

As a final note the rubric at the end of the Prayer Book communion service gives the curate the unconsecrated remnants of the bottle of wine opened for the service for his (or, now, her) own use. Do you know of any clergy using this provision?

Yours sincerely,  
Simon Springett (Portsmouth)

Dear Colin,

Today it is not strange for adults to be baptized by immersion in a portable container ranging from a paddling pool to a sheep dip! But is there any documentary evidence of past practice in using portable containers in the Church of England?

In 1847, Spencer Thornton the evangelical Vicar of Wendover was asked by a female candidate if she might be baptized by immersion. Thornton consulted other clergy and Charles Goodhart gave a full account of what he had done in similar circumstances.

Thornton hired a large bath from the town and placed it in the chancel and the baptism took place after the sermon. It took place at that point in the service (rather than after the second lesson) so that he could preach on the subject of baptism and to give some explanation of what was happening. The sermon was on the text 'What mean ye by this service?' (Exodus 12.26).

'After the sermon, the young woman, neatly dressed in white, stood by the bath. A small ladder of steps had been made, which she, at the right time, mounted, and then descended into the water. Mr. Thornton held her hands while she bent backwards, quite under the water. She then came up out of the water, a cloak was thrown round her, and she retired into the vestry.'

(W. R. Fremantle, *Memoir of the Rev. Spencer Thornton MA* (London, 1851), pp128-130).

The local Baptists were surprised to hear what was happening and many people came to witness the baptism.

In the Victorian period how and where were adult candidates baptized in the Church of England by full immersion? Local rivers might have been used but this would have suggested association with revivalist sects; and local chapels might have allowed access, but, bearing in mind questions of church order, this would have been an unlikely setting. So was the Wendover example the more common practice for the immersion of adults?

Yours sincerely  
Alan Munden (Coventry)

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# News of Liturgy

Editor: Colin Buchanan

Issue No. 231

March 1994

## Editorial

I am a child in the field of copyright, and putty in the hands of the commercial firms. But I cannot but be aware of NOL's own correspondence columns, including some draft letters on the subject which have never reached the light of day. A fairly bland contribution from Michael Perry (Tonbridge) is the visible footprint left after some heavy trampling. We hope to introduce you to this conflict as time goes on.

Here, to draw the issue into sharper relief, are some innocent pointers:

1. Is there any such concept as a common Christian inheritance? When writing books, I decline to seek or acknowledge permission for use of what may be copyright versions of the Bible. As one who knows Greek, in the New Testament I do my own translations as I go along; they often run close (as accurate translations will) to existing versions; but I shall only discover that by reading my verse of scripture in six modern versions—and life is too short for that. And, in any case, suppose a quotation proves to be very like, say, the NIV, but marginally different, is my translation then in a double fault, of both pirating and bowdlerizing, or is it free of all fault as a new translation (copyright COB)? (There are actually some introductory and post-communion sentences of scripture amongst the 'Propers' in the ASB which fall into exactly this category . . .).
2. There is a strong desire amongst liturgists that liturgical texts should be freely available. The Episcopal Church in the USA takes that view of its BCP, and any use of the material without acknowledgments is permissible. This is mostly viewed as a straight benefit, though a charge of 'dumping' could, I suppose be made—the American Psalter has been starting to invade our coasts, not particularly because of its merits in translation or poetry, nor even because of its visible inclusivity of language, but simply because it costs nothing, and the Collins 'Frost/MacIntyre' text costs royalties!
3. The third International Anglican Liturgical Consultation at York in 1989 issued a 'Finding' on the subject:

'This Consultation notes with concern the extent to which liturgical texts are protected by copyright and the difficulties this creates for churches which wish to copy and adapt material from other sources in their liturgical texts, and recommends to Provinces of the Communion the adoption of a policy of the greatest tolerance and generosity in this matter towards the national churches, whether or not they are Anglican, and urges that this recommendation be made through appropriate channels to member churches of the WCC and the Roman Catholic Church as well.

The Consultation also notes with understanding that copyright is often imposed to ensure the legitimate sale of books, but urges publishers to avoid the imposition of restrictions and royalties which impede the free sharing of forms of prayer.'

4. Now of course it is not as simple as that. But the Episcopal Church of the USA has matched its open-ness with the printed text with a similar release of material on disk (see the extract printed below). And the complaint about the Church of England is that, however accommodating it may be about copying printed text, when it comes to disks it has done a somewhat protectionist deal (quite the reverse of Free Trade) with a chosen pair of commercial firms—apparently without even going out to tender. Both Hodder (and OUP if they wish it) and the Liturgical Commission and various consumers shall have the use of these columns to throw further light on the issue. It seems that all deals run out in 1997, and perhaps interest ought to concentrate on what happens then, as much as upon an inquest on a deal already done. Clearly the next three years have also got to see great developments in the disk world, and the parishes might as well be warned that the future of written texts lies almost certainly with computers . . .
5. Lest this seems a bit heavy let me remind you of the one place where I think I hold copyright. In *Patterns* there is a wholly scriptural dialogue about the resurrection. Every word is from scripture. I compiled it for the Caister Celebration in 1988. *Patterns* adopted it, then I was asked for copyright permission, and in the supplementary list of copyright permissions I came out as 'Holy Scripture—Colin Buchanan'. This kind of attribution rather goes to one's head, but in the light of my own principles (see (1) above) I have found no consistent way of cashing in on it so far.
6. Yet there is such a thing as ownership, and creative texts are a property . . .

All guidance through this jungle will be gratefully received.

Colin Buchanan

### **ECUSA BCP AND COPYRIGHT Header text to the Computer Version**

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...

The electronic edition of the BCP was prepared because all the E-text sources that we could find were proprietary, even though the text itself is guaranteed to be in the Public Domain by Canon Law. We feel strongly that the basic texts of major religions, especially our own, and especially those used in liturgies, should be freely available in a form that is not restricted by a requirement of registration or payment of a fee. Any fee, no matter how nominal, restricts the distribution of the text, prohibits its improvement by others and its inclusion in free software systems.

Dear Colin,  
With reference to your *NOL* editorial (No. 230, February 1994), I don't know whether you remember the Anglican-Methodist unity proposals of the late 1960s (!), but you may recollect that the question of wine at Holy Communion was addressed, and the use of 'a fermented wine from which alcohol has been removed' was one of the recommendations. We had an alcoholic incumbent in my Archdeaconry in the early 1970s and contacted the chemist who supplied this kind of wine for the local Methodists. (In case it satisfies the purists to know this, the liquid still contained about 0.5% of alcohol!) Everyone was happy and the clergyman's recovery was no longer at risk.

There is little that is new under the sun.

And—while I am writing—can you explain to me why the women who were priested at Bristol Cathedral last Saturday altered their *own* stoles? Here in Durham the stoles are altered (generally by an Archdeacon or assisting Bishop) during the litany, immediately prior to the ordination. Any liturgical symbolism? I value any comment.

As ever,

Michael Perry (Durham)

Dear Colin

The issue of alcoholism and the reception of wine at holy communion was raised at Chelmsford diocese some years ago, on which occasion an archidiaconal polaris missile was used to assure the synod that the sky would fall unless alcoholic wine was used. The relevant private member's motion was buried by moving on to the next business.

Actually we have quite sufficient guidance in the prayer book: the rubric for 'The Communion of the Sick' states

'If a man . . . by reason of extremity of sickness . . . or by any other just impediment do not receive the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, the Curate shall instruct him, that if he do truly repent him of his sins, and stedfastly believe that Jesus Christ hath suffered death upon the Cross for him, and shed his blood for his redemption, earnestly remembering the benefits he hath thereby, and giving him hearty thanks therefore, he doth eat and drink the Body and Blood of our saviour Christ profitably to his Soul's health, although he do not receive the sacrament with his mouth'.

Not receiving the wine is, in the case of an alcoholic Christian, both good pastoral and good Anglican practice. There is the question of whether it is right to administer in one kind only, but notwithstanding Article XXX (. . . both the parts of the Lord's Sacrament . . . ought to be ministered to all . . . alike) it is there appropriate. The practicalities are easily dealt with: the person concerned leaving the communion rail immediately after receiving the bread and before the chalice arrives.

Cranmer's solution (if I may call it that) has two beneficial side-effects. First, it helps us to avoid a quasi-magical view of the sacramental bread and wine. Second, receiving bread only increases levels of dissatisfaction with those dreadful wafers, and increases the pressure for real bread—as it happens, another good Prayer Book principle.

## Correspondence

(Marked this month by contributions, in different causes, from *both* the famous Michael Perrys (? Perries) who have a finger or two in the liturgical field).

Dear Colin,

I am writing in support of Michael Perry whose letter appeared in January's *NOL*. It is quite important that the liturgy should not belong to the Liturgical Commission, or the Central Board of Finance. It is the liturgy of the Church: *our* liturgy.

In the USA, the canons of the Episcopal Church ensure that its liturgy is placed in the public domain on authorization. It may be used and copied by anyone without further permission. A group of volunteers has just made available the whole of the American BCP on computer, and it is available for parishes, and others, to use *at no charge whatsoever*. Enthusiastic programmers are already working on free software to manage it. This free availability has not stopped commercial publishers from producing their own editions.

By contrast in England, a parish may not even put together two services in its own book. And there's no hope of making freely available the computerized texts of the *ASB*: I was refused permission, presumably because of pending commercial agreements.

By the year 2000, technology will have made it possible for our new services to be published by Church House depositing the texts in a computer archive: this technology already exists but is not yet common in England. Let us take the freedom that this offers to make our liturgy as widely and cheaply available as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Kershaw (Huntingdon)

[Simon Kershaw provided the 'Header Texts' to the ECUSA BCP printed on p.2 above].

Dear Colin,

Electronic Publishing: Liturgical Material

I have been asked by Hodder & Stoughton to clarify the issue in my letter which appeared in the last edition of *News of Liturgy*. Hodders are insisting that they along with OUP have considerable expertise in electronic publishing but in no way would wish this to become a conflict between publishing houses. Hodders tell me that their Worship Master plans are not final, despite the sample disk which already been distributed.

I think it is important to discover precisely what arrangements have been made between General Synod office and Hodders on the back of the exclusive software contract that has been signed, so that General Synod can give its advice and retrieve the situation if possible after 1997 when the initial contract expires.

Synod must make sure that the Liturgical Commission, the Central Board of Finance and the Synod officers themselves keep as 'open' a policy as possible in respect of software publishing.

Furthermore, the consultative group that is set up must include within reason all interested parties, among whom will be other publishers of liturgical material.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,

Michael Perry (Tonbridge)

## THE NEW LITURGICAL CANONS

We pointed out last month that Canon B3 remains virtually unchanged. We printed the revised B4, and we reported the deletion of the old B4A. We go on now to B5.

### B5 OF THE DISCRETION OF MINISTERS IN CONDUCT OF PUBLIC PRAYER

1. The minister who is to conduct the service may in his discretion make and use variations which are not of substantial importance in any form of service authorized by Canon B1 according to particular circumstances.
2. The minister having the cure of souls may on occasions for which no provision is made in the Book of Common Prayer or by the General Synod under Canon B2 or by the Convocation, archbishops, or Ordinary under Canon B4 use forms of service considered suitable by him for these occasions and may permit another minister to use the said forms of service.
3. All variations in forms of service and all forms of service used under this Canon shall be reverent and seemly and shall be neither contrary to, nor indicative of any departure from, the doctrine of Church of England in any essential matter.
4. If any question is raised concerning the observance of the provisions of the last preceding paragraph or whether a variation in a form of service is of substantial importance or not, it may be referred to the bishop in order that he may give such pastoral guidance or advice as he may think fit, but such reference shall be without prejudice to the matter in questions being made the subject-matter of proceedings under the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1963.
5. In this Canon the expression 'form of service' has the same meaning as in Canon B1.

### Commentary

The changes here are of little substance and are designed to clarify the authority of the minister 'having the cure of souls' and to do little else. Clause 5 is new.

The Canon has its own separate debates, as, except in cases of grievance, it does not locate *who* (other than the minister concerned) is to determine which variations are of no substantial importance! There were attempts in the General Synod in the 1980s to get Archbishop Runcie to rule on the matter, and *Making Women Visible* is an exercise in semi-official advice from the Commission as to what is possible in the importing of inclusive language (this has the added canonical irony that the change is said to be needed for reasons of great importance, whilst the only authority for making the change is that it is of no substantial importance. . .)

### **This month's Booklet is . . .**

. . . Joint Liturgical Study no. 27, *Revising the Eucharist: Groundwork for the Anglican Communion: Studies in Preparation for the 1995 Dublin Consultation*, edited by David Holeton. The editor is chairman of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultations, and he convened an 'interim' international gathering at Untermarchtal in South Germany in August 1993. The main individual contributors to this symposium are the editor, who puts the material into an historical context, COB and Thomas Talley. The COB paper is very general, but the Talley one is a very searching piece on the revision of the eucharistic prayer. This last paper has been in great demand from those who were at Untermarchtal, and Grove Books and the Joint Editorial Board have had to act with great firmness to prevent the paper being pirated . . . Along with the main essays are one-page identifications of a range of issues in revision.

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

is Worship Series no. 128, *Revising Weddings*, by Charles Read. There has been a flow of creative ideas amongst Roman Catholics in recent years about the marriage service, but, whilst the Church of England Commission has certainly observed and assessed these, there have been no reports which specifically address the marriage rites thus far coming from the Commission. So this booklet is a contribution to the future from a keen observer.

### **THAT LAY PRESIDENCY ISSUE—IN AUSTRALIA**

Earlier this month the Diocesan Synod of Sydney diocese noted a resolution endorsing the principle of lay presidency, a 1987 vote to accept that there are no doctrinal objections, and a report last year that there are good reasons in favour. The Archbishop of Sydney had in 1993 expressed some personal hesitations, including his own role as metropolitan of the Province of New South Wales, so the resolution this month asked the standing committee to involve the Archbishop in the preparation of legislation.

### **ANOINTING AT THE ORDINATION OF BISHOPS**

We now have to hand the text used by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the last two ordination services for bishops in the Southern Province (a text not printed in the programme in either case). It runs as follows:

'As the Father anointed our Lord Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit, so may he pour upon you the virtues of his abundant grace, to reconcile, strengthen and sanctify his people, now and for ever. Amen.'

Whilst the text appears to have some Roman parentage, it has also been worked over at Lambeth. We await the Lambeth *ex cathedra* commentary (stating the theological and liturgical rationale). On 29 April, the Archbishop will be chief consecrator at the ordination of three bishops in one rite—a liturgical Trinity which, if not unprecedented, is at least rare in the Church of England.

So what are we offered? Curiously Raymond George does the appreciation of Ronald Jasper, probably on the grounds of being a contemporary and an enthusiast. The snag is that, although he may crack up the task of JLG and ICET/ELLC, he did not actually observe Ronald at work in his own life-crowning task, the 16-year chairmanship of the Church of England Liturgical Commission, in all the years leading to the ASB. For that we have to go to Ronald's own autobiographical *The Development of Anglican Liturgy* or await the promised biography from Donald Gray.

Gordon Jeanes ('Ceremonial') majors on baptismal rites; Bryan Spinks ('Culture') uses his theme as a run-in for expounding the cultural messages of *Patterns* and *Promises*; David Glover ('Doctrine') tackles doctrines of eucharistic sacrifice in the Church of England (and I am not sure he has the issues and authors of the 1960s absolutely right); Phillip Tovey ('Ecumenism') writes out of LEP experience and gives a Cook's tour of the United Churches, inter-church initiatives—and Taizé; Edward Phillips ('Ethics') explores a range of opinion which at one end identifies ethics with liturgy and at the other sunders them totally; Grant Sperry-White ('History of Christianity') looks from his title to be doing more than all the others put together, but is in fact pleading that historians should get properly into the liturgical stream in which the history of each era is formed, and that once they are there they should recognize what are appropriate methodologies for measuring and assessing the stream; Catherine Pickstock ('Language') provokes some direct quotation: 'In order that there be an enclave at a remove from the vast and undefined space of the chaotic quotidian where events are caught up in the cataract of paratactic time . . .', and there *must* be some other way of saying 'in the story of the emperor's new clothes . . . the referential fact of his nudity is collectively non-existent'—and I spent most of my efforts on translation. Paul Bradshaw ('Living Literature') delineates how documents and unwritten 'literature' (and liturgy too) in use go on changing over generations; Ruth Meyers ('Society') is back with questions of culture, including the impact of secularism and existentialism; Susan White ('Technology') is in similar paths, though the origins of her cultural context lie in mechanization of which we are victims, rather than *hubris* in which we are the aggressors; and finally Maxwell Johnson ('Theology') examines Schmemmann, Wainwright and Kavanagh in the light of *lex orandi*.

If the crucial word in the title is 'and', it is clear that there is no likelihood of a common thrust, nor any guarantee of a full coverage of any field—the coach takes us round twelve tourist sites, where different kinds of guides give us a fairly quick introduction, or sometimes concentrate on one detail. The day ends, and we are hard put to get a common picture of the day's tour, or of the sites or buildings we should have liked to visit which were *not* on the itinerary. So we go to bed with a general awareness that it has been a most interesting day and there are a couple of sites of particular interest where we would like the chance to interrogate the guide at greater leisure on another date.

ordinances, whereas the picture is much more complicated—plenty (including the divorced) want a church wedding, but they are like Harrison in wanting the words of the rites to be very Christian, but not to bind anybody to anything. For myself I see nothing but further decline down that route. But then I want the church to be Christian.

Other reflections include a chapter 'Forgive Us, Lord, for We have Synod', and a relegation of women's ordination to being a side-issue in the real struggle for continued existence of the Church of England and its quest for a role. He has a deep concern for the unchurched, though without wanting them to be properly gathered into a real church—so it is not clear that financially or administratively his 'church' base would survive even the first stages of his programme.

But . . . there is an interesting twist. One would have expected the whole thrust to have been to lay great weight on the established character of the Church of England and on the exhaustive 'cure of souls' which the clergy assume. But, lo and behold, when it comes to the state connection, he is a disestablishmentarian. Well, one must not despise allies of any sort, but this part of his policy looks as though it was invented on a different day from all the rest. For my part, I would hate to go into the disestablishment battle armed with his ideology—I would be constantly afraid I might stab myself in the back.

The book is not very internally consistent, and has many of the marks of instant journalism about it. It takes one to recognize one!

COB

Paul Bradshaw and Bryan Spinks (eds.), *Liturgy in Dialogue* (SPCK, 1993, x/225 pp., £14.99).

This is a major symposium, apparently arising from a desire to honour the memory of Ronald Jasper, but in fact not mentioning him on the outside front cover, and only giving short space to him within. So the book contains useful contributions without it being very clear what the unifying concept is that brings them together, and without the title giving very much away either. (The blurb on the back suggests that the 'dialogue' is simply a statement that liturgy is connected to many other theological and pastoral disciplines, and the editors' brief Preface never uses the word 'dialogue'—but they say they wish to explore 'some obvious and some less obvious areas of connectedness', and I guess that is as near to an explanation of 'dialogue' as they get; I am confessedly nitpicking, but there are varying distancings as between liturgy and the other themes listed here—for instance, 'ceremonial' might be viewed as a detail *within* liturgy; 'doctrine' as a discipline *embracing* liturgy; and 'architecture' as a separate study which nevertheless ought to *relate to* liturgy (and how!); and the themes are arranged alphabetically, which indicates their disparteness). It is an Atlantic-spanning volume, with English and American contributors as well as two, Paul Bradshaw and Susan White, who have crossed the Atlantic (one in each direction) to minister away from their land of birth.

## SOME MARCH LITURGICAL ODDITIES

I have wandered a bit in March, and in the process have added some experiences to my diary. I sat at home on 13 March and heard part of the first lawful (8 a.m.) eucharistic rite at which a woman presided in the Church of England—and it was a 1662 rite! I went to Shrewsbury on 14 March and discovered (amongst other things) that the crematorium there does duty not only for the surrounding Shropshire countryside, but also for the whole of mid-Wales, right across to Aberystwyth. This has a curious set of knock-on effects—clearly the clergy on the Welsh coast are not going to take a trip to Shrewsbury twice a week, so instead they do everything necessary at the local church and despatch a coffin without mourners or relatives by hearse to Shrewsbury, where the local clergy officiate (at a specially reduced fee) over the last disposal to the flames in an empty crem chapel. (Stop press news is that Aberystwyth is getting its own crematorium, so Shrewsbury's services to a large slice of the Principality may be nearing their end.)

The next night I was at our own Rochester Diocesan Liturgical Committee meeting. We are running a whole day conference on All-Age Worship on 23 April, with an all-star cast, and an invitation to bring all the family, so that our conference can model what it teaches. This is at Meopham, fifteen minutes from the Dartford Crossing and about ten minutes from the A2, the M25 or the M20. Visitors from outside Rochester diocese are very welcome. Ring 081-650-3400 (or my number) for details. The next day again I was sitting with a small group to plan a diocesan service in September for the commissioning of our first trained and accredited diocesan evangelists (can this be done, we asked ourselves, without singing 'Shine, Jesus, Shine'? Answer 'yes, it can'). On the Saturday of that week I called in on the small brotherhood at Ewell Monastery (which backs onto the Benedictine Nunnery at West Malling), only to discover the most thoroughgoing liturgical counter-revolution I could imagine. Here are monks who don't believe in the Church year! They are companions of Knox and Cromwell, but neither of them would have thought these iconoclasts had many stakes in monasteries. My new friends believe we live in a continuous unbroken Easter season, and to pretend otherwise, e.g. by 'actualizing' Holy Week, is exactly that—pretending. So they do not give up the Gloria in Excelsis for Lent, have little patience with Good Friday, and are not prepared to go down *The Promise of His Glory* route. Two days later I was at a PRAXIS Council meeting, where there was concern on behalf of the day I am due to share with Joel Edwards on 'West Indian Pentecostalist Worship' on Saturday 11 June at St. Peter's, Eaton Square—it seems few have booked in, so do come and join us.

By then Holy Week was looming and I was practising for a (deliberately heckled) open-air sermon in the High Street shopping area on Good Friday, and our own local version of a pontifical Easter Eve (with baptisms, asperging, etc.).

So by the time you get this Christ will have risen from the dead—or do those Ewell Brothers have something to say here?

COB

## THE SOCIETY FOR LITURGICAL STUDY

SLS meets every other year, when Societas Liturgica is not meeting, and now announces that this year's conference (at Plater College, Oxford) will be held from 30 August to 1 September (a change of date from that previously advertised). There is no single theme, but the following papers are expected:

Chris Cocksworth: 'The Liturgy and the Trinity'  
Jane Sinclair: 'Feminism and Liturgy'  
Graham Woolfenden: 'Recent Research on Liturgical Origins'  
Anon: 'The Revised Roman Missal'

Applications to the Secretary, Dr. Martin Stringer, Department of Theology, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT. He has also included some useful book reviews in the circular—and news of another liturgical journal to be expected—it is entitled *Anaphora* and will be edited and circulated by Graham Woolfenden (c/o Ripon College, Cuddesdon, Oxford OX9 9EX). More details will come soon.

## AND SOME OTHER CONFERENCES

With more or less detail, information has reached us about:

23 April: Rochester diocesan Liturgical Committees's one-day conference on 'All-Age Worship' (see 'March Liturgical Oddities' on page 5 above for how to book).

7 May MORIB's annual National conference at CPAS, Leamington Spa, with Michael Gear, Bishop of Doncaster, as the main speaker, under the title 'Infant Baptism and the Gospel' (book by contacting Conference Secretary, 24 Geldart Street, Cambridge CB1 2LX, or ring 0223-63545). Bring your lay baptismal visiting team for an instructive day out!

14 May: (PRAXIS\*) 'Personality Types and Liturgical Style'

21 May: (PRAXIS\*) 'Computers—A Useful Tool for Good Worship?'

11 June: (PRAXIS\*) 'Worship—Learning from the Black-Led Churches'. (PRAXIS—COVENTRY) 'Growing in Christ—Liturgical Consultancy'.

15-17 July: National residential conference of the Friends of the Prayer Book. See separate note opposite about the organization, and contact Margot Johnson, 37 Hallgarth Street, Durham DH1 3AT, for details of the Conference.

24-29 July: Summer School of 'Liturgical Music Resources and The Society of Saint Gregory 'Celebrate and Serve''. For details ring 0272-467456.

30 Aug-1 Sept: SLS conference as outlined above.

\*All PRAXIS Conferences are at St. Peter's, Eaton Square, unless otherwise mentioned. Details from PRAXIS, 19 Maunsell Street, London SW1P 2QN.

## FRIENDS OF THE PRAYER BOOK

We advertised this Society's conference on John Cosin last year but perhaps failed to spell out who the Society is. Margot Johnson, the secretary, has supplied the following details:

### Aims of the Friends of the Prayer Book

The aim of the Society shall be the advancement of the Christian religion according to the doctrines of the Church of England, and in furtherance of this aim the Society shall seek the following objectives:

- (a) to uphold the worship and doctrine of the Church of England as embodied in the Book of Common Prayer;
- (b) to encourage the use of the Book of Common Prayer as a major element in the worshipping life of the Church of England;
- (c) to spread knowledge of the Book of Common Prayer and of the doctrine contained therein;
- (d) to ensure that members of the Church of England understand the religions and cultural traditions embodied in the Book of Common Prayer, and to encourage the continued use of the Book of Common Prayer in our parish services;
- (e) to encourage the use of the Book of Common Prayer in the training of Ordinands and of candidates for Confirmation.

Apparently this Society has no connection with the Prayer Book Society.

### Book Reviews

Ted Harrison, *Members Only? Is the Church Becoming Too Exclusive?* (Triangle/SPCK, 1994, 137pp., £4.99).

This is a very 'popular' journalistic expression of the author's opinions, backed by questionnaire returns from 300 sample clergy, who more or less cancel each other out and leave him free to deliver his opinions. Those opinions are not always consistent but come out something like this:

'I have had the impression that the established Church of England—and, in some ways, the established Church of Scotland—are in danger of losing an essential purpose and contact with the people by, frankly, becoming too "Christian".' (p.1).

So what is his programme? Give people space to express their own folk religion; cater for them at occasional services; use the BCP and sung matins; and ensure bishops and clergy give up their admin, dump all their paperwork, and get out visiting. When they do so, they are not to be thought of as trying to get people to church (that would create too definite an impression) but to be expressing the sense that the Church is there 'for all'. The author had an extract in *The Times* Saturday Magazine on 19 March, which quickened interest in the book.

Naturally he is concerned about occasional offices: but he does not seem to have considered what baptism is, nor noticed the continued demand for church weddings (at least on photogenic premises), nor recognized that even at the crem it is a Christian minister who officiates over 90% of the time. He writes as though the nation were turning its back on the church's