

# News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan Issue no. 181 January 1990

## Editorial

It is *Patterns, Patterns*, all the way now – not only for this issue of *NOL*, not only for Synod in February (for which read on), but all the way through the forthcoming decade (which starts, it will be recalled, in a year's time). The new material from the Commission not only puts Prince Charles straight out of court, but also bids fair to be the backbone of our liturgical consideration, and the staple contents of much actual liturgy, till 2000 be out. So this is by way of rounding up the immediate loose ends.

Firstly, we note a couple of adjuncts. One is a pair of *Essays on Eucharistic Prayers* by Bryan Spinks and Kenneth Stevenson (GS Misc 333 – and presumably available from Church House Bookshop). They are circulated with the goodwill of the Commission, and relate specifically to the new eucharistic prayers in *Patterns*.

Bryan Spinks tells us, rightly in my judgment, that there is now a need to go beyond Rite A's provision of 'EP's. The four in Rite A look as though they have too much of Hippolytus in their ancestry; too much homogeneity in their structure; too wooden or defensive a use of the institution narrative; too many abstract concepts and too much synodese in their English language. He argues further that

'in reproducing the Thanksgiving material of the classical EPs, the rehearsal of "the mighty acts of God" runs counter to modern ideas of history. The idea of progressive history . . . has with some justification been compared with the Whig interpretation of history . . .' (pp.5-6).

This is now becoming fun, as it is not so much a shift of direction which he seems to advocate here as a complete abandonment of a central principle. If this is a ground for writing new EPs, then it is also one for burying existing ones. And the writers of the new must watch lest they too suffer from this Whig virus which has carried off the best the Synods could do ten years ago . . .

There is finally a hint of another cross-current to sweep away controversies of the 1970s. 'A number of us' says Spinks are 'High Calvinists', and this apparently means that they want an emphasis upon 'the eternal efficacy of the sacrifice of the obedient manhood which is now in heaven'. It is a forthcoming essay of Bryan Spinks which will convince us of this, but we must assume the Commission is content already.

Then he introduces the new EPs. They exhibit variety. They echo sources which are early, 'classical', and reformed (oh, yes, and West Malling . . .), and they do not rely upon one impeccable ancestor to keep the stock pure. They 'celebrate God's action in the present' as well as 'recalling his past mighty acts'. The language seeks to use images and to be evocative. It is drafted for increased congregational participation. And the whole provision has a 'deep structure' of 'thanksgiving and supplication'.

Kenneth Stevenson's essay is largely an exposition of each of the new EPs in turn, thus giving instances of Spinks' principles. EP A is creation-conscious, and includes a new approach to the 'taking' of the bread and cup. B is 'neo-classical', and has highly imaginative 'proper insertions' at a point after the Sanctus. C 'moves happily and easily' through a structure which includes a mingling of past and present and a variety of one-line congregational responses to a climax in the Sanctus (hence the importance of West Malling). D is simple and short and more familiar in its thought-forms than the previous three – but it connects with the rest of *Patterns* by adopting the 'Thanksgivings' from the Resources section of the Report as *Proper Prefaces*.

Whilst those two essayists seem to have got semi-official circulation for their work, there is, of course, a wider and fuller treatment of the whole Report by three members of the Commission in *Introducing Patterns for Worship* (Grove Worship Series no. 111) published with this *NOL*. Furthermore the Report itself has more explanatory and commentary material than previous Commission reprints.

Along with these essays, there are published six sample cards for congregational use, as advocated in the Report (pp 31-105), and these attractive boldly illustrated cards do look as though they could be very business-like, as well as tolerably economical, in congregations which do not want large books to hold. Well done, CHP! The baptism sample (pp. 99-105 in *Patterns*) made me think hard about what should be available in people's hands – the sample is apparently uncertain as to whether infants and children are its main targets (they are targeted at the giving of the candle, but not elsewhere). And there is nothing in the sample to say 'You must answer for yourselves and for these children' (and there is also no prayer, mandatory in ASB rite, for protection from the powers of evil). A card put out like this *by authority* will quickly convert into that which a leader of worship uses, both for convenience and, quite genuinely, to ensure that leader something are following the same route. When mandatory material is omitted from the cards without even rubrical trace (just happened with the cards for communion of the sick) then the mandatory material is greatly at risk.

Finally, the Synod is likely to be asked to authorize outlines as 'Alternative Services' under the existing procedures. These, as suggested on page 287 of *Patterns*, would be

1. A Form of Service for Morning or Evening Prayer: The Service of the Word.
2. A Form of Service for The Holy Communion (Rite C).
3. Alternative Confessions and Absolutions (Resource Section 2).
4. Alternative Eucharistic Prayers (Resource Section 9).

Over this policy I would want to raise a question or two. The authorization of Rite C seems uncontroversial (and is what constitutionally should have happened with all new material for the eucharist in *Lent Holy Week and Easter*). But the Service of the Word, admirable as an idea and highly adaptable in practice, looks as though it will prove formidable to bring under the provisions of an 'alternative' service of Morning or Evening

Prayer. I cannot think what a Revision Committee of Synod would do with it, and I should have thought that 'commendation' by the House of Bishops as a service not alternative to anything would have ensured the sustaining of the Commission's original vision, whilst still giving the rite as good a standing as the *Lent . . .* material has.

As to nos 3 and 4 in the list, then we have bigger problems still, and probably unnecessary ones. There is no limit on confessions in existing Rite A, so new ones would always be lawful anyway. At Morning or Evening Prayer, whilst one text seems to be set, there is no reason why other confessions should not be used *before the rite officially starts* – in this case at 'O Lord, open our lips'! And, obviously, new confessions can be in the Service of the Word and in Rite C. As to new eucharistic prayers, these cannot be lawfully authorized to go with Rite A, *save* by altering the rubric at no. 37 in Rite A. And that means that Rite A itself is being revised, and anything could happen. And it is unnecessary, for surely Rite C includes everything that could be desired under Rite A, so that authorizing new eucharistic prayers under Rite C would suffice to give all who use Rite A the opportunity to use them – but their use would have become Rite C! In essence the Worship and Doctrine Measure allows the authorization of alternative services, but does not provide for the authorization of bits and pieces outside of full rites. So the Synod ought to look hard and long at the programme on page 287.

To wrap it all together, we reproduce below the relevant extract from the report of the Archbishop's Advisory Group on UPAs *Living Faith in the City*. Synod will not be debating this report alongside *Patterns* (and financial compensation in the wake of the presbyterization of women). It should come in July. Mevnrwhile God bless them.

Colin Buchanan

## CELEBRATING FAITH: WORSHIP IN UPAs

(Reproduced from *Living Faith in the City*, pages 17-20)

1. Contrary to what is widely believed, corporate acts of Christian worship flourish in the so-called concrete jungle. Much of this worship however, takes place in the context of informal gatherings in homes' secular buildings such as schools or youth clubs, or in the open air. Within this brief report it is not possible to do justice to such a variety of approaches, and therefore we confine our attention to liturgical worship as traditionally understood within the Church of England. This is crucially important since for most UPA residents their most likely contact with worship occurs through their (probably occasional) attendance at a church service.
2. *Faith in the City* emphasized the importance of liturgical worship in the life of UPA churches (6:99-113), recognizing that if such worship is truly to engage the hearts and minds of urban people it must 'emerge out of and reflect local cultures'. The report noted that 'the work of reforming the liturgy has really only just begun for the UPA Church, and we recommend that the Liturgical Commission pays close attention to the needs of churches in the UPAs.'

3. Two significant consequences have flowed from this recommendation. Firstly there has been the careful work for the past three years of the sub-group appointed by the Liturgical Commission to prepare new services responsive to the needs of UPA parishes. Secondly there has been a fresh impetus on the part of many clergy and congregations to explore forms of worship arising from their own experience: 'worship committees' have sprung up producing material which can range from the bright and beautiful to the banal and bizarre. Understandably therefore the proposals of the Liturgical Commission may be regarded as a 'reining in' of the unco-ordinated, unauthorized and unstructured provision which is widespread in the context of non-statutory services.
4. The Liturgical Commission's proposals for UPA services have arisen from their experience of listening to local representatives and examining material submitted from diocesan groups. Even a cursory glance at the proposed material should encourage UPA doubters that their pleas have been clearly heard: the sample services are notable for the absence of excess verbiage, they are orientated towards congregational participation and the language employed cannot be dismissed as 'ASB speak'. Also the services can be made available on cards, thereby meeting the objection of *Faith in the City* that UPA congregations are not comfortable with the 1300 page ASB. The comment of the Commission which will probably strike the most sympathetic response among UPA worshippers is the final sentence of the paragraph relating to UPAs in the Introduction to the services: 'The needs of the UPA parish for worship reflecting local culture, language and concrete expressions are not best met by a group of experts at the centre laying down all the words of liturgy, but by creating the framework and the environment which will enable a new generation of worship leaders to create genuinely local liturgy which is still obviously part of the liturgy of the catholic Church,' if this acknowledgement is accepted by Synod and recognized throughout the Church of England the results could indeed be exciting and, in the best sense of the term, revolutionary.
5. The Commission has been prepared to grasp the potentially most painful nettle of revision of eucharistic worship, and here also the proposed material containing shorter prayers with more pictorial and concrete language should be warmly welcomed by UPA congregations. In this connection we would also stress the value of family services and other forms of non-eucharistic worship as valuable bridges whereby the non-committed churchgoer may be initiated into the worshipping community. We wish to affirm the Commission's bold declaration that 'The forces of tradition, inertia, fear of insecurity and upheaval should not be allowed to prevent the continuing growth and development of the liturgy which is necessary to meet the needs of those in our cities.'
6. One of the strong, recurring pleas which *Faith in the City* heeded was the need to provide for the expression of 'story' on the part of UPA Christians. The Liturgical Commission also acknowledged this, and recommends that the Church 'should make further and more imagin-

ative lectionary provision', noting the omission of many well-known stories in both Old and New Testaments from the current ASB Sunday lectionary. To this we would wish to add that there must be correspondingly greater facility for UPA Christians to 'tell their own story' within the context of worship, with a recognition that such participation should not be seen as intrusive in the movement of liturgy.

7. *Faith in the City* was careful to note that 'Worship which encourages informality and spontaneity will not dispense with care and preparation'. The Liturgical Commission in *Patterns of Worship* warns of the danger of devaluing the reading of Scripture because lessons are badly read, whether by children or adults. Training is desirable for those who officiate at services of public worship, and it does not seem that provision is always readily available for this even within specific lay training schemes. There is likewise a need for help with preaching skills for both clergy and lay ministers who serve UPA congregations. In an age when the television set and video player are to be found in most homes the demand for visual as well as spoken presentation becomes increasingly insistent.
8. Recognition of the proper place of training must not obscure the vital truth that all members of a congregation should be given an opportunity to share in preparation and presentation of worship. It seems that UPA worshippers are often more willing to participate in services than those from other backgrounds who incline to individualized, even private, religious devotion. In his fine book on pastoral care in the inner city, Nicholas Bradbury indicates ways in which members of a congregation can be encouraged to prepare worship together, and how this results in the growth of spiritual confidence. He observes perceptively that 'The corporate preparation of worship will result in more than lively liturgy on Sundays; it will nurture the prayer of the congregation.'
9. One suggestion we advance towards developing and enriching liturgy in UPAs is for dioceses to designate 'Areas of Liturgical Experiment'. This would permit the use of more radical and creative forms of liturgy within the pale of official authorization, and remove the sense of stigma attached to congregations who may otherwise be considered culpable for holding 'illegal' services.
10. From the standpoint of many urban Christians who desire only to participate in worship which truly glorifies God as well as lifting their own spirits, the goal of all reform and experimentation is the emergence of genuine 'people liturgy'. One of the most moving examples of this in recent years was the experience in Liverpool following the Hillsborough football disaster. The preparation for the memorial service at the Metropolitan Cathedral took the form of people offering informally and spontaneously various objects which were associated with their present situation – shirts, scarves, hats, flowers etc. – which were placed on the altar. The procession was impressive, like pilgrims visiting a shrine. Tears of guilt and penitence were shed and hands of peace outstretched to affirm and support one another in the wake of the ordeal. The fellowship of people with a common interest and purpose was expressed with all the dignity of eucharistic liturgy. On other occasions the mood might be exuberant rather than solemn.

<sup>1</sup> N. Bradbury *City of God? Pastoral Care in the Inner City* (SPCK, 1989) p.70.

11. There is currently a great emphasis on ‘celebration’ in all sections of the church, and nowhere is this more appropriate than in the drab and depressing situations in which many congregations meet together. We need therefore to encourage developments which will enable worship in UPAs to become more truly the offering of all the people of God. In the words of Jurgen Moltmann ‘It is possible that out of a church for the people there could come a church of the people . . . In place of a religious ceremony for the people each Sunday there can be a feast of the congregation.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. Moltmann *The Open Church* (SCM, 1978) pp.115, 124.

#### **This Month’s Booklet . . .**

. . . is *Worship Series* no. 111, *Introducing Patterns for Worship*, by Trevor Lloyd, Jane Sinclair and Michael Varley.

#### **. . . and the Ethical Study**

is no 40, *Morality and Economic Sanctions*, by Charles Yeats.

#### **. . . and next Month’s**

is *Evangelism Booklet* no. 9, *Cross-Cultural Evangelism*, by Hitesh Dodhia.

#### **. . . and a Reprint**

is *Ministry and Worship* no. 20, *A Case for Infant Baptism*, by, COB still selling after sixteen years.

#### **. . . and a ‘New Titles’ Catalogue**

should come with this.

#### **PRINCE CHARLES CLOBBERS ASB**

Well, the pre-Christmas liturgical season was captured this last month by the Prince of Wales, fresh from his victories over contemporary architects. It appears that the Prayer Book Society and the *Spectator* had clubbed together to sponsor a prize for the school youngster (we are not clear whether it was ‘schoolboy’ or not) who could best declaim a passage from the BCP remembered by heart. Sure enough, the Prince went along to bestow the prize at a London school on the Wednesday before Christmas, and he employed a mischief-maker with a nice turn of phrase as his speech-writer (it is difficult to visualize the oh-so-serious Prayer Book Society as having drafted it with a poker face, but it just *could* be).

The Prince attacked the general lack of knowledge of English to-day, and some of the juicier language he used himself was part of this general attack, and it is incorrect to understand it as in those parts aimed at the ASB. However there are clear places where the ASB was the target, and, for the record, we print them:

‘Consider the following “We do not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy

manifold and great mercies.” Compare the courtesy of Cranmer’s language with the crassness of the Alternative Service Book, which spends much time telling the Deity what he must already know; “Lord, Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us. You are seated at the right hand of the Father, receive our prayer . . .” and so on.

‘It saddens me, as no doubt it saddens all of you, that we gather to praise Cranmer’s great work at a time when it has been battered and deformed in the unlikely cause of making it easier to understand. We seem to have forgotten that for solemn occasions we need exceptional and solemn language, something which transcends our everyday speech. We commend the “beauty of holiness”, yet we forget the holiness of beauty. If we encourage the use of mean, trite, ordinary language, we encourage a mean, trite and ordinary view of the world we inhabit.

‘If English is spoken in heaven (as the spread of English as a world language makes more likely each year), God undoubtedly employs Cranmer as his speech-writer. The angels of the lesser ministries probably use the language of the New English Bible and the Alternative Service Book for internal memos.

‘The editors of the Revised Standard Version and the New English Bible had good reason for many of the changes they made to the King James Version. But a good many more changes were done just to lower the tone, in the belief that the rest of us wouldn’t get the point if the word of God was a bit over our heads. But the word of God is *supposed* to be a bit over our heads. Elevated is what God is. And for meddling with the Prayer Book there isn’t even the scholarly excuse.’

Well, folk who helped write the ASB, and congregations which have chosen to use it rather than the BCP, are bound to rise in a reflex action against this swingeing condemnation. And, whilst we are extremely loyal to the throne (though with certain reforms in mind), we are sure that the heir to the throne, having launched an attack with a set of right royal fisticuffs, would want the issue tried on its merits and not simply evaded on the grounds that royalty must not be gainsaid. So here goes – hints for the prince next time he wants God to arise and scatter the ASB:

- 1 Criticism should (for credibility) be based upon proven experience of worshipping for a period with each Book (the prince may have this, but it is not clear).
- 2 Criticism should not take the form of sweeping generalizations but should be well illustrated (and, as a formal point, the best of one Book should be compared with the best of the other – anyone can score a cheap triumph by comparing the best of one with the worst of the other).
- 3 The criticism that the ASB does too much of telling God things about himself he already knows falls flat on its face. The whole structure of BCP prayer is ‘Almighty and everliving God, who by thy holy apostle hast taught us to make prayers and thanksgiving for all men’. The petition when it comes is based on the attribution of certain characteristics to God. The only difference in the ASB is that the telling God is done by main sentence forms in the second person singular, rather

than by adjectival clauses in the second person singular (and that change is made simply because to say ‘Our Father, who are in heaven’ does not sound right). There is no difference of principle whatsoever.

- 4 The two particular illustrations the Prince chooses are appalling for his purposes (we could have supplied him with better) For –
  - (a) ‘We do not presume’ comes in virtually identical form in the ASB so that no accusation of bowdlerization can stand; and
  - (b) the extracts from the Gloria in Excelsis in the ASB correspond closely to those in the BCP (saving only the adjectival clause).
- 5 We have a half-recollection that the Prince used ASB prayers (with a Series 1 rite otherwise) when he himself got married. Why in these prayers did he abandon God’s English speech-writer for the mess of memos the angels push around the departments? (We argued at the time that he (or the archbishop) was in breach of the law for doing so, it must have been for a very weighty cause he did it. We do not get many glimpses of the Prince’s own liturgical choice, but his one we did get – and it now seems to clash with his own principles).
- 6 Whilst it is no part of *NOL* to defend Bible translators, we do think that demonstrating the point about a deliberate lowering of tone would be very difficult: we do not readily concede that the word of God should be ‘over our heads’ if by that is meant that it is either incomprehensible, or so mesmeric as a work of art that its message is not heard – not thus was the NT written in *koine* Greek.
- 7 We naughtily wonder whether anybody had sent a copy of *Patterns* to the Prince. The ASB he attacks is now becoming fairly *passé*.
- 8 But what we are really chasing is this: even if we allow that Cranmer is God’s speech-writer, who is the Prince’s?

## **DIocese TO DIocese**

Editors: John Corbyn and Martin Dudley

### **Manchester Diocese**

The Rev. Michael Ainsworth writes about a new venture in the Manchester diocese:

In *Diocese to Diocese* last May, John Corbyn wrote of the need for some liturgical ‘field officers’ to help people turn new texts into living worship. This and similar suggestions coming from members of the Liturgical Commission rang bells with me as I looked around for a next job, after seven years as chaplain and liturgy tutor of the Northern Ordination Course. I wanted a UPA parish base in the diocese of Manchester, but with an opportunity to maintain and develop the links I had with worshipping communities across the diocese and beyond. The result was that I was appointed to a south Manchester council estate parish on the understanding that, once settled there, I might devote some time (up to a day and a half a week) to liturgical development activities, with special reference to the needs of urban parishes.

It was decided to structure this as a project of the diocesan Worship Committee, which I would co-ordinate, as a pilot venture to be reviewed after a year. So we have now launched an Urban Parishes Worship Project, with a set of guidelines which have the approval both of the diocesan

authorities involved and of the Liturgical Commission. Their publication of *Patterns of Worship* is an opportune jumping-off point for the project. With limited resources (and no definite funding for expenses), modest promises seem the best way of starting! The guidelines identify a number of possible activities. Firstly, there is ‘consultancy’ for clergy and parishes, and we have already received several requests to help review parish worship and introduce new ideas. Second is the dissemination and interpretation of new worship resources, from the Commission and elsewhere. Next, it will be important to identify and develop the networks of people and resources, so that good practice may be shared. We hope to work with deaneries or groups of parishes wherever possible, to enable sharing of experience and widening of horizons. POT and other training opportunities will also be valuable.

Our project attempts to take up the challenge identified by Trevor Lloyd, in his paper at the *Societas Liturgica* congress in York:

‘We need city forums for liturgical formation, and some kind of peripatetic liturgical consultancy service which as well as being involved in training and evaluating will also act as a cross-fertilizer to spread good ideas and practice . . .’

Further information from Michael Ainsworth, St. Christopher’s Rectory, Moorgate Avenue, Withington, Manchester M20 8HE (061-445 2008).

### **Durham Diocese**

Some readers will have noticed the recent advertisements for a new chaplain at St. Chad’s, Durham. This position is combined with a number of other duties, the fruit of discussions over a long period.

The chaplain will be required to conduct doctoral or post-doctoral research in liturgy, co-ordinate the teaching of liturgy in the university and act as the secretary of the Durham Diocesan Liturgical Committee. This last activity is of particular interest for this column for Durham has not had a diocesan liturgical committee for some years. It will be interesting to see which multi-talented and energetic individual will be appointed.

### **Blackburn Diocese**

In the Blackburn diocese consideration is being given to the Maundy Thursday service of Blessing of Oils and Renewal of Ordination Vows. A group of Liturgical Committee members is drawing up the service under the direction of the new diocesan bishop. Paul VI’s innovation of combining the renewal of vows with the Chrism Eucharist can make for a rather overloaded service, requiring very careful planning.

This service has gained a measure of popularity in recent years, especially among clergy of a particular outlook, indeed in some places this service has something of the character of a party rally. So called ‘concelebration’, often, even usually, part of this service, has attracted some but discouraged others. The Bishop of Blackburn has decided that in Blackburn this eucharist will not be ‘concelebrated’, this together with a generous approach to the vesture of the clergy, may help to draw a wider range of clergy to the Blackburn service.

In previous years at the Blackburn service it has been the priests alone who have made an act of recommitment. It is intended that this year deacons will be given an opportunity to join in this action. The renewal is to use the vows in the ASB 1980 Ordination Rites. The nature of the participation of lay people in this service is a matter of some delicacy.

The Roman Catholic Church located the renewal of vows on Maundy Thursday because the vows renewed were those of the priests, linked to this day because of its focus on Christ’s priestly ministry, and in the light of that church’s particular doctrines of priesthood. The action of the diocese of Blackburn, and other dioceses, in extending the scope of this service constitutes a significant development.

Maundy Thursday comes at a particularly busy period for the clergy, making it difficult for some to attend, especially those who live some distance from their cathedrals. Perhaps an opportunity for a renewal of vows could be made at some other time of the year, perhaps on the Saturday preceding the major ordination seasons of Petertide and Michaelmas?

### **Ripon Diocese**

Michael Vasey writes about a meeting of the Ripon diocesan synod: The white-haired man in front of me wore an elegant pin-striped suit. He dabbed his eyes with a folded handkerchief as he wept with laughter. We were both listening to a presentation by the Ripon Diocesan Liturgical Committee to the Diocesan Synod. The Synod began with a eucharist planned by the Liturgical Committee using texts from *Patterns for Worship* and sensitively led by the Bishop. Next came a witty portrayal of four different approaches to Mothering Sunday. No tradition was spared. (The script of this was prepared with help from the Diocesan Drama Advisor; it can be obtained from David Mann, 40 Marlborough Grange, Leeds LS2 4NE, or Andrew Nunn, St. Hilda’s Clergy House, 70 Cross Green Lane, Leeds LS9 0DG). This was followed by three members of the committee saying in a few sentences why liturgy mattered to them. A retired archdeacon then spoke about the way in which liturgy affected everyone – you did not need to be a patristic scholar or a first-class musician to have something to give. He emphasized that the Liturgical Committee had important things to give and introduced the following recommendations, already circulated on an A5 sheet:

1. That the committee secretary sit on the Board of Ministry and Training and that a member of the committee sit on the DAC.
2. That the committee be used as a resource by all involved in liturgy – parishes, schools, deaneries.
3. That a Diocesan Liturgical Resource Centre be established and that a Liturgical Advisor be appointed (part-time or extra to post already held).
4. That the committee include lay membership.
5. That parishes/groups of parishes establish worship committees to work with parish clergy.
6. That the committee concentrates more time on liturgical formation (exploration and education of clergy and laity).
7. That we are all open to the liturgies we experience and learn from what other churches/communions/denominations are doing.

These were welcomed and will be discussed at the Bishop’s Council. Both service and presentation finished early.

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