



Called to Common Mission: Are We?

WILLIAM H. PETERSEN

The “we” of the title refers, of course, to the Episcopal Church. When our 73rd General Convention meets in Denver this July it will have two resolutions of major ecumenical significance to consider. In reverse order, the second resolution from the Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (SCER) is simply the “second reading”—required of any constitutional change—of the 72nd General Convention’s passage by an overwhelming majority of a suspension in the operation of a provision in the BCP’s preface to the ordinal. After more than thirty years of dialogue, this temporary suspension will finally allow us immediately to remove the last obstacle to inaugurating a relationship of full communion between our church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). In other words, if the resolution passes its second reading, then the ordained ministries of ECUSA and ELCA on the level of pastor/priest will be instantly reconciled and a process begun whereby the respective episcopal ministries of the two churches will be ultimately reconciled over time.

But it will make absolutely no sense for our General Convention even to consider this second resolution if a logically prior one does not pass. This resolution states that the document entitled *Called to Common Mission (CCM)* provides the theological and ecclesiological basis upon which the Episcopal Church can enter into full communion with the ELCA. Attached to the SCER resolution is an explanation that claims the “agreements in faith, sacraments, and ministry” in *CCM*

Before proceeding, it may be well for me to reveal my own answer to the question that begins this article.

It is a categorical “Yes!”

are “substantially the same as in the *Concordat of Agreement*.” It will be remembered that the General Convention of 1997 received and passed the *Concordat*, but that two weeks later ELCA’s Churchwide Assembly failed such coordinate passage just six votes short of the required two-thirds majority. And thereby hangs a tale.

Before proceeding, it may be well for me to reveal my own answer to the question that begins this article. It is a categorical “Yes!” The Episcopal Church should receive *CCM*, the full title of which is

“Called to Common Mission: A Lutheran Proposal for a Revision of the *Concordat of Agreement*,” so that the relationship of full communion between ECUSA and ELCA can be established without further delay. Reasons for my confidence and hope in this regard will appear as the discussion proceeds.

Lutheran difficulties

The aftershock of the ELCA’s Churchwide Assembly failure by such a narrow margin to adopt the *Concordat* in 1997 was precisely that its vigorous and vocal Lutheran opponents were stunned at the size of the all but two-thirds majority favoring the proposal. At issue for them was the ELCA’s willingness to accept the historic episcopate over time through the relationship of full communion that would have been established with ECUSA. Still other Lutherans had reservations about the provision of the *Concordat* which specified that the three-fold pattern of ordained ministry (bishops, priests, deacons) would be the eventual pattern for the ordained ministries of both churches.

Veterans of the three series of Lutheran-Episcopal Dialogues (LED) from

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1969 to 1991 knew all too well that these were sensitive points. For those who wished to make the most of that sensitivity, the *Concordat* (itself only nine printed pages in length) appeared totally focused on matters of polity and ordained ministry. All the supporting and background documents and ecclesial agreements over nearly three decades of conversation and action were not immediately visible as the doctrinal and liturgical underpinning of the matters of polity and ministry that needed to be mutually addressed in order to remove the last obstacles to full communion.

The rallying cry against the *Concordat* was “No historic episcopate!” The fine point of the dialogue and the resulting *Concordat* that finally had broken

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through the traditional impasse between Lutherans and Anglicans was altogether missed. It is relatively easy to state but takes a longer time to appreciate. In previous actions and agreements everything but the mutual interchangeability of ordained ministries had been adopted. Anglicans, for their part, found a way to make that possible without insisting on historic episcopate as a precondition to full communion. Lutherans, for their part, found themselves free to receive historic episcopate precisely because no precondition was required. Mutual recognition of ordained ministries was based on agreements about the implications of the Gospel in regard to the nature of the Church and the economy of salvation.

For the ELCA, however, the fact remained after the 1997 Churchwide Assembly that the *Concordat* had not passed and a substantial minority of their church remained distressed. While pledging a renewed effort toward full communion with ECUSA, a way was sought to meet the internal concerns. A principle at work for the Lutherans—and one that should find congenial ground among Anglicans—was to find a middle term between what is absolutely *essential* in the relation of the Gospel to the Church and what is utterly *adiaphora* (a matter of indifference). Such a middle term is that which is *normative*.

From Concordat to CCM

In the relatively short time between biennial assemblies, representatives officially appointed by the Episcopal Church (Bishop Christopher Epting of Iowa, SCER; Dr. William Norgren, sometime Ecumenical Officer; Dr. J. Robert Wright, Consultant to the Ecumenical Office; and Canon David Perry, Presiding Bishop’s Deputy for Ecumenical Affairs) met with ELCA theologians and ecumenists who represented the spectrum of opinion on the *Concordat*. A finely crafted document emerged from their conjoint deliberation. It aimed at a clearer text without footnotes and a sequencing of materials that “begins with a description of the relationship of full communion, followed by agreements on faith and ministry, moves to actions of each church to bring them into full communion, and ends with actions of both churches in full communion.”¹

What changes occurred in the process that are of principal interest to Episcopalians? First, the historic episcopate will become a feature of the ELCA principally through sources available within the wider Lutheran World Fellowship (though, to be sure, a bishop of the Episcopal Church will be invited to participate fully in the prayer and laying-on-of-hands at liturgies where synodical bishops are consecrated/installed). This is chiefly a change in the manner of implementing historic episcopate within ELCA over time. Ironically, this possibility was suggested in the course of LED II and again in LED III, but was rejected by the Lutheran representatives at that time. Now,

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Editor Ruth A. Meyers

Editorial Committee

Ruth A. Meyers, Elizabeth Morris Downie, Ormonde Plater, Marilyn Haskel, and John W. B. Hill.

Manuscripts (preferably WordPerfect files on 3.5-inch disk), cartoons, letters, and other communications may be sent to the editor at the editorial office.

Book Review Editor

Please send book review copies to Elizabeth Morris Downie, 106 E. Elizabeth St., Fenton, MI 48430-2322 or edownie@voyager.net.

Production Manager

Ormonde Plater

Proofreader

Art Jenkins

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Coordinator

Ronald H. Miller

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reassuringly, it seems to have won the day from their side.

Readers of *Open* will be less happy with the fact that the mutual pledge to a future pattern of threefold ministry in both the ELCA and ECUSA was altered in the change from the *Concordat* to *CCM*. One of the matters left for future decision when ELCA was formed from its predecessor bodies was the question of whether the diaconate/diaconal ministries were within the “one ordained ministry.” For reasons largely unrelated to the general and worldwide Lutheran commitment to the importance of such ministries, it was subsequently determined by the ELCA that diaconal ministers were not to be regarded as ordained to the pastoral ministry that is shared by bishops and presbyters. While this may be a disappointment to those of us who support a distinctive diaconate, it should be remembered that there is a deep Lutheran fidelity to diaconal ministries.² The change leaves room for growth in practice of *diakonia* through mutual consultation within a future relationship of full communion between ELCA and ECUSA. In any case, the question about the place of diaconate in the life and mission of the Church does not have “church-dividing issue” status.

With such contextualizations in regard to faith, sacraments, and ministry, and the changes indicated, *CCM* emerged and was submitted to a process of reception—including definitive clarifications by ELCA’s Conference of Bishops—before the 1999 Denver Churchwide Assembly. There it received further debate and the approbation of passing by virtually a 70% majority (716-317). What appears operative in overcoming the difficulties has been the principle of *normativity*, mentioned above as the middle term been the “essential” and the “indifferent.” This concept has made it possible, on the one hand, for the ELCA to freely accept the historic episcopate and, on the other hand, for the Episcopal Church not to insist upon it as a precondition of unity.

Back to the future—an opinion

My assessment of these events and the documents as a veteran of the dialogue since 1978 and a present member of the Anglican-Lutheran International Working Group, but as an outsider to the process leading from *Concordat* to *CCM*, leads me to agree with the SCER’s claim that the latter is “substantially the same.” It is, therefore, worthy to be received and passed as such by the 73rd General Convention meeting in Denver this summer. This would mean also that we could pass immediately then to a positive vote on the second reading of our constitutional change, *viz.*, the temporary suspension of the operation of a particular provision in the BCP’s preface to the ordinal. It will be remembered that we are undertaking such a suspension so that ultimately its *normativity* may be mutually established. The principle works for us as well.

Yet even as I write this article, there are those within the ELCA who are passionately devoted to nullifying the implementation of the commitment made by their church to the ecumenical breakthrough that full communion between Anglicans and Lutherans represents. The newly constituted WordAlone Network, for instance, is calling for constitutional changes in ELCA that would provide for, among other things, a “non-geographical synod” (sound familiar?) and a “conscience clause” (another dread phrase from ECUSA history!) for those who simply cannot accept the “tyranny of historic episcopate.” Unfortunately, this group and their fellow travelers do not balk in their scare tactics at telling lies about the Episcopal Church and warning of dire damage to the “pure Gospel” should Lutherans enter into full communion with Anglicans.

Since the ball is in our court, as it were, the question becomes: “*Should the Episcopal Church receive CCM, but in view of such turmoil in ELCA, take a ‘wait and see’ attitude by postponing action at our General Convention?*” By no means! Experience has revealed that this vocal-but-vociferous minority in ELCA will not

be placated in any case. By their lights, the ELCA has apostasized at least three times already: first by even considering full communion with the Episcopal Church, then by the Churchwide Assembly’s 66% vote for it in 1997, and finally, by the 70% vote for *CCM* in 1999. Will they then leave the ELCA? Though some Lutherans might wish that they would, I think not. For the ELCA provides an ecclesial framework, however apostasized from their point of view, within which they can continue as a protest movement. Were such as the WordAlone people to leave the ELCA they would instantly find themselves in need of forming a church. And, ironically, the setting of a normative polity would provide one of the first orders of business—something, in other words, beyond the WordAlone as they conceive it. Much easier to stay and be unhappy but, thereby, purely self-justified.

In the final analysis, nevertheless, this is a matter of primary consideration for the leadership of the ELCA. Our General Convention and the Episcopal Church are faced at the present moment only with the challenge to accept *Called to Common Mission*. Then we may move with our Lutheran brothers and sisters toward a greater appreciation of how we may in full communion together serve the Gospel of reconciliation in Jesus Christ.

Notes

1. William A. Norgren, *A Commentary on CCM* (Office of Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations, Episcopal Church Center), p. 2.

2. See the work jointly drafted by Professor Michael Root and myself as adopted by the Anglican-Lutheran International Commission: *The Hanover Report: Diaconate as Ecumenical Opportunity*, 1996.

William H. Petersen is Professor of Ecclesiastical & Ecumenical History at Bexley Hall, Rochester, NY, and oversees Bexley’s academic and formational program within Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, OH. He has served on the Associated Parishes Council since 1973.

Lutheran liturgical practice: *The Use of the Means of Grace*

PAUL R. NELSON

It is impossible to imagine a discussion of the Episcopal Church that did not include some important role for *The Book of Common Prayer*. The history of the prayer book in its various forms and revisions is an important part of the history of the Anglican Communion and the American Episcopal Church. It would be natural for Episcopalians to look for a comparable book for worship in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) as a way of understanding its history and ethos during this time of careful study of one another as churches.

Most congregations of the ELCA use the *Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW)* as an important worship resource. Because of its widespread use and influence, it would be natural to conclude that *LBW* is the “book of common prayer” equivalent in the ELCA. But that would not be an accurate comparison. In the ELCA no one worship resource is “required” for use in every congregation of the church. Each congregation is free to choose or create its own resources. As a church body, the ELCA, like the Episcopal Church, does carefully prepare and publish worship resources and has a system of liturgical review and approval in place in which the Presiding Bishop, the Church Council, the Conference of Bishops, and various boards and churchwide staff have roles to play. The church’s publishing house plays an important role in producing and distributing worship resources. However, in the ELCA there is no equivalent to the Episcopal Church’s Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music.

Rather than relying on a worship resource like *The Book of Common Prayer*, the ELCA (and the Lutheran churches that joined to form it in 1988) has relied on certain “statements” to encourage common practices related to worship in the congregations of the churches. The current form of that statement is titled: *The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement*

on the Practice of Word and Sacrament. This statement was “adopted for guidance and practice” by the Churchwide Assembly in 1997 (the fifth biennial Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA). The statement is the document which governs practice by the churchwide expression of the ELCA and provides guidance to congregations and synods.

The statement itself describes its mission in this way:

The gift of Word and Sacrament is from God. This statement on sacramental practices seeks to encourage unity among us in the administration of the means of grace and to foster common understanding and practice. It does not seek to impose uniformity among us. (Principle 4)

This statement grows out of this church’s concern for healthy pastoral action and strong congregational mission. It does not address our practice of Word and Sacrament out of antiquarian or legalistic interests but rather to ground the practice of our church in the Gospel and to encourage good order within our church. (Background 4A)

Our congregations receive and administer the means of grace in richly diverse ways. This diversity in practice is well grounded in the Confessions. “It is not necessary for the true unity of the Christian church that ceremonies of human institution should be observed uniformly in all places.” (Augsburg Confession, article VIII) We are united in one common center: Jesus Christ proclaimed in the Word and sacraments amidst participating assemblies of singing, serving, and praying people. (Application 4B)

Just as there are Episcopal parishes that represent varying traditions of worship within the same church, so in the ELCA there are parishes with differing

traditions of worship. We understand this to be a strength of church life, not a weakness.

What does the statement contain?

The statement contains five parts: Preface: The Triune God and the Means of Grace; Part 1: Proclamation of the Word and the Christian Assembly; Part 2: Holy Baptism and the Christian Assembly; Part 3: Holy Communion and the Christian Assembly; Part 4: The Means of Grace and Christian Mission. Each of these parts provides a principle or series of principles on which practice should be based, and often it also provides some “background” to that principle or an “application” of that principle for careful consideration.

“Means of grace,” an expression taken from the Lutheran confessions of the sixteenth century, refers to those means that God uses to give grace to individuals and the church. Lutherans ordinarily understand this to include baptism and eucharist (two sacraments) together with proclamation of the Word and confession and absolution. As the Augsburg Confession of 1520 puts it: “through the Word and sacraments, as through means, the Holy Spirit is given, and the Holy Spirit produces faith, where and when it pleases God, in those who hear the gospel.” (Augsburg Confession article V)

Jesus Christ at the heart

“The living heart of all these means is the presence of Jesus Christ through the power of the Spirit as the gift of the Father.” (Principle 1)

The preface of the statement is focused on the way in which the triune God acts in the means of grace, worship. It is only by beginning with God that worship is set within its proper context. Worship depends primarily on this and not on the particular aspects of practice that may be the same or different from one congregation to the next.

The Christian assembly

Lutherans understand the church to be the result of God’s activity:

It is also taught among us that one holy Christian church will be and remain forever. This is the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel. (Principle 3, Augsburg Confession article VII)

The assembly around Word and sacrament is the place to see the church and God at work forming it. The rest of the statement rests on placing the Word and sacraments in the life of a gathered assembly of believers.

The Word of God in the Christian assembly

In North American culture, when Christians speak about the Word of God the reference is often taken to be the Bible. However, the Bible itself understands the Word of God to be Jesus Christ. For Lutherans the scriptures are witnesses to this incarnate Word-Jesus Christ. The Word is proclaimed in the assembly.

Proclamation of the Word includes the public reading of Scripture, preaching, teaching, the celebration of the sacraments, confession and absolution, music, arts, prayers, Christian witness, and service. The congregation's entire education ministry participates in the proclamation of the Word. (Application 5A)

Sunday has a special place in this proclamation of Jesus Christ as God's Word. Because of Christ's appearances to the disciples and others on the first day of the week following his resurrection, Sunday is also a day for assembly and proclamation for Christians today. Every day is a day for proclamation, but Sunday is a special opportunity for this.

In addition to hearing the scriptures read and preached on in the assembly, everyone gathered participates in the common voice of the assembly in speaking the Word. The assembly does this in singing hymns and the texts of the liturgy. It confesses the Nicene or Apostles' Creed. Music becomes a vehicle for the Word.

The visual arts too serve to proclaim the Word.

Lutherans are deeply committed to the public (that is, in the assembly for worship) exercise of confession and absolution. The statement also calls us to individual confession and absolution—though this is less common in practice.

Holy Baptism

Lutherans believe that in baptism God acts:

In Holy Baptism the Triune God delivers us from the forces of evil, puts our sinful self to death, gives us new birth, adopts us as children, and makes us members of the body of Christ, the Church. Holy Baptism is received by faith alone. (Principle 14)

It is an act of God's grace which is not dependent upon our worthiness. It establishes a relationship and awakens faith. Holy Baptism is always administered in the name of the triune God. Baptism is not repeated, because this can question God's promise, but baptism does have daily application for those who have received it—it calls us to die and rise with Christ every day.

The Use of the Means of Grace urges congregations to administer baptism in the assembly, not privately, and to do so in ways that involve the whole assembly. The water of baptism is an especially powerful sign and should be maximized. The anointing with oil is also encouraged. Secondary signs, such as the lighted candle and the white robe, can also support baptism and its catechesis.

Holy Communion

Lutherans have long distinguished themselves from other Protestants by our commitment to the "real presence of Jesus Christ" in the sacrament.

In this sacrament the crucified and risen Christ is present, giving his true body and blood as food and drink. This real presence is a mystery. (Principle 33)

Lutherans understand Holy Communion to include a service of the Word and service of the meal. We urge our congregations to celebrate this sacrament every week—though this is not yet a universal practice. Most congregations commune children at about ten years of age. In a recommended change of practice, the ELCA sets no minimum age for a baptized person to begin receiving this sacrament—it allows for the congregation, pastor, parents, sponsors and individual to determine the pastorally appropriate time. An ordained pastor presides at Holy Communion. In very exceptional circumstances a bishop can authorize an exception to this principle.

In the ELCA all baptized persons are welcome to receive this sacrament. We feel a special obligation to be clear that we teach and confess that Christ's true body and blood are given and received in the sacrament. Once bread and wine have been consecrated, any remaining is consumed following the celebration. The consecrated elements may also be taken to the absent for their communion.

The means of grace and Christian mission

The Use of the Means of Grace concludes its guidance by linking the means of grace not only to individual Christians assembled for worship but to the world in which they live and work. The means of grace lead the Church to mission. This is the same conviction which Episcopalians voice each time they pray "And now Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do..." in the beautiful postcommunion prayer (BCP, p. 366).

Studying *The Use of the Means of Grace* may not always allow an Episcopalian to predict what they will find happening in a congregation of the ELCA, but it will clearly show the practices we encourage among ourselves and support as we are able.

The Reverend Dr. Paul R. Nelson is Director for Worship, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Worship with young adults

AMY MCCREATH

Last summer, while working on the staff of a leadership conference for young adults, I decided to post signs around the camp welcoming people to join me in the chapel for compline every night. "Compline," I wrote on the notice, "is a traditional Christian prayer service for the end of day." This was not a Christian camp; it is open to people of all faiths, agnostics, and atheists. Participants are young people from all sorts of backgrounds, reflecting fairly well the demographics of society today. I didn't expect anyone actually to come to compline. The first evening, two college sophomores showed up. I chose not to explain the service, but simply to light the incense and the candle in the midst of the vast, dark space and begin. They joined in. They picked up the tune of the Tallis round quickly. When the service ended, they didn't want to leave. They just sat in the silence.

The next evening, they returned, bringing several friends. The next night, a dozen of us crowded around the candle's light. All of these people were college students. Few were "active Christians" of any denomination. None had ever heard the word "compline" before. They came back, night after night.

I wondered about that experience for months after the conference ended. What was it that attracted these young adults? How would they explain the experience to their friends back home? Why did compline at a camp at 11 p.m. with "non-practicing" young adults attract more people than evensong at 5 p.m. in the Episcopal church I serve?

Much has been written recently about the spirituality of the younger generations—the Gen Xers (born approximately 1964-73) and the Bridgers (born approximately 1974-1984). Tom Beaudoin, a young Roman Catholic theologian and author of *Virtual Faith: The Irreverent*

Spiritual Quest of Generation X, argues that Generation X is a deeply sacramental generation, searching for authentic spiritual guides and dependable, genuine communities in which to encounter God and interpret their own experience of the divine. Liturgical churches, Beaudoin believes, have a unique charism in their sacramentalism that has the potential to speak powerfully to this generation's spiritual yearnings and experiences of suffering.

Nondenominational pastor Dieter Zander, coauthor of *Inside the Soul of a New Generation*, emphasizes the importance for worship planners of understanding the post-modern mindset of today's younger adults, with its irreverence, experientialism, and capacity for mystery and paradox. Having grown up in an era of divorce, political disillusionment, and media manipulation, they have watched society's meta-narratives collapse, and they seek in worship a trustworthy story into which they can insert themselves. They are emphatically uninterested in style or technique, and passionately seeking authenticity and genuine love.

Thom Rainer, Dean of Southern Seminary in Kentucky, reports on his interviews with teenagers in 2000 churches across America in his book *The Bridger Generation*. He believes that the "bridgers" seek structure, moral boundaries, and direction, and are frustrated by the adults around them who will not mentor them. Bridgers are very religious, but they tend to construct their own "religions" by weaving together elements of lots of spiritual traditions presented to them in the culture. Very few are landing in churches, and those who do are choosing Mormonism, Islam, and fundamentalist Christianity.

These three authors were among the presenters at a recent conference in Baltimore entitled "Gen NeXt and the Church: Virtual Faith and Spiritual Hunger." Although the focus of the conference was

broadly on evangelism, the issue that came bubbling up to the surface, especially for the Gen Xers who attended it, was liturgy. How can our worship reveal the love of God in Christ for today's younger adults? What in our liturgical heritage is particularly helpful? How (if at all) can projection screens, microphones or even the internet be used to enhance and re-present ancient, saving truths? We shared a frustration that few churches are doing much creative thinking about how to join what Tom Beaudoin called our unique charism—our liturgical heritage and sacramental theology—with the vocabulary, symbols, shared experiences and technological tools of the modern culture within which Gen Xers and Bridgers were formed.

Put simply: liturgists and Gen Xers need to talk to one another! How many young adults in our congregations read *Open*? How many of you, reading this article, read *Fast Company* magazine? God is speaking in both places. I believe that we all have a lot to learn from one another. More importantly, such a conversation is crucial to the mission of the church as it moves into the new century. I want to suggest four sets of questions that would be central to such a discussion. These questions might be used within a congregation, perhaps by a worship committee. They might be questions for clergy and liturgists to wonder over together or separately. Most importantly, they are questions worth asking in a venue that includes a broad range of people: churched, unchurched, and dechurched; young and old; professional liturgists and newly baptized adults; traditionalists and charismatics. They are questions, I believe, that lead to the center of our mission: revealing and worshipping God in Christ here and now.

Continued on following page

1 *How have today's younger adults experienced creation, sin, and redemption in their lives? What are the words they give to these experiences? What are the shared symbols, rituals and cultural expressions of these experiences that they have developed?*

One of the messages that runs through much of the literature on Generation X is that their lives and culture are not taken seriously by the church. Many recent authors have pointed out how popular music and films, fashion and bodily expressions such as tattooing and body-piercing are dismissed as superficial or irrelevant to faith, rather than being seen as the expression of faith or spiritual yearning that they are. Understanding and taking seriously these movements and symbols is not equivalent to "selling out" to secular culture. It is about seeing seekers as the children of God they are. It is an act of hospitality which prepares us to present the Christian story creatively in a way they can hear.

2 *How is authenticity communicated in liturgy? Do we believe in the liturgy we create and participate in? Are we passionate about it?*

The word that came up in nearly every presentation at the Gen NeXt conference in Baltimore was "authenticity." Time and again, presenters emphasized that what Gen Xers seek more than anything else is authenticity. Presiding Bishop Frank Griswold, in his keynote address, said that what younger adults are looking for when they walk into a church is "glimmers of authentic community." Their unstated message is, "What I really want is you, not your constructed piety."

3 *How can we incorporate elements of modern life and culture in our worship in a way that reveals rather than distracts from the gospel?*

This was perhaps the most hotly debated question at the Gen NeXt conference. What does projecting the scripture readings onto a screen during worship communicate theologically? How can modern visual images be used during the sermon, the prayers or the liturgy of the table to point to a truth beyond words? When much of what is presented on screens or over electronic amplifiers in our culture is fleeting or manipulated, how can we use these tools in a way that is trustworthy? These are, to some extent, age-old issues of inculturation. But the explosion of tech-

nological tools, the access to endless information and countless images, and the perception of shortening attention spans in younger generations freights the issue with a new immediacy.

Liturgical churches have so much potential to speak to the spiritual hunger of today's younger adults. But it will take some willingness on our part to listen, to change, and to let "those people" who don't look very holy or grounded teach us. As a Gen Xer with a heart for my own generation, and as an Episcopal priest with a deep love of the sacramental life of the church, I look forward to the conversation ahead.

Amy McCreath is Assistant Rector of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, River Hills, Wisconsin.

We'd hate to see you go!

We regret that for a number of members this will be their last copy of *OPEN*. Please take a minute to check the address block on the back cover. The top line gives the month and year of your membership expiration. For a number of readers it says "LAST COPY".

Given the part-time nature of the Coordinator position and the press of other business, renewal notices are mailed in the anniversary month, and there is no other follow-up. Please don't lose your membership by inadvertence or mail error. Please check the address with each issue and renew in a timely fashion.

There are important issues facing the Church on which you will find *OPEN* of use and interest.

The changing context of music and liturgy

The Changing Context of Music and Liturgy” was the theme for the annual conference of the Association of Diocesan Liturgy and Music Commissions November 15-19, 1999, hosted by the Diocese of Fond du Lac in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

In his keynote address, Charles Fulton, president of the Episcopal Church Building Fund, essentially recapitulated much of the information presented at the last Trinity Institute, forcefully reminding the audience that boomers and subsequent generations are not filling the pews or taking on the responsibilities of church membership. They are interested in spirituality, Fulton said, but find traditional worship boring because it lacks visual excitement for those raised in this technological era, is not “professionally” presented, and incorporates music that they “hate.” He emphasized the importance of diversity, urging us to “count the ones who aren’t there.” For diversity to flourish, more than one kind of music, liturgy, and education must be offered.

Each morning began, as it has for the past several years, with “Awake My Soul,” a morning office drawn from various sources and including extensive hymn singing from both *The Hymnal 1982* and *Wonder, Love, and Praise*. The most moving of these offices was led by George Emblom; the extended time of singing was structured around the reading of the statement to the court made by Matthew Shepard’s father. The statement was divided among ten readers, and each segment was brilliantly illuminated by the singing of a carefully chosen hymn, concluding with Holly Near’s “We Are a Gentle, Angry People.”

Workshops were offered on church space and starting a new service (Charles Fulton), musical leadership as instrument of change (Julia Huttar Bailey), liturgical presidency (Janet Campbell), enriching our worship (Phoebe Pettingell), new technology (Frank Hemlin presenting the CD-ROM publications of Church Publishing Incorporated), the Revised Common Lec-

tionary (Joe Russell), and the use of drama in liturgy (Bruce Stewart).

Bruce Jenneker, Phoebe Pettingell, and Clay Morris brought ADLMC members up to date on the work of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music. Interest focused on the plan for prayer book revision to be presented in Denver this summer, which envisions the second reading of the revision in 2012. The first triennium (2000-2003) would largely be spent collecting data and forming task forces and drafting committees. There would be an interim report in 2006, followed by first reading in 2009.

Phoebe Pettingell, chair of the expansive language committee, described the next volume in the series which *Enriching Our Worship* is becoming. It will offer rites and prayers for ministry with the sick and dying, and a special rite for the burial of a child. If authorized by General Convention, it will be published by Church Publishing. *Gleanings: Essays on Expansive Language with Prayers for Special Occasions*, edited by Ruth Meyers and Phoebe Pettingell, is scheduled to be available by the time of General Convention.

On the question of same-sex blessings, Bruce Jenneker declined to be specific about the SCLM report, saying only that it would consist of short, “crisp” statements of key issues with a short bibliography, and would be both ecclesiological and pastoral, embodying reverence in the face of mystery.

In addition to the usual business and courtesy resolutions, the conference resolved to support and encourage efforts to develop suitable canons for equitable practices for appointment or employment, evaluation, accountability and discharge from position for all who minister in the church. Resolutions to develop plans for scholarship aid for young liturgists and musicians to attend the ADLMC conferences, and to engage “those who are not present” in the life and work of the Association were also passed.

ELIZABETH MORRIS DOWNIE

Editor’s note

This issue comes to you as a combined Winter/Spring 2000 issue. A family illness during the past several months has consumed significant amounts of time and energy, and I was unable to turn my attention to preparation of this issue until the conclusion of the academic year at Seabury-Western. I apologize for the lengthy delay in getting this issue to you.

This issue marks the conclusion of Leonel Mitchell’s service as Book Review Editor, a position in which he has served since 1991. I am deeply grateful for his many years of faithful service and his unflinching support of me in my work.

Elizabeth Morris Downie, Rector of St. Jude’s Episcopal Church in Fenton, Michigan, has assumed the post of Book Review Editor. She will be more fully introduced in the summer issue.

RUTH MEYERS

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Considerations for amending the burial rite

JENNIFER M. PHILLIPS

1. Some Anglican principles for burial practices

In my ministry as a parish priest, there is no liturgy that more frequently collides with cultural and social expectations than *The Burial of the Dead*. Here, the diverse practices of Episcopalians raised in many religious traditions and acculturated in regional and ethnic practices meet traditional forms of worship at a time of pain and distress, and the priest must decide how far to keep to Anglican custom and how far to concede to the wishes of the bereaved, and must balance the evangelical moment in a community facing death with the pastoral concern for individuals, including the one who has died.

The 1979 Book of Common Prayer (p. 490) states: "Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church." Nonetheless, in the Midwest where I ministered until just a few months ago, social custom and the funeral industry place pressure on families for a funeral home service, and I am grateful for this strong rubric. During a member's life, the church is the central place of her or his shared life of prayer and the place where (s)he is nourished by the sacraments for the life of ministry in the world. For this reason, it is appropriate that the church, rather than a funeral home, be the site not only for the funeral itself, but for the opportunity for the body to be visited, bereaved friends and family to be first comforted by the community, and farewells to be said to the deceased member. Historically, the deceased one might be laid out on the dining table at home—not acceptable to most moderns; the church is a splendid alternative. Visiting hours at a funeral home tend to feel like visiting a loved one in some combination of a motel and a brothel, rather than a setting where that person was loved and greeted and made welcome in life. Visiting hours in the church may be arranged just prior to the funeral.

Popular culture says that death is an intrusive and unusual aspect of human experience, to be removed as quickly as possible from the domestic setting and mediated by professionals in institutional settings, from hospital to funeral home. For the Christian, death is a transition from life into life, and professional assistance is helpful for specialized functions to do with pain relief while dying, medical investigation after death, hygienic storage and transport of the body, and the like, and of course for urgent assistance when death is unexpected. But when death occurs at home and is anticipated, family and members of the church community may properly perform some of the functions necessary if they feel able—washing and shrouding the body, taking a leisurely farewell with prayers at the time of death and afterward—and they may ask the funeral director to wait until these ministrations are complete and the loved ones are ready before the body is taken away. I have had fights with funeral directors on behalf of families wishing to take this extra time to care for a body at home, but in terms of the grief process such conflicts are well worth the energy.

In the parish I served previously in Boston, we began a wonderful custom of bringing the body to the church for evening visiting hours and having a rota of pairs of parishioners keep watch through the night with prayers and psalms for each hour, until the funeral the following morning. People who had not known the deceased person in life sometimes helped with the watch, and some reported grace-filled experiences of prayer in which they felt a deep acquaintance with the one who had died. Lights burned, and coffee and crackers were available to watchers, who never found the experience creepy or frightening but rather universally reported finding it peaceful and contemplative. We were pleased to have taken back the monastic tradition of caring for our deceased loved ones and liberating them and us as much as possible from the commercial world of the funeral parlor! A few of the

local funeral directors became accustomed to our unusual practice and worked with us helpfully.

Popular culture and some of the strands of Protestant American religion emphasize the duality of body and soul, in which the soul is godly and important and the body a corrupt, unclean, and unspiritual thing. At the time of death, in this understanding, it is desirable to get rid of the body as quickly as possible and have no more to do with it. Religious ritual in this understanding focuses on the spirit seen as liberated from the prison of flesh.

Anglican theological tradition emphasizes God's love for us manifested through the incarnation, Jesus Christ's coming in the flesh of our humanity and passing through suffering and death into resurrection life, just as we also shall be raised into eternal life. Through the incarnation, all the matter of creation has been hallowed, especially humankind in our bodies. For this reason, the body should always be present, when possible, at the final liturgical celebration of life in the Episcopal Church community, the funeral. The body, when it is laid aside in death, is honored in the community for its service and is bid farewell at a funeral liturgy.

In this time of AIDS, many of those who die of HIV-related illness struggle with deep ambivalence about their bodies and sometimes feel ashamed or unclean, or that their disease-damaged bodies are ugly and hateful, or that they do not deserve to be welcomed in the church as the house of God. Bringing the body home to the church is a poignant and powerful sign that the community's love is not withheld because of AIDS or any behavior that brought infection, that God's love for us is not withheld because of HIV infection, and that HIV does not make the body impure or unfit to be in holy space. While other branches of the Christian church allow memorial services to take the place of the funeral, it is really only suitable for Episcopalians to hold a memorial service if the body has been lost,

destroyed or donated to a medical institution, or by rector's permission in case of extraordinary pastoral need, or if it has been necessary to hold the funeral of a member elsewhere and a parish commemoration is desired. Cremation, if chosen, should take place after the funeral, and there is no theological objection to it. A note might suggest that, if there is a compelling reason for cremation before the funeral, the container of remains may be placed on a small table at the front of the nave, covered with a small pall (a corporal or even a chalice veil with a cross would be suitable), with the paschal candle beside.

At or before the time of death, Episcopal clergy properly encourage members of the church to consider organ donation, in cases where this is possible. Removal of donated organs takes place immediately after death, and like a post mortem examination (autopsy), it delays a funeral only slightly, if at all. Neither medical procedure prevents a body from being brought to church or viewed at visiting hours.

2. How might the burial rite be amended?

Receiving the body

In the next formatting of the prayer book, it would be helpful for the "Reception of the Body" (BCP p. 466) to be placed at the start of the burial rite instead of in "Ministration at the Time of Death." Reception begins when a body is brought by the undertaker to the church. It is met at the door by a priest and other members of the congregation, might be sprinkled with holy water, and is greeted with prayers, covered by a pall, and carried or wheeled into the church by pallbearers.

A casket may be open during visiting hours in the church, but if so, it is closed before the funeral and not opened again. If the casket has been covered by a flag or flower pall during transportation, this is best removed at the door of the church, replaced by a liturgical pall, and not used

again until the liturgical pall is removed as the casket leaves the church for burial. The rubric (BCP p. 490) does not point out that the pall places every dying Episcopalian under the same sign of the cross, whether rich or poor, loved or forsaken, veteran or pacifist. A note to this effect would help readers of the prayer book to understand why their floral tributes are set aside at the church door. While flowers, the flag, notes or other particularities may accompany the casket to the grave or funeral home, at the church, the common pall says we are all equal before God.

The eucharist

It is generally desirable and helpful for the burial of an Episcopalian to take place in the context of the eucharist. I believe we should not be hesitant to say so in the prayer book. The sacrament nourishes and strengthens the community in its grief and reminds us of the way we are joined together with the saints, living and dead, in the body of Christ. A note might add that in pastoral instances where communion does not seem fitting, it is quite suitable that at the next Sunday eucharistic gathering of the congregation of the deceased or chief mourners, prayers for the dead be included. There is lively debate at present among Episcopalians whether reception of communion should be limited to baptized Christians. A funeral is an occasion where the most generous hospitality seems fitting; at the least, Christians of other denominations should be explicitly invited to share the comfort and healing of the sacrament, and possibly "all who hunger and thirst for God in Christ" might also be welcomed to receive.

Music for the burial rite

The deceased parishioner may leave preferences, and the bereaved family may request hymns. It would be helpful for a list of suitable hymns to be appended to the rite. In this case, too, the priest may be faced with requests for "favorites" from popular culture or other religious traditions—even the deceased's college foot-

ball song! I tend to be lenient in this but review the lyrics carefully before consenting.

I find many mourners approach funeral planning thinking they want entirely upbeat and joyful music, while my experience suggests that what they need is music—and prayers—which encompass a range of emotion, including the mixture of sorrow and joy which the prayer book mentions in the note (rather hidden away) on page 507. Mourners often ask for an Easter "hymn sandwich" service, possibly punctuated by "How Great Thou Art," "On Eagles' Wings," or "Amazing Grace" with bagpipes. There is a legitimate desire for more music than seems expected by the prayer book. Options for a communion and postcommunion hymn certainly could be spelled out.

In paradisum (The Hymnal 1982 #354) has been sung for centuries by Christians as the body leaves the church. Out of my admittedly Anglo-Catholic sensibility, I'd love to see it lifted up as a strong option for closing (it is now last of a list of anthems on BCP 500)—even if after a rousing Easter hymn. In the Midwest, most people prefer a triumphant Easter hymn finale, but often out of the unformed assumption that all plainsong is mournful. Perhaps a young composer might take on the task of setting the wonderful words of *In paradisum* to a contemporary tune. It would also be nice to see the plainsong music for the Bruce Ford "Give rest O Christ" and "I know that my Redeemer lives" (#S380 in *The Accompaniment Edition* but not included in the pew book for congregational singing) more easily available for funeral use by those with traditional tastes. A set of *troparia* such as those collected by the congregation of St. Gregory Nyssen, San Francisco, might be included in a musical supplement for funerals, along with some of the hymns favored by particular ethnic Episcopal communities.

Continued on following page

The sermon

The sermon at an Episcopal funeral interprets the Good News of resurrection to the congregation. While the deceased person is remembered and her or his life celebrated in it, the sermon is not a eulogy in our tradition. Those who might wish to speak at the funeral or, more suitably, at a reception following it or at the graveside, do so only as invited at the presider's discretion.

Over time, I find I have become more adamant about this limitation of speech-giving during funerals. If in a congregation the most isolated, unloved member were given as eloquent and careful a memorialization as the most popular, well-educated, influential member, perhaps eulogizing would not turn into a popularity contest—but too often there is no one but the priest, or perhaps a lone lay eucharistic minister, to speak of the faithful life of a shut-in member.

Eulogies nearly always, in my experience, gloss over the imperfections and difficulties of a life to present a false image. The priest can see the lie, in such circumstances, in the pained eyes of some of the mourners. Truth must be spoken when the community faces death—kindly but plainly spoken, for the good of the whole Body of Christ; that is the homilist's job in the sermon. Truth is told as part of the greater Good News of the Gospel. When this happens, even a stranger in the assembly will sense the integrity of the message and hear that Christ is the truth and life for those gathered. I have had more than a few people join the church as a result of attending a funeral. I would favor a rubric that strengthened the limits on eulogies within the burial rite at the bottom of BCP page 495.

The prayers

Let me note here that new materials for the burial rite of a child have been completed for consideration by the General Convention this summer, along with expanded prayers for the time of death and ministrations to the sick, and for the withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment. There

is still a need for new hymns for the burial of children. A more contemporary prayer of commendation is included in these new materials, as is a litany which might be suitable for the moving of a casket from hearse to grave.

Collects in the burial rites I and II offer a rich array. I would welcome some additions that might be used for the burial of an unbeliever, for someone fallen away from church, and for funerals where half the mourners are from another faith tradition. There might be additions, too, that address sudden and violent death, protracted miserable death, or circumstances where mourners are extraordinarily angry about the death, or at the one who has died. A prayer suitable for a memorial service for one who has donated one's body for medical research would be useful.

"An Order for Burial" (BCP p. 506) allows much flexibility for services, but the language of the prayers in the two burial rites does not provide for interfaith funerals and other pastoral occasions where spaciousness of language would communicate Christ more effectively than reduplicated trinitarian doxologies. An alternative form of prayers of the people might be inserted to meet such needs. A dismissal from the Committal might be added:

Presider: Go in peace; the souls of all who die rest secure in the hands of God.

People: Thanks be to God.

Perhaps such prayers might acknowledge respect for the faith of the one who has died or awareness of the lack of faith, and respect for the differing faiths of those gathered, while bespeaking the Christian community's hope for those who die. Suggestions for psalms and scripture readings might also be expanded to include material that addresses a broader range of pastoral complexities than those on BCP pp. 494-5 and that makes explicit for the rule-observing preacher and officiant that those listed are suggestions not prescriptions.

At the grave

Most priests have found themselves at some time using "The Committal" with some added prayers as the only funeral service for someone who has died. Perhaps mourners and deceased are barely connected with a congregation. Perhaps a person died far away and a funeral was held there, but the body returned to its hometown and home community for burial; a duplicate burial rite seems no more proper than a duplicate wedding for someone married away from home, yet the home congregation needs a chance to mourn and say farewell. An expanded set of committal options might include prayers which acknowledge the connection of the body of Christ where the funeral took place with that gathered for burial: for example, "From the hands and prayers of our sisters and brothers in Christ in Freeport, Maine, we receive the body/ashes of our sister in Christ, N.____, for burial. May God comfort all who mourn and strengthen our bonds of love in the Body of Christ."

Committal prayers might include some suggestions for expansion of the graveside service. I would also like to see a prayer for the burial of an unknown person added. Though most Episcopalians might seldom hear it used, the presence of such a prayer would remind the church of all those who die unidentified and for whom the tender ministries of clergy (particularly hospital chaplains) are called upon.

I would also welcome a short form of committal designed for military burial, where a funeral has taken place at the church, a small party of mourners accompanies the casket to the military cemetery, and there is a fifteen-minute slot for prayers in the chapel there, but mourners cannot go to the graveside and must leave the casket sitting in the chapel. Here some prayers and hymns tailored for a veteran or veteran's spouse would be helpful, displaying the flag is quite suitable, and the sprinkling of earth with the "dust to dust" prayer does not fit at all.

On the other hand, encouraging Episcopalians at civilian burials to consider

Music

by Mark A. DeW. Howe

I have recently read Rembert Herbert's new book *Entrances: Gregorian chant in daily life* (New York: Church Publishing Inc., 1999). Herbert here sets out the possibility of chant being used in praying communities, as a means toward deepened corporate contemplation and more faithful living. In constructing his argument, he makes liberal use of the works of Christian writers from Origen through Teresa of Avila, including Gregory the Great, Bernard of Clairvaux, Gregory of Nyssa and John Cassian. *Entrances* is an effort to graft monastic practice onto twenty-first-century parish life. It is an appealing presentation, throughout which Herbert reminds the reader that the idea of a particular style of music being a pathway to greater humility and wisdom is totally anachronistic.



He is right. That community could be built through music is not an alien concept today; after all, consider the bumper sticker that reads "Peace through music." But the idea that strenuous demands might

be made of people praying together in song—subordinating and subduing to a larger whole all the impulses glorified by a society of radical individualism, with the aim of a more profound relationship to God—is a tough sell in the year 2000.

What interests me about Herbert's proposal is how it looks in relation to other models of contemplative prayer that seem to be springing up, including

- Taizé-style services
- Noonday gatherings for centering prayer
- Choral Evensong or Compline as a sort of "sacred concert" at the end of a Sunday afternoon or evening

These examples invite people into quietness in a noisy world. But they are examples of a kind of consumerist mentality, in which one checks the listings in the newspaper and then chooses from diverse possibilities, dipping into the nearest meditation chapel for a quick pick-me-up of meditative prayer before returning to continue clawing one's way up the corporate ladder or logging billable hours in one's consulting business.

In contrast, the model Herbert suggests is one of regular, slow, sustained work, and it presupposes an openness to a radical change in heart and life. Further-

more, it is a matter of singing as the means in that process of conversion, and it is easy to imagine that the process and the singing might take over one's whole life—a prospect to which most modern consumers would be hostile.

Learning to sing together, especially learning to sing in a style as remote from the post-1600 musical style we of the year 2000 know best, is arduous work.

Such a model would be most readily workable as an urban parish's use, probably in a place where there is an academic community. It is hard to imagine it in some of the small rural parishes most dioceses have. It is also an endeavor that presumes an intellectual presence, for so much of what Herbert describes is so deeply rooted in a non-televised, literate environment.

So *Entrances* is about a kind of "use"—a means, if not necessarily a text, of prayer. Cranmer's idea that "all the whole realm shall have but one use" has been long gone, swallowed up in pluralism and given local variety. The use according to Rembert Herbert would not be simply local—that is, the use of a particular parish—but would in fact be a small group within a larger parish. The problem with this, it seems to me, is the almost certain charges of things like elitism, intellectualism (he believes a chant group should sing in Latin), and separatism that would be directed at a small group that adopted his plan as a means of growth in the Spirit. The promise of such a small-group use would be the growth in a distinctive path, rather like EFM groups, that served to help deepen the faith of its members.

Another question nags me. Is it possible that Herbert's model, which is based in monasticism and therefore presumes a willingness to live a certain ordered and corporate life, could be used in whole communities? It seems to me that an entire parish could choose a musical practice of prayer (Herbert is firm in his conviction that it must be western monophonic chant, though others might equally argue for another style of singing) as a way of life, and find it to be a metaphor for the Reign of God. In my view, it will be a great day when that happens.

the practice of Jewish mourners of having the casket lowered into the grave and together shoveling soil to begin burying it, or at least taking a turn to throw a handful of soil into the grave, would, to my mind, greatly enhance the grieving process at burials. In Missouri, a priest must often argue forcefully with the funeral director to have an inch of earth left uncovered by Astroturf so that she may (with purpose-brought trowel) cast earth on the casket at the words of committal. Bringing a baggie of nice tidy beach sand does not make graphic (sacramental) the returning of the body to the earth in the

same way . . . but then I favor real bread over wafers for communion, too, that we may do what we say in Anglican worship.

I hope these reflections, unabashedly opinionated as they are, will open dialogue about creating broader options for Anglican burial as we begin the next millennium in the American church.

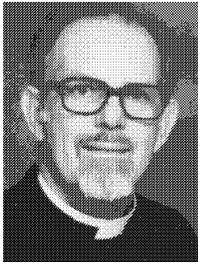
Jennifer M. Phillips is Vicar of St. Augustine's Chapel, Kingston, Rhode Island, and a member of Associated Parishes Council.

Books

edited by Leonel L. Mitchell

Jeffrey Lee. *Opening the Prayer Book*. Volume 7 in the New Church's Teaching Series. Boston: Cowley Publications, 1999. pp. ix + 198. \$11.95 (paper)

The title of this book represents a wonderfully appropriate pun. On the one hand, the work is intended to help the reader discern and understand the contents of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. Yet by its attention to the historical context of the prayer book tradition as well as the general history of Christian worship, the book is, on the other hand, an invitation to the readers



to expand their liturgical knowledge and appreciation. So far, then, we have four of the seven gifts of the Spirit as enumerated in the baptismal liturgy. Insofar as the author accomplishes these things excellently this book is a most welcome and worthy addition to the series, and readers who persevere to the end will have received good counsel, lovingly offered. There, that's seven! And to get such a measure and quality of spiritual gifts all at once makes this book a graceful bargain. Another way of evaluating this book is to say that it is at once engaging, informative and persuasive. In the first instance, Father Lee attracts our attention with immediately insightful comments that provide the organizational spine of the book, e.g., "the prayer book's history has been the history of our self-understanding" (p. 6). Others besides Anglicans who seek to understand our tradition will, on the basis of this rubric, find the story which the author mirrors quite informative. Successive chapters, then, move us from a theology of prayer and an overview of the development of Christian worship (1 and 2), to a history of the prayer book tradition (3 and 4), to a liturgical-theological

analysis of the BCP 1979's contents and its implications for living (5 through 7). The last chapter, "Looking Toward the Future," addresses concerns, problems and opportunities before the Episcopal Church (again in a larger and ecumenical context) as the process of liturgical renewal continues. The book concludes with scholarly endnotes, a listing of resources, and a helpful "Questions for Discussion" section.

These things all attest to the informative nature of the book. Another aspect that makes it engaging is the author's frequent contribution of vignettes drawn from his own and others' pastoral experience. At one point, for instance, he describes his trepidation about "meeting the needs" of a couple new to the Episcopal Church experiencing the *triduum* using the BCP 1979. In the potentially adverse circumstances of a gymnasium setting where he, as a pastor sent "to grow a church," had led the congregation's worship during the Good Friday veneration of the cross, these two came up to him after the liturgy and said, "This is it. This is exactly what we have been looking for and did not know how to ask for it—something older than what the pastor thought up last week" (p. 20). Such stories not only abound throughout the book, they serve to inspire the imagination—clerical and lay—as we continue together in the pastoral implementation of liturgical renewal.

Chapter 5, "A Baptismal Church," follows immediately upon an historical presentation of the development of the American BCP—a story which will fascinate those who do not know it or have not fully appreciated it. Here the persuasive trajectory of the book begins in earnest. From the centrality of the paschal mystery in the celebration of the *triduum* to the exposition of baptism, eucharist, daily office, the commentary instructs with apparent ease. In Chapter 7, "Liturgy in Action," the author makes all this come alive and

reveals the operative principal, "We have moved with strong currents of scholarship and changing social contexts over the past fifty years from an understanding of liturgy as primarily something that is *said* to something that is *done*" (p. 127). The end result is to show that the living prayer book tradition has become at once more complex (a greater number of variables) and more simple (the fundamental shape of liturgical action emerges more clearly). This trajectory is most likely to continue in revisions aimed at a more widely-appropriated renewal in pastoral liturgy.

This reviewer can personally attest that people throughout the Episcopal Church are reading and receiving this book with thanks for the qualities remarked above. It will continue to be useful to parish study groups, worship committees, and other interested parties because of the creative interplay the book exhibits among pertinence, accuracy and commendation.

WILLIAM H. PETERSEN
Bexley Hall Seminary
Rochester, NY

J. Neil Alexander, ed. *With Ever Joyful Hearts: Essays on Liturgy and Music Honoring Marion J. Hatchett*. New York: Church Publishing, Inc., 1999. 448 pages. \$24.95 (paper)

This is a wonder volume of essays celebrating the life and ministry of Marion J. Hatchett, liturgical scholar, teacher, pastor, musician and priest of the church. Dr. Hatchett taught at the University of the South for forty years, shaping the worship life of the Episcopal Church.

Reading *With Ever Joyful Hearts* is like taking a mini-sabbatical. It contains essays written by twenty-three scholars of the Episcopal Church on various topics, including church history, Christian initiation, hymnody, sacramental theology, ritual, ethics and justice. Almost all of the essays contribute new insights and invite

Continued on following page

the reader into new avenues of thinking and imagining.

The volume opens with an engaging article by Paul V. Marshall entitled “*Odi-um Politicum Odium Liturgicum: Sectionalism and the First American Prayer Book.*” Through the views of Samuel Seabury, Bishop Marshall identifies the historical realities that shaped the church in the North and in the South before, during, and after the Revolutionary War. The article provides a new understanding of the forces shaping the church at that time as well as a context for comprehending our own divisions today.

Jill S. Burnett chronicles the fifty-year history of struggle in General Convention over the proposed ordination liturgies for deaconesses. It is a piece of women’s history that rarely gets heard.

Five essays are particularly concerned with questions surrounding confirmation. In each article, new insights are brought to the current discussions about the role of confirmation and its meaning in the church. Byron D. Stuhlman offers perspectives from the Byzantine tradition in which rites have changed in response to the context of the society in which they are celebrated. David R. Holeton brings a new understanding of the development of the Reformation understandings of confirmation in an essay on the influence of Bohemian reformers. Leonel L. Mitchell traces the journey of Marion Hatchett’s scholarship and influence on the initiation committee of the Standing Liturgical Commission, and the contribution he made in shaping the current understanding of baptism as full and complete initiation into the church, and confirmation as an adult ratification of the baptismal covenant, a model which Hatchett discovered was proposed by Cranmer and not patristic in origin. Ruth A. Meyers chronicles the evolution of Massey Shepherd’s views on the role of the Spirit in baptism/confirmation. As scholars argued the theology of confirmation, Meyers notes the ways in which Shepherd’s understanding of the interaction of scholarship and contemporary pastoral concerns moved him to alter his points of view. Linda L. B. Moeller explores confirmation’s place in the his-

tory of the American church and the effect of American political and social history on its development and pastoral use. These are important contributions to the discussion around confirmation, and one can only hope that they will be required reading, especially for bishops, as we move toward future revision of the liturgy.

There are a number of essays on hymnody. The eucharistic theology of Isaac Watts is discussed by Daniel B. Stevick, while J. Neil Alexander offers insight into the eucharistic hymns of John and Charles Wesley. Harry Eskew focuses on the shape-note folk-hymn tradition and the story of its discovery and subsequent spread and incorporation into congregational song.

Both Charles Price and Boone Porter contributed to this volume and have since died. I suspect that these were the last articles they wrote: Price on the images of water and baptism in the Gospel of John, and Porter on one of his great loves, the Daily Office.

Several essays provide insights that will be valuable to anyone who preaches on a regular basis. In a wonderful synopsis of the work of New Testament scholars on the language of the kingdom and the parables, William H. Hethcock raises the urgency of preaching the kingdom. Such preaching will be marked by urgency, will be confrontational, paradoxical, and mysterious, will include hope, carries a message of inclusively and unity, and will emphasize justice. Thomas Talley focuses his scholarship on the development of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem in the Palm Sunday liturgy.

Joseph Monti raises anew the questions of the relation between the liturgy and the moral life. He explores in depth sacramental theology with a renewed sense of power for truth and justice within the worshipping community.

In a short review it is impossible to cover all the essays. This has been one of the most stimulating books that I have read in a long time. There is material to ponder, kernels to chew on for preaching, and quotes for newsletters. It is a work of abundance in honor of a man who contin-

ues to give abundantly to the life of the Body of Christ.

JEAN CAMPBELL, OSH
St. Mark’s Church
Chelsea, New York

Sr. Jean is vicar of St. Mark’s Church, Chelsea, NY, a member of the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music, and vice-president of Associated Parishes.

Gordon W. Lathrop. *Holy People: A Liturgical Ecclesiology.* Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999. x + 246 pages. \$29 (hard cover)

“Holy things for the holy people” is the ancient invitation to communion recorded in the fourth-century Mystagogical Catecheses attributed to St. Cyril of Jerusalem, and the congregation’s response is, “One is holy, one is Lord, Jesus Christ.” It is this dialogue which sets the theme for Professor Lathrop’s two volumes, *Holy Things* (reviewed in Spring 1997) and *Holy People*. If you shared this reviewer’s enthusiasm for *Holy Things*, you will want to read this companion volume. If you have not read the earlier volume, start with this one, for, although deeply interconnected, both stand alone.

Lathrop’s own comment on this dialogue gives the flavor of his approach:

“Holy things for the holy people,” sings out the presider, inviting and warning at the Eucharist, affirming the centrality and the holiness of both the proffered food and the surrounding assembly. “Only one is holy,” counters the voice of the assembly, the people evidencing the truth about themselves and the truth that any symbol apart from the mercy of God and yet affirming, because of that mercy, both food and assembly as the very locus of God’s presence. (p. 211)

Dialectic, reversal, and juxtaposition are key terms in his understanding of a liturgical ecclesiology, which begins with the Church as a eucharistic assembly and the

relationship of that local assembly to the Catholic Church “at all times and in all places.” He is not alone in wondering that “There are now local Christian gatherings that have no perceived interest in historic or catholic connection, no interest in being anything but local places answering individually perceived needs,” and his conclusion seems inescapable, “to the extent that these are indeed Christian gatherings, they are in need of challenge and exhortation” (p. 64).

He goes on to ask what a congregation has to do to be the biblical *qahal*, the Christian *ekklesia*, in communion with all the other assemblies throughout space and time which comprise the Catholic Church. Doing this requires “practices,” which he defines as “things Christian people do together over time in response to and in the light of God’s active presence for the life of the world” (p. 75). This approach steers a middle course between sitting back and expecting God to do everything for us and attempting to earn rewards through good works. He discusses these under the headings, “The Practice of Assembly,” “The Practice of Participation,” “The Practice of Leadership,” “The Practice of Unity,” and “The Practice of Holiness.”

One of his most penetrating and central insights is that “the essential matters are always juxtaposed to each other and always themselves made up of at least two juxtaposed elements: readings *and* preaching, teaching *and* bathing, thanksgiving *and* receiving the food” (p. 113).

There are many others, such as, “All preachers should strive to see that their sermons say in words the same thing that the bath and the cup say in actions. In the church, words should be edible, like bread, and just as full of grace. And the bread of Christ should be seen as a ‘word,’ indeed one of the strongest words we have to say the truth about God, the world, and ourselves.”

Warning us that communion with the Church throughout the ages does not mean imposed liturgical uniformity, he reminds us that Christian liturgy is “a practice of holiness in dialogue with a culture,” and that dialogue will produce many varia-

tions as cultures change (p. 226). “We need to tell the truth about what we can discover from history. We also need to be able to criticize what we find in history” (p. 123).

I do not intend to disparage Anglican liturgical theology by recommending this Lutheran work so strongly, but I think that Lathrop provides an insight to be profitably juxtaposed, to use one of his favorite words, to the usual Anglican approach, reminding us that our mission is “to set out the holy things in an assembly of needy beggars,” who in God’s unfathomable purpose are called to be the holy people of God.

LLM

William Seth Adams. *Moving the Furniture: Liturgical Theory, Practice, and Environment*. New York: Church Publishing Incorporated, 1999. viii + 172 pages. \$19.95 (paper)

Adams, the J. Milton Richardson Professor of Liturgics and Anglican Studies at the Episcopal Theological Seminary of the Southwest, has pulled into a single volume eleven essays published since 1982 on the three aspects of worship identified in the subtitle. Not only do they suggest moving the liturgical furniture in our heads, they also reframe the discussion of a number of issues.

Part One: “Thinking Something Different,” includes essays entitled: “Christian Liturgy, Scripture, and the Jews, A Problematic in Jewish Christian Relations,” “Expansive Language: A Matter of Justice,” and “The Prayer Book Theology of Ministry” which propose new ways of thinking about these issues. Part Two: “Doing Something Different,” includes “The Eucharistic Assembly: Who Presides,” “Given and Shed for Whom? A Study of the Words of Administration,” “On Liturgical Hospitality” and “Decoding the Obvious: Reflections on Baptismal Ministry in the Episcopal Church”; these raise questions about what is said by the way we worship. Finally, Section Three: “Moving the Furniture,” contain-

ing “An Apology for Variable Liturgical Space,” “Theology: Liturgical Space, Saying What We Mean,” “The Place of the Dead: Christian Burial and the Liturgical Environment,” and “Preaching and the Potential of Liturgical Space,” discusses what our buildings say about our intentions and our worship. An Afterword contains several points on which Adams has rethought his original essays. Space prevents one from a full discussion of these thoughtful and suggestive articles. To look at a single example, in his discussion in “Expansive Language: A Matter of Justice” he reminds his readers: “One needs to remember, in all this, that the language of the liturgy is only partially contained in the texts provided in the Prayer Book. There is a much broader context in which these words serve. The words of the formal texts are joined by other words, those from the Bible, those used to do the congregation’s business by way of announcements, those words offered in song, those words employed in the fashioning of indigenous prayers and those used in preaching. Whatever matters of justice are rightly raised about the formal texts, these same matters of justice must also inform these other words. The church’s commitment to justice, when it is shown forth in texts, must find worthy companions in the rest of the language of the liturgy. All our speaking must speak justly” (p. 31). In this time when the Episcopal Church is looking toward prayer-book revision we need to hear his further comment: “‘Fixing the words’ is not the point; justice, and godly mercy, are. Here we are at the essential matter. Are we (that is the church, not just liturgical revisers) able or willing to see the need for a revised liturgical vernacular as a matter of justice at all?” (p. 33).

Adams brings the same degree of insight and provocation to his other essays. My copy is full of marginal markings which highlight comments I had hoped to use in this review. Readers will be spared more of my choices and are encouraged to make their own collection of favorites. To conclude, this is an enjoyable book to read, even if one would disagree with Adams at one point or another. It is attrac-

tively laid out and printed. Although there is no bibliography, there are full notes at the end of each chapter which can guide the interested in further reading. The first page of each essay is highlighted by a photograph which sets the tone for the discussion which follows. In all, it would make a good addition to one's own library or a good gift for someone who is concerned with the renewal of Episcopal worship.

RONALD H. MILLER
AP Coordinator
Baltimore, Maryland

Robert Boak Slocum, editor. *A New Conversation: Essays on the Future of Theology and the Episcopal Church*. New York: Church Publishing Inc., 1999. x + 335 pages. \$23.95 (paper)

The title of this book is misleading. One expects the voices in a book entitled *A New Conversation* to be new. This is not the case. Of the twenty-seven authors, twenty-five are male, most are white, and a little research yields the fact that the average age of the first dozen of those authors is 62. These are not, by any stretch of the imagination, new voices, nor is their conversation, with a couple of exceptions, new. And, sadly, many seem to have been ignorant of the subtitle of the book. While a number of the essays are on theology and the Episcopal Church (though not all are even that), few seem to take seriously the task of imagining what the future of theology might look like. Many of the authors seem to have taken this opportunity to bemoan the sorry state of things or to put forward their idea of what would "fix" the church. All of that having been said, the book is still worth reading. If a person wanted to see the Episcopal Church as its senior generation sees it, this is well worth the reading. There are two or three younger authors in the mix, but by and large, this is an older "crowd" and represents some of the huge spread in intellectual commitment and interest that are realities in our denomination.

Particularly interesting are Robert

Cooper's eclectic essay, "Who is Like God? On Not Mistaking the Pointing Finger for the Moon," and Frank Griswold's confessional essay on the interdependence of Word and Sacrament. Lee Mitchell has also written a forward-looking essay on liturgical reform. Interestingly, he is the only author to take into account the changes the computer is making and will make on our ways of being the Church.

Mark McIntosh's piece on the recovery of spirituality and the doctrine of Christ is an example of a younger voice and one that seems to have a better grasp on the issues of contemporary culture. The sense that one is left with after reading the whole collection is that surely the Holy Spirit is the only force strong enough to keep this church from flying instantly into a million fragments!

The future of the church is bound to be more ethnically diverse, less male-dominated, and younger than this book imagines. It is less likely to operate out of the old paradigms of the institution and more likely to be in conversation with the culture and technology in which we live. And because of those differences, the questions that are asked and the suggestions for answering them are bound to be new. Nonetheless, as a snapshot of the Episcopal Church at a particular time in history, this book is valuable.

ANNE WRIDER
Vicar
St. Ambrose Church
Chicago Heights, IL

Kenneth Stevenson. *The Mystery of Baptism in the Anglican Tradition*. Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1998. viii + 214 pages. \$15.95 (paper)

Kenneth Stevenson's new book is a fresh look at the baptismal writings of nine distinguished Anglican theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: William Perkins, Richard Hooker, Lancelot Andrewes, George Herbert, John Bramhall, Jeremy Taylor, Richard Baxter, Simon Patrick, and Herbert Thorndike. They do not, of course, represent any one school of An-

glican thought. Perkins and Baxter are Puritans; Andrewes, Bramhall, Taylor, and Thorndike are "Caroline Divines"; Patrick was a Latitudinarian; Herbert a mystical poet; and Hooker the great Elizabethan theologian. Stevenson does not attempt to resolve their differences but rather underscores them to show something of the breadth of classic Anglican baptismal theology.

In the opening and closing chapters, the author sets a context for the historical study. He borrows three terms from Brian Gerrish's study of Calvin's eucharistic theology to identify three views of what sacraments do. The first is "symbolic memorialism," the view identified with Zwingli's sacramental theology, which makes baptism a memorial of what Christ has done for us. None of the nine writers fall into this category, although Perkins has some leanings in that direction. The second is "symbolic parallelism," identified with Bullinger, Zwingli's successor, which carefully separates outward and inward baptism, but sees them as "simultaneous and parallel." Perkins and Baxter, he describes as holding this view. The others all hold "symbolic instrumentalism," which Stevenson calls a "reformed Catholic" view, that of Calvin, Luther, and Hooker, which sees the sacraments as "visible words," consisting of both the sign and what is signified. "The water of baptism," he says, "conveys the gift of salvation in the sacrament itself; faithful reception begins from that point." Taylor and Patrick, however, he feels veer slightly toward symbolic parallelism in insisting on the importance of holy living. As Taylor said, "The Church gives the sacrament, God gives the grace of the sacrament." Stevenson himself prefers the term "symbolic relationalism": "A wholesome sacramental theology is about God's action and our faithful response." This insistence on our response, he feels, is the strength of Perkins and Baxter. "All of our writers," Stevenson concludes, "burned with a deep and lasting conviction about the centrality of baptism not only in the worship of the Church but in the life of the Christian."

LLM

A new prayer for the Church of England

PHILLIP TOVEY

The General Synod of the Church of England has now authorized eight eucharistic prayers to be published in *Common Worship* later this year. Perhaps the most interesting is prayer H, which came into being late in the life of the Synod and was rushed through with general consent to be able to be published in the new volume. This short article looks at the text of the prayer and gives some comments on it for wider interest. First the text; the bold type is said by the congregation.

Eucharistic Prayer H

The Lord be with you. *or* The Lord is here.
And also with you. **His Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is right to praise you, Father, Lord of all creation
in your love you made us for yourself.

When we turned away
you did not reject us,
but came to meet us in your Son.

**You embraced us as your children
and welcomed us to sit and eat with you.**

In Christ you shared our life
that we might live in him and he in us.

**He opened wide his arms upon the cross
and made for all a perfect sacrifice for sin.**

On the night before he was betrayed
he came to table with his friends
he took bread, and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to them saying:
Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

**Father we do this in remembrance of him:
His body is the bread of life.**

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine
he gave you thanks, and said:
Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins
do this in remembrance of me.

**Father, we do this in remembrance of Him:
His blood was shed for all.**

As we proclaim his death and celebrate his rising in glory
send your Holy Spirit that this bread and this wine,
may be to us the body and blood of your dear Son.

**As we eat and drink these holy gifts
make us one in Christ, our risen Lord.**

With your whole Church throughout the world
we offer you this sacrifice of praise
and lift our voice to join the eternal song of heaven:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!**

Commentary

The genesis of this prayer is in the July 1999 General Synod of the Church of England. In a debate on the eucharistic prayers, it became obvious that there was considerable concern that the prayers were too much of a “monologue” and that there was a desire for “interactive” prayers. In one sense this is a misnomer, because all eucharistic praying should be done by both priest and people together, but a common criticism of the eucharistic prayers in the *Alternative Service Book* (1980) has been the monologue nature of the prayers. This has led some parishes to experiment with saying paragraphs of the eucharistic prayer together. It was pointed out in Synod that the prayers of the *ASB* were not designed to be used in this way and that if it was the desire of Synod to have “interactive” prayers it would be better to compose afresh one such prayer. The aspiration of Synod was clearly voiced by Bishop Colin Buchanan, the unrepressable evangelical bishop and liturgist. The result was that Synod saw a draft prayer, which had been composed overnight, and members were invited to send in their comments.

The prayer returned to the November Synod, where a large number of amendments were proposed. This is one of the most

frustrating elements of liturgical revisions in the Church of England. Twenty motions can be introduced on a eucharistic prayer, changing it line by line. It soon became apparent that this was nonsense; by changing "this," but not "that," Synod could end up with something that does not cohere. So standing orders were suspended while a creative procedure was developed. This enabled the prayer to go back to revision committee and the points raised to be considered further in committee. This was done, and the prayer was revised. In the February sitting of Synod there were further proposals for amendments from the bishops. It was asked why their Lordships had not done this at their own stage of viewing of the prayer. As the amendments would have made the prayer longer, Synod kept the prayer as the revision committee had suggested.

The prayer is designed to be, as was said above, interactive. When presiding, using the prayer it feels very much a dialogue. It has been carefully constructed so that "presidential elements" are kept presidential, e.g., the dominical words and the epiclesis. It might be questioned whether this perpetuates concepts of consecratory moments.

It ends with the Sanctus. This was questioned in Synod: although it may have been the theory of E. C. Ratcliffe that early eucharistic prayers ended in this way, should that be so now? Also, the effect is to remove a congregational "Amen," something which is commented on in scripture. Nevertheless it was decided that this was a suitable development and that the Church of England could be involved in a modest development of tradition.

One big issue is of a prayer that is suitable for use with children. The Church of England is slowly moving to allowing children to receive communion before confirmation. In places where this is so there is a demand for suitable eucharistic prayers. The composers of this prayer admitted that this was not intended to fill that gap. However, it will be more suitable for "all age" worship as expressed in the "Family Service" movement. The issue of prayers suitable for use with chil-

dren is likely to return to the agenda of the Church of England. One evangelical commended the Roman Catholic provision in the debate, saying she would prefer to use this than have nothing.

The Church of England has thus produced a new an innovative prayer, prayer H. It awaits to be seen as to how this prayer will be received in the parishes. There are some indications that it will be very popular in some traditions.

Phillip Tovey, a priest in the Church of England, is a Training Coordinator in the Diocese of Oxford and a member of General Synod.

Associated Parishes Council meeting

The Council of the Associated Parishes held its annual meeting at the Duncan Conference Center in Delray Beach May 3-8, 2000. Much of the meeting was spent in "open space," a meeting format used by Council in recent years to enable energized and creative conversation about liturgy and mission. One evening was spent exploring music with local guests from the Association of Anglican Musicians (AAM). At another session, ecumenical guest John Baldovin spoke to Council about the status of liturgical renewal in the Roman Catholic Church today.

Throughout the weekend, Council members worked in small groups to plan daily morning and evening prayer. Following each service, we gathered to reflect prayerfully on our experience.

Council business included discussion of new brochures, which are in the process of revision, and election of new members. (A list of Council members is included in this issue.)

A fuller report of the meeting will appear in the next issue.

RUTH MEYERS

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BARBARA MITCHELL

Glorify your Maker, you works of our God,
Wonder at God who endures for ever.

You sun and moon and clouds and winds,
Constellations, curtains of shimmering light,
Winter and summer, autumn and spring
Proclaim to our God your thanks and praise.

You mountains and valleys, prairie and field,
Snowdrift and avalanche, drizzle and ice,
Coastland and badland, floodplain and berg
Proclaim to our God your thanks and praise.

You cedar and fir, you maple and birch,
Arbutus and cottonwood, willow and spruce,
Pinewood and fruitwood and walnut and oak
Proclaim to our God your thanks and praise.

Trillium and paintbrush, berry and shrub,
Sagebrush and lichen and mushroom and sedge,
Yard flower and pond flower and seedpod and bud
Proclaim to our God your thanks and praise.

You muskox and bison, wolf cub and marmot,
Grizzly and puma, wapiti, moose,
Raccoon and carnivore, field mouse and fox
Proclaim to our God your thanks and praise.

Salamander, garter-snake, turtle and frog,
Black fly and deer fly, mosquito and wasp,
You algae and mildew and beetle and worm
Proclaim to our God your thanks and praise.

Cardinal and raven, puffin and tern,
Snowy owl and magpie and eagle and finch,
Gosling and trumpeter, mallard and loon
Proclaim to our God your thanks and praise.

Orca and dolphin, blue whale and cod,
Salmon and sea star and walrus and crab,
Scallop, anemone, otter and kelp
Proclaim to our God your thanks and praise.

You immigrant, native, refugee, guest,
Worker and student, people of God,
Homedweller, traveler, invalid, seeker
Proclaim to our God your thanks and praise.

You pioneers and elders, descendants and youth,
Martyrs and saints of the threefold shores,
Angels at watch over homeland and sea
Proclaim to our God your thanks and praise.

*Barbara Mitchell, a priest in the Anglican Church of Canada,
is a member of the Council of Associated Parishes.*

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