

News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

Issue no. 198

June 1991

Editorial

The roadshow itself, however, will not give us the full impact that we would like. We have found that we also need to publicize ourselves much more widely within the diocesan structures, to encourage other boards and committees to work with us to get our name and our principles into the parishes by whatever means are open to us, and generally to place 'worship' as a high priority on as many different agendas as we can.

We have never refused a request for help or advice although we have always adapted requests to our own interests. For example, the Readers and Lay Assistants asked us to lead their day conference on 'New Trends in Worship' and almost a hundred people, many of them fairly elderly and conservative in their outlook, enjoyed a day exploring new ways of presenting worship, new music, drama and, of course, the principle of corporate planning. The whole day culminated in an act of worship that they, themselves, had brought together. We have also been asked by the Parsonages Board for a rite of blessing for new clergy houses, and by Laity Development for a rite for the commissioning of lay ministries. In both cases sub-groups are exploring possibilities and their brief has already been changing and expanding to include rites for the blessing of houses of any kind and rites that can be used, with additional material, for a wide range of lay ministries. So the list goes on. Different individuals and sub-groups of the Committee are involved in a very wide range of related activities and it is sometimes very difficult to keep track of them all.

Another important part of our approach has been to focus on as many different levels within the diocese as possible. The Urban Parishes Worship Project is focussed primarily at the parish level and has already worked with a number of different parishes. Our request to see, talk through and advise people on parish worship booklets also gives us a way in at this level. The roadshow is focussed primarily at the deaneries and members of the committees are now being asked to talk to synods and chapters to support and back up the work of the Roadshow. We are also focusing on the diocesan level and taking an active role in a number of debates currently going on about the level of co-ordination between the various Boards and Councils that make up the Diocese.

There is still much work to be done. I have been impressed and encouraged by the enthusiasm and commitment of all our members and it is this, along with our common goals and the ability to work as a team, that has enabled us to make such a good start. We must now move on, be willing to adapt to any changes that may occur, and look forward to the day when liturgy is taken as seriously as it demands by the church as a whole.

Martin Stringer, Secretary

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Christian initiation is back on the agenda this Summer in the Church of England. The main interest this minute must lie in the debate in the General Synod, which comes during the meeting in York from 12 to 15 July. Documents for this meeting are starting to emerge and I consider them below. But I also want to draw attention to the Fourth International Anglican Liturgical Consultation which meets in Toronto from 6 to 10 August. This Consultation will have a weight of documents available (one which has come on my desk as I write is from the Primate of New Zealand, reflecting on the twenty-one years of experience of giving communion to unconfirmed children in that Province). It will also have a far wider and fuller membership than any of the previous Consultations, and we can expect its findings will be of considerable relevance to the Communion—with implications, I would guess, for the Decade of Evangelism. However, this will deserve greater space next month, and I return to our General Synod debate.

The motions to be moved from the House of Bishops are as follows:

1. That this Report be received.
2. That this Synod instruct the Standing Committee that the Canon entitled "Draft Amending Canon No. 16" (GS 935) be not proceeded with.
3. That this Synod
 - (a) affirm the traditional sequence of Baptism-Confirmation-admission to Communion as normative in the Church of England.
 - (b) accept that within this sequence Confirmation can take place at an early stage when this is deemed appropriate by the parish priest and the bishop.
 - (c) agree that experiments of admission to Communion before Confirmation should be discontinued at a rate which gives due regard to the pastoral difficulties in individual dioceses and parishes.
 - (d) ask the Liturgical Commission to prepare a series of rites described in Route Three in GS Misc. 366 for the renewal of baptismal vows, for reception of members of another church, and for reconciliation and healing.
 - (e) ask the House of Bishops, in consultation with the Board of Education and the Liturgical Commission to prepare a paper on patterns of nurture in the faith, including the Catechumenate.

This, readers will recognize, is at some points a rather opaque set of motions, but, where it is clear, it is an astonishingly reactionary package. However, it needs some commentary to set the issues out clearly.

Firstly, then, there is the 'Godin' issue—i.e. an examination of whether the Church of England should accept the timely point (reinforced by the 1988 Lambeth Conference Report) that Churches should avoid 'apparently indiscriminate baptismal policies'. The Reardon report, *Christian Initiation—A Policy for the Church of England* (GS Misc 365) is reviewed on its own merits elsewhere in this issue. The motion above which refers to it is the second one. This motion does not obviously have anything to do with initiation at all; but in fact, however improbably, it is a final attempt at the burial of the accident-prone attempts to include 'willing and able' into the Canons on baptism—i.e. that infant baptism should be for the offspring of parents who are 'willing and able' to make the requisite promises. I cannot personally shed any tears over this burial as I have always considered that 'willing and able' said either too much or too little, and had no standing in the Church of England. After a lot of hard spade work behind the scenes, I can report that 'Reardon' has an accurate account of this.

This motion is the only one which refers to baptismal policies (however obscurely). It is therefore at this point that anyone wishing to strike a blow for a more principled policy ought to offer an amendment. I doubt if I shall do so myself, but I learn that, although the form of motion no. 2 does not look amendment-friendly, some persons of principles are prepared to take up cudgels.

Secondly comes the triad of motions: 3 (a), (b), and (c). These are backed by the covering report of the House of Bishops and by a separate report (GS983), which gives some theological back-up to the motions. And here we are on extraordinary ground. The motions would give up existing 'experiments' with communion for the unconfirmed, and would meet any requests for early communion by offering early confirmation. This, in my judgment, would be playing fast and loose with Canon B27 which requires 'years of discretion' for confirmation. Certainly it would fit ill with existing patterns of confirmation as well as teaching a doctrine of the absolute necessity of confirmation for full Christian initiation.

Fortunately, however, the House of Bishops is not bound by the motions! It is acknowledged in the House that individual bishops may dissent from them. As a signatory of the Knaresborough Report (and of the 1985 'Boston Statement' from the First International Anglican Consultation), I not only cannot support those motions, but the truth is that I regret them deeply, though obviously I cannot describe in detail how it is that we are getting just these motions brought to the Synod. I shall be taking some action I hope—but see further comment below.

The Liturgical Commission themselves produce the third document, published on 1 July, *Christian Initiation and its Relation to Some Pastoral Offices: A Paper prepared on behalf of the Liturgical Commission by Kenneth Stevenson and David Stancliffe* (GS Misc 366, Church House Bookshop, 70p). It is this to which the motion 3(d) above refers. Within the short report, there is a heading 'THREE ROUTES to CHRISTIAN FAITH AND PRACTICE'. The 'three routes' themselves are defined as follows:

Route 1: 'the inherited route that lies behind the Book of Common Prayer'—this is set out as infant baptism leading to confirmation at years of discretion, and admission to communion. Curiously, the admission to communion prior to confirmation is treated as a minor variant on this 'route', though by the House

DIOCESAN REPORTS 7—MANCHESTER

When I was talking to other people about this column it was suggested that I should tell the story of how the Manchester Diocesan Worship Committee has raised its profile within the Diocese. As I began to think about this I realized that there was no real story to tell. There have been numerous events and activities over the past five to ten years all of which have come together to give the Worship Committee whatever influence or reputation it might have, but there is no continuous narrative.

The Manchester Diocesan Worship Committee appears to have something of a mythic status outside the Diocese as a Worship Committee that gets things done. It is only very recently, however, that many people within the Diocese have even realized that we exist. Certainly Kenneth Stevenson laid a very solid foundation when he was Chaplain at the University. Many of our present members owe their initial interest in liturgy to his infectious enthusiasm, and for a number of years the principles that he established kept the committee busy. They prepared liturgies for diocesan use, they arranged well attended and greatly appreciated conferences for clergy, and they prepared a regular series of short papers on liturgical matters. This laid a very solid foundation but was primarily aimed at the clergy and, inevitably, at those clergy who were already interested.

More recently we have found that this pattern was becoming tired. There were no more services to write, the numbers of clergy at conferences was declining and we were running out of things to write papers about. There was also a strong feeling that somehow the whole approach was wrong. It was about this time that I joined the Committee and I immediately set about trying to encourage the other members to take seriously the concept of 'formation' and to focus on the laity as well as the clergy. This had some effects; the occasional papers were transformed into *Rubrics*, a journal on liturgical matters that went out to lay readers and lay assistants as well as clergy; conferences were aimed much more specifically at lay people and held on days when it was hoped that they could attend, but somehow the old skins did not seem to fit the new wine.

The turning point came from two directions. The first was the setting up, by agreement between the Diocese and the Liturgical Commission, of the Urban Parishes Worship Project under the supervision of Michael Ainsworth (and I hope that Michael will be able to say more about this himself in these columns at a future date) and the second was the publication of *Patterns for Worship*. I prepared a series of questions on *Patterns* for the Committee, which were reproduced in NOL for July 1990, and we agreed to pursue a new set of principles which saw worship as a corporate activity, one that should involve the whole congregation from planning to presentation. The need was to train parishes to think about, learn more about, and ultimately plan and present their own worship.

Our response was to organize a Deanery Roadshow which hopes to visit every Deanery in the Diocese over a period of two years. It was important that the roadshow was to be seen as extra to Deanery Synods and Chapters etc. and that as many people as possible should be encouraged to attend. So far we have only held a pilot 'show' in the Rossendale deanery where it was well attended and considered to be a success. There were lessons to be learnt, of course, and we are now in the process of fine-tuning ready for the real launch in the autumn.

Bill enabling women to be ordained to the Priesthood and the Episcopate. Recognizing that the decision represented a development in the ministry of the Church of Ireland and that some Church members both clerical and lay, have genuinely felt that this change has significantly affected their relationship to the Church of Ireland, it is hereby affirmed that they should suffer no discrimination or loss of respect in their membership or in their ministry by reason of their *bona fide* held views, nor should such views constitute an impediment to their exercise of ministry in the Church of Ireland.'

A motion was brought before the Synod, asking it to 'note', 'receive' and 'affirm' the Statement which was, we were told, more of a pastoral statement than a conscience clause. After a good deal of discussion, it emerged (a) that no-one could define the concrete application of the statement; (b) that it was not clear whether it covered clergy who were ordained at the point of the 1990 decision, or all clergy with such opinions, present and future; (c) that there was a fear of a hidden agenda that the next stage was to propose that this statement be included in the Ordinal. When the qualms of the Synod became apparent, a 'rogue' bishop suggested that the motion be amended to leave out the words 'and affirms', so that the Synod was only noting and receiving the Statement. His amendment was carried, but those who felt the need of a pastoral statement to be affirmed were left feeling very raw, and indeed the Synod ended with the announcement that John Paterson, Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin had resigned as one of its Secretaries because of the vote (he has not, it should be made clear, resigned as Dean of Christ Church).

Another issue of note is that a Select Committee has been set up to consider the theological and pastoral issues involved in the admission of those baptized and unconfirmed to communion, and to report back to the General Synod in 1993. This was proposed by the Archdeacon of Cork, Michael Mayes, and seconded by me. The motion gave rise to what were perhaps some of the best speeches of the Synod, and showed that this is an important and lively issue. This is the first time that the Church of Ireland has officially dealt with children and communion.

Then there was the first stage of the revision of 'Ministry to the Sick', which included an appeal to find a better title. Any suggestions?: 'Ministry to Sick People'; 'The Ministry of Healing'??

And finally (and perhaps the most deeply felt of all), Collins has republished the *Alternative Prayer Book 1984* without adequate consultation with the Church of Ireland, and with no opportunity having been given to incorporate amendments or corrections, and has unilaterally raised the price from £5.95 to £10.95. The Church of Ireland has an agreement with Collins to publish the APB and certain supplementary material over a period of 25 years (longer than the APB will last!), and there appears to be nothing we can do about this, but it has raised many important questions about publishing liturgical materials in the future.

I hope at least some of these issues which were part of the Church of Ireland General Synod 1991 will relate to the concerns of the wider church.

Harold Miller, Cork

of Bishops this has been viewed as a wholly other (and even dangerous) 'route'. Equally curiously, though thoroughly welcome, the variant favoured by the official House of Bishops' document of an early age for confirmation is here treated as undesirable, because it 'might in such circumstances produce the need for yet another rite of commitment later on'. It will be noted that this particular report is itself the foreword to possible rites of commitment, but the authors clearly do not favour the artificial creation of such a need by removing confirmation from chief place amongst post-baptismal rites of commitment.

Route 2: 'the implied norm of the Alternative Service Book'—that is, a single service of baptism, confirmation, and admission to communion, given to adults as 'an integral whole'. This is not far from what the ASB does present, and it has to be recognized that the need for confirmation for those baptized as adults is not self-evident, and the two authors acknowledge this area of doubt. They also draw attention to practical difficulties in implementing the rite in many buildings, but my own guess would be that bishops who are unsympathetic to the structure are making too much of the difficulties—and the choreography they describe as difficult is itself not morally in accord with the rite in the ASB in any case.

Route 3: '*staged rites*'—a complex area, where the Roman RCIA has been influential. It is, of course, paradoxical that, just as baptism and confirmation had been united (see 'Route 2'), so the need to separate them out again may be coming over the horizon, though, to be fair, the 'stages' the authors describe do not include adult baptism at all, and their concern is the reaffirmation and commitment. (But surely adult baptism should have had a mention?)

But we shall have to await the actual rites, I guess—and, along with them, that unresolved issue as to whether we can dunk at reaffirmation of baptismal vows.

I do wish Toronto came before York.

Colin Buchanan

GENERAL SYNOD JULY 1991

Apart from the central initiation issues to which the editorial above refers, liturgy is on the Synod agenda in the following ways:

1. There is the Doctrine Commission's report on the Holy Spirit. Because two chapters of this are especially related to the Charismatic Movement, there will be a need to touch on worship questions. We hear on the grapevine some concern amongst charismatics that their (distinctive) doctrine of the 'baptism in the Holy Spirit' is not sufficiently positively handled (it is in fact brought to the test and text of scripture), but the more obviously worship question will be the role of the 'gifts of the Spirit' in worship. That comes on the Sunday afternoon.

2. Amongst Private Members' Motions is one by the (very conservative) Margaret Brown of Chichester (but once of Rochester) which deplors 'the use of . . . buildings, which have been consecrated for Christian worship, for the rites, ceremonies, readings or corporate prayers of other religions . . .' This is fifth on the list with 105 signatures.

3. Amongst the Diocesan Synod Motions pride of place belongs to the Rochester one resolving that:

'This Synod request the House of Bishops to prepare draft regulations that enable children to be admitted to Holy Communion before confirmation, so that discussion can take place within the Church and conditions for such admission, if any, can be considered.'

A similar if less clearcut motion from Ely Diocesan Synod comes third in the list. It remains to be seen whether these motions will be turned into amendments to the House of Bishops' platform motions, or will come as 'following' motions to be taken if as and when scope is allowed for them. My own guess would be that to pass the platform 3(a) unamended would be to encourage the lawyers to take the view that these Diocesan Motions would then fall. This in turn means that 3(a) would need some amending, so as to leave the door open a whisker to variants on 'baptism-confirmation-admission to communion'. I can see how it could be done. Keep an eye on what happens at Synod.

4. Mrs. Molly Dow, a member of the Liturgical Commission, has the seventh Diocesan Motion which runs that:

'This Synod [i.e. Coventry], welcoming the initiatives taken by other Churches, request the General Synod to make provision as soon as possible for a Eucharistic Prayer suitable for use in the Church of England at services with children present.'

Whether this is a connived job with the Liturgical Commission itself is anybody's guess. It might interestingly connect with the 'Knaresborough' issues in that hitherto the Commission and the Synod have taken the view that it was improper to write central liturgical material for non-communicants, and that the text must relate to the prime users, i.e. the communicants. If children do become communicants (over the divided body of the House of Bishops), then liturgical amendments to meet them might well be in order.

And the Synod is sleeping out in cardboard on the Saturday night!

PUBLICATION OF THE PROMISE OF HIS GLORY

We are assured by Church House Publishing that the handsome-looking liturgical texts for public use ('Commended' by House of Bishops) in *The Promise of His Glory* will be duly published on 1 August. The president's copy costs £16.95 and the 'pew edition' £5.50. The illegal (or not yet legal) lectionary will be added as an appendix.

Review

Martin Reardon, *Christian Initiation—A Policy for the Church of England* (Church House Publishing, June 1991, 66pp. £3.50)

This booklet was mentioned last month, and is part of the data for the debate on initiation in General Synod next month. It arose of course from the famous Godin amended-till-it-faces-both-ways motion:

This month's publications . . .

are both worth a mention. One is Joint Liturgical Study no. 18, *Irenaeus of Lyon on Baptism and Eucharist*, edited by David Power, the world-famous Jesuit scholar. This adds yet another set of ancient texts at reasonable prices to the collection available in the previous Grove Liturgical Studies and the present Joint Liturgical Studies. The other publication is Pastoral no. 46, *Deliberate Oversight?* edited by Gordon Ogilvie. This extra long (but not more expensive) collection about the ministry of bishops includes contributions from George Carey (his first appearance in a Grove format, which must surely come as the crowning climax of all his ambitions as an author), Lesslie Newbigin, Michael Baughen and John B. Taylor. It is quite a treat for the overseen as well as for the deliberate overseers.

. . . and next month's

is Worship Series no. 117, *Multi-Faith Worship and Christian Truth*, by David Bookless. This area of the fine lines between respect and mission, between hospitality and syncretism, between integrity and public discernments, between tolerance and approval—all those lines get a careful airing.

STOP PRESS—IN MEMORIAM

We note with deep regret the deaths in June of Margaret Hewitt, Gerald Priestland, and Cyril Taylor. We hope to have an obituary to Cyril Taylor next month.

CHURCH OF IRELAND GENERAL SYNOD

After a Synod which decides to ordain women to the priesthood and the episcopate, the next one is bound to be an anti-climax. That was undoubtedly the case with the Church of Ireland General Synod which met in Belfast from 14 to 16 May. This was only the second time in history that the General Synod had met outside Dublin, and it was a brand new Synod.

Issues related to liturgy did, however, get quite an innings;

First, there was, at very long last, a Resolution granting leave to introduce a new Ordinal in 1992. There had been a certain amount of conservative unease in the Church of Ireland about ridding itself of the medieval imperative formulae, but that seems to be all gone now, and it looks as though we will have an Ordinal more or less equivalent to ASB 1980 by next year. This may not exactly be news in England, but for those of us who have put up with the most awful mix of the 1662 Ordinal and the APB Eucharist at Ordinations, it is joy to the soul. There are one or two points to be ironed out during the coming year (For example a rubric which does not make clear who decides whether it is a scarf or a stole, and another one giving the newly ordained bishop 'the Bible and other symbols of office', with its shades of the 'Generation Game'), but it looks as though we are coming towards the end of this particular road.

Then, there was a tidying up point relating to the Ordination of Women: A group of 'concerned clergy' had been meeting with the Archbishop of Armagh during the year, to try to find reassurance that their ministry will not be treated as second rate. The House of Bishops then issued a statement to the Standing Committee in April 1991; saying:

'Recognition of diversities of conviction among faithful members of the Church of Ireland

In May 1990, the General Synod of the Church of Ireland passed the

125th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF READERS' MINISTRY NEC Arena, Birmingham, 22 June 1991

Rank upon rank of white-robed Readers in their blue scarves, throughout the arena and up into 'the gods', with their families and friends, and their bishops, gave a sense of community and oneness which is rarely felt in the day-to-day demands of Reader ministry. The oneness was almost tangible in the event of the day, and the programme itself contributed to that by ably crossing the barriers of church and world, past and present, traditional and modern, formal liturgy and multi-media presentation.

In the first half of the afternoon the Reader ministry was celebrated by looking to its past—in drama; its present—in a series of recorded interviews of Readers by Brian Redhead; and its future—in sharing of a vision for Readership training and ministry, by three people involved with Readers as part of their job. The congregation [or were we an audience at that stage?] were able to participate in singing hymns and the whole was presented by Geoffrey Wheeler, himself a Reader, clad in his Reader robes.

The second half of the afternoon was an inspiring Eucharist at which the Archbishop of York presided, and the Archbishop of Canterbury preached. Their presence was in itself an affirmation of the ministry and the Archbishop of Canterbury's sermon added to that affirmation, as well as being challenging. It was interesting to me that he came over as the pastoral and spiritual leader of these ministers, rather than giving much intellectual and theological meat to chew—an emphasis which was no doubt appreciated by many, if regretted by some. The administration of communion was a logistical masterpiece, and its order and quietness added to the sense of occasion and prayerfulness.

There were several notable features of the afternoon, but space limits me to mentioning just two. The first was the quality and professionalism of the event. Right from the early stages of communication and organization, through to the detailed execution of the plans on the day and the virtually flawless programme, the mark of careful and professional work came through. This appraisal may seem to be somewhat uncritical, but it is hard to see how it could have been bettered. When the technical requirements of lighting led to difficulty in seeing the hymns to sing, it was remedied during the interval by putting all the words on the giant screens. Such prompt and efficient action was an example of the level of expertise that backed the event, and was greeted with a warm and appreciative round of applause!

Another feature was the music. The All Souls' orchestra entertained, led, and supported all stages of the programme, and together with the soloist contributed greatly to the inspiring atmosphere. Whatever one's taste or orientation musically there was something to suit, and yet the sense of unity was always maintained.

This was more than morale-boosting. It was a national agenda-setting exercise for the years ahead, when we had been reminded of the roots and rationale of Reader ministry. A thoroughly and unusually good afternoon. Thank you to those who conceived the dream, and to those who made it a reality.

Carolyn Headley

'That this Synod calls attention both to the concern over apparent indiscriminate baptism, as expressed in *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* documents, and increasingly shared by many people of differing theological persuasions in the Church of England; and also to the concern felt by others over the theological implication of rigorous baptism policies, and calls upon the Standing Committee to initiate within the lifetime of this Synod a debate based upon a suitable discussion document concerning current theological, pastoral, evangelistic and ecumenical issues.'

The Standing Committee gave the task to Martin Reardon, amid fears (not least from NOL) that a one-man effort would not do justice to the hard realities. In fact Martin Reardon went to work with even-handed consultations, asking carefully about every point of history and theology and listening very closely to those who had criticisms of his earlier drafts. (He himself changed jobs twice in the two years between the passing of the motion and the completion of his report, and great credit should go to him for not cutting corners in his drafting.)

Whilst Martin Reardon does look at issues about children being admitted to communion before confirmation (on which his position is more open than that of the platform motions at General Synod—see editorial on page 1 above), his main concern is the 'baptismal discipline' issue. He manages to chart a sure path through the jungle of the Ely debates (and the greater jungle of later misunderstandings of what was happening during the Ely debates), and thus gives a good view of the status of the odd debates and drafting which have been happening re need for the parents of a child to be baptized to be 'willing and able to make the requisite promises'—virtually every word of which is a linguistic, canonical, and pastoral can of worms . . . Martin Reardon is ready to take the view that debates on his report can properly be regarded as the 're-examination' of the conditions on which children are accepted for baptism, a re-examination requested by the Synod at the end of the Ely debate *in November 1976*, and never otherwise granted.

Martin Reardon's conclusion on the policy issue is that there is a tension which he does not wish to see resolved: 'The solution lies not in letting one party "win" but in harnessing the energy and insights of both parties, and using them for a concerted attempt to create an initiation policy which puts baptism right at the centre of the Church's life, and sees it as an ecumenical opportunity for better pastoral care, education, and evangelism.' (pp.32-33)

Whilst I do not think this 'let us be celibate and promiscuous simultaneously' concept can actually help individual parishes much, I must commend Martin Reardon on his fairness. The report ends with four statements of personal conviction—two by Mark Dalby (the notorious advocate of baptizing on sight) and John Packer (a more sophisticated arguer for universalism and 'reticence' about our theological declarations) and the other two by Gordon Kuhrt and Michael Seward. Perhaps we can hope these last two will throw their weight into the synodical debate, and help give us something which at least gives a biblical emphasis within the framework of the Canons, even if no improvement of the Canons themselves is envisaged.

COB

Footnote: It is not exactly a 'review' point, but mention of the Canons does prompt me to add that *there is no right in law for parishioners to have their children baptized on demand*. According to the Canons the clergy may defer baptism for the sake of instruction; injured parents may appeal to the bishop; and the bishop's directions in the matter are *final*. So, if there is a church and state division on the issue, the decision about admission to baptism (unlike rights in respect of marriage) remains firmly on the church side of the division. I hope to write further on this elsewhere.

HEFTY CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Colin

After a little over ten years the future revision of ASB is under serious consideration and during the next ten years the General Synod will have to make some important decisions. In preparation for this a band of bright young(ish) men have produced two books of essays about Liturgy in the new Century. I say men advisedly, as no women's names appear in the list of contributors. (Let me say with authority that in the earlier Commission's Anonymous Books of essays there were always women contributors).

May I, as a woman of a certain age (as they say in France) be allowed to make a few comments on these essays. I do not make them in any spirit of carping criticism or with any great chip on my shoulder but may I say that if *Liturgy 2000* is really to be of help to the people and lead to more worthy worship of God there are three factors which I would ask these men to bear in mind.

The first of these is to ask them please not to forget our Ecumenical Partners. The second is to request that when they make comments about the work of the pre-1980 Commission they will be accurate and the third is to beg them to remember that they are forming Liturgy for ordinary people with their feet on the ground and not for those who live in rather esoteric circles. Let me give a few examples to illustrate these points.

The Lectionary

In his essay on the Christian Year (in the second book of essays) Michael Perham claims that, *The Promise of His Glory* has faced the contradictions of the pre- and post-Christian Season and has brought an integrity and cohesion to the whole period from All Saints to Candlemas that will need to shape the Calendar for that part of the year in any new Service Book. He also refers to the introduction of a longer Advent in the ASB, which he describes as confusing and accuses the ASB Lectionary of introducing themes which do not fit with the traditional ones.

In the introduction to *The Promise of His Glory* it is even claimed that it is not practical to begin the Calendar nine Sundays before Christmas as that is often half term week end! Does worship stop for Half Term? It certainly does not in York Minster when often on that Sunday the Minster is absolutely packed out. The point is that week end *is* the week end when the Secular world starts to think about Christmas and look towards it, whether we like it or not. The stores get out their goods and even Father Christmas arrives! We have to take note of this and begin to steer people forward in a positive way. There can be no better way than tracing the story of the Redemption of the world from Creation through the history of the laws to the point where Jesus was born a Jew in a Jewish City. Moreover, 'Creation Sunday' now coincides also with One World Week

and ties up with our present day concern about Creation and Ecology. Even the Greek Orthodox Church has decided to begin the lectionary year in October with readings from the Creation Stories and special Prayers about ecology. The Greeks usually refuse to change their Liturgy and adapt to modern concerns but this they claim is vital—and yet our Commission talk of 'traditional themes'.

Michael Perham and the others also refer to All Saints-tide and Remembrance Sunday and claim that they necessitate a break from the ASB Readings, but the Old Testament readings set can be splendid for reading and preaching in the octave of All Saints or on Remembrance Sunday. Moses or Abraham both fit in well with today's needs on Remembrance Sunday. Furthermore we do not all want to be dominated by the RC Festival of Christ the King and many of us still feel that the best time to consider the kingdom is in Lent, as it was a kingdom which could only be entered through suffering.

Ecumenical Agreement

All these things I feel strongly but the MOST IMPORTANT POINT I wanted to make is that the Revision of the Calendar and the formation of the Lectionary was NOT A CHURCH OF ENGLAND AFFAIR. It was an Ecumenical Business . . . It was in fact the work of the Joint Liturgical Group and many of the points which I have made were carefully weighed up by that original body. Their work was revised and accepted by the General Synod and by the other Free Churches of our land. It was a great step forward when we did this work together. It has helped Ecumenical relations a great deal. On an Ecumenical Ordination Training Course, it is helpful that we all share the same Sunday Calendar and Lectionary.

Calling to order the Steering Committee of CCBI on a Monday morning in April, the Welsh Methodist Lay Moderator can say 'I want to read to you from yesterday's Gospel' and away she goes with what we used from ASB the previous day. At that same Steering Committee consideration was given to the relationship of CCBI with the Joint Liturgical Group. In this new age of 'Churches Together' it is even more important that out separate Liturgical Groups keep in touch with each other and work together more and not less. With typical C. of E. arrogance the present Liturgical Commission has criticised the ASB Lectionary and calendar and brought out their own with never a thought that the ASB work was a joint Ecumenical work and never a word of consultation with our Ecumenical partners. They also did this work apparently unaware that the Joint Liturgical Group was undertaking its own Revision. This just will not do. It is just what the Free Churches find so hurtful about the C. of E.

Now of course the Roman Catholic Church in England, Wales and Scotland is a member of CCBI. I don't know what this would mean for a Sunday Lectionary. Maybe we would need to authorize two—one in league with our Roman Friends who would need to consider their worldwide constituency and one with our Free Church Friends. All of us, however, could, however, consult and help each other. THE BASIC POINT I WISH TO MAKE IS THAT A REVISION OF THE SUNDAY CALENDAR AND LECTIONARY FOR THE NEXT CENTURY IN THESE ISLANDS MUST BE DONE ECUMENICALLY AND NOT AS A LONE VENTURE BY THE C. OF E. For this I for one would think it worth going to the stake!

Jean Mayland