

# News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

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April 1993

Off its own bat the Liturgical Committee has spent some time working on a Eucharistic Prayer for use when children are present. We began with two forms but concentrated on one and found the exercise very stimulating, theologically, liturgically and linguistically . . . Our own bishop felt he had no authority to authorize the use of such a prayer but we have sent copies to the Commission for use in their deliberations on the subject.

We had planned too to hold a day on church music and liturgy in the light of the recent report, but pressure of other commitments has encouraged us to postpone this for the time being. On the whole we have, for the moment, gone off the arranging of special days in the diocese. The competition for such events is considerable and our experience is mixed so we are looking to cash in on existing opportunities such as deanery synod meetings, chapters, the diocesan mailing, and, who knows, in time, the diocesan synod and post-ordination training . . .

We try to keep the committee balanced in terms of lay-clergy membership, as well as male-female and High-Low. Members come and go so this is a constant theme but we seem to manage to preserve an equilibrium . . . In the last twelve months we have also met with the diocesan bishop and so, we hope, established a closer connection there. In line with other diocesan committees we are increasingly conscious of the need for longer term and co-ordinated planning and appropriate publicity.

S. P. Bailey, Chair

## rites for ordaining women

The Worship Committee of the Diocese of Manchester is beginning to consider the ordination service in the light of future priesting of women.

We think that the service might have potential to reflect some of the differences of circumstance which will obtain on the occasion of the ordination of women priests. Two factors come to mind, and there may be more: the majority of ordinands will be experienced clergy with many years of active ministry behind them, rather than men who have served as deacons for only one year. Also present at the service might be women who wish to continue as deacons, and it would be appropriate and good to recognize and affirm their ministries alongside their sisters.

The service itself needs to present women not just on the receiving end of male hands, but also in roles where they are ministering as well; otherwise it may appear to be a case of 'we bestow, they receive', clearly demarcated on gender lines!

If any one has had any thought, or is interested in exchanging ideas, we would be very grateful to hear. Please write to the Rev. Frances Ward, 1 Furze Avenue, West Loughton, Bolton BL5 2NN—or better still, send them to NOL for publication.

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## Editorial

All sorts of things—some unexpected, some all too predictable—are happening on the 'ordination of women as presbyters' front. I have three to which I draw attention. They are, I allege, all indirectly liturgical.

Firstly, the latter part of April has seen much movement on the interface between the Church of England and the Church of Rome. This began with the much-publicized reception of Ann Widdecombe, the Tory MP for Maidstone, into the Church of Rome on 20 April. There was much blowing of trumpets; it was done (amazingly) in the crypt chapel of the House of Commons (a first Roman Mass there since the Reformation); Roman Catholic MPs sponsored and accompanied the convert; and the press and TV publicity outstripped any that such convert has ever received in the past—including Charles II and John Henry Newman (they got more of theirs in retrospect). Thus the Roman option was well aired.

Two days later the Roman Catholic bishops made a considered public response when the media interest was high—and Bishop Graham Leonard was on television welcoming their response. From what they said there may well be an open door (though Cardinal Basil Hume at the same time said he did not want to see the Church of England weakened), but each individual must submit to Rome as an individual, and must accept the totality of Roman Catholic claims. On the specific point of Anglican orders, the Cardinal was equally clear, and actually cited Leo XIII's encyclical *Apostolicae Curae* which branded Anglican orders as 'absolutely null and utterly void'. This would seem still to mean not only that bishops and presbyters who exercise the option would have to be received in Rome as *laity*, but that they would, in effect, have to be declaring that they never had been validly ordained, and that their own assertions on the point were self-deceiving. For the issue is not just what they say about women's ordination; it is that all their previous statements about *their own* orders have been grievously mistaken. So they would leave for Rome on the grounds that the Church of England is flinging away 'Catholic' order—but they would have to arrive there on the basis that the Church of England never had such order anyway. They would be cutting off a branch they were not sitting on. The only comfort offered to 'converts' (that word has leaked out once or twice!) is that, provided they come across as individuals, they might possibly be able to continue as actual congregations, at least for a few years into the future. But they would not have special English rites nor other mitigations of full Roman rigour.

Whilst it may be easier to decide that the Church of England has erred than to know where to go if leaving; and whilst a slice of the Church of England has always looked to Rome in any case; yet there is an enormous logical gap between discovering that the Church of England is in error (whether fundamental or not), and discovering that the Church of Rome is clear of it! For both discoveries to happen simultaneously is stretching credulity to

the limit. It is relevant to recall Newman sitting in Littlemore for two years, sure that the Church of England had lapsed, but only slowly, oh so slowly, coming to conclude that the Church of Rome had not.

The second flurry of interest comes from the apparent awkwardness of the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament in handling the Measure. It had been hoped (by optimists) that the Measure would have been declared 'Expedient' by now, and would have come to Lords and Commons in June or July. This would have given just enough time for the Canons (which sit on the shirt-tails of the parliamentary Measure) to be 'engrossed' (I *think* that is the right word, but I am ready to be corrected). This basically means 'written out gothically on parchment' (or, again, I *think* it does . . .). This is a process which, as readers can guess, cannot possibly be hurried, and it was always an even chance that the Canons would not be ready parchment-wise for a promulgation in November 1993. No ordinations in terms of a Canon can be effected until it is promulgated, and promulgations can only happen during sessions of General Synod, and General Synod had agreed way back that it would *not* meet in February 1994. However, there is now a day provisionally booked, 22 February 1994, when a one-day meeting of Synod could be convened solely for the purposes of promulgating. (If the one-day meeting were in fact a ten-minute meeting, and were scheduled for the afternoon, then we could all come on Supersaver rail tickets (apart from those from Man, Europe, and the Channel Islands), and if the average of those were no more than, say, £30 per head, then the whole business would be concluded at a cost of around 3,000-4,000 person-hours, and a travel cost of £16,500 . . .

However, this is idle speculation, for, if the Ecclesiastical Committee cannot do its own business in time to get the Measure before Parliament before the Summer recess, then it is likely to be November at the earliest before Parliament can see it. In that case 'engrossing' *might* be possible by July 1994, and the General Synod, having promulgated the Canon on the Friday night or the Saturday, could attend York Minster on the Sunday morning not just for its 'own' service, but for the Archbishop of York to ordain women as presbyters *coram synodo*. That would be only 21 months on from the General Synod decision.

But even this is balmy optimism compared with what may be an equally likely scenario. For the wretched Committee, in its pinnickiness, may yet deem the Measure 'inexpedient'—and return it to the Synod. (It appears that even proponents of women's ordination may engage in these delaying steps, as the issue of equity is not, in their view, met by Clause 2 of the Measure.) So then the Synod would face (perhaps in November this year) the decision as to whether to send it to Lords and Commons, snapping its fingers at the Ecclesiastical Committee's strictures, or whether to try and amend the Measure to meet the criticisms.

This synodical dilemma has two most uncomfortable prongs on which to impale ourselves:

Prong One is to attempt to vote on sending it back to Parliament. This could well have opponents of the principle joined by a vocal group in Synod, saying 'we *must* take account of the Ecclesiastical Committee's strictures, and should alter the Measure, rather than try to get it

### DIOCESAN REPORT 3—SHEFFIELD

The Sheffield committee is steadily developing a higher profile in the life of the diocese and finding itself with work to do at the request of other diocesan committees which naturally contributes to our usefulness.

Our major project of the moment continues to be the production of a book of *Guidelines for All-age Worship*. We did explore the possibility of commercial publication but have reverted to a local version—but we hope to have it available to anyone else who might be interested! It will cost £2 but we plan to provide each parish with a free copy (thus using up our budget . . .) and then to promote further sales through chapters and deanery synods as well as relevant training events in the diocese. This is where developing connections with other committees comes into its own. We are participating for instance in a scheme sponsored by the bishop called 'Keen Disciples in a Learning Church'. This grows out of the bishop's concern for well-informed and well-trained laity. The project seeks to use the 'sermon-slot' of the usual Sunday morning in a more imaginative and careful way—inevitably then this has implications for the liturgy and we have been providing some of the input here, both in terms of lectionary material where appropriate, as well as collects, sentences etc., but also in terms of reflection on the usual Sunday structure. The Training committee has overall responsibility for the project but in addition to the general help already mentioned we are also contributing to a day being organized for parishes participating in the scheme on All Age Worship itself. This obviously in turn becomes an ideal opportunity for us to promote the *Guidelines*.

A second development alongside the Training committee—and also once again at the bishop's request—is the construction of a course of training for lay people involved in leading worship in Church Plants in the diocese. So far, we have met with some of the lay people involved and are now devising an appropriate course for them in the light of their expressed needs. This will be led by different members of the liturgical committee and we hope will be factual, informative, historical, practical and useful as well as including some theory! Some of the interesting aspects of this will be to bear in mind the distinctive character of worship in a 'church Plant', its relationship to the 'Mother' church's worship—and the different contributions members of the committee can make . . .

This may develop into a course that can be made more widely available to churches as a general introduction to leading worship. The Training Committee sees this in the setting of its Pastoral Workers' course, which in turn overlaps with the Readers' course. It will be important, of course, as always, to ensure that work is not simply being duplicated.

For the last two years the committee has been involved in providing material for a Day of Prayer in the diocese for the Decade of Evangelism. This has involved both the production of a special leaflet of prayers and readings etc. as well as notes on the liturgy of the day. The day chosen has been St. Francis' day in early October which has, in fact, meant that the material produced could draw on St. Francis and harvest themes as well as the decade of evangelism: a rich set of resources! The material seems to have been well-used and appreciated—and the leaflets were deliberately devised to be helpful for private use well beyond the specific day. The Mission and Unity committee has requested similar material for this year too.

outdated as some would want us to believe. Dan Hook is a Roman Catholic of the strand that has re-discovered the Bible and sees the homily as an important ingredient in liturgy.

'Preaching is a skill that can always be improved' he says and since he roots preaching in the pastoral context of the Christian congregation, he sees both sides as having a responsibility. The preacher, to give of his best; the community to ensure that the minister receives nourishment by the congregation providing the wherewithall to attend conferences, or at least by giving a book allowance. 'A preacher does have the right to efficient tools of the trade'.

He is concerned not only with content but also with method and he sees the use of story as the effective means of communication. He has chapters on 'Preaching as Revelation' and 'Preaching and Tradition' and, in his second section, he seeks to clarify the task by examining the aims of the preaching and also demolishing some of the traditional pre-suppositions.

He sees one of the aims as both personal and communal conversion, for he is clear that 'essentially, preachers are trying to facilitate some sort of liberating encounter between the believer and God'. Because he wants to demolish the pre-suppositions, he offers some guidelines to uncover the assumptive world of people, so that the message, which is about the *meaning* of life, can be got across.

As for the preacher personally, he makes a plea that preachers must be honest, vulnerable, listening and reflecting people, before embarking on the task of preparation with its four stages, which for him demands time and is a process. 'Creative ideas are spawned in the unconscious minds'. Here is a book well worth the reading 'If any ministry is collaborative, preaching must surely be it. It involves preachers collaborating with God, with people and with their own inner lives, in developing and appreciating the presence of God in our lives and in our world. I, and others, have found the following prayer helpful in disposing us to deliver a homily; "Lord help me to say what you want me to say, so that people will hear what you want them to hear"'. Charles H. Hutchins

#### **This month's booklet . . .**

. . . is one or both of two liturgy-related publications. The standard Worship series one is no. 124, *Renewal of Baptismal Vows*, by Colin Buchanan. Alongside it is the Ethical Study no. 89, *Liturgy and Ethics*, by Oliver O'Donovan. This is an edited version of the lecture delivered by the author at the twentieth birthday party of Grove Booklets in January last year. Michael Vasey contributes a liturgist's response. Because we failed to provide a January Worship booklet, and because it was a borderline decision as to whether the O'Donovan Study should be viewed as 'Worship' or as 'Ethics', we are sending a copy of this Ethical Study (with separate invoice for £2.25) to all those who take Worship Booklets on standing order, but do not usually take Ethical Studies. It can be sent back, but we think few will want to do that.

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

is Evangelism Series no. 22, *Inner-city Evangelism*, by Tony Adamson.

**. . . and those elusive Alcuin/GROW Joint Liturgical Studies** are now in place for the whole of 1993. They are as follows:

- 24 Paul James, *Liturgical Presidency* (June)
- 25 Ric Lennard-Barrett, *Sarapion: A Text for Students* (September)
- 26 Phillip Tovey, *Extended Communion* (December)

The titles are not exact, but the subject-matter is fairly clear from them.

through *against* the Committee's advice'. Thus, the Synod might this time divide not on a 67-33 basis, but one more like 59-41. A vote like that would either mean Synod could not proceed, or, if it could act on a simple majority, would greatly hearten opposition in the Church, and, with the contrary advice of the Ecclesiastical Committee also before Parliament, this would deeply prejudice the Measure's chances in Parliament.

Prong Two is the alternative course of trying to alter the Measure. At the moment it is not clear what the Ecclesiastical Committee might be wanting—sometimes it sounds as though they want Clause 2 removed, sometimes as though they want it applicable to future bishops as well as present ones. But on the assumption that some clear proposed amendment accompanied their verdict of 'Inexpedient', then the Synod could try to amend the Measure. That would mean re-opening the whole Measure, taking it to a Revision Committee, introducing the desired amendments, risking not getting these ones and/or getting other ones, settling the state of the Measure in a way that it would be hoped the Ecclesiastical Committee (or any future one) would wear—*and sending it down to the dioceses*. Meanwhile, time would be running out on the Synods—new diocesan synods are to be elected in May or so in 1995, and a new General Synod in September or October that year. If the Measure were still *sub judice*, then a General Synod election would be fought *for the second time* on the issue. Those wavering about going to Rome would, presumably, still be with us, now with a gleam of hope that it might never happen; and the women deacons, more and more numerous each year, would have lost all confidence in the Church of England's ability to govern itself, and would be manifesting great signs of stress. Finally, the new diocesan synods would send a return to the new General Synod in time for debate in July 1997 (there being no February General Synods nowadays). If it there received the requisite two-third majorities, it would at last go again to the Ecclesiastical Committee of Parliament. *But it would be a different Ecclesiastical Committee*. The present government must go to the country by April 1997 at the very latest (some would hope for years earlier). So we might even have the scenario of, say, a hung Parliament elected in October 1996 which would then have to go back to the country within eighteen months. In such an event there might not even be an Ecclesiastical Committee till mid-1998 . . .

So who will rid us of this turbulent state?

My third flurry of interest is a purportedly theological one. (Theology is beginning to look at bit distant from the scene in the murk of the politics outlined above.) The issue is simply this: does the Church of England have the 'authority' to decide to ordain women as presbyters? For much of the anglo-catholic opposition has framed itself in this way—that we hold our orders 'from the undivided church' and have no authority to take unilateral decisions to alter them, as over against a lack of such decision by the universal church. (It will be observed that this is an asymmetrical ecclesiology—it suspends us upon Roman decisions or lack of them; whilst it knows that Rome would never suspend any of its decisions upon our participation or concurrence; however, it also saves the arguer from the necessity of saying that, in terms of revealed theology, women *cannot* be ordained, and thus hedges bets in case Rome ever says they can.)

Having suggested I might address theology, I lapse into *ad hominem* (or should it be *ad virem*?) argument. It also has two prongs, but these ones are designed to make other people uncomfortable, and not me:

Prong One is a retort: how then did you vote in favour of women's ordination as deacons? Not all opponents of women's ordination as presbyters did vote against their being deacons—some voted in favour, and even cited early church practice (as with Phoebe in Romans 16, or the women deacons in the *Didascalia*) as precedent. But the same argument should have been deployed, and I am not sure that we heard it anything like so loudly—that is, that we have no 'authority' to alter received orders, even if the alteration does not appear as far-reaching in its implications as it does with presbyters. Those who ignored this line of argument re deacons are on poor ground if they depend upon it re presbyters.

Prong Two is another retort: when did you *ever* take the proper synodical step for someone who reckons a synod is debating an issue which is *ultra vires*? When did *anyone*, at *any* point in time, in *any* synod (deanery, diocesan, or General Synod), *ever* move that Synod pass to next business on the grounds that it had no business and no authority to consider a motion permitting women to be ordained as presbyters? And when did anyone ever, having failed to get this procedural motion adopted, then lead a walk-out in protest at Synod debating that projected decision? My impression is that, in the whole complex of above 600 synodical debates at the three levels of synod, there is no record of either the procedural motion or the walk-out. If that is the case (or even if is a rare exception), then the assertion that we have no authority to debate the issue is undermined by the very people who assert it—they have consistently acted as though it were in order to debate such motions. Let me make my *ad hominem* reply as starkly clear as possible—those who debate an issue, whether they vote for it or against it, do by their participation agree it is lawful and proper for that issue to be debated. The only way an argument that we have no business to debate this issue can be deployed is by procedural protest or deliberate absence. (Now a minority who knew they were less than 10% might adopt those genuinely honourable tactics, knowing they would lose anyway—but in this case the opponents had good reason to hope they would defeat it, and so they dared not absent themselves. But it means they have lost all claim to moral protest on the grounds that we had no 'authority'.)

I fear that, in lapsing into *ad hominem*, I have evaded the theological issue of the authority of General Synod, or the authority of the Church of England to take its own decisions without waiting for Rome. Ah well, we are out of time for this month; there are clearly plenty more months in front of us; and in any case, perhaps it is not *very* liturgical.

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Perhaps I could slip in another only-tangentially-liturgical opinion: I hear London diocese is to consider rebuilding St. Etheldreda's in the City of London, as the medieval building was devastated by the IRA bomb. This is *not* in order to restore a ruin—it will be a new architectural design of a modern sort; it is *not* to provide for 300 people who have nowhere to worship—there are dozens of churches in the City, and very few

## Book Reviews

Paul Roberts, David Stancliffe, Kenneth Stevenson (ed.) *Something Understood: a Companion to 'Celebrating Common Prayer'* (Hodder & Stoughton 1993, 102pp. £6.99)

This book is an introduction to *Celebrating Common Prayer* by a series of authors each contributing a chapter and all of whom contributed to the original book. Its preface is by the Archbishop of Canterbury and reprints his preface to that book. It invites comparison with *Renewing Daily Prayer* by Christopher Cocksworth and Paul Roberts (Grove Worship Series No. 123), a booklet one third the size and price whose three chapters look at the principle of common prayer, the main ideas behind *Celebrating Common Prayer* and some imaginative ideas on its use, all seen from a more evangelical Anglican viewpoint.

*Something Understood* has nine brief chapters with an introduction and postscript. Six chapters look in some depth at the principles behind key features in *Celebrating Common Prayer* such as the 'shape' of the office, the Psalter, the Church's Year, the Bible, the midday office and possible rites and ceremonies. These chapters are mostly descriptive and helpfully reveal the underlying thinking of the compilers. The addition of page references to *Celebrating Common Prayer* would have made it easier to follow the quite detailed argument. Many interesting points emerge, such as possible new saints, including more women saints! The overall feel of the chapters is Anglican Catholic, which is perhaps appropriate in the light of the probable main users of this new book and the balancing Grove booklet.

I found the 'Daily Prayer' chapter by George Guiver with its emphasis on prayer in the earliest church always being corporate, a fascinating corrective, if perhaps an over-emphasis, to much that is written on prayer especially in the New Testament period. Martin Kitchen's second chapter on 'Using the Bible' is so full of caveats on Biblical misuse that it seemed a little unsympathetic as an introduction to a book so soaked in Scripture. David Silk provides a later chapter on the actual use of Scripture. Incidentally, the short reading at the Midday Office turns out to be one sentence only! The final chapter with suggestions on the variety of practical uses for the book shows imagination and suggests the use of the Simple Form. The postscript emphasizes again the book's desire to be an Office for all God's people, not just the clergy. How far this admirable aim will be achieved now rests with the purchasers' use of the book; and so far many copies have been sold. This companion volume goes far towards a rationale for *Celebrating Common Prayer* and a guide as to how it might be used imaginatively in a variety of circumstances.

Christopher Byworth

Dan Hook, *Effective Preaching* (Dwyer, Australia. Imported via the Columba Book Service, Dublin)

Here is a book that warmed my heart and brought to me at the right time, encouragement to persevere with the expectation that preaching is not as

(4) WAITING

HYMN:

We open ourselves to quietness  
[A Poem]

SILENCE

(If you receive prophetic words or pictures, please wait until invited to share, rather than interrupting the silence)

We say together:

**Come Holy Spirit, come.  
We wait on you to speak words from the Father.  
Send us your gifts  
Open us to your voice  
Give us boldness to proclaim  
For the sake of Jesus, the Word of God,  
Amen.**

*A time of waiting on God for prophetic words, pictures etc.*

(5) STARTING

As we embark upon this journey together  
**Go with us, Lord**

As we open ourselves to the operation of your Holy Spirit in us  
**Go with us, Lord**

As we open our minds for learning

**Go with us, Lord**

For those who will be teaching

**Give them wisdom, Lord**

For those who will be serving

**Give them joy, Lord**

For those who will be ministering

**Give them love, Lord**

As we embark upon this journey,

**Go with us Lord**

**Take us where you will**

**Move us with your love**

**Stir us by your power**

**Fill us with your vision**

*CLOSING ENCOMPASSING PRAYER (said together)*

**Circle us Lord, Keep protection near, and danger afar  
Circle us Lord, Keep hope within, keep doubt without  
Circle us Lord, Keep peace within, keep evil out**

HYMN

THE PEACE:

The peace of the Lord be always with you  
**And also with you**

*We greet each other with a sign of peace*

residents; it is *not* (as far as I know) that whatever Guild purposes St. Etheldreda served cannot be done elsewhere; no, it is solely to show the 'bulldog' spirit towards the IRA. In my view this would be a crazy use of a seven-figure sum. London diocese should vow that not one penny of diocesan funds (desperately needed for the gospel), and not one penny of insurance or compensation money, should go to such a venture. If there is no medieval heritage left to restore, let them sell the site to developers, pocket the cash, and promote the gospel with it. It is bad enough, if inevitable, for the Church of England to have to tend medieval shrines which cannot be well used for contemporary worship; it is surely a thousand times worse to purchase a contemporary shrine which no-one needs for worship (or, in all likelihood, for anything else) in order to show how much we prize our medieval heritage?

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I am myself off to Kenya on Thursday 27 May, as I have been asked to give a paper on inculturation to the pan-African liturgical consultation convened by Bishop David Gitari under the aegis of CAPA (Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa). Any wisdom from England would be gratefully received. Oh yes, and on that Thursday on which I go I am lecturing at lunch-time at the Christian Resources Exhibition at Sandown Park, and would be very pleased to see friends, readers and hecklers at that.

Colin Buchanan

And a personal PS: I am going by car to the liturgical conferences in South Germany (Untermarchtal) and Switzerland (Fribourg) in August. I have room for one other in the corner, and would be glad to hear from anyone wanting to explore the possibility.

**SOME BITS AND PIECES**

There has been formed 'The Gregory Dix Memorial Award', which will commemorate with a prize competition the fiftieth anniversary of his 'fat green book', *The Shape of the Liturgy*. There will be three awards in each of five topics, namely: Dom Gregory Dix OSB; Liturgical Sources; Liturgy and Theology; Pastoral Liturgy; Liturgical Formation. The following categories of persons may apply:

- a. persons who are neither established authors nor holders of academic posts.
- b. persons over 18 years of age pursuing a course of further education in theology or related disciplines during 1994, including ordinands and post-graduate students.
- c. persons under the age of 19 on 1 January 1995.

The awards are set up by the monks of Elmore Abbey (that which was once Nashdom), and application for details should be made to The Secretary, The Gregory Dix Memorial Award Committee, Elmore Abbey, Church Lane, Speen, Newbury, Berks RG13 1SA. Closing date for submission is 1 January 1995.

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The Society for Liturgical Study (SLS) has appointed Dr. Martin Stringer as its secretary to succeed Donald Withy. Martin can be reached at the Department of Theology, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT. His first newsletter announces the 1994 conference

of SLS, at Plater College, Oxford from 6 to 8 September that year. There is no overall theme and individual papers are being solicited. The letter also includes Bryan Spinks' review of Paul Bradshaw's book *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*—'In eight chapters Bradshaw has bulldozed the untidy liturgical landscape of assured facts, and removed every neighbour's landmark ... the splitters have a field day ...'

We greet a new journal, strictly our contemporary. It is *WorshipNet*, a journal on worship for and from the Lutheran World Federation, of PO Box 2100, 150 route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland. It is edited by Dr. Anita Stauffer (whom we hope to publish in an Alcuin/GROW Joint Liturgical Study next year). Anita Stauffer revives in the LWF the 'Worship Desk' once held by Eugene Brand, but in abeyance after he swapped disciplines in 1988.

We believe there is still space at the Conference on 'John Cosin (1594-1672): Priest to Prince-Bishop'. This is being held in Durham on the weekend of 2-4 July, and costs £28.75 with meals but without accommodation (though this can be provided). Apply to Ms Margot Johnson, Department of Adult and Continuing Education, 32 Old Elvet, Durham DH1 3RN.

*O tempora, O mores.* We hear that David Martin has resigned as vice-chairman of the Prayer Book Society, because the chairman, Anthony Kilminster, has begun, more or less in the name of the Society, to attack the decision of the Church of England to ordain women. Apparently you can be a fossil in one area and as trendy as you like in another. That, however, does not appear to be the chairman's view—he has learned from American cousins that trendiness and liberalism are a great cluster of issues which have come together under a single umbrella. Thus when one threatens, another emerges also. If women are ordained presbyter, then the BCP is even more certainly marginalized. Is this good politics or poor discernment?

### **A LITURGY FOR THE START OF A CONFERENCE**

*(used at the Anglican Renewal Ministries Conference on Renewal and Evangelism)*

#### **(1) RELEASING**

We call to mind all that we have left behind for our journey to this conference  
We release now into the hands of God:

Our homes, those whom we love and care for  
Any who are dependent on us, who may feel vulnerable without us

Lord, you love all those whom we love

**We release them into your love**

All for whom we have pastoral concern  
those who are in need at this time  
those whom we have counselled and supported  
the lost, the hurting, the bereaved, the wounded

Lord, you care for all those for whom we care

**We release them into your care**

Our work  
the pressures that weary us  
the problems that would pursue us  
the world of overful diaries and demanding deadlines

Lord, you rule over all things

**We release to you the work we have left behind**

#### **(2) ARRIVING**

*Awareness of arriving:*

We acknowledge before God how it feels to be here

*A Prayer of Arriving:*

**Father in heaven**

**Thank you for calling me to this place.**

**Thank you for being with me on the journey**

**And for greeting me here through my brothers and sisters in Christ.**

**Thank you that you are a God who loves to give good gifts to his children,**

**I now open myself to you**

**that this place will be holy ground,**

**a place where you will meet with your people.**

**Amen.**

*A Prayer of cleansing and blessing for the Conference Hall*

Come Lord with blessing upon this room.

In the name of Jesus we now release this room from all past memories or influences of previous conferences.

May the angels of God stand over this place defending us from all evil.

We now bless this room in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that it may be to us a place of receiving the wisdom, the love and the power of God, and may the peace of Christ reign in this place throughout this conference. **Amen.**

#### **3) EXPECTING**

We now look forward to the four days ahead of us

We think about the theme *BY MY SPIRIT*

We take a few moments to meditate on the passage of Scripture in which this phrase appears

*[Zech. 4.1-7 was read]*

We say together

**Almighty God,**

**You are indeed the source of all power**

**Forgive us where we have depended on our own strength,**

**where we have failed to wait**

**and failed to trust.**

**Anoint us afresh with your Holy Spirit**

**and in these coming days may we know your presence and power among us.**

**For we ask in the name of Jesus**

**Amen.**