

# News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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## Editorial

I recall ten years ago this month that the Charismatic Movement first came seriously onto the General Synod agenda. By a route not worth retracing here it led to first the report *The Charismatic Movement in the Church of England* (1981), and then to two Synod debates. The upshot of the debates was a recognition that not only should the report be studied around the country (and that has happened in a few places), but also that further work should be done on renewal and the role of the Spirit. It is no great secret that the present Doctrine Commission is addressing itself to the work of the Spirit in the church and in the world. But the Board of Mission and Unity (the original handlers of the Charismatic theme) commissioned a different exercise, and this saw the light of day some time back in Josephine Bax' book, *The Good Wine* (Church House Publishing, 1986, 225pp, £4.95). Whilst this is not directly evaluating worship, its travelogue features (which are characteristic of it) do touch in passing on quite a wealth of worship material.

Now there is another book to pursue the issue – edited by Colin Craston it is entitled *Open to the Spirit: Anglicans and the Experience of Renewal* (Church House Publishing, for the Anglican Consultative Council, 1987, 162pp, £6.50). This is a series of essays from round the Anglican Communion, with a Foreword by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and, although the range and geographical spread of the contributors to this book home in is far wider than with *The Good Wine*, yet they home in more exactly on the charismatic movement than does Josephine Bax. She is interested in every kind of new life, or every kind of phenomenon calling itself 'renewal' – but some chapters of the pan-Anglican book almost indentify 'renewal' with 'Charismatic Renewal' (sufficiently indeed to raise a protest on this exact point from the Archbishop of Sydney, a distinctly and avowedly non-charismatic evangelical).

However, there are different insights into Christian worship from the contributors. Gordon Wakefield (whom I can hardly brand as a non-Anglican after my own quotation recently of a remark about him that he is the 'best Anglican we have not got') writes about 'renewal in past ages' and gives space to the Puritans as well as to the Methodists (and Quakers). There is a splendid paragraph about this:

'Renewal movements tend to despise what the Puritans called the "stinted forms" of the prayer books. Even Cranmer's great Litany was thought to be trifling with God, "more wishes than prayers". What they would have thought of so much modern intercession in public worship, which is often little more than a rehearsal of the

news headlines, can all too easily be imagined. Prayer was an uninhibited outpouring to God, sometimes a wrestling, sometimes a sheer rapture of thanksgiving . . .' (p.143).

Other intriguing glimpses are provided by the occasional reference to the American book, *Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail*, and Donald Allchin especially makes much of 'Liberation through the Liturgy' (pp. 154-6). The point here is the power and attractiveness of the objectivity of the liturgy, in contrast with the twentieth century patterns of worship which descend from the Puritans – and to this extent Gordon Wakefield's review is nicely balanced by at least some features of the present day.

Perhaps, if we are to pursue this line, I missed from both books much reflection upon the counter-attractions of Pentecostalism and the House Churches as offering appealing alternatives to Anglican worship. Both books are strong on strengths! Perhaps the Lambeth bishops need a little more help in criticizing both received patterns and contemporary innovations.

Colin Buchanan

## INTERNATIONAL LITURGICAL CONFERENCES

The silly season is the conferencing season. Regular readers of *NOL* will have spotted that the two years is up since the last such occasion, in Boston, USA, in July and August 1985 (from which the Anglican 'Boston Statement' on children at communion emerged). So 1987 is next such conferencing occasion, and it is all happening in August in Brixen (or Bressanone) in the South Tyrol of Northern Italy.

First comes ELLC (English Language Liturgical Consultation) on which the main Church of England representative is Canon Donald Gray. We hope to report on this Consultation in the August *NOL* (whilst for the later ones it will be September). Perhaps they can re-act to the General Synod motion on the Lord's Prayer (for which see the following pages).

Secondly, there is the central reason for gathering – Societas Liturgica is meeting from 17 to 22 August. This year's theme is 'Reconciliation' and some major papers will be given under the watchful eye of the president, Robert Taft. There is also expected to be a special silver jubilee edition of *Studia Liturgica* published during the Societas congress to mark its twenty-five years.

Thirdly, from 23 to 26 August, there is the inter-Anglican consultation. This time its theme will be 'Liturgical Formation', with a whole series of contributors, with Canon David Holeyton of Canada presiding over the event. There is hope that some of this may bear fruit in a future Joint Liturgical Study (as the Boston papers did).

## JULY SYNOD

General Synod duly met in York over the weekend from 10 July to 14 July. Of most immediate interest for actual impact on the worship of

the Church of England, pride of place must go to the Ecumenical Canons (B43 and B44), which, together with their enabling Church of England (Ecumenical Relations) Measure, received Final Approval in the Synod. The reported results of diocesan voting had shown 4847 in favour and 286 against, and the General Synod went the same way – in the (constitutional) vote requiring a two-thirds majority in each House, the Measure passed as follows:

	Ayes	Noes	Abst.
Bishops	24	0	1
Clergy	133	6	0
Laity	155	3	0

As pointed out previously in these columns, the Measure now needs Parliamentary approval before it becomes law – and that will take till well into next year. But the Church of England's own so thoroughgoing endorsement of proposals which grew from the ashes of the old Covenant is, in the light of all previous history, quite amazing. Certainly there were safeguards built in (far too many, in this reporter's opinion), but there is still a clear charter for new ecumenical endeavour such as has never been lawful before. Indeed, apart from an oblique reference in Canon B15A, the Church of England has never previously recognized in its formularies and legislation that the other Christian denominations even exist. Now the die is cast – let Parliament obstruct it at its peril.

(Two footnotes to this Measure are:

- NOL* confesses to misleading readers in its May Editorial – there are two Ecclesiastical Committees – one of the Synod itself, and one of Parliamentarians; and these two had been assimilated into one in our account. It is the Parliamentary one which presents the snag in getting the Measure onto the statute book.
- Although it will take time, after the Measure becomes law, to bring Local Ecumenical Projects to the point of 'designation under instrument', it is not too early now to consider how to prepare for them. Close study of the Canons will indicate what is possible and what not under their provisions, but there will also be help in the October Grove Worship Series (no. 101, by COB, entitled, *Anglicans and Worship in Local Ecumenical Projects*).

Of second most immediate relevance was the debate on the Freemasonry report. Whilst it did not touch on the official worship of the Churches, it did touch on whether the Craft's rituals are or are not worship. The Synod, after amending the platform motion, voted on it on the Monday morning, 13 July, in the following form:

'That this Synod endorses the Report of the Working Party (GS 784A), including the final paragraph, and commends it for discussion within the Church.'

The final paragraph cited contains the punch-lines, virtually saying that Christianity and Freemasonry are incompatible. And the motion went through by 394 votes to 52 with 5 abstentions (which suggests a much fuller Synod than when the Ecumenical Canons went through).

High in interest, though low in relevance, was the debate on the Bath and Wells motion reported last month. In the event the Chairman of the Liturgical Commission, the Bishop of Winchester, tabled an amendment to provide for parallel forms, and this was carried on a show of hands. The amended motion then read:

'That this Synod, recognizing the current usage of the Lord's Prayer in the Roman Catholic and Free Churches, schools, and on public occasions, requests the House of Bishops (after consultation with the Liturgical Commission) to introduce into Synod proposed revisions of the ASB services which would include the Lord's Prayer in its Rite B form in parallel with the Rite A form, wherever that occurs.'

The Synod saw off an attempt to move to next business (246-138), and various other amendments, and finally accepted the amended motion on a show of hands.

Irrelevant? Yes, surely so? Whilst it is true that the Commission is seeking ways of altering the authorization procedures for new liturgy, there could never be a parallel text version in the 1990s which was precluded from Synod criticism and amendment on the grounds that the Synod had carried the above motion in July 1987. Furthermore it will spoil the look of the Murgatroyd pages if it does happen . . .

## This month's booklet . . .

is the century one, no. 100, *The Future of Anglican Worship*, drafted by Trevor Lloyd on behalf of the whole Group for Renewal of Worship (GROW). No fiddling with *minutiae* of text here – the argument moves onto a cosmic canvas; the eschatological worship of heaven provides the criterion for assessing the present, and the directions for the future; and it is only in that light that actual proposals are put forward. Try it. It might be catching . . .

## . . . and next month's

is Pastoral Series no. 32, *The Quick and the Dead*, by Michael Mitton. This is a sensitive re-exploration by an evangelical of the relationship between earth and heaven in respect of the communion of the living and the dead.

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## Book Review

J. B. M. Frederick *The Future of Liturgical Reform* (Churchman Monograph, 1987, 82pp., £3.95).

Here is an astonishing bit of work, but before I reveal reasons for my astonishment, let me say a personal word about the author. I know John Frederick, and admire him considerably. He was a fine colleague on the Knaresborough working party, which produced *Communion before Confirmation?* in 1985. He is a learned and thoughtful parish incumbent. And, quite irrelevantly, he is an American. But my reasons for astonishment do not lie there.

The truth is that this book has, save for one tiny sub-current, no connection with its title whatsoever. I have read it and re-read it, hoping for even glimpses into the future. I have been with the Group for Renewal of Worship striving to write Grove Worship Booklet no. 100 (see page 4 about this). No title could have raised more timely expectations among us. But still there is no glimmer.

There are five chapters. One is on liturgical movement background, the next on 'impasse' (which looks at the parish communion from 1937 to 1962), the third on 'Covenant' (which wanders round some scriptural paths), the fourth is on the 'signs of the covenant', and it edges us towards that sub-current – that children should be admitted to communion. Finally, the fifth is on the 'secular order', and it too, without following a very clear route, ends with a call for children to receive communion.

On the one change John Frederick does want, I would have thought he had better material in the Knaresborough report. On everything else, even a microscope failed to detect any hint of the 'future' whatsoever. Even the cover blurb does not suggest much except a review of the past, so the publishers must have known what they were doing.

COB

## LITURGICAL LECTURES IN SOUTH WALES

We are asked to publicize the following public lectures at the Anglican Society at the University of Cardiff Anglican Chaplaincy (61 Park Place, Cardiff), on Mondays at 7.30 p.m.

- 19 October: 'Two Decades of Liturgical Revision in Wales' by the Dean of Llandaff.
- 26 October: 'Prospects for the Future of Anglican Liturgical Revision' by COB.
- 9 November: 'Freedom in Worship: A Catholic Perspective' by the Rev. Martin Williams.
- 16 November: 'Come back, tabloid liturgy – all is forgiven' by the Rev. Robin Green.

23 November: 'The Offering of All God's People' by the Rev. Ronald Keating.

7 December: 'Liturgy, Language and Communication' by Chris Morgan.

Details from Simon Reynolds at the Chaplaincy (tel. 0222-32550).

## KENNETH STEVENSON'S BOOK

Kenneth Stevenson has just been awarded a D.D. for his book which received a just-less-than-ecstatic review here. As he wrote at length about the review, despite his doctorate, we venture a word in reply . . .

### Editorial comment

This is a very typical Kenneth Stevenson response, but it does not conclude the matter. In particular it does not quite touch the main thrust of my review – that a tradition is not above reform, if controversy proves that its linguistic expression was incautious, or misleading, or actually wrong. And furthermore it is all very well to say 'For me "spiritual sacrifices" . . . has to include the eucharist', but that necessity in *Kenneth* does not bind the rest of us; to 'include the eucharist' is a very different thing from identifying the eucharist with 'the Christian sacrifice': and, even if we concede (which I am not necessarily unwilling to do) that the eucharist *qua* worship is a 'spiritual sacrifice', that is still a good distance from conceding that the sacramental elements, i.e. the bread and the cup, are themselves a 'spiritual sacrifice', which would seem to be implied by the oblationary texts which figure largely in Kenneth Stevenson's book.

## ORDAINING WOMEN—CAN WE DO BETTER?

Many would answer 'no'. But the title is Michael Vasey's in an article in the latest *Anvil*, in which he reckons to break new ground (though he has still to answer the old question, of course . . .). He has offprints for sale at 45p plus postage and packing (say 25p). Write to him at St. John's College, Durham.

## COB'S LITURGICAL SCRAPBOOK

**June:** (15) Licensing a Local Non-stipendiary as Priest-in-Charge of one of few country parishes; (17) evening confirmation for inner-ring more-or-less evangelical parishes, including extempore prayer, informal chorus-singing, and testimony also – and a woman of 81 who beams at me and says 'I'll bet I'm the oldest candidate you have ever had' – and I tell her to turn around and (from another parish) immediately behind her is an 89-year-old! (18) Diocesan office staff communion in the morning – the first time I've ever given a 'Corpus Christi' address, as far as I can recall; (19) confirmation again; (20) tenth anniversary of the 'Aston' scheme for pre-theological training – nothing to do with the present Bishop of Aston, save that it is on Birmingham territory (actually in a marquee) and the

Archbishop of York is coming, so I duly turn out (they want a procession of bishops in hats . . .), and the tent-eucharist is diverted (in almost every sense) by the unscripted arrival after the collect of a clown in full gear, who, amongst other disruptive activity (which is meant to illuminate the clergy) gets small bottles of liquid bubble-soap out of a shopping-bag and hands them round for us to blow streams of bubbles around the eucharistic assembly – the presiding Archbishop and homilizing Bishop of Chester (who have had no warning) blow their bubbles sheepishly and visibly unenthusiastically (how would *you* feel in like case? – a question there for planners of special events . . .); (21) and a most extraordinary liturgical event to get mixed up in – I am 'Select Preacher' of the University of Oxford on 'Commemoration Sunday' – an academic kind of event with a congregation of about seventeen dons in gowns and hoods (I wear bands and hood for the first time since my consecration), and invited preacher conducts a service which has one hymn, one long set prayer of thanksgiving for the Benefactors of the University (including in my case Cardinal Wolsey and King George 1), and also mentioning that the Queen's Majesty is, over all causes ecclesiastical as well as civil, sovereign (a marginal note gives me discretion to omit the most extraordinary features of the Divine Right of Kings therein contained, but I take the view that if I am to conduct a Tudor kind of ceremony, Tudor it shall be) – then I preach my sermon, lead in some prayers, and make a quick though of course dignified exit, as the University Church is marginally embarrassed by this coelacanthine event, and wants us out before the real event of the Sunday morning, the parish communion, comes in; (23) early morning visit to a hospital to anoint a woman deacon unconscious after falling from a horse four days ago; (24) a 'double-header' – two confirmations virtually end-to-end, the first at the Institute for the Deaf, where they have never had a confirmation before, and we function throughout with a combination of sound, lip-reading, and singing – a great rite to lead – and then on to an incense-swinging charismatic parish, revolutionized by a vicar who has been in just twelve months – and, as it is the Birth of John the Baptist, I get the chance to preach on the hand of the Lord (Luke 1.66), which confirmation perhaps models?; (28) a confirmation and a rural evensong which they have turned into a kind of Flower Festival, mounting flower tableaux on each windowsill to portray hymns – and in the evening revisit the deacon I anointed on Tuesday, now much restored; (29) St. Peter and a house-communion in high-rise flats on Castle Vale Estate.

**July:** (1) not exactly liturgy, but my first experience of planting a tree at the opening of a Housing Association new development; (5) cathedral ordination – and I have worked over the decor and done a word-processed rite – and all the ordinands come in joyful from a very happy Retreat, and on a very hot Sunday morning, and, sure enough, the heat gets to one candidate – I am well along the line laying hands on the new deacons, when the man next on from the one on whom I am about to lay my hands faints, and falls backwards cracking his head on the cathedral floor – everyone gasps and half rises, and folk rush in to give him smelling-salts etc. – I put my hand on the shoulder of the man I am about to ordain, and say to him *sotto voce* 'we'll wait for a minute' (and am of course asking myself whether, if the candidate who has fainted is about to be removed to hospital, I should lay hands on him first – if a man has answered

the questions, and been conscious when the ordination prayer began, does he have to be conscious when hands are laid on him?), but in a minute or so the man has revived, and I lay hands duly upon the one in front of whom I'm waiting, then on to the one who fainted; then on to the last man – and the man who fainted starts to sway again! – they rush in and put him on a chair and when I go down the line again giving New Testaments he is still seated on the chair at the side, so I not only give it to him but say a brief prayer for him also – and then when the candidates turn to face the congregation, and receive applause, there is a gap where our casualty had been – and then, as the applause dies away, he rises from his chair and takes his place in the gap in the line, and joyful relieved applause mounts – this is first regular ordination of women deacons at a regular ordination *ab initio*, and there is much joy in the Lord all round (with hands in the air) – two evening services to celebrate a 75th anniversary pale a bit by comparison, though they are very special for the parish (largely black) where it happens); (7) Licensing a Franciscan as priest-in-charge of a Handsworth parish – apparently creating a precedent by writing in a role for the Provincial Minister of SSF, who is asked the question whether the Society designate the priest for this task. (I also wear a Franciscan cope, borrowed from Bishop Michael Fisher); (8-10) gathering of British Isles bishops who are going to the Lambeth Conference, distinguished by poker-faced 1662 communion two mornings running (are we trying to say something to the Lambeth Conference?).

## THE 'REALLY JUST'

('Really' and 'Just' are frequently-used words among the New Wave Informality Movement within the Church of England).

'To thee, O Lord, our hearts we raise  
In songs of adoration' –  
Such formal words for happy days  
Of total relaxation!  
The 'Really Just' are keen to share  
The simple, bright and breezy,  
Be really open, just be there –  
It's fun, it's free, it's easy.

But may we not kneel here in peace  
To worship our Creator?  
And know our love for him increase,  
The lesser for the greater?  
Well no, the 'Really Just' would see  
More active demonstration.  
(Could lifted arms be guarantee  
Of ultimate salvation?)

So worship the almighty Lord  
In oldest jeans and sweater;  
The 'Really Just' give no reward  
For wearing something better;  
Decorum goes with chanted Psalms  
And choristers and candles  
So drop your standards, raise your  
arms –  
Renewal comes in sandals.

So now the saints go marching in  
With charismatic fever,  
And liturgy becomes a sin  
For any true believer;  
Ecstatic is the interview  
Informal are the people,  
Vernacular the parish pew,  
Colloquial the steeple.

Paul Wigmore