

OPEN

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AP leaps
for joy!
our 24th
quarter
arway

The Council of Associated Parishes

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Thomas Babbitt	Litchfield, Connecticut
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The Rev. Bonnell Spencer, OHC*	West Park, New York
The Rev. Thomas Talley*	New York
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The Rev. Samuel E. West	Marshall, Michigan
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^o Ecumenical Member	
+ Canadian Member	Winnie Crapson
* Member of Executive Council	Recording Secretary to the Council

A Birthday Greeting from the "PB"



Now and then, in the life of the Church, a small group of committed people have banded together to help restore a particular emphasis — which has been eroded or lost — to the totality of Christian witness. They have been called for by a great need. And they have responded largely because they have been willing to open themselves to the movement of the Holy Spirit.

The Associated Parishes has been just such a group even though they would eschew the group idea. They have been responsible in the Episcopal Church for a recovery of (or a timely re-discovery) of the valid dimensions of the Liturgy, and the relationship between liturgy and mission. At the heart of it has been the exploration of the mysteries of the Eucharist, and the acceptance of a responsibility to

share with others their corporate findings, relating the Eucharist to both the individual's search for the reality of the transcendent and the Church's role as a worshipping, reconciling, healing community.

Much vitality for the Church has been motivated by the teaching seminars, the experimental innovations in liturgy, and the tireless search for the deep values of the life of prayer and worship sponsored by the Associated Parishes. They can look back upon a quarter of a century of service with gratitude and advance with an even more exciting quarter of a century with confidence.

John E. Hines
Presiding Bishop

from the Prayer Book's
official "watchdog"

It would be hard to overestimate the enlightenment and growth which have come to the Church as a result of the impact and impetus of small and voluntary groups of committed Churchmen. In this century, one has only to think of the Emmanuel Movement and its influence on the Church's ministry to the sick; the Episcopal League for Social Action in the field of social concern; the Overseas Mission Society, recalling the Church to its worldwide task; and the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity, awakening the Church from its blindness and lack of concern for racial and ethnic minorities.

In this noble company, the Associated Parishes, Inc. is to be numbered. Beginning a quarter of a century ago with a small but distinguished nucleus of clergymen concerned for the renewal of the Church through liturgy and mission, the Society, through its publications and by its series of na-

tional liturgical conferences, has interpreted the world-wide Ecumenical Movement to, and naturalized it in, the Episcopal Church. It has drawn into its orbit and has formed the outlook of most of those persons — clerical and lay — who are today charged with the responsibility of revision the Book of Common Prayer; indeed, the Prayer Book revision project, though initiated formally by the General Convention, can be seen as a tangible fruit of the prayers and studies and consultations of the Associated Parishes.

Charles M. Guilbert

The Reverend Canon
Charles Mortimor Guilbert,
Custodian,
Standard Book of Common Prayer

and from an old
& dear friend

The twenty-fifth anniversary of Associated Parishes brings back many happy memories. I recall the initial gathering brought together by John Patterson in a hotel in Cincinnati late in the summer of '47 to plan our organization, and then the first formal meeting the following November at the College of Preachers.

We were an apostolic band — some twelve faithful men and true: six parish priests, myself, and our beloved episcopal sponsor, Bishop Noble Powell, who led our initial meditations. Our guide and mentor during those first years was Canon Ted Wedel, who foresaw the importance of this group for the liturgical renewal of the Church.

I think we were wise in pressing during those early years for loyalty to the Prayer Book, and making its teaching and ideals the focus of a total

parish program. We did not press for revision — knowing perhaps that its coming was inevitable. Now that we have trial use, the Associated Parishes has been ready, with a solid foundation, to give it creative leadership. Our cause has been taken up by the whole Church.

Associated Parishes is one of those voluntary groups that has always been open to new ventures, and thus has not found it necessary to dissolve when its original purpose has been recognized and accepted.

All best wishes in the coming year.

Sincerely yours,

Massey

Massey H. Shepherd, Jr.

Know a word from our President

The termination of the first twenty-five years of Associated Parishes marks not just an anniversary but the end of an epoch. The group of priests and laymen, who got together in 1946 in order to see what could be done to raise the standard of worship in the Episcopal Church, began a process of research and experimentation in their parishes, with semi-annual meetings to discuss and evaluate the resulting data. To a considerable extent their original findings are now being acted upon by the whole Church.

The first principle of the group was loyalty to both the spirit and the letter of the Book of Common Prayer. Accordingly, it recommended only ceremonies that were permissible in terms of its rubrics and interpretations that conformed to its ethos. The group did not at first agitate for Prayer Book revision, but rather tried to help the Church understand and appreciate the riches of the 1928 book and its implications for worship and social action.

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These researches were relayed to the Church in two ways. First, there were the brochures dealing with each of the sacraments and the other rites and ceremonies of the Prayer Book, of which the most important and influential was The Parish Eucharist. Second, there was a series of major conferences, at Madison, San Antonio, Wichita, New York, Seattle, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles.

Although not explicitly aimed at Prayer Book revision, however, the work of Associated Parishes prepared the way for it. As priests and congregations grew in knowledge of the meaning of worship and the sacraments down through the centuries, and its expression in the Book of Common Prayer, they also began to see that for our rapidly changing scene its expression needed clarification. The Standing Liturgical Commission began work on this in the late 40's and, since at least four members of the Associated Parishes Council have served on the Commission, it has had

its influence in shaping the proposed revision of the Prayer Book.

Among those who attended the conferences and read the brochures there developed a growing number of supporters who wanted to cooperate more closely with Associated Parishes. The Council believed that to accomplish its work of research and direction it had to remain relatively small. But it was finally decided that it could accept general associates and proceeded to solicit them.

The response created new problems. To handle our relationships with the new group, it was felt advisable to employ an Executive Secretary. Thanks to a large gift received at that time, Associated Parishes was able to appoint Otis Charles (now Bishop of Utah) on a part time basis. A two-year grant received the following year made it possible for him to be employed fulltime.

It was hoped that before the second grant ran out, the number of associates paying dues would be sufficient to cover the operating cost of our Executive Secretary, office, and publications. Unfortunately it did not work out that way, and the attempt to operate without a grant last year has resulted in a debt. Hence we have not been able to employ an Executive Secretary since Otis Charles resigned.

His duties have been parceled out to various members of the Council. Inevitably there has been a notable decrease in efficiency, but we are doing what we can.

Now that the Church through the trial use proposals has given official expression to many of the things for which Associated Parishes was originally working, the question rises, what does Associated Parishes do next? The encouragement of the understanding and appreciation of the proposed liturgies would seem an obvious contribution. Already we have held three conferences for the Diocesan Liturgical Chairmen, and this winter we are helping organize regional and local conferences to stimulate intelligent trial use. But with the development of diocesan and parochial liturgical committees, this work is being taken over more and more at the local level, as it should be.

*«Would you tell me,
please, which way
I ought to go from
here?.»*

ALICE

The need for a deepening understanding of the theological, liturgical, and devotional principles on which the current renewal and revision is based is still with us. Perhaps Associated

Parishes should concentrate therefore more on expounding them, possibly through a new series of brochures which do for the trial liturgies what the former series did for the 1928 Prayer Book.

On the other hand, no informed and perceptive person thinks that the current proposals are the last word. There remains much research and experimentation yet to be done on the meaning of liturgy, its most effective expression in modern terms, and its significance for the individual and for society in the contemporary world. While others are solidifying the gains already made, perhaps Associated Parishes should be blazing the trails ahead.

Or maybe we should make some combination of two or three of the above.

All these questions — financial problems, relations with our associates, the work we should be doing and how best to accomplish it — will be thoroughly explored at the next Council meeting, April 7-10, 1972. We wish all our associates could be with us, but that would defeat the purpose of the meeting. A large group can discuss, but it can come up with only superficial answers. And Associated Parishes needs some solid conclusions on which to base its second quarter of a century.

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The Council will welcome, however, your help in discerning the problems and needs, and your advice on how we can solve and meet them. Please address any comments to the Reverend Thomas Talley, General Theological Seminary, 175 Ninth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10011. And if you have any criticisms of the way things are being handled, do not hesitate to voice them also.

*a crisis
in faith*

Today the Church faces a crisis in faith, worship, and the spiritual life greater than any since the Reformation. On the one hand, the divisions of the sixteenth century are beginning to be healed. On the other, the Church is forced to present itself as but one option in the pluralism of an increasingly secular society. In such a situation a group that is interested in liturgy in the fullest meaning of the word — its significance, its techniques, and its implications — and one which has some expertize in the field, certainly should have a contribution to offer. With your help and support we hope to recognize and make it.

Bonnie

The Reverend Bonnell Spencer, OHC
President, Associated Parishes, Inc.

Theology & Play

by Thomas V. Lay SJ

Theology and play? — Theology of play? The words do not fit easily together. A few years ago "The Death of God" — a strange semantic linkage too — was all the buzz in theology land. Is it a sign of further deterioration and bankruptcy that theology, the study of God, now concerns itself with reflections on play? Does it reflect a kind of effete trivialization of the religious thinkers of a decadent and affluent society? For a committed believer, these are frightening possibilities.

A brief look at the losses and gains on the Theological Dow-Jones Board since the transcendent's bankruptcy around 1965 may prove instructive for our purposes. With the decline of interest in God "out there" or "in the depths" investments rose sharply in the Secular City and interpersonal and community involvements. The Church, or rather some Christians, were politicized. However, as any true believer would have expected all along, investments in transcendence

began to rise again. True it was a chastened and altered transcendence. Perhaps it was only a "Rumor of Angels" that we heard. Moreover, our signals were coming not from "out there" — not from "the depths within" but from the Future. Even before Alvin Toffler, the theologians had divined the shock that comes from the future. With a little cooperation from the exegetes, the systematic theologians were able to assure us that actually God had revealed himself to Moses as "I will be who I will be." This concludes the first portion of my message for you this evening and speaking as I have been from the floor of the Dow-Jones Exchange, I am pleased to assure you that transcendence is holding its own and rising steadily.



What has transcendence to do with play? What has the future to do with play? What has the hope which we have for the future to do with play? What has our worship to do with play? I would like to discuss these each briefly, in turn.

transcendence & play

(1) What has transcendence to do with play? By transcendence here I mean any experience which hints to us that our limits are not what they appear to be. When we truly play for the simple joy of it or the hell of it if you wish, we affirm, if only momentarily, our liberation from the apparent constraints of the everyday world. Whether it is charades or Halloween, we put on another mask, play another, more free role and actualize a part of ourself not normally lived. When play is not coerced, it truly does have a gratuitous quality of re-creation. It frees us from the hypnotic effect of our unexamined environment and in McLuhan's terms creates an anti-environment which has the potential of revealing the limitations and constrictions of our work-a-day world. For this reason, "role playing" has healing and therapeutic possibilities.

It is perhaps in the totally free and

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spontaneous quality of play that its transcendent reference is best grasped. In his book, Man At Play, Father Hugo Rahner notes, "All play . . . is an attempt to approximate to the Creator, who performs his work with the divine seriousness which its meaning and purpose demand, and yet with the spontaneity and effortless skill, of the great artist he is, creating because he wishes to create and not because he must" (p. 28). We recall the words of Proverbs in which the Divine Wisdom is personified:

"When he traced the foundations of the earth, I was beside him as a ward of his; and daily was I filled with delight, as I sported before him all the time, sported in this world of his, and found my delight in the sons of men." (8:30-31).

play & the future

(2) What has play to do with the future? One form of play is fantasy. Aided by the freedom and spontaneity inherent in play, new possibilities for alternative futures might emerge. "It shakes off the fetters of that which is." A few years ago there was a TV special which presented a historical survey of science fiction projections for space travel. The real effect which this "play" produced was un-

mistakable. The effect of these playful comic strip imaginations are real, indeed, in our world today.

The game of political fantasy involves utopias and their construction. Quite rightly Harvey Cox in his Feast of Fools argues for the necessity of the unburdening effect of play and festivity in aiding us to "lay hold again of the gift of envisioning radically alternative futures" (p. 86) for ourselves. This need is further demonstrated in these words of Lewis Mumford, "Utopia has long been a name for the unreal and the impossible. We have set utopias over against the world. As a matter of fact, it is our utopias that make the world tolerable to us: the cities and mansions that people dream of are those in which they finally live." Play, then, can be a kind of rehearsal for the future, reminding us of values and opportunities yet unrealized and simultaneously educating us for the realization of those possibilities.

play & hope

(3) The relation of play to hope, by now is rather obvious, I'm sure. Thomas More's joke on the scaffold was rooted in something deeper than the empirical evidence of his surroundings, that is, the hangman's noose. (Sir Thomas is reported to have said to his executioner: "Pluck up thy

spirits, man, and be not afraid to do thine office; my neck is very short; take heed therefore thou strike not awry, for saving of thine honesty." ed.) His joke reflected a hope — an opening — a clearing in the fog — that delivered him from a claustrophobic despair.

This has been in some measure the vocation of every true comic — to put the lie to every form of the dead earnestness of the man of the univocal or one-dimensional imagination, the man who can see no further than his nose. Surely our experience with administrators looking for "final solutions" and ecclesiastics concerned with the finest nuances of orthodoxy should assure us that it the comic's ability to shatter pretensions and premature certainties we find a source of hope.

play & worship

(4) Now let us consider our final question. What does play have to do with our worship? Is it too lacking in respect to suggest that the liturgy is play par excellence? Two personal experiences have suggested this possibility to me and I would like to share them with you. Oddly enough they both occurred with Orthodox Churchmen.

During my days in the seminary at Saint Mary's College in Kansas, I recall an evening that Father Alexander Schmemman spent with us. He mentioned that one of the things that bothered him about the Roman Catholic celebration of the liturgy was that it was so often done in such a joyless context. These were the days of the privately celebrated masses early in the morning. This was for me a first awakening to another dimension of the liturgy calling us to joy in our lives.

A similar experience with a group of Russian Orthodox churchmen helped me in this matter. During a beautiful and moving celebration of their liturgy, the Censors they used were decorated with small bells! The bells — reminiscent of sleigh bells or tinkling bells of childhood, surely signaled the entry into a world removed from the constraints and obsessive seriousness of time clocks and work whistles, of deadlines and appointment books.

Many aspects of the liturgy — the colors, the embraces, the ritual ges-

tures, the kisses, all conspire, hopefully, to hint at a different possibility for our lives than that which we ordinarily realize. Is there not an element of role playing when we who often speak divisively of one another come together and try to share (often with embarrassment) words of love? Is there not an element of role playing when we who knowingly and unknowingly conspire to limit the amount of bread on the tables of many men come together and eat our fill at the Eucharistic table?

When we were children we learned many things from our play.

By playing with sounds we learned our language. By playing grown-up we learned a little about growing up. Is it too much to hope that by acting like we are at a heavenly banquet we may hasten its coming and our own entrance into that Kingdom which comes so highly recommended to children — children who are free enough to play and open enough to learn from their play. May God grant that it may be so!

*an address to diocesan
liturgical chairmen
at S. Louis Nov 1971*

their backs and Bibles in hand, attempting to convert everyone they come across to their stern version of Christianity." If one asks, "Why are our churches in decline while such an aberration of the faith grows?", the Wall Street Journal answers, "These kinds reject their parents' religion for the same reason they reject their parents' society: They find it formalized, dead, and sterile."

Such words are hard to accept for the parish priest or faithful communicant who has committed himself to his Lord and Savior within the formal setting of parish life and especially Sunday morning worship. A danger we face is that this commitment to what has been good and true and beautiful might shift to a self-righteous complacency with the way things are in our parish life and worship.

Acknowledging such self-righteous complacency as an ever present temptation, we must also consider our motives as Christian worshippers today. Is there not within us, as within Jesus freaks and others, a motivation for gathering to worship God which meets our natural need of companionship and which solves at the sociological level our need to "meet some new people"? It is liturgically significant that etymologically companion means "with bread". Can we accept this natural experience of loneliness and

lostness and begin to see it as a legitimate beginning of the process of discovery of ourselves within a theological framework which affirms our humanity in the context of a mystery of life transcendent of ourselves?

The nature of man is not changed. He is essentially a being who transcends himself and his world while at the same time being concretely anchored in himself and his world. As long as this is so he will have religion by whatever name he calls it. In Future Shock by Toffler, it is said that we are experiencing change to the point of it being detrimental to our health as human beings. This may be a factor in our resistance to change. Our security and God are all tied up together. If my experience of God has been in a formal atmosphere which enhances a one-to-one quiet, individualistic experience of worship, then changes in liturgy which insist that I confront my neighbor, reach out and touch him and say "Peace" may do anything but give me peace. Change threatens my stability and security, and often liturgical and ecclesiastical change means my God is threatened too.

When we ask the question, "Why Change Our Liturgy?", we are asking a question larger than how shall we spend an hour on Sunday. We are asking whether or not God is calling us, his Church, into a re-examination

of our stewardship of the mysteries of life, the Gospel. Our complacency, the needs which motivate us to gather for worship, and the rapid state of change in our world all are interwoven in the knotty problem of facing up to changing our liturgies. Liturgy means literally, "the people's work". As the People of God our work of praise and thanksgiving to God remains the same now as ever, but the form, manner, and language of our worship is subject to the same change that all other parts of our world are. To re-examine the form, manner, and language of our worship let us examine three components of liturgical change: The Sociological, the Theological and the Linguistic.

SOCIOLOGICAL COMPONENT

Because of scientific and technological advances we have moved from a rural to urban society, from a society characterized by static, communal relationships to one characterized by ever changing relationships seeking community. In the rural society there was a security of individual identity. God, Church, family, and individual man all had a place in an order on which the individual could depend. In the urban society all relationships seem in flux. God, who used to have a fairly stable place and time (Church on Sunday) gets lost in four-day work weeks with three-day, leisure oriented, weekends.

In this social flux man has moved into the suburbs from both rural areas and the city. Churches, old and new, find themselves seeking to minister to new and different constituents. The old well-to-do inner city church now must serve parishioners who drive in from miles around the city while at the same time seeking to meet the needs of new and often poor, inner city residents and business areas. The great distances and the threat of the city at night reshapes the calendar of week-night activities and makes Sunday attendance less frequent. The suburbs burst with people moving in and out. Large developments of homes and apartments fill the suburban picture with people from every possible background, and whereas people have an image of a rural community church, the reality is that community must be built. The rural churches struggle to survive. With increasing costs, the loss of young families to the suburbs, and the demise of the small farm, these churches are threatened with a slow death.

A significant effect of this massive and revolutionary change has been that we now find ourselves seeking community rather than presupposing it. Once, people strived to keep their neighbors from "knowing everything;" now, the same people find themselves lonely. There is gnawing anxiety as persons seek direction and

purpose. Old values fade and new values seem tentative. The very newness itself is unnerving and threatening.

To offer thankful praise of God in this new world is at the heart of the Christian's vocation. To worship God as the Body gathered in a new world implies that our traditional function must be accomplished with the help of tools from the new world. Must there not, therefore, be new liturgy to dramatize and speak clearly of the new ministry that is obviously called for? Our worshipping congregation is not just another "group" alongside others such as the "job group", the "PTA group", and a host of others. Somehow, we need to point more clearly to the strength and power of God's love — to make sense out of this overwhelming diversity, and to offer one group which shares deeply in open, honest fellowship. New liturgical forms are needed to call this kind of community into being, and to celebrate the new life it can bring! Liturgy cannot presuppose a pre-existing community. It must strive to help community come into being in the act of worshipping God.

THEOLOGICAL COMPONENT

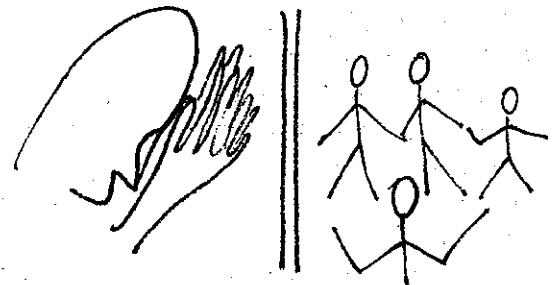
(1) In the static, rural society in which the experience of community was common, God was sought by the

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individual. The emphasis in post-Reformation Protestantism was on the individual believer and his God. To "participate" in liturgy in this framework was not only unnecessary, it was distracting. The typical early Communion service in the Episcopal Church is reflective of an individualistic piety arising from a static society and a theology which advocated isolating the individual worshipper with his God.

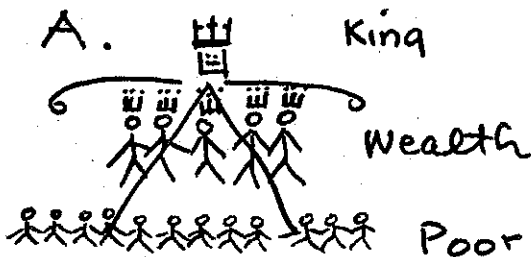
But a shift has occurred theologically. Since the recapture of Biblical theology in the first half of the 20th century, we now emphasize our corporateness as the People of God, the Body of Christ. One is not only a member of the Body, but God himself becomes manifest in and through the People; the Body "realizes" itself in a corporate offering of all of life in a joyful celebration of life.

The first theological point is that we have shifted from an individualism to a corporateness in our understanding of worship.

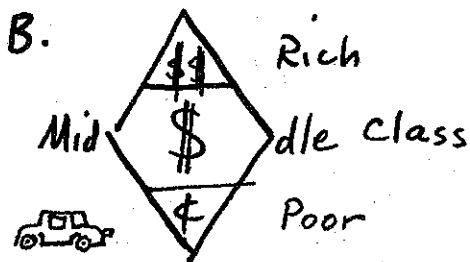


(2) A second shift concerns the role of clergy and laity in worship. Clericalism in both its Protestant and Catholic forms has led to the idea that the laity are passive members of the congregation in worship.

An economic analogy is appropriate. At one time the distribution of wealth looked like:



Here the "King" and a few at the top had all the wealth and the masses at the bottom were poor. The poor "looked up" to the authoritarian leadership from above. Later, with the rise of the middle class, the distribution of wealth looked like this:



No longer is the relationship of authority "from above" effective.

In a sense, clericalism functions as model "A" above. The clergyman is at the top and everyone "looks up" to him. For Protestantism this was possible because the clergy were "learned men". People were lined up in fixed rows (pews) each week to receive the Word from on high. The elevated pulpit illustrates this beautifully. But today, the "learned men" no longer have all the wealth. Few clergy today can pretend to "instruct" his congregation in all wisdom. Today, with the pews filled with people who have as much or more specialized learning in innumerable fields, the distribution of "the wealth of wisdom" is more like diagram B. The knowledge explosion, especially in its scientific-technological aspects, has dethroned the Protestant preacher from his pulpit. He no longer commands all authority about how one makes sense out of life.

In the Catholic tradition the priest was the "guardian of the deeps". He dispensed the mysteries which themselves were beyond question. Yet, the knowledge explosion has again dethroned the cleric from his position of authority.

Ironically, with the devaluation of the cleric's authority to rationally explain the world by preaching the Word and with the demise of superstition surrounding the Sacrament, and the con-

comitant loss of authority of the priest to offer the mysteries of God to the faithful, there has been a turning toward a "word according to Hesse" and others or toward the mysteries as offered in astrology or mind-expanding drugs.

(3) We need to regain a sense of the Church which affirms the legitimacy of both the clergy and laity. Together, we are the People of God. This People's life is a rhythm of gathering and dispersing. The Gathered Church is the church when it is gathered to work, pray, study or share in the fellowship. The Dispersed Church is the church when its individual members are engaged in their several callings — housewife, nuclear physicist, high-school student, etc.

The clergy are primarily responsible in, to, for and with the Gathered Church, but their responsibility is to equip and strengthen laymen for their work in the Dispersed Church. The laymen are primarily responsible in, to, for, and with the Dispersed Church in which their job is to proclaim the Gospel to people and structures. However, laymen also have the responsibility to inform the Gathered Church and its leaders about the issues confronting the church in dispersion, so that the equipping done when the church is gathered may be more useful to the church when it is dispersed.

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Within the Gathered Church the clergyman functions as priest, proclaimer, (or preacher), and pastor. As such he is a resource to the church gathered. No one function should be exercised to the exclusion of the other functions. For example, the Eucharist is not simply a sacramental act of a priest, it is also the occasion for proclamation of the Word and the opportunity for the pastor to help his people participate in Christian community. In relation to the laity gathered, the clergyman also exercises a role of enabler of his people. He is not an authority who lords it over his people, but one who functions to enable the People of God to be themselves in responsible action gathered and dispersed.

(4) Liturgically, we can see this if we ask the theological question, "Who is the celebrant of the Eucharist?" Biblically, Christ is the once-and-for-all presenter of life to God who establishes a once-and-for-all reconciliation between God and man. Every celebration participates in this Christ event, and the celebration today is done not by an individual cleric, but by a congregation gathered in Christ's name. The whole Body gathered offers up life in all of its joy and sadness; the whole Body says AMEN to the great thanksgiving said over the gifts offered; the whole Body participates as the Bread of life is broken;

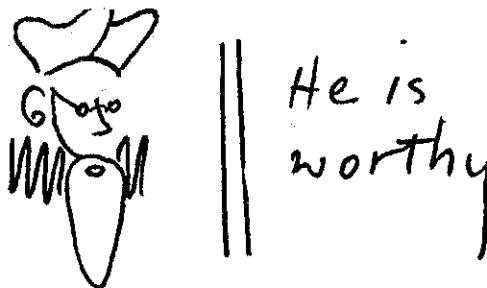
and the whole Body is communed, made "one with" God and one another. The joy of such a celebration of life is not a frivolous denial of sin, but an affirmation of faith in a victory once wrought and continually made alive in the personal history of countless unknown saints, Christian people, of every period of history. It is the clergyman who presides and acts as enabler when the church gathers to express such corporate celebration.

LINGUISTIC COMPONENT

Two considerations are necessary in the final section, and these are (1) the recognition that the language of the Liturgy is in urgent need of revision and even of what might be called "translation", and (2) that words themselves are of diminished value in our time in history, so that our liturgical problems would not be solved even if all of us were unanimously supportive of new words proposed for use in worship.

Cranmer himself would perhaps be the first to say that his English needs to be put in today's, for so many of his words have changed in meaning that it is often true that to approach them with today's understanding of particular words is to miss what Cranmer meant. More important is the radical shift in the condition of the people for whom a Prayer Book is written.

Many of Cranmer's words not only seem quaint, today, but are quaint and with their "tight little island" background are able to say less and less to citizens of modern superstates. Moreover, we live not in a great age of religion, but in a great secular age when God language is often not helpful in describing life. Just as our language today about God is tentative, tentativeness ought to characterize written liturgies. It appears that not even a resurrected and modernized Cranmer could devise liturgical language acceptable or helpful to everyone in the modern situation.



Our existence in McLuhan's Post-Gutenberg age provides an additional problem for the language of liturgy. It is not so much what is said as it is the manner of saying or doing it that communicates. New services done as clerically-centered performances with musical accompaniment before a passive audience would belong more to the past than to the present, while through the introduction of symbolic actions and modern emphases, it is possible in some cases to use Cran-

mer's language in doing services of worship in a truly contemporary way.

SUMMARY

Why Change Our Liturgy? In summary, we must change because our world and our style of life as human beings are not the same as they were even forty-three years ago. For the Church in this day to re-present the Paschal mystery of Christ in obedience to our Lord's command, "Do this in remembrance of me" is for the Church to regain a sense of the essentials for our journey in the wilderness. The Church needs to freshen the experience of worship in order to share the good news of its community with those lives that are affected in significant ways by rapid social change. To accomplish this we must be flexible and willing to take risks for Christ's sake. Monica Furlong writing in *The Manchester Guardian*, suggests:

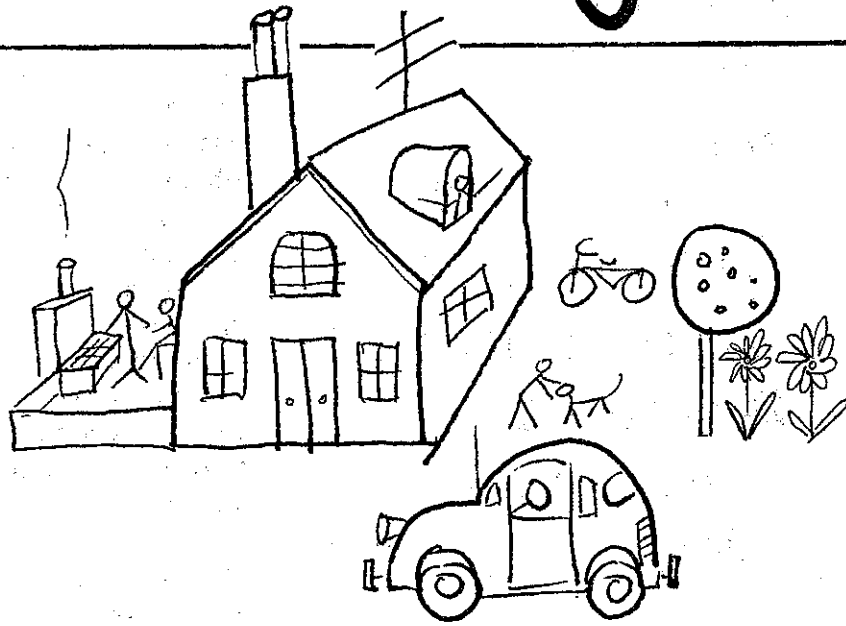
"I cannot imagine a more enjoyable time to be a Christian, except possibly in the first few centuries of the Church. For while the great holocaust is sweeping away much that is beautiful and all that is safe and comfortable and unquestioned, it is relieving us of the mounds of Christian bric-a-brac as well, and the liberation is unspeakable. Stripped of our nonsense we may almost be like the early Christians painting their primitive symbols

on the walls of the catacombs — the fish, the grapes, the loaves of bread, the cross, the monogram of Christ — confident that in having done so they had described the necessities of life."

The Diocesan Liturgical Commission sees the advent of Prayer Book Studies 18-24 as an opportunity for all of us to open our windows and let a little fresh breeze (or spirit) enter our worship. If we view these proposed services as instruments to aid us in recapturing worship in "spirit and truth" rather than as answers to our problems of vital worship, this period of trial use can be a helpful and healthy time for us.

(This paper attempts to reflect the substance of discussions of members of the Liturgical Commission of the Diocese of Washington during February and March, 1971. It is not a verbatim nor does it try to recreate the order of the discussion or the process of the group.)

Prayers at a House Blessing



for the
liturgy
of the
words



OT

Isa: 32: 15-20

Prov: 3: 33-35

PSALMS

84, 91

NT

Eph: 2: 17-22

Heb: 13: 1-16

Acts: 2: 42-47

GOSPELS

John 14: 1-6

Mk: 3: 20-35

etc.

water & salt are
blessed first ⊕

Almighty God, we thank you for the creation of water, over which the Spirit hovered, and from which has been brought forth on earth all the proliferation of living things. We thank you also that through the waters of the Red Sea you led the children of Israel to freedom, destroying the forces of evil, and through the waters of Jordan you brought your people into the land of promise. We pray you give to this water the fullness of its original fecundity, that wherever it is sprinkled it may bring life and health, peace and joy.

We thank you also for the gift of salt, which gives zest to that which is tasteless and which preserves that which would otherwise decay. We pray you to bless this salt to our use, that by our faith we may conserve the past and by our hope move fearlessly into the future, seasoning all things with your love, which is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, to be spread abroad in our lives to your honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

May this salt and water be mixed in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Songs during
the
processions



"Glorious things of
thee are spoken"

esp. v 3

"Tis the gift to be
simple"

ORIGINAL WORDS,
AT THE BEDROOM

"Feed us now, O son
of God"

KITCHEN

"Take our Bread"

AT THE TABLE

(HYMNS for NOW II)

"Come & go with me"

"Turn, Turn, Turn"

"O, when the Saints"

(JOURNEY TO FREEDOM)

at the kitchen ⊕

We thank you, all-loving Creator, for the bodies you have given us, and for the bounty and skill, not only to nourish them, but also to enjoy the many pleasures our bodies make possible. We ask you to bless this kitchen that what is prepared here may be a source of health and vigor, and of satisfaction and good cheer; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

at the table ⊕

We thank you, heavenly Father, that you place the solitary in families to be for them both a source of mutual support and a school of love. Bless this table and those who gather regularly at it, that the fellowship of the common meal may knit them ever more closely into one; and we pray that all who from time to time share in their hospitality may also partake in their blessing and joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

light and/or ⊕
incense may
be blessed & carried
around too

at the bedroom ⊕

Eternal God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we thank you that, when you created mankind, you made them male and female, and gave them in matrimony the supreme opportunity to imitate and express on earth your own triune love. We pray that those who dwell in this room may give themselves to each other with such generosity, reverence and love, that they may experience and reflect the joyous union of Christ with his Church, in whom we live and give glory to God forever and ever. Amen.

These prayers were composed for the blessing of the apartment of Mr & Mrs Oscar Carr Jr in New York City by the Rev. Bonnell Spencer OHC ⊕

The Eucharist was celebrated



other bedrooms ⊕

May these rooms be blessed in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, that those who live in them may grow in the love and service of God and man. Amen.

the living-room ⊕

Finally, all-loving Father, we thank you for our gathering here together, and ask you to bless this meeting place, that it may give to us, and to all who come here after us, an opportunity for the whole range of human companionship, from the fun of play, through the joys of social and intellectual intercourse, to the divine celebration of the Holy Eucharist, in which we are now to engage.

OPEN is the communication/publication of the Associated Parishes, a national network of clergy and lay people concerned with Liturgy as a primary instrument of the Holy Spirit for the renewal of the Church and for mission in the world. OPEN is published about six times a year by the Council of Associated Parishes, a group of 30 clergy and lay people of the Episcopal Church.

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS--articles, artwork, photographs, new music--are all needed to keep OPEN open. Send them in! Jeffrey Cave, William Gray, Committee for Publications.

WE HAVE MOVED from one of the loveliest villages in New England to one of the loveliest parks in an American city. Leaving Washington, Connecticut, was sad. We left behind an outstanding helper, Sarah Snyder, who has been our mainstay since Otis Charles left AP to become Bishop in Utah. We also sadly left behind our two-year association with the Shiver Mountain Press, and Ruth and Arn Glantz, who for two years supported our efforts with outstanding graphic arts and mail services. We continue a limited relationship with them.

THROUGH THE COURTESY AND GENEROSITY OF THE RECTOR OF CALVARY CHURCH, the Rev. Thomas Pike, and his Vestry, we are now housed in the ground floor of Calvary House on Gramercy Park in New York City. Our office manager is Ami Percy, and our all-purpose volunteer is Billie Carr. Our telephone number is (212) 473-0720, and it is manned 24 hours a day. Call us up. Come see us in New York!

THE REV. WILLIAM WENDT IS OUR CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN and he is now booking ahead for conferences later this year. He may be contacted in Washington, D.C., at St. Stephen and the Incarnation Church, 16th and Newton Streets, 20010. Or call him at (202) CO 5-0142.

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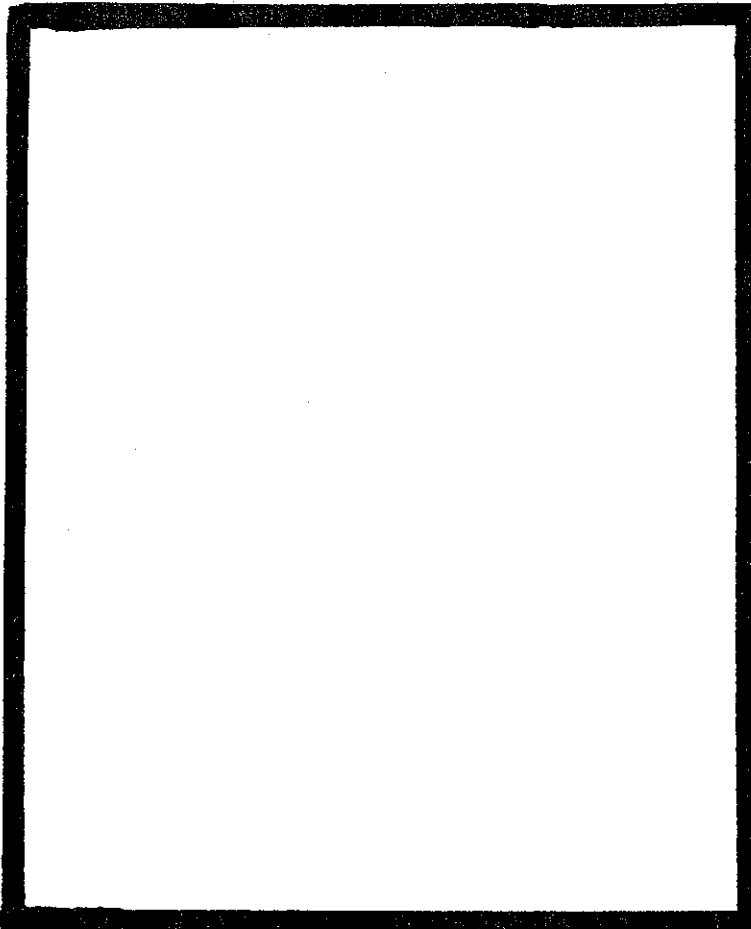
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