

# News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan Issue no. 187 July 1990

## Editorial

GENERAL SYNOD – JULY 1990 – END OF TERM REPORT  
The various strands of liturgical business on the General Synod agenda can be pulled together as follows:

### 1. First debate on *The Promise of His Glory*

A separate report by Michael Vasey, who sat in the gallery at York for this, begins below.

### 2. The hoary chestnut – ‘Willing and Able’

A separate report on this extraordinary business is provided by Roger Godin, who is central to the current Synodical activity on this issue, and that is on page 2.

### 3. Those Series 1 Rites

Well, the Synod finally got itself out of knots, and both titles were now approved for ten years use – but separately. The voting was

	Marriage		Burial	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Bishops	31	0	32	0
Clergy	134	33	134	31
Laity	127	47	112	53

It looks as though only 60% were voting, even though the Synod was at a residential meeting. The burial rites were piloted through by Bishop George Carey, nowadays declaring himself ready at least to sanction petitions for the departed.

### 4. Other Liturgical business (see June *NOL*)

The Meissen Statement was approved; the diocesan motions were not reached; and one or two questions should be reported here next month.  
Colin Buchanan

## SYNOD DEBATES ‘PROMISE’

*The Promise of His Glory* (GS 907) received a warm welcome in a ‘take note’ debate at York on Sunday 9 July. There was little of the nervousness that characterized the debate on *Patterns*. Christmas it seems, despite the absence of much official provision, is already part of common prayer! It was encouraging that so much of the Commission’s thinking was picked up and echoed in many of the speeches.

The tone of the debate was fixed by a welcoming first speech from the floor by the Bishop of Chelmsford. He spoke of the skill involved in preparing liturgical texts and warned Synod against insensitive corrections. ‘Few people can judge a piece of music by reading the score.’ The few brave souls who dared to point out errors in the text did so with some diffidence.

The Liturgical Commission had worked, we were informed, on the assumption that *Promise* could be ‘commended’ by the House of Bishops in the

same way as *Lent, Holy Week, Easter*. (See the confident preface by the Commission’s Chairman). It was therefore more than disappointing to be told that Synod’s lawyers have now decided that part of the book will have to go through the full synodical procedure. Explicit mention was made of the lectionary material which apparently now needs to be authorized under the provisions of Canon B4A. It is unclear why the lectionary material in *Lent, Holy Week, Easter* did not require synodical authorization. Perhaps it is also now unlawful?

A number of speeches pointed out that the calendar and lectionary ideas are integral to *Promise* and called for a more flexible approach to authorization. It was good to hear from the Bishop of Derby of a forthcoming House of Bishops’ minute asking for a ‘lighter’ form of synodical commendation for an experimental material. It was encouraging to hear a similar proposal from Hugh Craig, a doughty defender of lay rights. No one mentioned that attempts to establish such a procedure early in the life of this Synod had come to nothing. It is unclear whether all this will save *Promise* in anything like its present form.

The two most weighty criticisms of *Promise* came in a speech by Jean Mayland. She criticized an over-emphasis on predictive prophecy in the Advent material and regretted the near denigration of the ASB’s nine Sundays before Christmas with their fuller handling of the Old Testament. This criticism can be met in part by pointing to the much fuller treatment of the Old Testament in Lectionary 2.

Jean Mayland also described much of *Promise* as ‘baroque churchianity’. Another speech tried to send up the very ‘antique’ version of the *Dies Irae*. Sybil and all. Of course, none of the material is compulsory and a strong case can be made for keeping the best of traditional material in use. Those who have criticized the ASB for underplaying divine judgment should now be satisfied!

I have two personal reflections on the debate.

The first is that one of the two ways of viewing *Promise* never really emerged. The tendency is to see *Promise* as a move to recover the rich weight of the ancient seasons of Advent and Epiphany. It can also be read as less directive and more exploratory. It has plenty to offer to churches for whom the traditional seasons either side of Christmas have little relevance or whose eyes turn naturally to the Bible, to mission, to contemporary insights or to popular practice – I avoid the pejorative ‘folk religion’ – rather than to things ecclesiastical.

My second reflection is regret that the strong and creative contribution of evangelicals on the Liturgical Commission is not reflected in Synodical discussion. Discussion of the delicate issues round prayer and the departed would have been much improved. The ways in which *Promise* draws on evangelical strengths and biblical principles could have been spelt out. The vacuum created in Synod by Colin Buchanan’s departure has yet to be filled.

Michael Vasey

[I am about to try to fill any such gap myself – COB].

## FLAWED OR FLOORED? – ‘WILLING AND ABLE’ AGAIN

As anticipated (even hoped for?) in *News of Liturgy* last month, the minimalist proposed amendment to Canon B22 hit trouble at the July Synod. This was intended to give effect to the 1974 Chris Wansey minimalist amendment (Grove Editor calls it ‘perverse’!) that the parents of children presented for baptism should be ‘able’ to make the requisite faith affirmations and declarations.

In my speech supporting the draft amendment I pointed to a ‘History of Accidents’ on all initiation business:

- The initial 1974 draft ‘was lost sight of’ in Church House;
- The 1976 Southwell motion requiring the conditions under which children are accepted for baptism to be reviewed. was ‘somehow’ never debated;
- Although a 1980 attempt to overthrow Wansey was defeated, the draft Canon was never presented;
- The honest statement in 1986 that the Authorities ‘believed they had taken action synodically . . .’ on the ‘willing and able’ motion;
- The accidental failure (uniquely) of the Finance Board to say there was no money to service the (passed) Godin Motion – (just £800!);
- The wrong drafting mentioned in last month’s *NOL* on the first presentation;
- The Reardon Report covering all the issues requested by the Archbishop of York’s dissenting speech to my 1989 motion and drafted in May, was not ready.

etc. etc. . .

However at long last the draft Canon was drawn up, generally approved at the November group of sessions in Synod (without a murmur from anybody) and adjourned until July. Just two weeks before the sessions began, the Standing Committee announced that it was of such fundamental importance to the fabric of the Church of England that it had been declared Article 7 business – a rigorous procedural device requiring mandatory reference to the House of Bishops, as well as special scrutiny elsewhere sometimes.

Chris Whitmey, Peter Hobson and I led a two-pronged attack to seek for this decision to be reversed, but after careful consideration by the ‘gang of six’ including two Archbishops and both prolocutors, the Standing Committee decision was predictably (but I have to say on reflection not incorrectly) affirmed. On reflection, as Michael Hodge suggested to me, we who look for baptismal reform to be taken seriously should be encouraged by this – the Church is waking up to its responsibilities at last!

However, since it was Article 7 business the Standing Committee removed the offending section from the initial draft and it was re-introduced, some thought as a formality, late on Monday afternoon (at a time when quite honestly I should have been on the train going back to my PCC for the Parish Audit Review!).

Re-introduction was far from a formality. Before anybody could speak Archdeacon Silk was on his feet and outwardly making a case for waiting until the House of Bishops had completed their detailed discussions. As one member said, he was actually making a very good case for remitting

the discussion in the normal way to the Revision Committee. Several strong speeches followed – from Alan Bretherton (Liverpool) pointing to the strengthening of pastoral control this would give to the clergy, Peter Hobson and Chris Whitmey pointing to the need for minor amendments in revision to deal with the single parents and single believing parents issues. However the final battle was joined when as usual the Archbishop of York ‘intervened’ and sought to explain that the ‘chapter of accidents’ was not so much one of deliberate or accidental carelessness, but because to him the concept seemed ‘fundamentally flawed’. Persuasive as ever, he recommended to the Synod that highly plausible and effective argument – ‘Let’s defer until there has been fuller discussion by the House of Bishops’, based on the Reardon Report and others. Frankly this is the same record as we have had played several times but to a slightly different tune. However in response to his request that a publicly spirited person might stand up and move the adjournment I obediently and submissively did just that!

But just how can it be said that the ‘series of accidents’ is a result of the proposals being flawed? The Wansey wording may sound imprecise but that is part of its charm! As Oswald Clark said at Revision Stage – it can mean anything or nothing. Just like so much of the ASB liturgy beloved by Dr. Habgood! But drafts don’t get lost sight of if they are simply flawed – they get debated and rejected. Even if the Wansey Clause is not the best thing since sliced Ely, it was a start, twice approved by Synod and unchallenged in Revision Committee. And were BEM and Lambeth both so flawed in their arguments that, until pressure was brought to bear, there was no response from the House of Bishops?

I am not willing and able to suggest that there are planned accidents. What I do believe is that it will be as difficult to tackle ‘folk religion’ and the woolly ‘it’s the faith of the Church that matters’ as it was to gain support for modern English Services. But in one there was clearly a will to find the way. On baptismal reform there are not many Bishops willing and able to find the way – yet.

So Chris Wansey’s ghost haunts Synod still – the ‘and able’ clause survives in the wings, but far more importantly, and seriously, the new Synod will be considering Christian initiation in depth hopefully from the very start. I am actually delighted that in the new Synod there will be the Reardon Report and a comprehensive review by the House of Bishops. What better subject could there be in the first quinquennium of the decade of evangelism! Baptismal Reform is not flawed – but is now clearly on the Floor of Synod for debate.

Roger Godin

## ECUMENICAL CANONS RE-VISITED

In the early part of last year I gave considerable space to the coming in of Canon B44, and I was myself involved in Birmingham, both as chairman of the Diocesan Pastoral Committee and as chairman of the Regional Sponsoring Group for LEPs, in drafting the form of an ‘Instrument’ to be employed in each LEP. At a late stage the BMU gave advice that existing LEPs had no need to become legal, but long-standing illegality should be simply let alone – advice which completely vitiated all the care that had gone into producing the Canon. Readers may also remember that we got guidelines from elsewhere (which were tighter than B44), but the effect

of their bad advice was countered at an even later stage by a good ‘Model Instrument’, which exactly embodied the liberties in the Canon.

A year’s experience, not least in West Kent, makes me wonder whether anybody anywhere has actually read the Measure and Canon B44! I get a distinct impression that anybody who is doing anything ecumenical now simply says ‘I am acting under B44’, as though this was an automatic and infinitely wide umbrella for all activities, and there was no need actually to consult it – let alone follow it.

An even greater oddity has emerged. I encountered a friend in an LEP in the South Midlands the other day, and asked him, as is my wont, whether the bishop had issued an ‘Instrument’ under the Canon. ‘No’ my friend replied ‘he does not need to – he has simply given his permission by less weighty means’. At first hearing this was absurd, but I looked in my files, and found a BMU letter of 5 July last year (which I failed to reprint at the time), advising ecumenical officers, with the approval of the Legal Advisor to General Synod, as follows:

‘. . . The wording of Canon B44.4 (1) is that “A bishop . . . may by an instrument in writing” make provision for a number of matters.

‘It has been pointed out that this is not mandatory and that, therefore it is for the bishop to decide whether, in making provision for ministry and worship in an LEP, he chooses to do this by an instrument or in a more informal way.’

I have checked this back with the text of the Canon, and I am convinced that this advice is not only incompatible with text of the Canon, but has the effect of washing out all the careful provisions of the sub-clauses of B44.4(1). Let us look at those two aspects:

- The simple word ‘may’ in a provision does *not* normally mean that a bishop or cleric or whoever ‘may’ do something in this stated way, or may do it by some other way. It means he may do it this way, or not do it at all. We may illustrate this from ordinary speech, sharpened by a touch of common sense. Thus, we might note, an incumbent ‘may’ use an Alternative Service with the consent of his PCC, but the other option is that he should not use one at all, *not* that he may use it *without* the consent of a PCC. The Canon gives no other means by which a bishop ‘may’ provide for ministry and worship which vary from the Canons of the Church of England, and surely no such powers exist?
- The provision a bishop ‘may’ make by instrument is very carefully safeguarded and circumscribed, and the whole issue of whether ‘joint services’ may be allowed is just one of those points. The following sub-clauses (2) (3) and (4) and the next main paragraph, no. 5, all put limits upon what he may provide ‘by instrument’ under his powers in paragraph 4. But if he has powers from somewhere else unspecified within the Canon to make what provision he wishes for ministry and worship in an LEP, without any trammels on it, then why on earth should he submit himself to the limits of an instrument? But if the limitations can be subverted by these other powers, then why did we all spend so much time and trouble on the Derby Working Party and in the Synod Revision Committee writing them all in?

So – *NOL* would like:

- to see any existing ‘instrument’ relating to an LEP (which must be rarer than a 9p piece);

- (b) to know in what other ways bishops believe they have powers to vary the provision of the Canons of the Church of England in LEPs;
- (c) to hear from projected LEPs, and to learn how they are approaching B44; and
- (d) to hear whether anybody anywhere has challenged the BMU advice, and insisted on proper B44 procedures?

OK – the law may be an ass. But when people spend years writing new law, and then, immediately it is in operation, tell you it never meant what they had been busy getting into it all those years, there is a sense of institutional (or even individual) idiocy left in the air. So do write in.  
COB

#### This month's Booklet . . .

is Worship Series no. 113, *But Who will Preside?*, by Alan Hargrave. The author was a lay missionary in Bolivia a few years ago, and was involved in the debates in the Southern Cone about 'lay presidency' at the eucharist. He has written up his subject from the angle of that experience, and endeavours to relate the issue to the needs of the whole Anglican Communion.

#### . . . and next month's

is Spirituality Series no. 34, *The New Age: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*, Philip Seddon offers guidelines for discrimination in 'one of the most powerful spiritual movements in the world at the moment'.

#### . . . and Clare College Sermons

provide now two out of the total of three titles due – all under the umbrella of 'Into the 1990s', and all edited by Nicholas Sagevsky. The first is *The Church in the 1990s*, and includes sermons by Leslie Newbigin and Stephen Sykes. It is an 'extra', costing £1.40, like ordinary booklets. The second is the Ethical Study for July 1990, and is entitled *Church and Society in the 1990s*. It includes sermons by Greg Forster, Christopher Rowland and John V. Taylor, and, as an Ethical Study, costs £1.95. The third title, *Christian Spirituality in the 1990s*, comes in November as no. 35 in the Spirituality Series.

#### . . . and reprints

include (short-run) extensions for P2, *The Local Church's Political Responsibility*, by Graham Dow, and S20, *Prayer and my Personality*, by Ian Williams. Full reprints include P5, *The Wisdom to Listen*, by Michael Mitton, and E74, *The Christian Green Heritage*, by Edward Echlin.

#### . . . and catalogues

also come in July – both a new stock list and a new 'New Titles' brochure. In addition we now have the first 'thematic flyer', listing all titles on Christian Initiation. We hope to follow with further flyers on Christian Ministry of Healing, Working in Small Groups, Evangelism, etc. Do you know any large-scale circulation where such flyers could be employed?

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#### SEMI-OFFICIAL PRAYERS

Firstly, the Queen Mother's 90th birthday (4 August) (issued by the Archbishops):

Almighty God, bringer of light and joy, we render grateful thanks for the happiness, the encouragement and the hope which Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother has given to the peoples of this land, the Commonwealth, and many nations of the world. We pray for her, that she may be preserved in health and in length of years, and continue your faithful servant, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Then, there is an ever-growing collection of prayers for the Decade of Evangelism. The ACC have put out successive prayers (on A4 cards), edited by Robert Renouf, the ACC advisor on the Decade. The latest selection ('Prayers through Pentecost') include prayers from Sabah, Singapore, ECUSA, Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church (in Spanish), Melanesia, West Indies, Uganda, England (yes, we are in the prayer business too), and this one (in translation) from Korea:

Almighty God, we pray as we enter the Decade of Evangelism that you will prepare your people to share their faith with those around them. Inspire more candidates for the ministry in the church and help us to increase the number of seminarians. We pray especially for the establishment of new churches that they will be living centres of evangelism. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

There is also now a 'first official Church of England publication' on the Decade of Evangelism; Brother Bernard SSF has compiled *Prayers for a Decade*, published on 18 June by Church House Publishing (16 pages, £1). There are seven pages of personal prayer themes, guidelines, open space for personal suggestions, and meditation material. There are a page of propers for communion 'for the missionary work of the church', a page from the Methodist Covenant service, and three pages of a Family Service 'On being a Witness for Christ'. On the title page the following two prayers of Brother Bernard himself appear:

Set us free, O God, to cross barriers for you, as you crossed barriers for us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.	Spirit of God, make us open to others in listening, generous to others in giving, and sensitive to others in praying; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
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In addition to the above (and we will try to keep abreast of such materials from now on), various dioceses are starting to plan and bring to birth liturgical services for the launch of the Decade. I am myself involved in the planning for Southwark (the evening of 26 November), and am at least conscious that in Rochester we shall be having a mass open-air 'launch' on Pentecost Sunday in May 1981. If anyone is involved in bright ideas for these 'once-off' inaugural events, you are invited to share them, and NOL will gladly play at *Exchange and Mart* for the next few months.  
COB

#### Book Reviews

Donald A. Withey, *Catholic Worship: An Introduction to Liturgy* (Kevin Mayhew, 1990) 280pp., £00.00.

This is a very straightforward introductory book on the official liturgy of the Roman Catholic Church, written by one of their leading (lay) scholars in this country. Nearly half the book is a whisked hop-skip-and-jump

through liturgical history, giving a background, and the second part includes a rite-by-rite explanation of the structure, theology, text, and pastoral use of each of the current rites, but also considers other features of celebrating them – such as music, art, architecture, movement, and ceremonial. A final chapter gives a brief glimpse forward, with an emphasis on coaching needs.

The history section has the occasional oddity (the fall of Jerusalem in AD 40 (p.26); the 'presbyter' as the liturgical president in the first century (p.31) – well, maybe (but note 'presbyter' in third century (p.37) and yet it is the bishop's role (p.47)); 'essential elements' in the late second century included 'concelebrants' (p.37); a slight corner-cutting on the Church of England 'Confirmation Rubric' (p.69); is it true that the withdrawal of the laity from the cup (which is how he puts it!) was 'completed by the twelfth century'? (p.74); and the liturgical movement receives rather less than one page in total (pp.96-97), which seems inadequate as a background to the current scene). But these criticisms are minor blemishes on a very good overview, and one could hardly expect a Roman Catholic author to be more critical of either medieval or Tridentine usages.

The current scene is not only surveyed, but is frequently opened up most helpfully. I particularly noted: the deprecation of communion from the tabernacle when it can be received within the liturgy; discussion of the priesthood in relation to the mass; substantial treatment of the offices; the other sacramental rites; and a thorough treatment of the role of the people – rightly grasped and presented as a key to what the liturgy is.

Here too I was left with one or two tiny questions: is consecration (or 'transformation' as it is put here) necessarily and *de fide* located in the institution narrative? (p.146); is the position of the Peace worth defending? (pp.150-1); is there any scope for a modern Lord's Prayer? (cf. pp.111 and 150); and has 'inclusive language' made any inroads yet? But these issues may be simply those on which an Anglican homes in.

If I were offering a Roman Catholic communicant a first solid book to read on RC worship to-day, I would unhesitatingly begin here. It gives almost exactly what I would want such a person to have.  
COB

George Curry (ed.) *Church Worship* (Jude Publications, 1 Springbank Road, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 1PD, 1990) 35pp.

This service booklet is the product of co-operation between two Anglican congregations and one other local Christian Fellowship, together with advice from the Rev. Roger Beckwith. It contains an order of service for Morning and Evening Prayer, the Lord's Supper, Family Worship and both 'Infant Thanksgiving' and Infant Baptism. Also included are Marriage and Funeral Services together with an order for the Interment of Ashes.

In compiling the various services – based mainly on those in the *Book of Common Prayer* – the 1978 *An Australian Prayer Book* has been plundered for various prayers, adapted extracts and responsorial material. The overall effect is to provide a modernized, 'you' form of 1662 services with rubrical instructions kept to a bare minimum. But a note at the end of the booklet encourages following BCP rubrics '... so as to avoid superstition at the Lord's Table and confusion concerning for whom (the services) may or may not be used'.

Features that catch one's attention immediately include, the mixture of inclusive and exclusive language, the use of 'one holy universal church, in the Creed, and the short but effective Exhortation linked with 'You, then, who truly and earnestly . . .'. In the Infant Baptism service parents and godparents undertake to provide '... at every stage of N's development, instruction in Christian doctrine . . .'. Some adaptations seem less logical: for example, why should it be felt necessary to delete 'we thank you for feeding us with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ' from the post-communion collect (ASB, p.145) if it is deemed acceptable to ask the Lord before communion that we might 'eat the flesh of your Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood'? One hopes that at the Lord's Supper those who are responsible for leading what are simply referred to as the 'Prayers' have been sufficiently well instructed to follow ancient tradition and encourage prayer '... for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here on earth.'

Dick Hines

#### DIOCESE TO DIOCESE

Editors: Martin Dudley and John Corbyn

#### Wakefield Diocese

The diocesan Worship and Liturgy group has, after being 'out of action' for a while taken up its task again. As in many dioceses it has turned its attention to the Liturgical Commission's reports *Patterns for Worship* and *The Promise of his Glory*. In the new year a pair of evening sessions will be held in each archdeaconry. These will look at the general issues raised by the reports as well as the material itself. The group is at present thinking of looking at two types of services, a 'family service' with a stress on all-age worship and a 'one-off' non-eucharistic evening service on a theme of the Decade of Evangelization. It will be interesting to see how other Liturgical Committees address the Decade of Evangelism.

#### Manchester Diocese

The Manchester committee has also been responding to the publication of *Patterns for Worship* (PFW). They plan to put on events on a deanery basis covering the whole diocese over a two-year period. They hope to involve those in the relevant deanery in the planning of the event and intend that participants will not only become familiar with the published material but also have an experience of collaborative planning of worship. Dr. Martin Stringer, the committee secretary, has prepared a series of questions arising from PFW which the committee will discuss at a later meeting. With his permission I reproduce these.

- 1) One of the aims of PFW is to provide material for 'one-off' services. As long as these are non-eucharistic there are no legal restraints. However there are still basic organizing principles that ought to be noted by congregations trying to produce such services either for family worship, brigade services, youth services or whatever group is being catered for.  
*Should the worship committee provide a series of sheets providing guidelines and advice to congregations who are considering such services?*
- 2) To enable the kind of congregational involvement in worship and in the planning of worship that is implied by PFW members of congregations will need a much greater level of basic 'liturgical literacy' than is currently available.

*In what ways can the worship committee work more closely with the Council for Education, Laity Development, Continual Ministerial Education, The Reader's Board and other bodies to enable the growth of 'Liturgical Literacy' within the Diocese?*

- 3) Much of PFW suggests that one function of liturgy should be the 'formation' of the congregation. This is especially true of the suggestions for the development of thematic lectionaries over short periods of time. Such a thematic approach could also be of value within the context of witness or evangelism.  
*In what ways can the worship committee encourage the use of the Liturgy in Parish Development or Evangelism, with special reference to the use of short Thematic Lectionaries?*

- 4) *Living Faith in the City* suggests the need to move on from PFW and to encourage experimentation in certain churches under the control of Diocesan Worship Committees.  
*Whilst acknowledging all the difficulties and pitfalls involved would the Worship Committee be prepared to set up one or more 'Areas of Liturgical Experiment' as suggested by Living Faith in the City?*

- 5) The final section of PFW puts a great emphasis on the use of stories in explaining the development of worship in particular parishes.  
*Could the Worship Committee explore ways of circulating stories of 'Good Practice' that come to our attention around the diocese in a way that would be of value to other parishes?*

- 6) It is acknowledged that changing the words and making them more accessible is the 'easy bit'. What is more difficult is to develop congregations in which involvement in worship, performance and planning, becomes the norm.  
*With this statement in mind we should ask, as a Worship Committee, how the Urban Worship Project should be best used.*

- 7) If we are serious about the development of involvement in worship then we must be continually exploring new ways in which that involvement can be expressed through music, through drama, through dance and in other ways. We should also enable congregations to explore these various media.  
*Is it the right time for the Worship Committee to encourage the re-establishing of drama/dance/music/art groups within the diocese which could provide a resource for local parishes?*

- 8) We must acknowledge that the primary debate surrounding PFW as it moves through the synodical structures is going to be about the need for minimum content or minimum structures within liturgy.  
*Whilst acknowledging the excellent section on content and structure within Patterns for Worship itself should the Worship Committee be addressing itself to these issues in preparation for the debate that is about to arise?*

John Corbyn

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