was possessed, then it seems unlikely that the faithful would receive their restoration on the suggestion that they should be interpreted allegorically! Better to develop a dramatic rite that incorporates credible theology and does not evoke mystery by obscurity. Despite these disappointing conclusions this is a fine book that clearly lays out the data of the early church and gives helpful background for those reforming liturgy in the parts of the world where the role of the devil and spirits is seen as all-pervasive, as well as

is also the organist and therefore up in a gallery) at the most genuinely rural parish in the diocese – Newton Regis right up near No Man's Heath in the more rationalist west. The bibliographical method in the index is frustrating and I hope that this book is not setting a trend. The price is horrendous but I suppose that it is not likely to be a best-seller!

Phillip Tovey

The Churches' Joint Group on Funeral Services *Funeral Services* (Canterbury Press, Norwich, 1986) 104pp., hardback, £3.50.

These services, published together so as to equip cemeteries and crematoria with a single modern book for all Christian uses, were published at the end of July. The rites printed out include one by the Joint Liturgical Group, one from the ASB, Series 1 (for ancient language), and the Roman Catholic rite. It includes provision for the funeral of a child, and 25 of the most-used hymns are added as an appendix. The print is large and clear (like the 'Desk' size ASB) and the rubrics are (interestingly) in green. It really is a handsome and genuinely useful production and I hope that it will pass into widespread use. A Welsh bi-lingual book is due to appear at the same price around now. The publishers offer users a 25% discount for an introductory purchase of 20 or more copies.

COB

The Oxford and Cambridge Office Book (OUP and CUP, 1986) 1888 pp., £25.

This is the most sumptuous production of them all, and outstrips in that way the Collins' *Daily Office Book* (see *NOL* for June 1986). It also scoops a pool by having an appreciative Introduction by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and a launching on 7 October by the Bishop of London. But, at the heart of it the question is: will the NEB suffice for the purpose? (And the purpose includes the NEB Psalter! – after all, Collins hold the copyright on the Liturgical Psalter).

Well, the Bishop of London, in his speech at the launching, commended the Presses on their 'Thou' form texts, so there is no mistaking that. This Office Book cannot be used by anyone sharing in an ASB office, because it lacks the ASB Psalter – and those who have got used to the ASB Sunday eucharistic readings will quickly indicate whether they are wishing to have less NEB or more. For myself, I itch for the NIV, and hope the new Commission will take steps to get it fully legal – but failing that I would go for Collins' use of RSV, rather than the dons' idea of everyday speech which the NEB represents to me (oh yes, let me be fair – it is often good on narrative; but it is dreadful on St. Paul . . .). The Bishop of London thinks it might be useful for saying the office in a car, and it has the added bonus of including the *Lent Holy Week Easter 'Night Prayer'* for returning home late at night, but the University Presses will be extraordinarily lucky if they find a vast market amongst chauffeur-driven clergy.

COB