

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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Editorial

July 1989 has seen not only the bi-centenary of the storming of the Bastille (the most significant event in modern history?), but also the quincentenary of the birth of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1533 to 1556. Whilst Anglicans are accustomed to saying that their church was continuous through the Reformation, and that they are not Cranmerians in the way in which Continental Christians became Lutherans and Calvinists, yet if there was one mind more formative of independant Anglicanism than any others then that mind was Cranmer's. And I was at the conference at Cranmer Hall, Durham, which celebrated his quincentenary, and there is a brief report of that in this issue.

I am afraid my church history is always likely to be sweeping and insufficiently nuanced. But, for what it is worth in an *NOL* editorial, here are some quick glimpses. Behind it all stands the sophisticated scholar, reading the scriptures, annotating his editions of the Fathers, noting the strengths and weaknesses of contemporary schools of thought, and picking his own way with both solidifying protestant conviction on the one hand, and a diplomacy which ran near to deviousness to ensure survival on the other. His most glorious hour is beyond all doubt his martyrdom, when conviction outstripped any concern for survival (or, to put it at its lowest, the prospect of survival having finally disappeared, he was the better able to act on conviction).

In Henry's reign he gave us a far-reaching doctrine of the Royal Supremacy (with its corollary of independence from Rome), a precedent for clerical marriage, a Bible in the vernacular, and a Protestant Succession. In Edward's reign he gave us in six short years a Book of Homilies, two new Prayer Books, a lasting style of liturgical English, controversial writings on the Lord's Supper, various doctrinal Articles of Religion, and a draft reform of Canon Law. He worked strongly on his job as archbishop, and must have been the more impelled by his awareness that one heart-beat alone stood between the whole Reformation programme and a vindictive Princess Mary coming to the throne. Time might be short, and great things must be achieved fast. He held in his own one person an astonishing combination of political power, of theological conviction, and of unparalleled skill as a innovating drafter of liturgical English. And thus he exercised his influence.

The day came; the king ('our young Josiah') died; the desparate cobbling up of a case for a Lady Jane Grey collapsed; the Archbishop's time was over. But one drama remained – he recanted of his Protestant teaching. and then, with marvellous skill in deploying his argument and delaying the denouement, he took back his recantation, and amid uproar was hurried to the stake.

This is no place or time for comment on Cranmer's role to-day. It is usually mis-understood, and is always invoked for partisan contemporary reasons. Here we simply look through the window of history, and are grateful for all he gave us in his time – so much of which became determinative in a way he could never have foreseen of what Anglicanism itself was to become.

We salute his memory.

Colin Buchanan

MAKING WOMEN VISIBLE – GENERAL SYNOD DEBATE

Before the debate the question for me was whether Synod would rise above the simplistic and polarized positions that characterize most discussions of the subject or would tip over into a brawl about women priests. Listeners to the *Sunday* programme may have thought it failed these tests. In reality the debate was unexciting but much better than might have been expected. The report had been available since December 1988; the debate took place at York on 8 July 1989 on a motion moved by the Bishop of Winchester to 'take note of the report'. It would be difficult to present Colin James as a trendy Goddess-worshipping feminist. His moderate and balanced introduction may not have succeeded in making people listen to each other but at least it kept most people in the ring.

In the debate two different experiences of modern English emerged. Some knew no one who cared about the issue or many women who regarded the changes as irrelevant or insulting. Others, working in London or with young people, spoke of a major barrier to mission. The report's assertion that inclusive language is now the rule in education was supplemented by references to industry, the media and the Civil Service. Even Cambridge University has gone to the expense of amending all its statutes.

The report itself got a reasonable press. Even the criticisms of suggested changes did not get much further than those articulated in the report itself. A rumoured assault on the feminine texts in chapter 5 did not materialize although Professor Porter did question the omission of Ps. 123. 2a and argued that the use of 'daughter' in Zech 9.9 and Ps. 48.11 was irrelevant – it simply represented a Hebrew idiom for towns. The report's argument that language is always changing and cannot be trapped in some universal and pure form seemed to be accepted by many speakers. There seemed less understanding that this means there can be no simple inclusive language package. The determinist view of language espoused by some feminists did not make an appearance. The report's permissive and flexible approach, aiming to guide changes that are already being made, seemed widely accepted.

The most dangerous moment for the report was a speech by John Habgood. Like other speakers he praised the report highly and he admitted his earlier commendation of the project. But, now that we at last had before us 'the best labours of our best liturgical scholars', it was clear that the changes could not be made without loss of the theological content, of force and of dignity. Changes would only fuel resentment. Thin end of the wedge arguments did apply in this case; for example in the future what we do with the *Patronage* measure? The future must lie with more sensitive creative writing. (A point made in the report). A forceful speech was gradually undermined by fine contributions that followed, not least one by Elaine Storkey on the changeability and theological limitations of language.

Jean Mayland told of her discovery at the WCC Assembly in Nairobi in 1975 that more accurate and sensitive wording was being widely adopted elsewhere, and of her total failure to persuade fellow-members of the Liturgical Commission producing the ASB: 'my friend Colin Buchanan who turned it all into a joke.' Michael Perham made a fine maiden speech – including witty comment on the term. He argued that some of the offence in the ASB was the frequency of occurrences that caused 'cumulative exclusion'; if this was remedied the few places where no change was possible should lose their offence. Wit included references to the Prime Minister's 'We have become a grandmother'; to the oppression of women in the Cabinet; if men wear dog-collars what do women wear? If you saw Dr Margaret Hewitt and Mrs. Brown talking, you would be unlikely to say, 'I wonder what those two men are talking about?' (The last example is interesting because such use would probably have been possible in the fifteenth century; women's emancipation has accelerated rather than initiated change). Shirley-Ann Williams, whose Private Member's motion had attracted many signatures, noted the omission from the report of the theological case for reaching out to those who felt excluded.

Bridget Woollard asked for a review of the decision not to allow 'and became human' in the Nicene Creed. (If this is refused ELLC's proposal 'became truly human' will be the first alternative to gain currency in England).

There was some evidence that many people are only beginning to engage with the issues and to listen to others or their own deeper selves. More is involved than the pain of some women. I am intrigued why so many 'typical' Englishmen find it so hard to have feminine imagery applied to them. The most important theme to emerge was *exploration*. The church now has time to explore the subject, to listen to scripture and to the experience of people within and outside the church.

What now? Canon B5 already allows minor changes, subject to appeal to the bishop. The motion to take note of the report was passed by a large majority. The Chairman's Preface promised, 'After a period of debate the House of Bishops will decide whether these variations should be regarded as coming within the ambit of Canon B5'. It is not clear when this will happen or how any guidance would be made public. Colin James hinted that the Liturgical Commission might be allowed a voice in this review. When the bishops give their guidance will the reservations of the Archbishop of York prevail?

On the ground will the fears of those who fear a slippery slope be proved right? Can we do better than applying the blue pencil in a way that flattens language and yet keeps women out of sight? Can sensitivity increase without adopting a package as the report urges? Is it possible to retain 'man' = 'the human race' as the report argues? Are people willing to work at recovering the feminine in scripture and the Christian tradition?

Michael Vasey

EDITOR'S P.S.

I owe an apology to readers for misleading you by not scanning the July Synod agenda sufficiently closely – we should have picked up the *Making Women Visible* debate. I am interested myself to see that, simply by increasing precedent, the House of Bishops is slowly becoming an (?the) authority which determines what changes are of no substantial importance under Canon B5. We perhaps should not mind, so long as local discretion to interpret also exists. But the interesting question is *how* these changes could ever reach the printed text of the ASB. By simple H/B *diktat*? Or by simple majority on a snap vote in Synod (like the diglot parallel columns for the Lord's Prayer)? Or by Revision Committee procedure? If it is not done, then no amount of supposedly authoritative decisions by the House of Bishops is going to be worth very much at the recipients' end.

CRANMER CONFERENCES

There cannot have been many birthday parties where six learned academic papers were the centre of attention.

At Cranmer Hall, Durham, over 1-2 July some 40 teachers, students and leading scholars gathered not to light 500 candles, but to debate vigorously and learn about the birthday boy: one Thomas Cranmer, who was otherwise engaged.

Instead, a small portrait of the man, described by Professor Stephen Sykes as 'perhaps our most scholarly Archbishop', looked down upon lecturers and listeners alike. Admittedly this former don, who surely is the only Archbishop to put his wife in a box, did not look too happy when a far from favourable article from the *Church Times* was quoted.

A gradual hint of a smile appeared as the record was put straight. Dr Paul Ayris began by pointing to Cranmer's biblical spectacles so profoundly coloured by Romans 13, which led him to see Henry VIII, Edward VI and even Mary as the Godly Prince to be obeyed at all costs. Professor Sykes unveiled Cranmer's God-centred 'Open Heart'. Once again Bishop Colin Buchanan skillfully uncovered the master-liturgists' sleights of hand, pastoral sensitivity and theological consistency. Dr. Basil Hall, with typical historical precision, took his listeners on a trip to the continent, and demonstrated Cranmer's international vision. Whilst Rev. David Selwyn gave a clearly guided walk through the Archbishop's library, shaking dust off myths, as he underlined this scholar's far-reaching learning, there was finally a 'magical' address by Dr. Eamonn Duffy, who provocatively argued Cranmer's reforms had a socially divisive impact upon various communities, shattering certain cohesive customs.

The cumulative impact of these papers was better even than the birthday cake. Most listeners themselves drawn into that tiny distant portrait of Cranmer, discovering for themselves, that this was a birthday well worth commemorating.

Jolyon Mitchell

ORDINATION OF WOMEN AS PRESBYTERS

Along with the documents for the July Synod came the draft form of the Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure, revised by the Revision Committee of Synod, and due to be debated in November. Whilst it takes about one line of legal drafting to enable bishops to ordain women as presbyters, it takes much more small print to circumscribe such activities and stop them getting out of control. So the following restrictions are written in:

- It does *not* extend to letting the woman presbyter become a bishop.
- A bishop may declare that he will not ordain (nor suffer to be ordained) a woman presbyter; and that he will not institute or licence such a person for presbyteral functions.
- A PCC may pass resolutions that keep all women presbyters beyond the boundaries.

All these restrictions are designed to help those who think women should not be ordained, but do not reckon they must leave the Church of England if such comes about – such people can put a *cordon sanitaire* around themselves. If, as they say in Scotland, they canna' thole it, then another Measure gives a little financial cushioning to them. *NOL* had an editorial in May pointing out that it is difficult to solve conscientious problems in this area simply by arranging that women presbyters do not cross one's path – there is a bigger ecclesial question. (And it caused some editorial pleasure that a stiff opponent of women's ordination – one in episcopal orders – wrote in to say how right that editorial was).

One tiny liturgical footnote: in common with various other parts of the received 'conventional wisdom' the draft Measure seems to think that only presbyters can 'pronounce the Absolution', and thus, to hold women presbyters at bay, a PCC resolution must say that the PCC would not accept a woman 'as the minister who presides at or celebrates the Holy Communion or pronounces the Absolution in the parish' (Schedule 1, Resolution A). It should be noted that this reference to the Absolution must be for *non-eucharistic occasions*, as, at the eucharist, the president says it, so that point is met without mention of the Absolution. What happens elsewhere is *not* that presbyters say Absolutions and deacons, for instance, do not – but that both groups say it, *but in different forms*. We do not enter here into idiocy of the distinctions made in those different forms; we simply note that it is very slipshod thinking which would confine the saying of Absolutions to presbyters . . .

AUGUST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES

We have earlier advertised the Congress of *Societas Liturgica* to be held in York from 14 to 19 August, and the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation to follow it from 20 to 23 August. Both are dealing with inculturation issues. For Anglicans the obverse side of the inculturation coin is the international liturgical identity of Anglicanism, and this is likely to arise at the ALC. We hope to have reports of both gatherings in our August issue.

A NOVELTY IN INSTALLATIONS?

These columns do not often report the installation of a Dean, but we now have, slightly late, the text of the exotic rite for the installation of Brandon Jackson as Dean of Lincoln on 12 May. One look at the service suggests that the incoming dean himself had little to do with its concoction (exactly that the point we have previously made about the launching of diocesan bishops). Among all the parading and presenting (and the occasional reference to appurtenances), the novelty (or is it an antiquity at Lincoln?) which stood out was as follows: the subdean, who did much conducting hither and thither, installed Brandon Jackson in his 'Prebend's Stall' – and had no sooner got him comfortable than he produced a brief injunction (in capitals, unlike anything else in the whole service in the original) 'FRIEND, GO UP HIGHER'; whereupon he removed him and took him (presumably higher!) to the 'Dean's Stall', and parked him there as a better resting-place. Our only question in whether that much-worn joke-quote 'Go up higher' from Luke 14.10 has any other known use in liturgy. The relevance to the particular installation context is doubtful.

This month's booklet . . .

is Worship Series no. 109, *Sunday Evening Worship*, by David Kennedy and David Mann. It is seventeen years and just 100 booklets since COB produced *Patterns of Sunday Worship*, no. 9 in the Ministry and Worship series. That booklet gave one chapter to the Sunday evenings of parishes with a Sunday morning eucharist, and to-day's authors have picked up the need and expanded the possible solutions.

. . . and the Ethical Study

is no. 74, *The Christian Green Heritage*, by Edward Echlin – a timely insertion of the theological basis for being Green into the greening arena.

. . . and Reprints

include Spirituality 16, *Silence*, by David Runcorn, and (in August) Liturgical Study 12/13, *Worship in the New Testament*, by Charlie Moule (a double-size Study, costing £4.50). Soon after should come COB's *One Baptism Once. Thinking About Baptism* comes early in August also.

. . . catalogues

stock list included with this desaptch, and (probably in August) a 'New Titles' list for the next six months.

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PARLIAMENT RULES FAR FROM OK

No, I am not referring to the general misdemeanours of Mrs. Thatcher's government, nor even to the distorted and unrepresentative way in which her party exercises such power in the land. I refer to the act of the Commons in the early hours of 18 July, when it finally threw out the Measure to allow the bishops of the Church of England, under exceptional conditions, to ordain those who had been once married and then divorced, and had since re-married. Liturgical? Well, yes, insofar as it affects candidates. That is why we occasionally report on the ordination of women.

In the case of this particular legislation, there had been difficulties raised in the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament (which advises on whether it is 'convenient' to take Measure to Parliament). That Committee finally only approved the going forward by a casting vote, and it was known that there could be trouble when the Synod persisted in laying it before Parliament, and the actual rejection by the Commons by 51 votes to 45 may therefore not have surprised every close onlooker of the scene. Some have written as though the vote, taken at 3.30 a.m., was tiny and could be easily reversed. My impression on the other hand was that, for church legislation, this was an enormous turn-out, and would not easily be increased. The dynamics of Church of England affairs in the Commons appear to be that (a) upwards of 500 members consider either that they should not vote at all, or that it is a matter of low priority; and (b) the remainder who will vote tend to include a more passionate opposition to some General Synod Measures than can ever be attracted as supporters. This was one of such. The result may not have been surprising. On the other hand, there are those, of whom I am one, who will count it horrifying.

Why horrifying? Well, I cannot, of course, leave out of account the persons who, were it for not this re-marriage in their pasts, would be candidates, often very good candidates, for ordination. Some are women who were already deaconesses, and thus have had full selection and full training, but could not be ordained deacon when the other women were two years ago, as the Canons forbade it. I even know a couple of such deaconesses who are debarred from ordination because their *clergy* husbands were already divorced when they married them. That is the ultimate irony, I guess – where the male presbyter's *second* marriage, coming subsequent to his ordination and divorce, does not and cannot impede his own sacramental and other ministry, whereas it does impede the ministry of his poor wife who has only entered her *first* marriage. But there are many other anomalies also.

But the truly horrifying factor is that it is the *Commons* which has, as it occasionally does, thwarted the decision of the General Synod. I suggested in an article in *The Times* on 19 July that, if the General Synod really wants this action, of such persons being ordainable when the particular candidate has not only been selected but a special case has been made to the archbishop of the Province, then the way ahead lies not in trying to bamboozle the Commons into a different result, but rather in attempting to evade the MPs altogether.

If to-day's House of Bishops were to draw upon the actions of their predecessors in 1929, following the twice-running defeat in the Commons of the 1927-28 'Deposited' Prayer Book, then they would issue a statement saying that, in the present emergency, they would not view actual

acting upon the draft Canon about ordination as not 'inconsistent with loyalty to the Church of England' (which was the terminology in 1929). This would be better far than trailing back with subsequently the same legislation simply hoping helplessly that different persons would be present and voting in the Commons next time. And let the Church of England be free.

C.O.B.

Book Review

Michael Perham (ed.) *Towards Liturgy 2000: Preparing for the Revision of the Alternative Service Book* (SPCK/Alcuin Club, July 1989) 102pp., £4.95.

Well, I am probably the wrong person to review this book, as I wrote a Grove Booklet on the subject in January. But the volume has come to hand with only just enough room and time for a first notice of it to come in these columns – and if news of liturgy is our business, then a book which stands so close to the heart of NOL's concerns should at least be *mentioned* this month, even if later comment is added. So here goes on an admittedly swift notice.

This is a symposium, with brief handling of topics, and with well-known authors in the contributors. Donald Gray's opening touches on the history of Alcuin Club influence on liturgical revision in the past; Bryan Spinks traces the move from definitive volume to 'Directory'; John Fenwick has four pages on charismatics and the liturgical future (have we read him on *this* subject before? It is good to see). Mark Dalby fuffs around about the principle of deriving infant baptism from adult, complains about the deletion of the Mark 10 Gospel, and is pernickety about baptismal 'promises' (a statement of love is a statement of will for the future theologically; and statements of repentance and faith are the same; and both can easily be called promises without misrepresentation). We have chapters on offices and lectionary; and a Stevenson treatment of the eucharistic prayer, which sensitively explores shape and style and congregational participation, and enters (as we might expect) into some special treatment of eucharist sacrifice. Funerals need a new look; but marriage and ordination apparently do not. The ambience, the language – yes, and the women – of liturgy get a substantial crack. And we more or less end with the bureaucratic as Derek Pattinson takes us over the procedures which I have myself always revelled in explaining, whilst knowing they were infinitely boring to all outsiders . . .

It is interesting to see Alcuin and SPCK in cahoots again – I always understood that my *Latest Anglican Liturgies* had sundered the relationship, and that our joint quarterly Studies had arisen phoenix-like from the ashes of old partnership. It will be very good if the two parties have got back together. And the provision of a 'once-off' Alcuin Book occasionally, such as the working arrangement for the Joint Studies has always allowed and even encouraged, is very good to see.

C.O.B.

DIocese TO DIocese

Editors: John Corbyn and Martin Dudley

The Liturgical Commission: Inadequacies Revisited

In May I wrote about what I described as the inadequacy of the Liturgical Commission. I have had a number of communications in response to that item. May I first make clear that I did not criticize the Commission for what

it is and does, but expressed the hope that, given greater resources, it could do more. Further I readily acknowledge the time and effort members of the Commission generously give to the work of liturgical formation, not least by participating in events organized by diocesan committees.

I was not surprised to hear that the Liturgical Commission had itself given some thought to how the practical task of liturgical formation might be advanced. Some members in 1987 visited the Liturgical Institute in Ireland and, duly impressed, have since coveted such a body for England. Commission members have also felt the need to increase the study of liturgy in universities, not least to increase the number of those qualified to teach liturgy in the theological colleges and courses.

Finance seems to be, as one might expect, the stumbling block. However, surely if there was a will a way to overcome this difficulty could be found? Consider what might be achieved with a budget equivalent to the cost of one parsonage house, indeed with a budget of considerably less than one parsonage house!

The Liturgical Commission: Work to be Published

A 'Synod edition' of 'Patterns for Worship' (UPA-Family Service Liturgy) should be available in the early Autumn and, the Commission hopes, a 'Synod edition' of 'The Promise of his Glory' (Advent to Candlemas material) in December 1989.

Liverpool Liturgies

The Bishop of Liverpool asked his Diocesan Liturgical Committee to produce a series of occasional services which, to quote from his commendation of the services, 'touch some of the deep experiences of life and offer ways in which people can bring them before God'. The committee has now produced the first three such services. They comprise services for the celebration of marriage and of retirement and an education service. They are printed in an A5 format, together with some notes about the service and a form on which to make a response to the committee about the service.

The celebration of marriage and the education services, though not the service in celebration of retirement, include the placing symbolic items upon the altar-table. In the celebration of marriage service, suggestions are offered for four different groups; newly-weds – wedding album or bridal veil; couple with children – toys or household aids; retired couple – photographs or retirement gifts; and widow/widower – a keepsake.

The education service is divided into three main sections, the gifts of administration, learning and welfare, usefully covering different aspects of the life of an educational institution, not just the academic side.

In the years I spent in education in England I never once was aware of an 'education service'. When I spent a semester in Rome however I attended two 'Masses for the beginning of the academic year', one for Gregorian University students and one at St Peter's, presided over by the Pope, for all the pontifical universities. Perhaps my experience in England was typical, but I feel that services for the beginning and/or end of the academic year could have a wider currency. Services not restricted to one particular school could be held on an inter-parish or ecumenical basis.

The retirement service, though not the other two services, is designed so that it can be used either as a service in its own right or as the ministry of the word in the eucharist.

Sample copies of these services are available by sending a SAE to The Rev. P. Crean, St Philip's Vicarage, 55 Shell Road., Liverpool L6 3AD.

Lichfield – Living Worship

The Rev. David Austerberry writes:

'Day Conferences on "Living Worship – Preparing for Sunday Worship" are being planned for the coming winter in the Diocese of Lichfield. These days are being held in four centres around the diocese, two of them being on eucharistic worship and two on all-age non-eucharistic worship. We will be inviting a car full to come from parishes (1 clergy and 3 laity). Each day will be limited to 40 people from 10 parishes. The programme will include input on "What is Worship?" and "Flexibility within the Liturgy", workshops on Word, Music, Prayer, Use of Space and Presiding Skills, preparing an Act of Worship to conclude the day. It is envisaged that from next Spring members of the Liturgical Group will be available to lead similar workshops within parishes or groups of parishes as part of a continuing programme to improve the standards of worship within the diocese.'

Golden Silence?

Recently I attended a residential conference at which the worship was led by various participants in turn. The worship was generally of a good quality except for one flaw; it seemed to me that the services contained too much material too quickly said and without sufficient pause for thought. Soon after returning from this residential conference I attended a day conference which began with a said eucharist (ASB 1980 Rite A). Apart, I think, from the commandments, every item that one might use at the eucharist was used, I felt 'punch drunk' by the end of the service. This particular eucharist was led by a number of clergy but it made me realize how mid-week said eucharists often involve the priest speaking, more or less continuously, for the greater part of the service, perhaps giving the worshipper liturgical indigestion. Mid-week eucharists are, in the main, attended by those worshippers most able to use periods of quiet; this being the case, the intercessions might consist of brief biddings, indeed it might be appropriate to omit a set prayer, for instance the prayer of humble access, thereby giving worshippers the opportunity for their own prayers.

If periods of silence are to play a creative part in worship worshippers need to know they are coming, otherwise the impression is given simply that there is a hitch in the service. Also the presiding minister needs to set a good example and resist the temptation to find, say, the next hymn which will usually be imitated by the congregation.

At services where there is musical accompaniment there is scope for instrumental music which might assist reflection.

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