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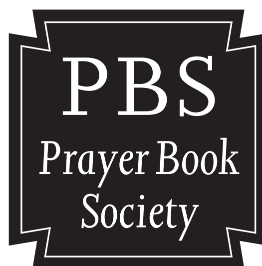

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THE COLLECT OF THE SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

O LORD, we beseech thee, let thy continual pity cleanse and defend thy Church; and, because it cannot continue in safety without thy succour, preserve it evermore by thy help and goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

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Editorial

The Church of England's Liturgical Commission produces a report at the end of every five years, 'briefly reviewing what has been achieved and setting out the work that it believes will need to be undertaken in the future'. The words quoted are from the latest such report (*Report of the Liturgical Commission* 2001–2006, GS Misc 822), which has recently been issued.

The work of the Commission over these years has been devoted to the completion of *Common Worship*, which, the report makes clear, took longer than expected:

> The appearance of three substantial and definitive *Common Worship* volumes in 2000 created a widespread misconception that the *Common Worship* project was complete. This was far from the case, and the Commission's previous 'end-of-term' report noted that at least six further publications would be needed … In the event, this turned out to be an underestimate.

After a further five years, however, the work is (for the time being) complete:

> The Church of England now has resources for worship which are remarkable in range and quality, to be used together with the Book of Common Prayer, *which is in no way replaced by the new provision*. But liturgy is of course not a text; it is the combination of structured word and music and movement which in its totality enables the encounter with God in worship. There is always a danger for a body like the Commission that it will mistake the word for the act, the text for the living encounter. To have supervised the production of such a large body of carefully crafted material is something which inevitably gives satisfaction to the Commission, but the real test will be the way in which these resources are actually used in places of worship throughout the Church of England. *It is to the task of liturgical formation that we now turn* [my italics].

That the Commission now has a 'formation-centred agenda' is the main burden of the report, and the work of formation is being helped on by the appointment, in July 2005, of a new National

Worship Development Officer. This is surely welcome; as Colin Podmore observes in his very interesting article in this issue of *Faith and Worship*, there is common ground in arguing for ordered liturgy at all in a context which is somewhat anti-liturgical. The Commission's report certainly betrays some unease about this:

> Through some of its members the Commission has tried to keep in touch with a wide range of alternative, experimental and emerging liturgies, particularly those related to 'Fresh Expressions of Church'. The appearance of 'Fresh Expressions', together with other liturgical movements, raises interesting questions for the Church of England as a whole, about the relation between common or shared worship and worship arising directly from the needs and experiences of a particular community or group. The richness of provision in *Common Worship* is sometimes criticised for allowing too much variety, so that the shared identity that goes with shared worship is compromised. It is perfectly true that the Book of Common Prayer, supported by the Act of Uniformity, was immensely important in creating a shared Anglican identity, which remains fundamental to the whole Anglican Communion and not just to the Church of England. But few would think that anything like such a uniform use could be imposed across the Church of England today. The uniformity that began to unravel in the second half of the nineteenth century cannot be reinstated as if the last 150 years had not happened. The intention of *Common Worship* is to provide resources which even those places of worship that sit lightly to the Church of England's provision will wish to use willingly, and so to increase the sense that all our worship is nourished by common Anglican roots. It is clear from the amazing effervescence of 'alternative' forms of worship and community, inside or outside the church, that it will be a real challenge to sustain a sense that catholicity, our mutual belonging in space and time, is essential to the church. This will undoubtedly shape a significant part of the next Commission's agenda for liturgical formation.

This goes as far as it decently can in admitting that a common liturgical 'formation' based on the Prayer Book was once a reality, which the spread of alternative rites has displaced, but not *re*placed. Differences of use and ceremonial there may have been, but Church of England people shared a set of texts, large parts of which were known by heart, as recently as forty or fifty years ago, never mind 150 years ago. As the passage quoted above concedes, not only are the official texts open to the accusation of compromising 'shared

identity' by allowing 'too much variety', but even this degree of choice is insufficient for those who 'sit lightly to the church's provision'(and to the Church's law, it might be added).

It would be easy enough to furnish, from back numbers of *Faith & Worship* for example, a commentary on the various stages by which we have arrived at this state of affairs, but it would not perhaps be helpful. It is clear from the report, and from Dr Podmore's article, that there is now a will in the Liturgical Commission to nourish 'a sense of common Anglican roots', and to spend time consolidating and inculcating liturgical principles rather than producing new liturgies. The Commission envisages this being done in partnership with national organisations 'like Praxis, the Alcuin Club, the Group for the Renewal of Worship (GROW) and the RCSM'. Though the Prayer Book Society is not mentioned as a possible partner in the report, Dr Podmore evidently sees it as one. The Commission wants the 'resources' of *Common Worship* to be used, and among those resources are the BCP services included in the main volume; besides which the Prayer Book itself 'is in no way replaced by the new provision'. It is very much in the Society's interest to ensure that the Book of Common Prayer features in the training and consultation offered to 'those teaching worship and liturgy at theological colleges', and in that strand of the Commission's 'formation-shaped agenda' concerned with 'formal worship and mission'. The report notes in this connection 'evidence that significant numbers of people are capable of responding to ordered liturgies that are deeply rooted in history and community'—which I take to be a roundabout way of referring to the Prayer Book.[1] We must encourage the Commission to give as much weight to the BCP as to the 'large body of carefully crafted material' for which it has itself been responsible, and towards which it may otherwise show a natural partiality.

It will go against the grain for many supporters of the Prayer Book to think of it as one brand among many competing in the post-modern marketplace, or as something to be commended by a species of 'niche marketing'. But this odd situation—deplorable, even—does also represent an opportunity. If 'anything goes', that must include the Prayer Book; and if the rhetoric of 'diversity' brings it back by a side wind to parishes from which it had vanished, that

[1] The report *Mission-Shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions of Church in a Changing Context* (Church House 2004) likewise referred to 'evidence of an increase in attendance at cathedral and other churches offering traditional styles of worship … there are a few stories of new congregations based on the use of the Book of Common Prayer, as part of a shift to a pattern of multiple congregations' (pp.73–4).

will be cause for rejoicing, without prejudice to the view that the Book of Common Prayer is not just one among a variety of options, but the Church's continuing liturgical standard and norm.

Writers in *Faith & Worship* occasionally mention books about the Prayer Book which some readers don't know of. A recent instance for me was Evan Daniel's *The Prayer Book: its History, Language and Contents*, mentioned by Professor Gomme in No. 58. I have now obtained a copy, and very good it is: I can see why it went through so many editions. It occurs to me that 'Prayer Book Classics' might be a regular feature of *Faith & Worship*, and really useful in alerting us to works we have missed. Readers are invited to submit recommendations of books on the BCP (its doctrine, history, language, sources etc), giving a brief account of the recommended book's contents and purpose.

A Living Tradition

COLIN PODMORE

This article began as an address to the Salisbury diocesan branch of the Prayer Book Society, given at Toller Porcorum Village Hall on 10 June 2006. It begins and ends with personal reflections informed by my own personal history, experiences and vision for the future. In the last seven years, my experiences have included being, as Secretary of the Liturgical Publishing Group, the staff member in charge of the publication of *Common Worship* (from 1999 to 2002) and then Secretary of the Liturgical Commission (from 2002 onwards), but I should make clear that my reflections have not been discussed with the Commission and I therefore cannot say whether in every respect the Commission would share the views that I express.

I The Prayer Book and me—1974–1988

I begin with an account of my engagement with the Book of Common Prayer in the fifteen years before I joined the staff of the General Synod in 1988. My story starts in Bodmin in Cornwall, where I was brought up as a member of the Methodist Church. I still have the *Shorter Book of Offices* that I was given when I was made a member of the Methodist Church in 1974. That book, published in 1936, includes what is, to all intents and purposes, the Prayer Book Holy Communion service (with slight modifications by Wesley and by the 1936 editors) and a shorter alternative order which largely consists of texts from the Prayer Book service. That reminds us, of course, that the Prayer Book has had a life and an influence not only in other churches of the Anglican Communion but also in the Methodist Church (which can be seen, historically, as a separated branch of the Anglican tradition) and in other churches too.

As a teenager I didn't know it, but I had got in just in time, because in 1975 a new *Methodist Service Book* was published, containing services almost all of which were in modern English. However, the Prayer Book Holy Communion service with slight modifications was retained. The new book was introduced in Bodmin some time later, in the by

then fashionable glossy booklet form (my booklets were purchased in February 1977, so perhaps it was about then). But in those two or three years I had already become very attached to those Prayer Book texts, and precocious teenager that I was, I got up in the church meeting and asked that the old service should be used alternately with the new. Perhaps that displayed a blending of traditionalism and pragmatism that I have retained in later life, and maybe I was even anticipating—unknowingly!—the 'both/and', 'pick and mix' culture of my own and later generations that we have come to know as post-modernism. Be that as it may, the minister was so taken aback by this degree of interest in church policy shown by one of the youngest people present that he readily agreed to my proposal—not, I fear, a pattern universally followed in the introduction of new liturgy.

Things moved on, and in July 1977 my comprehensive school headmaster took me and two friends to Oxford and Cambridge to try and interest us in applying to those universities. I was already attracted by the Church of England and indeed by Oxford, and had my eye on Keble College in part because—at that time at least—it still had a very definite Anglican identity. In Oxford I purchased a copy of the Book of Common Prayer. Over the next year I often turned the pages of that Prayer Book—not just the services, but the Prefaces, the Calendar and the lists of what the Pet Shop Boys call 'feast days or fast days or days of abstinence' too. (Was Neil Tennant consciously echoing the Prayer Book when he wrote the Pet Shop Boys' song 'DJ Culture', which includes that phrase, I wonder?) Cranmer's genius was, of course, that for all the discontinuities in theology, the liturgy of his Book of Common Prayer was still clearly in continuity with what had gone before. And under Elizabeth the black-letter days that Cranmer had swept away from the Calendar were restored, including many English saints such as Dunstan, Edward and Swithun. (This reminds us that Cranmer was not responsible for every aspect of the 1662 Prayer Book that we know and love today—the tradition developed between 1552 and 1662.) The tradition that I could explore through reading the Prayer Book was the common property of all English—and Cornish—people, and it was one to which I wished to belong more fully.

I went up to Oxford in 1978 and was confirmed in Keble College Chapel in 1979. I don't think the college chaplain was particularly pleased when I asked for the Prayer Book Confirmation rite to be used, but given the Prayer Book's part—among many other things of course—in bringing me to that point, and since in being confirmed I was identifying myself with the Anglican tradition of which it had been the vehicle, that was the rite that I wanted to be confirmed with. And so I was.

At Keble at that time there were two services every day, but for none of them was the Book of Common Prayer used. For Evening Prayer on weekday evenings we used the shorter form from 'Series Two Revised' (a mustard-coloured booklet). To be honest, I quite liked that. It was basically a shorter version of Prayer Book Evening Prayer that was suitable for a brief service at the end of the working day before dinner, and there was a different canticle every day which allowed for a little variety. Admittedly, there were minor variations in some of the texts ('helped' instead of 'holpen' in the Magnificat, and 'Holy Spirit' instead of 'Holy Ghost' throughout). These struck me as mindless irritants. We were perfectly capable of understanding those words in context, and much of the other language was archaic anyway. To embellish the Prayer Book tradition was one thing—and a good thing—but to fiddle about with the odd word here and there seemed completely pointless.

As to Holy Communion, it was at Keble that I had my first taste of Series Three. That was something else—with the exception of one or two good new prayers it was flat, terse and unpoetic; not embellished, but stripped bare. How I hated it! I suppose it must have felt the same after what Eamon Duffy has called 'the stripping of the altars' in Cranmer's time. Indeed—to digress for a moment—the altars were not just stripped of their hangings but removed completely and broken up, replaced by a plain wooden table placed lengthwise in the chancel. We may and should admire Cranmer's literary and liturgical genius, but let us not imagine that he would have felt at home at choral evensong with an altar where the altars stood before, surrounded by seventeenth-century altar rails, covered with a coloured frontal and bearing lighted candles. All of that is completely in what I will call the Prayer Book tradition, but that is a tradition that developed and grew in the seventeenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Cranmer gave us the text (though even that was of course modified and added to between 1552 and 1662, as mentioned above), but the text is only part of the whole experience of worship, and if we were transported back to 1552 or even 1662 I think many of us would find Prayer Book worship then rather foreign and not very much to our taste.

Elsewhere in Oxford on Sunday mornings, however, one could find Holy Communion celebrated according to 'Series One and Two revised', with the Prayer Book texts sung to Merbecke's setting or Martin Shaw's Anglican Folk Mass. Later on, I and others pleaded for some more variety in the worship at Keble. By the time I finally left there was one Prayer Book communion service each week—in 'prime time' on a Thursday evening, and it was one of the best attended weekday services.

For one year from 1982 to 1983 I was at Selwyn College, Cambridge. By now *The Alternative Service Book 1980* had replaced Series One, Two and Three. In Selwyn College Chapel, Evensong followed the Book of Common Prayer—no more mustard-coloured booklets—and for the Eucharist we used all the authorized rites: the Prayer Book, Rite B and Rite A on different days. Variety was good, because one could begin to see that each rite had its own strengths (and weaknesses), its own emphases. The leading church historian Professor Owen Chadwick was in his last year as Master, and he presided at the weekday morning Eucharist twice a week, the Dean of Chapel and the Chaplain also presiding on two days each. I found it interesting that the Master chose to preside each week at the Prayer Book service and also the most modern form of Rite A. Here was someone who clearly loved the Prayer Book—one could tell that from the loving way that he read it—but who also saw a need for something quite different to complement it. And he was an historian, like me. There was food for thought.

In 1988 I started work in Church House. Some members of the Prayer Book Society might think that it was all downhill from then onwards! By then those successive rites and booklets of the pre-1980 era had already been superseded. Now, in 2006, even the *ASB* that replaced them is itself a thing of the past, a mere memory and for a new generation of young Anglicans not even that. It seemed important in beginning this address to rekindle those memories of the world of twenty-five to thirty years ago—not least so as to remind ourselves that it is a world from which the Church of England and all of us have moved on.

II Liturgical Change and *The Alternative Service Book 1980*

Having begun with my personal perspective at the time on the *ASB* and the series of experimental rites that led up to it, I want now to try to look somewhat more dispassionately and historically at aspects of the process of liturgical revision that led up to the publication of *The Alternative Service Book 1980*. To do that, I shall have to go back before the period of the experiences that I began by describing.

As a middle-aged man of forty-six it is impossible for me to imagine the situation that pertained before the mid-1960s, when the only authorized liturgy in use was that of the Book of Common Prayer. The Prayer Book tradition was a living tradition—as it still is—and to live, as Cardinal Newman said, is to change,[1] so not only was the Prayer

[1] J. H. Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (London, 1845), p. 39.

Book in use in the mid-1960s not identical with that of Cranmer (as already mentioned), but it was not even precisely the same as in 1662. The tables of lessons for Morning and Evening Prayer, for example, were replaced in 1871 and an alternative set was added in 1922. Even if the texts of the services themselves were unaltered from 1662, the way they were performed had changed quite radically. In most churches hymns were sung, and from the nineteenth century onwards it had become customary in many to sing parts of the Holy Communion service to Merbecke's setting. What is more, significant items, such as the Exhortations, were generally left out, and from 1928 onwards use was commonly made of the embellishments, additions and alternatives contained in the 1928 Prayer Book.

Thus there was a living, developing tradition characterized by increasing variety, but none the less, the main elements of all the services conducted in the Church of England in the mid-1960s were all in the language of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and also reflected the world, the Church and the theology of those days, which by then lay three to four hundred years in the past. It is not surprising, I would suggest, that very many clergy and quite a lot of lay members of the Church felt frustrated and hemmed in by liturgical provision that no longer bore much relationship to the world as it then was. It is equally unsurprising, I suppose, that especially in the heady days of the mid-1960s liturgical change took quite a radical form—just as it did 450 years ago. (I expect my Cornish ancestors were among those who rose up against the 1549 Prayer Book and I am sure I would have joined them, but however much I would then have regretted the passing of the medieval mass in Latin and all that was bound up with it, I would not now want to be worshipping that way week in and week out.) Cranmer's initial 1548 Order of Communion was followed in 1549 by a complete Prayer Book, and that was completely replaced just three years later, in 1552. Between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s Series One was followed by Series Two and then Series Three with almost comparable speed. And as I have said, Series Three was pretty stripped down and bare—just as 1552 was in its original form, without all the ways in which the Prayer Book tradition was subsequently developed and embellished.

I suppose the big difference was that in the mid-sixteenth century the Church of England was blessed with Archbishop Cranmer who, whatever else he was, was a liturgical drafter of the first order. At its best, his composition had rhythm and poetry. Despite the fact that my teenage years in the 1970s came at the very end of the era in which the main Prayer Book texts in one service or another were used in

most churches (so I used them frequently only for a relatively short time) and although at the moment I only attend Prayer Book services now and again, I can still say large parts of the Prayer Book offices and Communion service by heart—including the priest's part. That says a great deal about the sheer memorability of the Prayer Book texts, which of course is linked to their rhythm and poetry.

The same could not be said about most of the Series Three texts or even those of the *ASB* into which they were later incorporated. There are some exceptions; I am thinking in particular of two prayers by David Frost: 'Most merciful Lord, your love compels us to come in …' and 'Father of all, we give you thanks and praise, that when we were still far off you met us in your Son and brought us home …' But those are the exceptions that prove the rule. Not every generation has its Cranmer, and it is important to be clear just how exceptional he was.

To be fair to those men of thirty and forty years ago, they were writing at a time when radical simplification and modernization was the order of the day, and when it was no longer conceivable that the language of the Church's worship could play a part in shaping contemporary English in the way that Cranmer's work did in his day. The differences between Series Three and the *ASB* on the one hand and *Common Worship* on the other are in part simply a reflection of ways in which English culture has changed again over the last forty years. To some extent at least, the authors of the *ASB* produced the sort of liturgy that many were demanding in the late 1960s and 1970s. Since then, times have changed.

Another factor was that internationally many churches (including the Roman Catholic Church) were producing new liturgies in modern English at the same time and common translations of the key texts were produced. Though the Church of England has never followed these slavishly (for example, we still pray 'Lead us not into temptation'), it felt obliged to adopt these ecumenical texts in most cases. Some of the worst elements of our modern liturgy are those that we have in common with other churches—for example the awful tee-tum-tee-tum rhythm of 'Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth' (a rhythm that was accentuated in John Rutter's setting which was widely sung in the early years).

It was perhaps predictable that the pent-up frustration of those who had found the Prayer Book tradition too restrictive should have resulted in a visceral hostility to the Book of Common Prayer on the part of many clergy. Those who had found it limiting were so fixated on change that they were simply unable to appreciate the merits of what they had inherited. Up and down the country parish clergy rode

roughshod over the laity or tried to do so. Many of you will be able to tell that story from personal experience. Three factors combined to prevent the Roundheads from defeating the Cavaliers completely.

- First, Ronald Jasper, the Chairman of the Liturgical Commission from 1964 through until the publication of the *ASB* in 1980, was clear from the outset that the Book of Common Prayer should remain available for use and shouldn't be tinkered with. Thus the new liturgies would be 'Alternative Services' published in an Alternative Service Book. Jasper's biographer, Donald Gray, tells us that Dean Jasper was 'a great lover of the Prayer Book' and wanted it to continue in use.[2] As is so often the case, many of the footsoldiers in the campaign for liturgical change were far more radical and had less breadth of vision than their general. Jasper's principle was, of course, eventually enshrined in the Worship and Doctrine Measure 1974, which provides that the Book of Common Prayer must remain available for use. The present Pope told a friend of mine years ago that he thought the Roman Catholic Church had made a great mistake in virtually outlawing the Tridentine Mass, and that the Church of England had been much wiser. In the Anglican Communion too, the Book of Common Prayer has generally been replaced by modern liturgical books—often, confusingly, bearing the same name. I am so glad that the Church of England embraced Dean Jasper's principle instead.
- Second, the Prayer Book Society was formed in 1975. I am hugely grateful to those who fought to defend the Prayer Book thirty years ago when it seemed most under threat. The work of the Society is a great achievement which deserves and has received the thanks of the Church of England at large, expressed by successive Archbishops of Canterbury. None the less, I fear that sometimes the statements, actions and behaviour of those who were hostile to the Prayer Book provoked reactions which were similarly combative and immoderate. That was hardly surprising but it was still regrettable, I would suggest. Thankfully, times have changed in that respect too.
- Third, the fact that in English churches it was—and to some extent still is—customary to have two or even very commonly three services on a Sunday meant that different liturgies could be used at different services during the day. I realize that the Prayer Book Society would wish the main Sunday service to be according to the Book of Common Prayer and would regret the marginalization of

[2] D. Gray, *Ronald Jasper: His Life, His Work and the ASB* (London, 1997), p. 65.

> the Prayer Book to eight o'clock communion and evensong, but at least that meant that both the Prayer Book Communion service and Prayer Book Evensong continued to be a familiar feature up and down the country. Now, of course, in many churches the number of services has been reduced, but at the same time more and more parishes are grouped together. It seems to me that priests would be well advised to offer a variety of services in the different churches in their care so as to attract the largest number of people, and the Prayer Book should certainly have its place at the heart of such diversity.

One of the factors that contributed to the polarization of worship within the Church of England in the 1980s was the fact that *The Alternative Service Book 1980* contained only alternative services. There was nothing from the Book of Common Prayer. That fostered a sense that you were either 'BCP' or 'ASB' but could not really be both. In fact the possibility of including Prayer Book services in the *ASB* was considered, but discussions with the privileged presses indicated that doing so might lead to the actual BCP going out of print. It was feared that churches would buy *ASB*s and not Prayer Books, and as a result publishing the Prayer Book would no longer be financially viable. Those who took the decision not to include any BCP material—and in particular Dean Jasper—were criticized for it, but in fact their motive was to protect the Prayer Book.[3]

III The Background to *Common Worship*

In looking at the thinking underlying *Common Worship* my approach will again be historical. Each successive Liturgical Commission serves for five years and customarily concludes its work by publishing a report which reflects on the quinquennium that is coming to an end and looks forward to possible future developments. In his preface to the end of term report of the 1986–91 Liturgical Commission, its Chairman said

> The Commission not only believes the Prayer Book tradition has a continuing and enduring place in the worship of the Church, as well as in the affections of churchgoers, but we hope that some of the proposals in our report will encourage a wider use of Prayer Book material in parishes which have adopted a more modern style of worship. Equally we would wish to enable those who wish to use the more traditional wording to do so without necessarily being bound to follow every rubric in the Prayer Book. We hope, too,

[3] D. Gray, *Ronald Jasper*, p. 106.

> that some of the newer liturgical writing which is more pictorial and tangible, less abstract and conceptual, more evocative and rhythmical, less terse and tense than that of a generation ago, will help to bridge the gap between the Prayer Book and the twentieth-century liturgical tradition … the Commission want the traditions to draw closer together.[4]

There, back in 1991, we have in a nutshell some of the key principles of what became *Common Worship* and some of its main differences from the *ASB*. One sign that drawing the traditions together was to be a fundamental aim was the appointment of one of the Vice-Presidents of the Prayer Book Society, P. D. James (now Baroness James of Holland Park), to membership of the Liturgical Commission, on which she served right up to the publication of *Common Worship* in 2000. In 1992 the Prayer Book Society made a submission to the Commission in which it expressed appreciation of the Commission's approach and made a number of constructive suggestions. The Society argued that there should be one Calendar for the Church of England, which should be based on Prayer Book Calendar and Collects, and that a new service book should include conservative revisions of the main Prayer Book services, based on the Series One services (what Professor David Martin called 'services in the Prayer Book tradition').[5] A consultation between representatives of the Society and the Commission followed, and the Liturgical Commission then made a formal response to the Society's submission.[6]

The dialogue continued within the Commission and resulted in a paper signed by three key members of the Commission—P. D. James, Michael Perham (now Bishop of Gloucester) and David Stancliffe (now Bishop of Salisbury), which was published in 1993.[7] This drew heavily on the paper that David Stancliffe had given at the consultation. Looking back, the authors criticized both the earlier Liturgical Commissions and the General Synod for preferring, in writing modern services, to 'tinker' with Prayer Book texts rather than writing new prayers with echoes of the old:

[4] *The Worship of the Church as it approaches the Third Millennium. A Report by the Liturgical Commission on its past five years' work with some options for the way ahead for worship after 2000* (GS Misc 364: London, 1991), pp. 4–5.

[5] 'The Prayer Book Society's Submission' in M. Perham (ed.), *Model and Inspiration: The Prayer Book Tradition Today* (London: 1993), pp. 5–6; *Model and Inspiration*, p. 26.

[6] 'The Liturgical Commission's Response' in M. Perham (ed.), *Model and Inspiration*, pp. 44–8.

[7] P. D. James, M. Perham and D. Stancliffe, 'Image, Memory and Text', in M. Perham (ed.), *The Renewal of Common Prayer: Unity and Diversity in Church of England Worship. Essays by members of the Liturgical Commission of the Church of England* (GS Misc 412: London, 1993), pp. 27–36.

> In retrospect it is easier to see that a better policy might have been to leave the old untampered, but to produce also new and creative material in a complementary but contemporary style, and to let the two exist side by side.[8]

They also suggested the use of traditional texts in modern services. They spoke of the need for new writing to be intelligible—and therefore simple, contemporary and concrete—but not to the extent of being 'bland, pedestrian and unmemorable'; there needed to be 'rhythm, strength and subtlety'. There needed to be a certain timelessness: the words should not be so much of the moment that they wouldn't stand the test of time—not archaic, but also not here today and gone tomorrow. 'Worshippers value the reassurance of familiar words, often hallowed by centuries of Christian use', the three authors commented, recognizing the danger of a loss of corporate memory to which the Prayer Book Society's petition to the General Synod had drawn attention back in 1979. They also observed that

> It can be argued that the language of worship can never be totally contemporary, since it is concerned with the spiritual and the eternal … Liturgical language, even newly composed texts, must always live close to the danger of belonging to the past.

It was time for assimilation between the Prayer Book tradition and contemporary liturgical worship and it was 'not too late to recover a sense of continuity and resolve to live in a church with a layered liturgy' (that is, a church in which the new was added to the old rather than replacing it).[9] There too, back in 1993, we find many of the themes of what became *Common Worship*. What I want to stress is the difference between that approach and the approach of *The Alternative Service Book 1980*, and the part that the Prayer Book Society and some of its prominent representatives, as well the Bishops of Salisbury and Gloucester, played in inspiring that approach.

IV Key Features of *Common Worship*

Having looked into the background, I can now set out some of the key features of *Common Worship*. One of the fundamental ones is that both the main volume[10] and the *Pastoral Services* book[11] include not only modern services but also the Prayer Book Sunday services and other services from what (following Professor David Martin) I will call the

[8] *The Renewal of Common Prayer*, p. 31.

[9] *The Renewal of Common Prayer*, pp. 33–6.

[10] *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England* (London, 2000).

[11] *Common Worship: Pastoral Services* (2nd edn: London, 2005).

Prayer Book tradition—principally the 1928 Prayer Book, as reflected in the old Series One services. Thus the main volume contains every liturgy that one might reasonably expect to encounter in a parish church on a Sunday—including Morning Prayer, the Litany, Holy Communion and Evening Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer. One of the senses in which *Common Worship* is 'common' is that for the first time for thirty-five years (if not seventy) one could find all the main Church of England services, old and new, in a single volume. The decision to include the Prayer Book services, taken before my time (indeed it originated in those discussions in the early 1990s), was one that I strongly supported. I did, however, make sure that the Liturgical Publishing Group faced the question of whether copies of the actual Book of Common Prayer might become a rarity as a result. Fortunately, the Group was—rightly—confident that the Prayer Book was now so secure—not least because of the work of the Prayer Book Society—that that danger no longer existed.

Just as the decision not to include Prayer Book services in the *ASB* was criticized, so the decision to include Prayer Book services in *Common Worship* has been (principally, I fear, by members of the Prayer Book Society who did not realize that it originated in a suggestion from the Prayer Book Society itself). It was not, as I have said, an attempt to subvert the Prayer Book—quite the reverse. By including the main Prayer Book services in a book which many people will open who will never have attended a Prayer Book service or seen a copy of the Book of Common Prayer, the Liturgical Publishing Group hoped to ensure that such people do encounter the treasures of the Prayer Book tradition.

Another criticism is that the services concerned—especially Holy Communion Order Two—are not precisely the same as the corresponding services in the Book of Common Prayer. But that simply reflects the fact that if someone attending a so-called Prayer Book Communion service for the first time were given a copy of the Prayer Book he or she would find it only an approximate guide to what actually took place. In *Common Worship* Order Two the text of the Book of Common Prayer service, with very few omissions indeed, is printed full-out, while those things that are customarily interpolated are indented. I hope that members of the Prayer Book Society approaching *Common Worship* Order Two with an open mind will find the service that they know and love as they actually experience it week by week. Again, this is what the Prayer Book Society asked for—not the exact text of the Prayer Book service (which is there in the Prayer Book anyway), but a conservative revision based on the old Series

One service (actually in the end it was somewhat more conservative than that). Morning and Evening Prayer similarly include customary variations. In the editing process for all the Prayer Book texts I made strenuous (and largely successful) efforts to ensure that there were none of those irritating minor variations (except for a handful that have been quite well established in practice since 1928).

The *Common Worship* main volume also includes Night Prayer in traditional language (all the texts from the much-loved 1928 Compline service, but in the same order as the modern service) and the Series One marriage and burial services which originated in the 1928 Prayer Book are now in *Common Worship: Pastoral Services*. Though not part of the Prayer Book itself, they too are part of the Prayer Book tradition as it has developed. The inclusion of these three services is again in line with what the Prayer Book Society asked for, and having played a part in bringing it about it is something of which I am personally rather proud.

So *Common Worship* includes Prayer Book Morning Prayer, Litany, Holy Communion and Evening Prayer, the Series One marriage and burial services and a form of Compline using the texts from the 1928 Prayer Book. That is quite a lot, but there is more. As the Prayer Book Society requested, the Prayer Book Calendar and Collects were taken as the starting point for the *Common Worship* Calendar and Collects, and as a result the two traditions are much closer to each other than was the case in the *ASB* days. For most of the year the names of the Sundays are the same or virtually so, and there is more correlation with regard to the saints. The collects too are very much in the Cranmer tradition—much more so than those in the *ASB*.

Personally (and here I really am speaking entirely personally) I am rather critical of the collects in so-called 'traditional language'. The trouble is that what *Common Worship* calls 'traditional language' ('thee' and 'thou' but 'has' instead of 'hath') is a synthetic language that has never been spoken or written by any actual person. Might it not have been better, when the *Common Worship* collect was based on a Prayer Book collect, to print that Prayer Book collect rather than translating the new one back into an entirely artificial language? That is one point at which the old *ASB* Rite B approach did still win through in the genesis of *Common Worship*. At my suggestion, the main volume does include a table showing what the BCP original of each of those fifty-four collects was, and giving some encouragement to use it in *Common Worship* services.[12]

[12] *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England*, pp. 522–3.

Of course the one thing from the Prayer Book that is very much alive but is missing from the main volume is the Coverdale Psalter. I deeply regret that it could not be fitted in, but the *Common Worship* Psalter makes up 180 of the 850 pages in the main volume and another 180 would have taken us to 1030 pages, which was just not realistic—especially since the two Psalters would have made up over a third of the book. Maybe it was a good thing, in that the Coverdale Psalter is one of the most popular parts of the Book of Common Prayer, and its absence from the *Common Worship* main volume will certainly mean that physical copies of the Book of Common Prayer will not vanish from our churches.

However, the *Common Worship* Psalter is itself another example of the difference between the *ASB* approach and that of *Common Worship*, since it too is ultimately based on the Prayer Book text. Though it is in contemporary English with archaisms removed, the English is for the most part a conservative form of contemporary English (though it is, admittedly, generally in 'inclusive language' which eschews the traditional use of masculine nouns and pronouns where both sexes are meant), and it echoes Coverdale time and time again. The text is corrected to make it a more accurate translation, but it also reflects the Christian tradition of using the psalms. The translators asked themselves not just 'What did they original Hebrew authors mean?' but also 'How has the Church interpreted those words through the centuries and how have they traditionally been expressed in English?' That whole approach is one which embodies conservative continuity and rejects radical change.

Turning to the new services in *Common Worship*, I would characterize them as fresh and creative, but also poetic and resonant. As will have been detected by now, I had very little time for the *ASB*. Among its worst elements were the offices—Morning and Evening Prayer. I must admit that on the few occasions when I attended *ASB* Morning or Evening Prayer—and those services were easy to avoid (unless you worked for the Church of England, as I did)—I wondered why anyone would wish to use them. To me they seemed essentially to be unimaginative translations of Cranmer's splendid offices into less exalted English. How different is *Common Worship: Daily Prayer*.[13] Because it is quite different, there is never that sense of it being an indifferent translation of a great masterpiece. Rather, it is a new creation, quite distinctive in shape and form yet steeped in the tradition of the Western Church and of course saturated in Scripture. *Common Worship:*

[13] *Common Worship: Daily Prayer* (London, 2005).

Daily Prayer includes a good deal of high quality, poetic creative writing and in this I believe it matches up very well to what the Prayer Book Society suggested back in 1992.

There are two other differences between *Common Worship* and the *ASB* to mention. First, *The Alternative Service Book 1980* quite deliberately had a date in its title. It was only ever meant to be a thing of its time, authorized initially for ten years and then continued for a further ten (until 2000) to allow time for its main services to be replaced. The *Common Worship* services, by contrast, are authorized for use indefinitely. After thirty-five years of liturgical change the need was for a period of stability. And second, *Common Worship* is not a single book but a collection of services, published both electronically and in print, and in a number of volumes. That reflects the diversity of the Church and indeed the age in which we now live.

V Where are we and where might we go from here?

In this final section, I want to give some suggestions as to where we are now and where we might go from here. These are perhaps the most personal of all my reflections.

On the positive side, and thanks not least to the efforts of the Prayer Book Society, the Prayer Book has survived. It is here and it is here to stay. In cathedrals up and down the land Prayer Book Evensong is attracting record attendances. Unlike many churches in the world we have not thrown over our liturgical tradition, though we did come perilously close to that. Not only has the Prayer Book survived, but the new liturgical texts now reflect its tradition in a way that those of thirty years ago did not. The Prayer Book tradition has, if you like, gained a second life through *Common Worship*, alongside its continuing life in the Book of Common Prayer itself. Also on the positive side, I think we have at last developed a tradition of new liturgical writing that is timeless, poetic and classical. Perhaps it's not surprising that it took us forty years and several false starts to do so.

So things are looking good, and better than they were. But we must be clear that we are going forwards to a new future. There is no possibility of going back to a past in which the same services could be used week by week in every church in the land. Indeed, I think most members of the Prayer Book Society recognize that, even if some of them may regret it. In some of the contexts in which the Church of England now ministers, where people never read books and are frankly incapable of following some of the lengthy sentences and complexities of seventeenth-century English, it is impossible to see how a diet of the Prayer Book and nothing but the Prayer Book could

be reintroduced. Regrettably, to many of our fellow countrymen the language of the Prayer Book is now a foreign language. A few years ago I was at a Prayer Book Evensong held during a music festival that was attended by a large number of educated middle-class people, many of whom were only loosely connected with the church. One of their number attempted to read the lesson from the Authorized Version of the Bible. I regret to say that the congregation found what was being read out so incomprehensible that they actually laughed. That was a shocking experience that I shall never forget. If educated, cultured people cannot cope with the Authorized Version, it and the Prayer Book are even more remote from many of the other cultures and contexts in which the Church of England ministers. There is no way of turning the clock back to a situation in which the Prayer Book was all the Church of England had to offer; diversity is here to stay. So the question is not whether we can go back to the past—we can't—but how we shape the future. For my part I am quite clear that taking the Church of England as a whole that future must involve not only worship in the Prayer Book tradition, but also the use of actual Prayer Book texts (and may in that respect be somewhat closer to the past than we are now). Without that, our worship would be impoverished.

But equally I am clear that our worship should not only involve Prayer Book texts. To offer an analogy, knowledge of Shakespeare is the birthright of every British child and any child that went through one of our schools and heard nothing of Shakespeare along the way (a situation, I believe, that the National Curriculum seeks to prevent) would be being sold short. But equally, I would be deeply concerned if any child went through school and encountered no English literature except for Shakespeare. By the same token, we rejoice in the riches of our musical tradition—plainchant, Byrd and Purcell, Handel, Wesley and Elgar; but let us also rejoice in some of the music of our own era—the carols and anthems of John Rutter and John Tavener, for example. The old and the new are not alternatives and I am not prepared to be deprived of either of them.

So what are the challenges that face us in promoting such a mixed economy—a church with a living liturgical tradition, which values what we have inherited but also adds to it? One is, of course, that much was lost in the iconoclasm of the '60s, '70s and early '80s. So now we do have to reconnect with the past by getting some of the key Prayer Book texts back into the bloodstream and indeed introducing them for the first time to those, for example, who are at university now but whose parents were still at university when the *ASB* was published. *Common Worship* helps us here, because there is encouragement to use

the traditional texts in the modern services.[14] So let's sing Merbecke's setting[15] and Martin Shaw's Anglican Folk Mass.[16] Let's sing the Prayer Book Canticles and the Coverdale Psalms, even in services whose structure and framework are that of *Common Worship* Order One. Not all the time, but for some of the seasons of the year—maybe in Advent or Eastertide, or in the green season after Trinity.

That's a first step, to re-establish the key texts in the corporate memory, quite deliberately on a piecemeal basis. The second is to promote the use of whole services from the Book of Common Prayer—again, not to turn the clock back and reject the new, but to celebrate Prayer Book services as a central part of the diversity that is bound to make up the worship of the Church of England today, as part of a monthly or a seasonal pattern, or of a varied provision of worship across a multi-parish benefice, or for special services.

In all of this, we need to be imaginative and creative, and to capitalize on the trends in today's post-modern culture towards variety and diversity, mixing and matching. There is a love of the arcane—the hidden and mysterious—and a fascination with history; just look at the television schedules, the newspapers, the shelves of bookshops. So my message to you is: 'Don't be reactionary, be radical; don't try to turn the clock back, but instead try to shape the future. Don't attack *Common Worship*—that would be perverse, as it would involve attacking the Prayer Book tradition which is part of *Common Worship*. Instead, work with the grain of *Common Worship* to ensure that the full diversity of Anglican worship, which includes the Prayer Book tradition, can be enjoyed by all.' Some clergy and parishes, I fear, may still be in the ASB era—still using *Common Worship* Order One as if it were the continuation of *ASB* Rite A by other means. It isn't. It's much more exciting, much more diverse, much more full of possibilities than that.

In all of this the Liturgical Commission will, I hope, be your allies. The days when your Society and the Commission were at daggers drawn are long gone, as even are those when the two parties began delicate peace talks fifteen years ago. No member of the present Commission was a member even in 2000 when the main *Common*

[14] Notes to the Order for the Celebration of Holy Communion, Note 2: 'In addition to the places where they are printed in the service, traditional versions of texts may be used'; Rules for Regulating Authorized Forms of Service, Rule 4: 'Where parts of a service make use of well-known and traditional texts, other translations or versions, particularly when used in musical compositions, may be used.' (*Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England*, pp. 330, 525).

[15] *New English Hymnal*, no. 542.

[16] *New English Praise*, no. 695.

Worship volume was published—let alone in 1991 or 1980. The Bishop of Salisbury, the Rt Revd Dr David Stancliffe, who as I have said did so much to reconnect the Church of England's worship with the Prayer Book tradition, has been succeeded as Chairman of the Liturgical Commission by the Bishop of Wakefield, the Rt Revd Stephen Platten. He too is a lover of the Prayer Book, as was demonstrated when he used the 1662 Ordinal to ordain his own son to the priesthood—a service arranged by his son's incumbent, also a member of the Commission. And one of our new members is the Revd Paul Thomas, who is a Trustee of the Prayer Book Society.

I hope that the Commission and the Society can work together to promote use of the Prayer Book, though of course the Commission's emphasis will be on the Prayer Book as an essential element in the rich diversity of the Church of England's worship, whereas the Society rightly exists to promote the Prayer Book tradition in particular. But I hope too that we can be allies in some even bigger campaigns. One is to uphold something even more fundamental to the Anglican tradition than the Prayer Book—the very fact of using liturgical worship at all, which is under threat in some quarters. Frankly, if that tradition is overthrown in favour of unstructured, non-liturgical worship, then disagreements between those who prefer one set of liturgical texts and those who value another will seem like a tea party by comparison. The other campaign is simply that to raise the standards of how worship is conducted. Sloppy, ill-prepared and unimaginative worship is not confined to any one tradition in the church, and I have attended some pretty poorly led and uninspiring Prayer Book Services in my time. My colleague Peter Moger, the National Worship Development Officer, is looking forward to working with the Society in teaching ordinands and trainee Readers how to conduct Prayer Book worship well. Some of them have never experienced Prayer Book worship before they begin training—and (it is alleged) some do not experience as much Prayer Book worship while they are being trained as the House of Bishops says they should, so there is a huge task to be undertaken there.

In conclusion, I should like to make one final point in support of the approach that I have advocated. Back in 1979 the Prayer Book Society rightly warned of the danger of a corporate loss of memory. As someone who believes in tradition, I would be the first to agree with that. But tradition is in its very nature dynamic and not static, and it should be living and not dead. A plant that has no roots will soon wither and die, but a plant that only consists of roots will not be in a much better position. Jaroslav Pelikan, the church historian

who died last month, once defined tradition as 'the living faith of the dead'.[17] As exponents of tradition, we keep the faith of those who have gone before us alive, and life necessarily involves change—or rather development, for as Cardinal Newman said, a great idea 'changes … in order to remain the same'.[18] But Pelikan also had a definition for traditionalism—'the dead faith of the living'. Let us rejoice in our Anglican heritage as a living tradition connected to its roots—the living faith of the dead, not a dead faith of the living.

(Dr Colin Podmore is secretary to the Liturgical Commission. His publications include Aspects of Anglican Identity (2005).)

[17] Quoted in *The Daily Telegraph*: obituary, 27 May 2006.

[18] Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, p. 39.

A Reply to Colin Podmore

PRUDENCE DAILEY

I first met Colin Podmore when I became a member of the General Synod in 2000, and I was pleased to be present at his recent address to the Salisbury Branch. I know him to be a genuine friend to the Book of Common Prayer, who would personally like to see it used more than currently it is. The Society is pleased nowadays to enjoy a cordial working relationship with the Liturgical Commission and with Church House, as partners rather than as antagonists.

It is important, however, to note that there are still substantial differences of perspective and of purpose between the Prayer Book Society and the central church authorities, as exemplified by Dr Podmore's piece: it is not time for us to pack up and go home. Here, I attempt to reflect upon some of the areas where I, personally, dissent from the views expressed. I apologize to the reader and to Dr Podmore for focusing on disagreement rather than agreement, when I concur with so much of what he has said; but there seems little point in simply reiterating points which have already been better made by him. It should be noted that my views do not necessarily represent the official policy of the Society: it may very well be that some PBS members would disagree with me and agree with Dr Podmore; or else might think that I have conceded too much.

As Dr Podmore says, the impetus for liturgical change—and the resulting hostility to the Prayer Book—was born out of a situation where clergy felt 'frustrated and hemmed in' by a liturgy which was no longer believed to be in tune with the current age. Whilst it is evidently the case that some clergy did feel that way, the question is: what was the underlying reason for that feeling, and was it reasonable? If it really were the case that the Prayer Book represented a sixteenth- (or seventeenth-) century worldview, how come it was still relevant in the nineteenth century—a period of exceptional growth and

flourishing in the life of the Church—but suddenly became irrelevant in the late twentieth?

It is no coincidence that the liturgical reform movement as we know it began in the 1960s, the age of 'out with the old, in with the new', a time of radical cultural discontinuity when the morals and mores of previous ages were being hastily swept away. It is hardly surprising that the BCP, with both its soaring language and its content speaking of Almighty God, 'high and mighty, King of kings, Lord of lords', and with its emphasis on the urgent need for personal repentance, was out of tune with the anti-authoritarianism of the day and the beginnings of the therapeutic culture. The extent to which clergy using the Prayer Book were 'frustrated' by it was surely at least as much a product of their own cultural confusion as of any intrinsic unsuitability in the services themselves. (It should be noted in passing that many other denominations and other faiths avoided the temptation to 'modernize' their liturgies, without apparently suffering in any way because of this—often quite the opposite, indeed, although a direct causal connexion may be difficult to prove.)

Unsurprisingly, the 'contemporary' liturgies of the Church of England, up to and including *Common Worship*, are shot through with the post-1960s mindset. It is still alas common to hear clergy, and not infrequently bishops, suggesting that the Book of Common Prayer overemphasizes sin. Adherents of the BCP would argue rather that the contemporary services go woefully light on sin, thereby effectively downplaying the magnitude and wonder of God's forgiveness. Nowhere can this be more clearly seen than in the *Common Worship* Baptism service, where one can very easily get to the end without hearing anything about baptismal regeneration, or that Baptism forgives sin. One cannot escape the conclusion that the more demanding bits of the Church's essential doctrine have been deliberately watered down in favour of what the congregation will feel comfortable hearing, thereby attenuating the power of the liturgy to challenge and to change us.

More cynical members of the Prayer Book Society, noting that Dr Podmore is by no means alone amongst those in positions of ecclesiastical influence in bemoaning the deficiencies of Series Three and the *ASB*, may find themselves wondering how long it will be before *Common Worship* undergoes a similar reassessment. This would, however, be to mistake the nature of the enterprise. Thankfully, the frenetic production of more and more liturgical texts has, for the time being, come to a pause; but when existing forms of service begin to be found wanting, I predict that the Church will react by and large *not* by replacing the current forms—because somebody somewhere will

be attached to using them—but simply by providing more and more additional alternatives.

Indeed, the whole of *Common Worship* reflects the consumerist mindset, where the multiplicity of options allows everyone to find something with which he feels comfortable. On the face of it, this may look like a strength—making the Church's liturgy as comprehensive as possible, adding rather than taking away. Dr Podmore sees this as an enhancement of the Church's liturgical tradition, but I believe it to be fraught with danger.

One of the strengths of the BCP is that, precisely because it does not provide alternatives, it protects people from their own particular prejudices (and the laity from the prejudices of their local clergy). At the same time, there is no running away from the parts that we individually find difficult, uncomfortable or challenging—the very things, perhaps, that we most need to hear. And then there is the loss of commonality: at one time, it was possible to visit any Anglican parish church in the land, and—despite differences in custom and churchmanship—to find the form of service there essentially familiar. Nowadays, visiting an unknown church can seem more like a magical mystery tour. The inevitable diminution of common identity can hardly be seen as enriching.

Although perhaps we rarely take full advantage of this today, the Prayer Book was designed to provide a complete spiritual system. The BCP offers a way of reading the scriptures, of living the Christian life, of connecting with the tradition, that shapes our memory and character; and it is the erosion of this system, of this coherent vision, which is perhaps the greatest loss. Whilst encouraging the use of parts of the Prayer Book rather than none at all is useful as a step along the way, regarding the BCP as a collection of optional texts cannot for its adherents be an end in itself.

Though I very much regret it, I do, nevertheless, acknowledge that, in the present age, there is no practical prospect of returning to a situation where the BCP was genuinely common to all the Church of England's worship. The way that the Church is organized, at national and at local level, simply provides no mechanism for that to occur (barring a breathtakingly drastic shift in mindset which, frankly, is just not on the horizon).

But, whilst accepting that the reintroduction of the BCP as the sole or main form of worship in the Church of England is not politically possible, I cannot agree with the claim that it would also be unworkable in practice. One of the objects of the Prayer Book Society is to encourage the use of the Book of Common Prayer as the norm for

all principal services throughout the Church of England and churches in the Anglican tradition, and we retain that as an aspiration and an ideal, even as we are pragmatic about the reality of the situation in which we find ourselves.

Well presented, the language of the Prayer Book evokes a level of comprehension that transcends the mere meaning of the words, carrying with it a deep sense of the numinous. Dr Podmore's account of the music festival service where people laughed at a reading from the Authorized Version suggests that not only the congregation but also the reader was unfamiliar with it, and hence that it was done badly. The cultural disconnection of our present age from the Prayer Book tradition is undeniable; but the sheer rapidity of cultural change suggests an openness to unfamiliar cultural forms. Bearing in mind also the love of the arcane to which Dr Podmore refers, the BCP could surely be used to reach out effectively to a very much wider group of people than is currently the case.

It is often claimed that certain groups of people (young families, for example, or those with little formal education) will be put off by the Prayer Book, but this assertion does not really withstand scrutiny. Unfortunately, it has become so widely accepted as a truism that there are few examples (at least in England—the same cannot be said of Canada, for instance) of the imaginative and missionary use of Prayer Book worship with younger and 'unchurched' people, but where this is known to have been tried it has been successful. Ultimately, the factors that most significantly affect people's sense of belonging to a church and their desire to return there regularly are such things as the pastoral gifts of the clergy, the warmth of the welcome and the breadth and appeal of church activities in addition to the services themselves.

But, whilst many PBS members may not join with Dr Podmore in rejoicing in our post-modern, 'pick-and-mix' liturgy, we must accept the reality of the situation in which we find ourselves, and that this does genuinely provide opportunities to promote the BCP as part of the mix. Regrettably, many PBS members still find active hostility to the Prayer Book on the ground, from their local clergy and sometimes those above them. It is much to be hoped that this will eventually become a thing of the past, but there is no room for complacency.

(Prudence Dailey is Deputy Chairman of the Prayer Book Society.)

Rediscovering the Catholicity of the Thirty-nine Articles

JULIE LETHABY

There is hardly time today to introduce the Thirty-nine Articles adequately even in outline. What I hope to achieve in this short and very imperfect address is to offer an aperitif to the five-course meal of the Articles themselves; at the very least I want to offer an advertisement to encourage you to go away and consider the Articles for yourself as they were intended to be understood and not as we have rather negatively been taught to perceive them. As a result, I hope that you will benefit from the spiritual nourishment and the doctrinal confidence that the Articles continue to offer.

From what I have recently read about the Articles, it seems clear that the one certain remark one can make in the Church of England of the twenty-first century, is that the Articles are not given very much, if any, attention. I suppose I find this surprising as a theological student of Anglican history. The Articles formed the doctrinal foundation of my work and research; the starting point for any serious academic study of the Church of England and the bulwark of Anglican orthodoxy against which my research was measured by others. Yet when I came to discuss the Articles with my Anglican friends, I hit if not a brick wall than a miasma of apathy. By comparison my Lutheran and nonconformist contemporaries were only too ready to sit around until the early hours in contemplation of the role, function and purpose of the Articles within the contemporary Church of England. Could it be that we don't appreciate what is on our doorstep? I live in arguably one of the most beautiful areas of the British Isles, but I seldom find the time to enjoy the rolling hills or breathtaking coastline. Why? Because they are always there.

That said, can I ask a personal question? How deeply have you thought about *why* you have chosen to express your Christian faith through the Anglican tradition? Have you thought about how those from outside the Anglican, indeed Christian, tradition would perceive and understand the faith you profess? An increasingly significant question, in an age and society where religious pluralism, if not always tolerance, is constantly expanding. Notably many would start their journey to understand the Church of England by studying the Thirty-nine Articles. As I have stressed above, the current Church of England for the most part does not pay much, if any, attention to the Articles. However, the Thirty-nine Articles are an indisputable element in the bedrock and defining principle of the Church of England, a fact acknowledged by the authors and editors of *Common Worship*: the Declaration of Assent forming part of their Preface. Let me here repeat what the words of *Common Worship* assert:

> The publication of *Common Worship* is an occasion of great significance in the life of the Church of England, because the worship of God is central to the life of his Church.
>
> The forms of worship authorized in the Church of England express our faith and help to create *our identity*. The Declaration of Assent is placed at the beginning of this volume to remind us of this. When ministers make the Declaration, they affirm their loyalty to the Church of England's inheritance of faith and accept their share in the responsibility to proclaim the faith 'afresh in each generation' [my italics].

Curiously whereas we now have choice (liturgical choice) about which type of service or worship to use within the Church of England—a choice ironically roundly supported by Article 34, which states—

> It is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, and utterly like; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word …
>
> Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish, ceremonies or rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying.

—the same right of choice is perhaps not true for doctrine. Although it was recognized that the Anglican Communion should not be bound to the Thirty-nine Articles, the Articles remain the domestic creed of the Church of England, *in* England.

The Articles have variously been considered as too vague, too prescriptive, too archaic, and above all too Protestant. This last charge appears to be the main, though indeed unjustifiable reason, for the demise of the Articles, not least as the Articles are viewed as an obstruction to ecumenism. An informed interpretation of the Articles would however acknowledge the intended catholicity of the Articles, a knowledge and understanding—I want to say comprehension—of the work of the Reformers in England that we have pushed to one side in recent decades. Rightly conceived the Articles have the potential to be of tremendous help, support and indeed solace, especially against the extremes within Christianity and other faiths as well as the waywardness of subjective interpretation. This is the function for which they were devised: not *to prescribe but to protect*. It is a task that they have been excluded from for quite some time.

In 1939 the then Bishop of Durham, H. H. Henson, wrote in his work *The Church of England*: 'The Church of England, at the present time, exhibits a doctrinal incoherence which has no parallel in any other church claiming to be traditionally orthodox.' It is an incoherence that has increased over the succeeding decades: a fact born out by a survey carried out by Christian Research on behalf of the conservative Anglican think-tank, Cost of Conscience. I was sent a copy of the report by a concerned member of the Prayer Book Society. If you are not familiar with this document, Christian Research sent out questionnaires to 4,000 parishes and received just under 1,800 replies representing a positive 46% response which gave a good balance of parishes, both large and small, urban and rural, catholic, evangelical and liberal as well as a good balance between the sexes and across the age range of Anglican clergy. However, the findings of the report were perhaps not so positive; even allowing for any subjectivity in the interpretation of the statistics and comments supplied. I would argue that the results of the survey underline the need to re-engage the Church—both clergy and laity—with the essential tenets of the Thirty-nine Articles.

At the risk of boring you I will rehearse the results of the questions asked about the essential articles of the Catholic creeds, which are of course ratified in name by Article 8 and in general across the whole scope of the Articles and in particular by Articles 1–5 which of themselves form a summary of the catholic doctrinal statements of the early Church Councils. (The patristic era is now increasingly presented as a 'golden age' for authoritative decisions in the worldwide Christian community, and in particular as a source for recent liturgical initiatives.) The highest score among the Anglican clergy surveyed was for belief in God the Father, which came in at 82%. The death

of Jesus Christ was affirmed by 77%, belief in the Trinity by 77%, the empowering of the Holy Spirit by an encouraging 75%, and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is surely the *raison d'être* of the Christian religion, by a rather disturbing 66%. Belief in the uniqueness of Jesus was asserted by 56% and in the Virgin Birth by a mere 51%. Is it therefore surprising that the 39 Articles have little if any influence or indeed purpose in the contemporary Church of England? Articles 2 and 4 assert for example:

> The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took Man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin … and … Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body, with flesh, bones and all things appertaining to the perfection of Man's nature; wherewith he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth, until he return to judge all Men at the last day.

The concept of a final judgement is surely yet another unpopular assertion for the church of today?

As the Declaration of Assent is still required of all those in positions of ministerial service within the Church how has the current paucity of orthodox faith arisen? Or expressed another way, how have attempts to revive the Anglican Church based on the tenets of patristic orthodoxy produced results that are counter to the intention of scripture? It perhaps may be argued that where there is now ample liturgical choice, the words of the Declaration commit the Church of England to the letter of interpretation, and comprehension of its worship through the prism of Articles which themselves are submitted to the test of scripture. To quote Article 20 'Of the Authority of the Church':

> The Church hath power to decree Rites and Ceremonies, and authority in Controversies of Faith: And yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of holy Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree anything against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of Salvation.

Such a statement can obviously be interpreted polemically as censure of the medieval Roman Catholic Church, but it was intended sincerely to *ensure the objective, and open, availability of Christian truth to all men, women and children.* Fundamental to a clear understanding of the Articles and indeed to the religious foundation of the Church of England (vis-

à-vis Henry VIII's more temporal incentives!) was the redefinition of what it meant to be *Catholic*. For Cranmer, as for his counterparts on the continent, Catholic came to be defined as meaning free and grateful access to and acceptance of the gospel rather than any one particular ecclesiastical tradition or doctrine; a theme that will be explored in greater depth later in this paper.

For the moment, let us return to today and to *Common Worship*. The Preface of *Common Worship* continues:

> Clergy and Readers, when they are ordained and licensed and on each occasion when they take up a new appointment, must profess The Declaration of Assent and its affirmation of loyalty to the Church of England's inheritance of faith.

The Declaration of Assent as published in *Common Worship* asserts:

> The Church of England is part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, worshipping the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. *It professes the faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds, which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation*. Led by the Holy Spirit, it has borne witness to Christian truth in its historic formularies, *the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion*, The Book of Common Prayer and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons. *In the declaration you are about to make, will you affirm your loyalty to this inheritance of faith as your inspiration and guidance under God* in bringing the grace and truth of Christ to this generation and making Him known to those in your care?
>
> I *Joe Bloggs* or *Mary Smith* do so affirm, and accordingly declare my belief in the faith which is revealed in *the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the catholic creeds and to which the historic formularies of the Church of England bear witness*; and in public prayer *and administration of the sacraments* [a clause omitted for Readers and Lay Workers], I will use only the forms of service which are authorized or allowed by Canon [my italics].

Have we in the Church of England of today been over-reductionist with our history and ecclesiastical experience? Writing twenty years ago in a scholarly and engaging pamphlet regarding the point, purpose and future of the Articles, James Packer made the bold personal statement (which some would no doubt challenge) that: 'Historical Anglicanism is not just a style of worship; it is also, and fundamentally, a confessional stance. The idea that the essence of Anglicanism is the Prayer Book without the Articles is another twentieth-century rationalisation of history' (and one I suspect that even the PBS may be guilty of …).

Before the Book of Common Prayer was even conceived, the faith of the Church of England was being worked out by doctrinal statement or as *Common Worship* terms it, historic formulary. The greatest influence on these initial attempts at a specific declaration of belief for the national church in England was unashamedly the Augsburg Confession. Within two years of Henry's breach with Rome the Ten Articles were published in 1536, followed by the Bishop's Book in 1537, and the King's Book in 1543. When Henry died in 1547, Cranmer seized his chance to recast the entire Church of England in a reformed mould. But caution must be applied to the use of the word 'reform'. For Cranmer reform meant reorganization and restructuring and not 'Reform' (with a capital 'R') as used of the work of Calvin and other Humanist Magisterial Reformers. Cranmer had long been convinced that the Lutheran position was both biblical and patristic (and if he was apt to forget, his German wife was by his side to remind him!). It should at this point also be recalled that Luther, unlike Melanchthon, was never a bona fide humanist. It was only on the subject of the eucharistic presence that Cranmer was persuaded to look to Zurich rather than Wittenberg. However, Rudolph Heinze in an essay written to celebrate the five hundredth year of Cranmer's birth suggested that Cranmer on the issue of the Real Presence was forced to go further than he might have personally chosen had he been living in Nuremberg for example rather than London, or his See of Canterbury. Cranmer's denial of the Real Presence was one of the heretical charges made against him at his trial, as was adultery for his second marriage. In his numerous recantations before his dramatic martyrdom, Heinze sees a soul genuinely troubled by his doctrinal eucharistic position; for evidence Heinze points to Cranmer's concern, indeed near obsession, with his dispute with Stephen Gardiner during the years of his imprisonment. There is of course no side-stepping the fact that the Thirty-nine Articles were written at a time and in an era when spiritual leadership was involved with temporal power. Like Holy Scripture itself, although obviously not carrying the same import or authority, the merits of the Thirty-nine Articles are buried within the veneer of sixteenth and seventeenth-century ecclesiastical and political polemic. However, those merits combined with the authority of scripture, form the basis of what we profess in the Church of England and indeed the doctrinal intention behind the words of the Book of Common Prayer. Canon Law implies them to be the ground of any liturgical revision or innovation. There are in fact two editions of the Thirty-nine Articles: those of 1563 are in Latin and those of 1571 are in English. It is the English edition which we have at the close of the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. Of course the Thirty-nine Articles are perhaps most famously,

if not now infamously, known for their repudiation of teachings and practices that Protestants in general condemned in the medieval Roman Catholic Church, in the Eastern Orthodox Church and in more radical and free evangelical expressions of faith. See for example, the denial of the teachings concerning transubstantiation (Article 28) and the sacrifice of the Mass (Article 31) as well as the sinlessness of Our Lady (Article 15). Eastern Orthodox belief is challenged by the assertion that the Holy Ghost proceeds from both the Father and the Son (Article 5) and by reference to the split between Rome and Constantinople (Article 19). However what must not be forgotten is that the Articles affirm that scripture is the final authority on salvation (Article 6), that Adam's fall compromised human free will (Article 10); and that both bread and wine should be served to all at Holy Communion (Article 30)— which is surely something we all now take for granted in the Anglican Communion, as is the right of ministers to marry legally (Article 32).

So, again, why have the Articles fallen out of use? One plausible reason, in addition to those already mentioned, focuses on their previous abuse. Subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles was of course formerly a requisite for attendance at an English university and indeed even for the right to vote; they were used to enforce a form of educational and political apartheid, which incidentally favoured the wealthy. With hindsight this was clearly and self-evidently the wrong use. Secondly, the challenge of the Oxford Movement and particularly Newman's Tract 90 of 1841 caused many to question the Articles and began a process that gradually eroded ecclesiastical confidence in their purpose and meaning. However, Newman's Tract 90, like so much of what was written and implemented by the Oxford Movement was based on an eclectic, and in the case of Hurrell Froude's diagnosis of the Reformation, bluntly incorrect and naïve view of history. This is all the more disturbing because history was the new and indeed ultimate source of ecclesiastical and theological authority on which the Oxford Movement founded and built its reaction to the challenge of the erosion of the Erastian paradigm of church/state relations and the emergence and challenge of the academic discipline of biblical criticism. We only have to review our own response to 9/11 and 7/7 to understand the comprehensive impact on life made by what was perceived as the godless revelry of the French Revolution, an impact which of all the factions within the nineteenth-century Church of England was most evident in the Romantic sensibilities of the Tractarians. Most problematic at the time was Newman's presentation of the doctrine of justification especially in relation to Articles 11–14. Articles 11–

14—that is, Of the Justification of Man, Of Good Work, Of Works before Justification and Of Works of Supererogation—stress that man has no role in his salvation except acceptance; in short he is passive. This was not however to be understood as a Reformed covenantal or forensic view of justification, but justification *fides Christi* as opposed to *sola fides*. From the death of Cranmer there was a dearth of genuine knowledge and interpretation of what Luther's classic exposition of Romans 1.17 actually meant. The fact that for Luther, justification by faith *alone* was his commentary on, and explanation for, what happened in the sacrament of Baptism, and for what was renewed and recalled at Holy Communion, was only ever grasped by a few notable Anglican theologians, among them Cranmer and F. D. Maurice. The creation of the Jerusalem bishopric as a joint Anglican-Lutheran foundation bears testimony to the brief renaissance in the Church of England of Luther's unique *via media* between the personal and the communal; between the individual and the church; and crucially between the Word of God and the Sacraments: each dependent on the other in the lifelong experience of justification by faith. It was a matrix for Christian life—the Word and the Sacraments—upon which Cranmer based not only the Articles but also the Liturgy.

Before quoting what Newman wrote about Articles 11–14 in Tract 90, it is perhaps worth reminding ourselves of what those Articles actually declare; I will also ask you to keep these words in your mind and compare them later with what was written by the Dominican 'Friends of God' in the mid-fourteenth-century work the *Theologia Germanica*, a work that formed the fulcrum of Luther's comprehension of justification and sanctification:

> Article 11: *Of the Justification of Man*. We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings: Wherefore, that we are justified by Faith only is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification.
>
> Article 12: *Of Good Works*. Albeit that Good Works, which are the fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's Judgement ; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith; insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit.
>
> Article 13: *Of Works before Justification*. Works done before the grace of Christ and the Inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God,

> forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the School-authors say) deserve grace of congruity: yea, rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.
>
> Article 14: *Of Works of Supererogation*. Voluntary Works besides, over, and above, God's Commandments, which they call Works of Supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety; for by them men do declare, that they do not only render unto God as much as they are bound to do , but that they do more for his sake, than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly, When ye have done all that are commanded to you, say, We are unprofitable Servants.

So what did Newman write about these Articles that caused Tract 90 to be the *last* of the *Tracts for the Times?* Newman stated:

> Of Works before and after Justification—The Article contemplates these two states—one of justifying grace, and one of the utter destitution of grace; and it says, that those who are in utter destitution cannot do anything to gain justification; and, indeed, to assert the contrary would be Pelagianism. However, there is an intermediate state, of which the Article says nothing, but which must not be forgotten, as being an actually existing one. Men are not always either in light or in darkness, but are sometimes between the two; they are sometimes not in a state of Christian justification, yet not utterly deserted by GOD, but in a state something like that of the Jews or of the Heathen, turning to the thought of religion … They [good works] are according to the Article, 'grata,' which means that GOD rewards them, and that of course according to their degree of excellence. At the same time, a divine influence, so works after justification are still liable to the infection of original sin; and, as not being perfect, 'cannot expiate our sins,' or 'endure the severity of GOD's judgement'.

Compare Newman's interpretation with that of F. D. Maurice, who was initially sympathetic to the Oxford Movement (indeed his 'Pamphlets in defence of the Oxford Usage of Subscription of the XXXIX Articles at Matriculation' of 1835, better known as 'Subscription No Bondage,' was mistaken as a work by a supporter of the Oxford Movement). Maurice was of course later to part company with the Tractarians especially in response to Pusey's tract on baptism and its vacillation about the status of post-baptismal sin, which was clearly a contradiction of Article 9 'Of Original or Birth-Sin'. Maurice is

now acknowledged as the theological father of the Christian Socialist movement of the 1850s and one of the greatest, if not *the* greatest, Anglican theologian of recent centuries. Maurice has been given this accolade because of his exposition of the belief that the Kingdom of God was located in the present and not in some future state of perfection. Creation stood redeemed through the incarnate and risen Christ; irrespective of position or status, those who looked to him therefore stood victorious over the old Adam. It was a theology that emphasized the Fatherhood of God for *all* men; as such it was a theology that was deliberately *intended to be a rejection of the sectarian character inherent in the nineteenth-century church*. Unlike Newman's view of justification there was a totality to the act of, or potential for, justification which did not depend on the individual. In contrast to Newman's dependence on what amounts to justification based on an intrinsic righteousness, Maurice—like Cranmer and Luther, and the Church of England prior to 1830—understood justification to be an extrinsic or a declarative act in which the recipient, just like a baby at Baptism, was passive. In his homily 'Of the Salvation of all Mankind', Cranmer argued that in order to obtain salvation we must first make ourselves dependent on the righteousness of another, 'which we so receive by God's mercy and Christ's merits, embraced by faith, is taken, accepted, and allowed of God for our perfect and full justification.'[1] To illustrate his point, Cranmer cited the example of the helplessness of infants that die young. It was his opinion that if baptized, they were accepted as justified in the sight of God, and thus 'inheritors of his kingdom' even though they had no recollection of being justified. This is the same argument offered by Luther as both explanation and verification of his understanding of the role of faith in Baptism. Sins committed after Baptism, Cranmer admonished,

> when they turn again to God unfeignedly, they are likewise washed by this sacrifice from their sins in such sort that there remaineth not any spot of sin that shall be imputed to their damnation. This is that justification or righteousness which St Paul speaketh of when he saith, 'No man is justified by the works of the law, but freely by faith in Jesus Christ'.

For Luther, as Heiko Oberman succinctly summarized:

> Baptism and communion are the pledge that God is present in the turmoil of the fight for survival against the Devil. These two sacraments constitute the visible, tangible prop that makes it

[1] T. Cranmer, 'Homily on Salvation', *The Two Books of Homilies appointed to be read in Churches.* (Oxford, 1859), p. 24.

> possible to resist the Devil in God's name. Thus baptism and holy communion are the solid ground on which the certainty of a Christian's faith rests. It is therefore clear that there can be no greater danger than the undermining of these two sacraments. Making baptism and communion into the work of man destroys the foundation of Christian life because it makes God's truth and reality dependent on the powers of persuasion of the individual, subjective conscience. Of this very thing Luther repeatedly accused both the papacy and also those Reformation groups he liked to call Anabaptists and Sacramentarians. Baptism already had become a central theme in the major Reformation writings of 1520. For Luther it was the visible sign of unmerited justification through God's grace. Baptism performs the 'joyful exchange' through which a sinner receives the righteousness of Christ and Christ takes over his sins; and all this is not simply 'cheap' it is free.

Why should all this matter today? Because the way that you believe justification is achieved or worked out, made real, applied to you, is not only the means by which you understand the purpose of the Church but also determines how you behave on a day to day basis in your personal relationship with God and in your interaction with others, both Christian and non-Christian. Primarily, then, justification was important for the Oxford Movement because how it is understood affects both one's individual relation to God and one's ecclesiological self-definition. As Schleiermacher observed: 'The former [i.e. the Protestant] makes the individual's relation to the Church dependant on his relation to Christ, while the latter [i.e. the Catholic] contra wise makes the individual's relation to Christ dependent on his relation to the Church.' The Church of England has always sought to steer the middle way and in so doing followed the example of Luther, who, as already stressed, was the most obvious initial theological influence upon Cranmer's Reformation work, as distinct from the initial humanist influence of Erasmus on his early student years and in particular his biblical studies. What Newman attempted in Tract 90 was to defend the ecclesiological opinions of the Oxford Movement, in short to read history backwards and in so doing to reverse the intention of the Articles which clearly put soteriology before ecclesiology, whereas in his personal pursuit for assurance Newman made soteriology dependent on ecclesiology, as born out by his secession to Rome. The Book of Common Prayer was intended as an expression of faith and not our means of attaining it. What we now understand as F. D. Maurice's view of the 'Fatherhood of God for *all* people' is far more relevant to a clear and contemporary interpretation of Articles 11–14

than Newman's ambiguous umbrella definition of *adhered* righteousness which inevitably leaves many standing out in the cold of unbelief and the hesitation of uncertainty.

Perhaps some of you might be wondering why this paper has repeatedly referred to Luther and indeed might be concerned it is getting away from the point of the Articles. I make little apology for referring the Articles to Luther, because as already accented, one of the strongest, if not the most frequent, repudiation of the Articles in the current Church of England focuses on the assumed 'Protestant' character of the Articles and their perceived similarity with the Swiss and German reformed confessions of western Europe.

As alluded to above, a corrupt rendering of Luther's interpretation of justification, and Melanchthon's (I want to say unfortunate) humanist influence over a *forensic* interpretation of Article 4 of the *Augsburg Confession* concerning Justification, has since the 1840s led to an adverse reading of the Thirty-nine Articles. In translation, Article 4 of the Augsburg Confession reads:

> Men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits or works, but are justified freely through Christ by faith, when they believe that they are received into grace and their sins forgiven through Christ, who made satisfaction by his death for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness before Him. Romans Chapters 3 and 4.

The Tractarians, (especially W.G. Ward, in his virulent repudiation, if not outright slander, of Luther in the much quoted *Ideal of a Christian Church*; and Newman, in his *Lectures on Justification*) all reject Luther and those he influenced—and indeed by inference the intention of Articles 11–14—by assuming he taught a subjective and therefore, ironically, a 'works righteousness' source for justification. There was really no excuse for this misinterpretation. A false opinion of Luther and his theology (as opposed to Lutheranism) had been expounded by S. T. Coleridge in his seminal *Aids to Reflection* of 1825; a work that influenced Newman and F. D. Maurice and their respective expressions of Christianity alike, but with very different outcomes:

> I will not take on me to defend sundry harsh and inconvenient Expressions in the Works of Calvin. Phrases equally strong and assertions not less rash and startling are no rarities in the Writings of Luther … But let not the opinions of either on this most fundamental Subject be confounded with the new English System, now entitled Calvinistic. The fact is simply this. Luther considered the pretensions to free-will BOASTFUL, and better suited to budge

> Doctors of Stoic Fur, than to the Preachers of the Gospel, whose great theme is the Redemption of the Will from Slavery; the restoration of the Will to perfect Freedom being the *end* and consummation of the redemptive Process, and the same with the entrance of the Soul in Glory, i.e. its union with Christ: 'GLORY' (John xvii.5) being one of the names of the Spiritual Messiah. Prospectively to this we are to understand the words of our Lord. 'At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me,' (John xiv.20): the freedom of a finite will being possible under this condition only, that it has become one with the will of God. Now as the difference of a captive and enslaved Will, and *no* Will at all, such is the difference between the *Lutheranism* of Calvin and the Calvinism of Jonathan Edwards. (emphasis, STC)

However, a staunchly sectarian view of Luther has sadly persisted if not expanded within the twentieth-century Church of England; a view compounded and indeed confused by the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival and its later doctrinal developments. A corruption of Luther's beliefs is, however, not a new phenomenon. In 1652 the only way that a certain Captain Henry Bell could receive permission from the House of Commons to publish his translation of '*Dr Martin Luther's Divine Discourses*' better known now as Luther's 'Table Talk' was to deny Luther's belief in the Real Presence, swelling Luther's Reformed or Protestant label, if not legend, and with it any hope of a Catholic reading of the work of Luther and by extension the fundamental impetus of the Reformation's stress on the gospel and godly living. In 1947, an Anglo-Catholic report addressed to the Archbishop of Canterbury presented a defamatory picture of Luther as the father of schism and sectarianism, indeed as the perverter of natural theology and of the innate, and thus God given, 'Image of God' in man. Critically, the Lutheran theologian Anders Nygren was cited in support of this animadversion. At an international conference on world Lutheranism held as a tribute to Nygren in 1950, the Swedish Bishop Gustaf Aulén gave an address entitled 'The Catholicity of Lutheranism: a contribution to the Ecumenical Discussion'. Aulén's essay formed a specific response to, and repudiation of, the British Anglo-Catholic report of 1947. To quote Aulén directly: 'I cannot but say that the character and position of Lutheranism, as here presented and criticised, have been seriously misunderstood.' In his essay, Aulén succinctly and authoritatively argued for the place of Luther in the universal Church, on the basis that Luther taught that the Church rested on the catholic principles of the Word and the sacraments.

> We hear him [Luther] complain of the abuse of the Sacraments and the sins of the ministry. We might suppose that he would conclude with a radical condemnation of Rome. But instead of that he tells us that the Roman Church is holy and even that her ministry is holy. His reason is that the Word of God and the Sacraments, served by the ministry, are 'remaining' and working in the Roman Church. It must be observed that Luther also justifies the 'holiness' of Wittenberg in exactly the same way. Luther does not, as we perhaps would think, refer to the 'pure doctrine' of Wittenberg, nor does he refer to any subjective holiness. The existence of the Church, and therefore her holiness as well as her unity, depends upon the fact that the constitutive factors of the Church, the Word and the Sacraments, are in function. Where these factors are in function, there is the Church that we confess as one, holy and catholic.'

Cranmer obviously knew of the difference between the Lutheran and Reformed accent on the sacraments. What is perhaps far more important or relevant than trying to ascertain the extent of Lutheran influence on the Thirty-Nine Articles or English Liturgy, is the fact that Cranmer remained constantly indebted to Luther's conception of the doctrine of justification by faith as a commentary on the sacrament of Baptism.[2] Certainly, as the Henry Bell experience concerning the publication of the 'Table Talk' testifies, an air of uncertainty had begun to settle in England over what was understood to represent a distinctive Lutheran interpretation of faith within a century of Cranmer publishing the 1552 edition of the Prayer Book;[3] a lack of acuity that J. H. Newman was able to exploit to the full in his own influential work in England as both Anglican and Catholic.

Finally it is perhaps worth recalling the work of Julius Hare, an English clergyman of privileged background who having been born and brought up in Italy came to revere and defend the work and writings of Luther as the bastion of Christian truth and as the hope of Christian—of Catholic—unity in opposition to the sectarian spirit he believed the Oxford Movement encouraged. Again, Hare was initially considered a supporter, indeed *natural* supporter, of the Oxford Movement. Hare believed that the separation of Luther's concept of justification from the historical Church is what had

[2] Cf. J. Trigg, *Baptism in the Theology of Martin Luther* (Leiden, 1994). See also, H. Oberman, *Luther: Man between God and the Devil* (New Haven, London, 1989), p. 226–32 as well as the fourth part of the *Large Catechism*.

[3] R. Hooker, 'A Learned Discourse of Justification, Works and How the Foundation of Faith is overthrown', J. Keble, ed., *The Works of Richard Hooker*, 7th edn., 3 vols (Oxford, 1888) pp. 601–81, esp. p. 631.

allowed the Church to become vulnerable to secularism, intellectual arrogance, eclecticism, and the splintering of the Church of England into various factions and sects. His sermon, 'The Unity of the Church' was initially innocuously delivered at the annual meeting of the Chichester Diocesan Association in 1840. It was re-published in 1845 with an extensive preface in the hope that it could be used to counter-balance the heated discussion excited by the creation of the Jerusalem bishopric and the questions raised by Newman's withdrawal from the Church of England. The immediate context of the sermon had been the claim of Henry Manning (then still an Archdeacon in the Church of England) that unity required uniformity. Essentially, it is the human condition of self-centredness that Hare held responsible for the sixteenth-century schism of the Western Church, and not any one particular doctrine, denomination or individual (*Unity of the Church* p. 52). Luther's teaching was for Hare an antidote for this selfishness; it was also a reflection of St Paul.

> The contest against the narrow selfish spirit within the Church was a main part of the mission assigned to the great Apostle of the Gentiles: and from him may we best learn to discriminate between those institutions and ordinances which may vary with time and place and national habits and condition, and those principles which are set before us in the text, and without which none can truly be members of the one Body, or animated by the one Spirit. (*Unity of the Church*, p. 70)

Hare's sermon revived the very kernel of Luther's theology, and Cranmer's also—that self, whether through religious diligence or self-centred disregard of others, is the fundamental root of all sin and the reason why Christ had to die on the Cross. What is not always acknowledged but certainly came to light during Hare's lifetime was that Luther did not simply pluck his revelation of Romans 1.17 from thin air; it was not the Damascus Road or subjective experience that we are so often taught in poor quality history books. In 1516 Luther had re-published a work by the Dominican 'Friends of God' known simply as the *Theologia Germanica*. The actual author or authors are unknown and it seems likely that the work was written sometime around 1340; it also seems likely that if not actually put to death the authors were severely punished for publishing this work. (I would love to quote the whole of this work; in fact if you type *Theologia Germanica* into Google you can have access to the whole work with one click of your mouse!) All I can offer you here is simply a taste of the spiritual treasures that the work has to offer, a work that through the influence of Luther on Cranmer forms a seam of gold though the Thirty-nine Articles and can

be seen in the words of the confession at both Morning and Evening Prayer, as well as Holy Communion:

> All that in Adam fell and died, was raised again and made alive in Christ, and all that rose up and was made alive in Adam, fell and died in Christ. But what was that? I answer, true obedience and disobedience. But what is true obedience? I answer, that a man should so stand free, being quit of himself, that is, of his I, and Me, and Self, and Mine, and the like, that in all things, he should no more seek or regard himself, than if he did not exist, and should take as little account of himself as if he were not, and another had done all his works. Likewise he should count all the creatures for nothing. What is there then, which is, and which we may count for somewhat? I answer, nothing but that which we may call God. Behold! this is very obedience in the truth, and thus it will be in a blessed eternity. There nothing is sought nor thought of, nor loved, but the one thing only.
>
> Now, according to what hath been said, ye must observe that when we say, as Christ also saith, that we ought to resign and forsake all things, this is not to be taken in the sense that a man is neither to do nor to purpose anything; for a man must always have something to do and to order so long as he liveth. But we are to understand by it that the union with God standeth not in any man's powers, in his working or abstaining, perceiving or knowing, nor in that of all the creatures taken together.

That mysticism played perhaps a unique or certainly singular role in shaping Luther's theology amongst the continental reformers is a fact that is all too often overlooked. What is most certainly unique is that it was a form of mysticism that was not founded on man being 'raised up to heavenly encounters of God', but rather, on a sense of despair at the recognition of man's difference and separation from God; a sense of sin and the weight of our difference from God which is a constant in the Book of Common Prayer. Only in that despair could the real and indeed loving character of God be revealed in spite of the reality of man's innate selfishness, pride and sloth; this Luther termed *concupiscentia*, by which he implied love of self. It is this acknowledgement of the *difference* between God and man, rather than the actuality and pervasiveness of human sin, a difference which required the mediating work of the Logos, that is emphasized, and sadly all too often berated, occasionally lampooned and certainly commonly rejected, in the Book of Common Prayer and Thirty-nine Articles. It is the acknowledgement, as so eloquently and succinctly expressed by Julius Hare in the mid-1850s, that 'We thank God that

our faith stands higher than our good deeds or sins'. That is perhaps also the simplest one line explanation of the Book of Common Prayer and summary of the doctrinal statement of the Thirty-nine Articles.

In short, and there really is so much more that could and perhaps should be said on this subject, the main reason why the Reformation in England—and by extension its theology, of which the Thirty-nine Articles and the Book of Common Prayer are seminal representatives—is so often neglected or ignored like a bad smell, is simply because, crudely and at the risk of over-simplification, the Reformation and in particular the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, was understood to imply a subjective and predetermined soteriology—that is one in which salvation was conceived to be enacted under an individualistic covenantal matrix instead of, as the Thirty-nine Articles outline and as was also taught by Luther, a sacramental view of salvation: one that stressed the communion of believers and the visible Church on the basis of the Word of God. Gustaf Aulén argued in his defense against the Anglo-Catholic attack on Lutheranism, that 'according to the well-known utterance of Luther', the Church is 'the Mother who gives birth to and fosters every individual Christian'. (By 'Church' Aulén implied Roman Catholicism as well as Protestantism or Lutheranism … or I could add Orthodoxy or Anglicanism.)

In his thought-provoking work *Catholic Evangelicalism*, Dieter Voll explored the evangelical, by which he implies Lutheran, influence on the religious developments in England during the late nineteenth century. Voll noted the influence of the eighteenth-century evangelical revival on the Oxford Movement, and the flowering of this influence among later Anglo-Catholics associated with the ritualistic slum ministries in the north and south of England. These later Anglo-Catholics equally emphasized the necessity of the sacraments and conversion, an emphasis not uncommon in Pusey's work on Baptism.[4] Although the classic Reformation definition of justification has become associated with the need for conversion or a personalization of the awareness of the implication of Christ crucified, as has been explained above, for Luther conversion re-emphasized, indeed personalized, the efficacy of the sacraments; an opinion, certainly in the instance of Baptism, that he bequeathed to Cranmer. It is possible to suggest that the late Victorian Anglo-Catholics were more representative of Luther's theological and ecclesiastical heritage than the Georgian evangelical Protestants who would claim direct descent from the Reformers and in particular Luther, although in reality they were the offspring of

[4] Cf. D. Voll, *Catholic Evangelicalism*, p. 121. See also Griffin, 'The Radical Phase of the Oxford Movement', p. 56ff.

later Pietists and Moravians.[5] The joint emphasis on conversion and the sacraments reflected the resurgence of interest in the incarnation as opposed to the atonement; it was also reflective of Luther's stress on the humanity of Christ as well as on the benefits of his resurrection. The American Methodist Preserved Smith observed in 1917:

> Nevertheless, there has been even among the highest dignitaries of the Anglican Church a certain section disposed to find a support for conservative doctrine in Luther's authority. Thus Frederick Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, in his *Charge to his Clergy* (1898) stated that the Anglican theory of the Real Presence was hard to distinguish from Luther's doctrine. This opinion, Dean Hensley Henson informs us, was received by the (Anglican) Catholics 'in disgust at the suggestion that they stand in the Eucharistic doctrine with the protagonist of Protestantism'.[6]

There is so much more that could be said about the Articles, but I hope what I have suggested or at the very least introduced, has inspired and encouraged you to go and explore our 'domestic creed' for yourself. The Articles are so often charged with being archaic or contrary to the contemporary—and certainly much needed—spirit of ecumenism (although on that charge I would encourage you specifically to re-read Article 18).

To conclude I would simply like to close with some advice from S.T. Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*, advice that confidently reflects the teaching of Articles 20 and 24:

> Never be afraid to doubt … He who begins by loving Christianity better than Truth, will proceed by loving his own sect or Church better than Christianity, and end in loving himself better than all.

(Dr Julie Lethaby is Head of Development of the Prayer Book Society. This paper was originally addressed to a day conference for ordinands.)

[5] Cf. A. M. Allchin, 'The Understanding of Unity in Tractarianism Theology and Spirituality', *Tradition Renewed*, G. Rowell, ed., (London, 1986), pp. 226–37. For further discussion see G. Rowell, *The Vision Glorious*, (Oxford, 1983) chp. 10, 'Catholic and Critical'.

[6] P. Smith, 'English Opinion of Luther', *Harvard Theological Review* 10 (1917), p. 151.

The Language of the Bible: the Word, the Flesh and the Ploughboy

ROWLAND WHITEHEAD

The language of the liturgy and the language of the Bible are two very special things. Language lives, never stays still for a moment, and we have to set our view of Cranmer and our view of Tyndale against this background. We must continually ask: Is the meaning clear? Could it be said another way? If we don't do this then members of the Tyndale Society and the Prayer Book Society will increasingly look like Colonel and Mrs Blimp drinking tea on the Vicarage lawn while 'out there' the 'cool kids' shape their own version of the words …

In talking about William Tyndale I am aware that some, perhaps many, of you will know quite a bit about him though others may not know too much. As the late Basil Hume once said 'talking is like oil prospecting—if you don't strike it rich in two minutes then stop boring!' So I hope I strike it rich with most of you and not bore the others.

On the motorway coming here I saw, parked in a field, a huge black pantechnicon visible to all who motored past. On its side was one of the many 'messages' to our government from the much-neglected farmers. The text was in large white letters and read 'Just say Non' and then went on, 'Eat Drink and be Merry – Buy British!' How appropriate, I thought—Tyndale's famous phrase of half a millennium ago still doing service to our language and in a curiously familiar context. The slogan on my salt grinder says 'the salt of the earth'. My Turkish

grocer, on a dark winter day, flicks the electric switch and announces 'Let there be light!' Tyndale is all around us …

So what I would like to do is consider William Tyndale first as a translator and then as a superb 'wordsmith'. Along the line I can then give you an account of the life of this extraordinary man. But first of all I should like to spend a moment considering what translation and language actually are.

I Language: the Word

We speak it. We take it for granted most of the time. That is until someone uses a word or phrase we don't know and we begin to doubt or misunderstand. I have been deeply involved with the Institute of Translation and Interpreting. Even the title of the institute makes a significant point. Translation is a past event, it has happened. Interpreting is ongoing. The former gives you time to pause and consider your verdict—the latter has to be the best guess of the moment with no redress.

But here's the odd thing. We have about 10,000 distinct languages in the world and maybe once had many more. Papua New Guinea even today has over one thousand separate languages, most of them unintelligible between even near neighbours. Humans are distinct in having language as a means of communicating abstract notions. We share with animals the ability to convey basic needs or requirements by noises. We, like animals, use body language for silent communication. But our claim to be 'in charge' is the ability to share our views of the past, present and future amongst ourselves.

Why then this huge variety of tongues? Would not evolution have been better served if it had tended to a universal language? Frankly I do not think that anyone can say for sure why this has not come about.

In Western Europe we have forty languages which have developed over a period of between six and eight thousand years. Papua New Guinea's thousand languages took about 40,000 years to develop. In Europe we have dozens of modified alphabets with dots and hooks and wiggles on the letters to suit the particular sounds of a particular country. However, look at China, huge and ancient civilisation of 1.2 billion people. But 800 million of these speak and write Mandarin. A further 300 million speak seven other languages related to Mandarin. Language, both spoken and written, is monolithic in China.

These are puzzling matters. I have seen no explanation that fits. I suppose it is nice to have an Institute of Translation and Interpreting to sort the whole thing out! After variety comes change and development.

Few, if any, languages stay still for long. Once someone has mastered the 10,000 languages, they still have to accept changes of meaning, new words and phrases, new spellings—and, of course, the ability to cope with languages which have died out. Remember, biblical Hebrew is a not a language in use today and we shall later admire Tyndale's skill with good reason.

Languages do not stand alone. Often they borrow words from each other. Some countries hate this cultural dilution: countries such as France where the purity of the French language is constantly watched. Or Iceland which, with only 250,000 inhabitants, and, incidentally, the highest literacy rate in the world, still insists that all new words be put into Icelandic or words that sound Icelandic.

The English language revels in language swaps. We owe 'taboo' and 'tattoo' to the Polynesians, 'amok', 'batik' and 'orang-utan' to the Malaysians, 'bungalow' to Hindi and, if you are a motorist the word 'buggy' to the Indians. Juggernaut, too, come to think of it. A trawl through Yule and Burnell's 1886 greatest-ever dictionary—Hobson-Jobson—will show how much Indian has come to us. Today's technology and impatient young e-mailers have fed our language with neologisms that make the older generation choke over their vintage port. Modern speak is not for the fainthearted.

And language is a two-way traffic. Read today an Indian newspaper and you are right back in the English of the 1920s. All 'gung-ho!' and 'upper crust' slang fifty years after the British left.

Where is all this pointing? Probably the most satisfying explanation comes from John Naisbitt in his book *The Global Paradox*. In essence he says that 'the more global we become the more tribal we behave'. The rise in multi-nationalism such as we see in business, social behaviour, habits of food and clothing and, not least, in language is mirrored by strong tendencies to tribal, local culture. The 'Cocacolonization' of the thirties has given way to the 'MacDonaldization' of the nineties and blue jeans to reversed baseball caps, as ethnic protesters strut their individual stuff in faraway places.

I believe that during this century we shall see English solidly established as the world language and the tribal languages preserved and proliferating about it. But there will be a difference. In William Tyndale's time there were fewer than a million people speaking English; literacy was below 30%. Our English language was very local indeed. There was no standard spelling or pronunciation and the language split between the two sovereign kingdoms of the Isles—Scots English, which declined after the Union though Rabbie Burns gave it a boost, and the English of England, based upon the dialect of the south east

found in Geoffrey Chaucer. The rise of the schools and universities, the genius of Caxton, all gave a boost to English.

In the last century we worked to a standard English orthography which writers adhered to though, pre Lord Reith, pronunciation still varied. Today we see variegated literary Englishes from countries which may have been former colonies or, in many cases, not even that. Works of high literary merit, some eclipsing native British and American writers, have emerged from Nigeria, the West Indies, India and elsewhere.

The 'spell check' on your computer will ask you which English you use—British, American, Caribbean, Indian and a score of others.

With the pre-eminence of English in technology and science we see our language prone to new uses which make us wince but which we cannot impede.

With the expansion of the European Union, and the exponential requirement for inter-community translation, we may well see a two-tiered English develop: the rough and ready language of interchange between twelve, fifteen, perhaps twenty European nationalities and the precise English of treaties, contracts and documentation.

Esperanto has been sidelined. As Professor Richards says 'At countless points on the earth's surface, English will be the most available language—English of some sort'. English is an easier language to acquire, at least to a level of competence, than say Chinese, Russian, Spanish or German. Writers in those and other languages look to English translation for their 'window on the world'.

As it stands today, one billion people speak English either as a mother tongue, or as a second or foreign language. 60% of the world's broadcasts are in English, 70% of its mail is addressed in English. And 85% of international telephone calls and 80% of all data on the world's 100 million computers are in universal English. German boardrooms have now to conduct business in English.

To sum up. We have a universal language, English, which itself is fragmenting, we have world-scale languages such as Chinese, Spanish, Arabic, German and French, none of which occupy the centre stage of science, technology or multinational commerce, and we have thousands of languages spoken by millions or by tribesmen. This is what makes translation so exciting and Tyndale's contribution so astonishing.

II Translation: the Flesh

To understand Tyndale we have to understand what translation is all about. Most of us, most days, read things in translation but never

give a thought to the process of translation, or to how accurate the translation is.

Your electric kettle instructions usually come across quite well, and you plug it in happily; no one is electrocuted. But what about the English translation of Marcel Proust, of Tolstoy's *War and Peace* or of Homer's *Odyssey*? What about an international treaty on the Law of the Sea which must be valid over fifty years? Can you be sure that the translator has caught the spirit of the thing? Are you really entering the world of the author? This is where the translator has to grapple. Does he move the reader to the author or does he move the author to the reader? Is the translator—should the translator—be invisible?

Put simply, there is no perfect translation. The German poet Rilke once said that no word, not even the most commonplace, has an exact equivalent in another language. 'Und', 'die', 'der' and 'das' have, as it were, a German life of their own which makes exact transfer impossible. We take a lot of cultural baggage with us when we cross language borders. If we read a very sleek modern translation of Homer we sometimes feel that 'we haven't been there'—it lacks colour. There are over two hundred English versions of Homer's epic story, and I suspect that our favourites are the ones that are slightly 'quaint' because they embody a sort of atmosphere that suggests what it might have been like at those times.

If we talk of cultural baggage then we come to huge problems for the translator. The amazing skill of Tyndale was his ability to encompass and fashion these potential pitfalls into a language that has stood the test of time.

Even words on a page have a significance. In English the word 'poetry' is made up of vowels and consonants but the letters themselves have no significance. In Chinese the word for poetry, by its very writing, has its own elegance and character. Often Chinese poems are written in a calligraphy that suggests the content of the poem.

Words in a particular language have sounds which lead us beyond their bare meaning. Think of beautiful sounding words. Dr William French has made a list: asphodel, chalice, tranquil, halcyon, thrush, melody, tendril, gossamer, murmuring. How many of these translate into beautiful words in other languages I wonder? Remember how Emily Brontë contrasts Wuthering Heights on the bleak hillside with Thrushcross Grange in the quiet comfortable valley. What about ugly English words? George Orwell suggests 'pudding'. James Joyce, when asked the most beautiful English word, replied immediately: 'cuspidor'!

Languages have onomatopoeia. Word sounds that describe what they are. Cuckoo, for example—but in Norwegian it is 'gauk'. No echoes of beautiful song there.

Then there are homonyms. Words that are either spelt the same or sound the same but with different meanings: 'We make our bows from the boughs of trees so that our enemies may bow before us'. English humour uses homonyms richly. But then Jesus called Peter his rock upon which he would build his Church. Pierre works well in French but doesn't in English.

Every language has its own word play: a nightmare for the translator. How do we translate Lewis Carroll and Humpty Dumpty's 'portmanteau' words such as mimsy to describe a creature that is both flimsy and miserable? Slithy from lithe and slimy? The French have recently had a go at Harry Potter but are completely floored by the special language. As they admit, French lacks the flexibility and suppleness of English. We owe our dictionary, the largest and richest that the world has ever seen, to this flexibility.

We do not think of slang in the context of biblical translation but in an age before dictionaries and with a strong regional bias to speech then we should consider this. Tyndale called light rain 'mizzling'. Lovely word, but probably unknown outside Gloucestershire. Slang either comes into the mainstream or it trickles away in the sands of time. It is a fine distinction and Tyndale so often selects to perfection. How about 'mercy-seat' or 'scapegoat'—Tyndale coined them first.

Entire words may be missing in a language. There is a certain island tribe in the South Pacific that has no word for sheep—they bred pigs. How is the translator of the Old and New Testament to present one of the most poignant and enduring images of the Bible? With difficulty, I suppose.

Words often have a resonance beyond their basic meaning. Read the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins and you will feel the resonance rising up around the words. 'I caught this morning morning's minion, kingdom of daylights dauphin, dapple-dawn drawn Falcon, in his riding of the rolling level underneath him steady air …' In another language much of this would be lost.

So I leave you with some thoughts on language and translation in general and come to William Tyndale in particular. He had the same problems of transfer as we have today but also an added one. The Hebrew of the Old Testament was a 'dead' language. Few, if any, in his day knew much Hebrew, and dictionaries and scholarly research were scarcely available. A Hebrew word might occur only once in the entire text, and there was no means of cross checking. The Ark

was made from gopher wood and no one has much idea what that might have been. Tyndale, ever practical, calls it pine and we all get the picture. There are even towns in Deuteronomy called Moregrove and Saltdale—very Gloucestershire, that.

This brings us to the title of the third section of this talk.

III The Word, the Flesh and the Ploughboy

Tyndale, brilliant scholar that he was, made his translation so that the ordinary people of England could be able to read the Bible at first hand. At the time an English Bible was forbidden by law. Jerome's Latin translation, though available, would mean nothing to a peasant. Tyndale, when confronted by a smug cleric one day, famously said 'Ere long, if my life be spared, I will cause the boy who driveth the plough to know more of the Bible than you do, Sir'. The Tyndale Society today has a team of ploughboys, and of course, ploughgirls, to spread the word.

This is a suitable point, I think, to step aside and look at the life of William Tyndale. Born in 1494 into a Gloucestershire family, brought up in a rural setting but with Oxford learning just down the road, Tyndale's intellectual powers were sharpened as a young man whilst his knowledge and love of the country remained with him always. He came from a good family in a county that was bustling with overseas trade. His knowledge of local words and dialects stayed with him as we shall see.

Local speech can impart wisdom in a memorable, often rhythmic, form. 'A rolling stone gathers no moss' has a lovely feel to it. Many of Tyndale's Bible phrases must have had their genesis in this tradition. 'Be not weary of well doing', 'When two or three are gathered together', 'Seek and ye shall find'. We are in the company of a master wordsmith. The phrases of the 1530s are with us still today.

In 1506 he went up to Magdalen College at Oxford and received a formal training in what were called in those days Quadrium and Trivium—'Quod and Triv', as they were known. He did spend some time at Cambridge but we know less about this.

Thereafter he returned to Gloucestershire and became tutor to Sir Thomas Walsh at Little Sodbury Manor. This was, and still is, a typical Cotswold manor house, rambling, stone roofed and walled, looking over to the River Severn and the Welsh hills beyond. Tyndale took Holy Orders, he preached locally with great effect, his duties to the Walsh children were minimal. Life was pretty good.

At what point his thoughts turned to Bible translation we do not know. He was a gifted linguist credited with seven languages. Latin would come naturally to him because that was the common language

of church and officialdom. Remember, the great Erasmus came to England with not a word of English and got on splendidly with all he met; speaking Latin. Isn't it nice, incidentally, that Latin seems to be making a comeback in our schools?

Tyndale's Greek was more than excellent and the bedrock of his New Testament skills. He knew Spanish, German, French and clearly some others. Best of all he had learned Hebrew, the language of the Old Testament.

The turning point in his life came with a visit to London to see Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of London, a significant Greek scholar, and someone whom Tyndale hoped could house him and help with a translation of the New Testament from the Greek. Tunstall would act as a patron to this young man. No such luck. The bishop told him to try elsewhere as he really didn't want to be involved. It was quite clear that the only opportunities lay in the continent of Europe.

Wycliffe had translated from Latin, thus a translation of a translation, and was immediately condemned. No complete Bible translated into English from the original Hebrew and Greek had ever appeared in England. The Constitution of Oxford in 1408 expressly forbade it. The Bible in English was not totally unknown, but only in part, in snippets secretly passed from hand to hand.

However, in Strasburg, a first German Bible had appeared—Luther's New Testament. It came out in September 1522, and by 1524 the Bible could be found in Danish, French, Italian, Spanish (that is Catalan), Czech and Dutch. Luther's Pentateuch, the first vernacular Bible direct from the original Hebrew, appeared in 1523, and his complete Bible, with illustrations by Lucas Cranach, appeared in 1524. But not in England. Bishop Tunstall, although a brilliant Greek scholar, had had cold feet.

Tyndale went to Germany in 1524. He moved about and it is not exactly clear where his wanderings took him till we hear of him settled in Cologne. North-east Europe had three great trading ports—Hamburg, Antwerp and Cologne. Here were to be found many printing houses and English business communities, both helpful to Tyndale. He worked with an assistant, a friar called William Roye, but the Cologne authorities got wind of them and they only just managed to escape arrest and flee to Worms. This was the start of years of pursuit and persecution. We can only wonder at and admire the courage and tenacity of Tyndale.

In 1526, in Worms, a small hymn-book-sized Bible was printed, probably of three or at most six thousand copies. This was Tyndale's New Testament translation.

Suddenly, in phrase after glorious phrase, the English we know and recognize came forth. 'A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid', 'No man can serve two masters', 'Ask and it shall be given you', 'Knock and it shall be opened unto you' and a hundred other familiar sayings. Here for the first time was a complete New Testament in the English that ordinary people could understand. The English is clear and unambiguous; the language that people spoke; simple and uncomplicated. The book was small enough to be put in the pocket. The ploughboy could sit and read it under a hedge as he munched his bread and cheese at midday.

Only three copies remain of the 1526 Tyndale New Testament. I was once privileged to visit St Paul's Cathedral Library to see one copy. 'Yes', I said, 'but where, in all these twenty-three thousand volumes, is the Tyndale Bible?' 'It is on the table just by your right elbow!' came the reply. I had just not noticed it … it was so unexpectedly small. Conservationists and librarians will shudder but I did place a finger on this sacred volume—it felt like touching the Holy Grail.

Only very recently has the third copy come to light in Germany. It had been rebound with the date of the binding printed on the cover, so was not assumed to be an original 1526 New Testament. It is an exciting thought that there may be others. Alas! Not under Gloucestershire hedges I fear …

Copies of the New Testament were shipped secretly to England, often in bales of cloth or barrels of grain, and readily snapped up by all who came by them; booksellers and eager readers in London and the south east seized on this remarkable book. So too, did the authorities. Cardinal Wolsey summoned his bishops and the process of burning these Bibles began. 'Many children of iniquity, maintainers of Luther's sect, blinded through extreme wickedness, wandering away from the truth of the Catholic Faith, have craftily translated our English tongue', he stated. He claimed to have found many mistakes in this translation. As we might say now, 'he would, wouldn't he?'

At this point Bishop Tunstall ordered copies to be piled up outside St Paul's Cathedral and to be burnt—fifty yards, ironically, from where one of the remaining Tyndale Bibles now rests. By now Tyndale was in Antwerp and well started on his Old Testament translation. Again the phrases so familiar to us come pouring forth from his pen. It is 1535 and he is living with a good friend, Thomas Poyntz, in what was known as the English House. It was peaceful and comfortable, a centre for English traders and, probably, what we might call today, 'a safe house'. Those of you who read and admire Salman Rushdie will know what such persecution must feel like to a writer, even in a safe

house. The first five books of the Old Testament, the Pentateuch, were now completed and being printed.

Consider the opening passage of the book of Genesis. In the Latin we see 'Fiat lux. Et facta est lux'—six words of great economy, strengthened by the repetition of 'lux' at the end of each phrase. This is truly God's command.

Italian is more economic still, only five words. 'Sia luce. E fu luce.' Still the stress on *light* but now the pronunciation comes in the way. These words are soft and feminine and the commanding tone is lost. 'Es warde licht. Und es ward licht' in German is longer but keeps the strength of the Latin. The French by contrast loses the dynamic surge and strength of God's purpose. 'Que la lumiere soit; et la lumiere fut.' Compared with the Latin it seems flabby. In English Wycliffe gives us 'and God said Light be made, and light was' which makes it less than magisterial.

'Let there be light, and there was light', says Tyndale and we know that we are in the company of a master translator. We experience a shiver of anticipation for what is to follow.

'Let not your hearts be troubled', says Tyndale, and we understand. 'Do not be worried or upset' say some modern versions, which sounds trivial. The New International Version, after endless committee meetings, comes out with Tyndale's original phrase. 'Let not your hearts be troubled.'

The story of the serpent and Eve and the apple reveals Tyndale's skills perfectly. The Vulgate version has 'Dixit autem serpens ad mulierem—nequaquam morte moriemini'. Roughly speaking, 'then the serpent said to the woman—by no means will you die of death'. The Lollard version has 'Forsooth the adder said to the woman—through death you shall not die'. How does Tyndale go? 'Then the serpent said to the woman—tush, ye shall not die.'

The serpent of Tyndale is 'subtler' than all the other beasts and, as we might say today, he is 'cool and streetwise'. His 'tush' is utterly dismissive. 'No problem, my dear, just go ahead!' Surely this is how we imagine the scene.

At the same time Tyndale found that Hebrew went into English readily and easily. 'The properties of the Hebrew tongue agreeth a thousand times more with the English than with the Latin', he wrote.

One reason is the grammatical form known as the 'construct'. This is the form THE + NOUN + OF + NOUN. Thus 'the beasts of the field', 'the gods of your fathers' have a nice ring about them which 'your father's gods' does not. We do this today when we want to heighten the mood. The Minister of State rather than The State's Minister. In

Tyndale monosyllables dominate. Verbs are simple. 'The wise knew not, babes knew'. How succinct!

Next we have Tyndale's marvellous sense of rhythm. The narrative moves steadily forward with a vigour that leaves other versions standing.

In the Authorized Version, in the Book of Samuel, King David says to God, 'When the waves of death compassed me, the floods of ungodly men made me afraid, the sorrows of hell compassed me about, the snares of death prevented me'. Tyndale has, 'The waves of death have closed me about, and the floods of Belial have feared me. The cords of hell have compassed me about, and the snares of death have overtaken me'. Tyndale keeps a run of concrete nouns and concrete verbs in strong simplicity. Waves, floods, cords, snares, and closed about, feared, compassed, overtaken. Open the Tyndale Bible at any page and this simplicity shines forth.

'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased' says the Authorized Version. 'Thou art my dear Son in whom I delight', says Tyndale. The AV suddenly sounds rather flat. Esau sells his birthright for 'a morsel of meat' in the AV. Tyndale has him selling it 'for one breakfast'—does this not sound very modern! 'And all that heard it wondered at those things that were told them of the shepherds. But Mary kept all those sayings and pondered them in her heart.' The juxtaposition of 'wondered' and 'pondered' gives a nice balance. Luther has 'Bewiget', weighed up, the Latin Vulgate has 'conferens', brought together. Ponder, to us seems exactly right.

Whilst monosyllables dominate, Tyndale often reserves the polysyllables for the ends of the sentences.

Like this from John 14: 'lest they bid thee again, and make thee recompense' says Tyndale, while the AV has 'lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee'. The rhythm is lost.

We read the Epistle to the Ephesians, chapter four, verse seventeen: 'blinded in their understanding, being strangers from the life which is in God', says Tyndale. The Authorized Version says 'having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God …' Tyndale is pithy. A little further on we read 'let not the sun go down on your wrath neither give place to the backbiter'—have a look at the AV …

In Genesis chapter four Tyndale says, 'Cain was wroth *exceedingly* and *loured*', The Authorized Version has 'Cain was *very* wroth, and his *countenance fell*'.

Clearly one could continue *ad infinitum* with quotations from Tyndale. I would suggest that any reader will get enormous pleasure and satisfaction from reading Tyndale and comparing him with not

only the Authorized Version but with other English Bibles.

Scholarship has advanced and new meanings come forward. What Tyndale calls a 'hedgehog' the Geneva Bible calls a 'rat' and the AV a 'ferret'. Probably we shall never know. Tyndale has 'fritters' which later turn into 'cakes'. As I have said he uses dialect words—'goggle-eyed' and 'perl-eyed', 'fainty' and 'flaggy', which all have a feeling of familiarity though they have long since faded from the dictionaries. But I have heard the word 'mizzling'!

It is now the spring of 1535 and by May it is all over. Tyndale has been arrested by the authorities in a villainous plot and imprisoned in Vilvorde Castle outside Brussels. The only writing in his hand that we have is a letter from prison asking for warmer clothes and the Hebrew Bible, grammar and dictionary. 'I suffer greatly from a cold in the head, and am afflicted by a perpetual catarrh' he writes, 'and I ask to be allowed to have a lamp in the evening; it is indeed wearisome sitting alone in the dark'. Tyndale has courage. He continues his work translating the Old Testament to the last.

We commemorate him on 6 October, the day of his death, and mourn the loss to Gloucestershire, to England and to the world of this greatest of men.

Tyndale was led to execution in Vilworde's square where two great beams of wood had been placed in a cross. 'Lord, open the King of England's eyes' were his last words. A rope was tightened round his neck, he was strangled and, when judged dead, the Procurer-General handed a lighted faggot to the executioner who set fire to brushwood, straw and gunpowder around Tyndale. So died a great Englishman, virtually unmourned.

But after five hundred years his efforts have not been forgotten or in vain. His Bible and other works are in print and available. There is even, now, a New Testament with his original spelling which is surprisingly easy to read.

The Tyndale Society is very active, we have branches in the United States and Geneva. We have a journal and we hold conferences in many countries. There are Tyndale websites and the boy or girl who drives the mouse can become acquainted, too.

We are incredible lucky, yes William Tyndale, LUCKY! to have our Bible from you. From your hand came English in all its beauty, came the language of Shakespeare and all that has followed down the past five centuries.

(Sir Rowland Whitehead is Vice President of the Tyndale Society, and past President of the Institute of Translation and Interpreting.)

Reviews

PETER NICHOLAS DAVIES: *Alien Rites? A Critical Examination of Contemporary English in Anglican Liturgies*
Ashgate, 2005 0 7546 5157 6 hardback, pp. xviii+246, £47.50

This book is part history, part textual analysis, and part sociological survey of the attitudes to liturgy of regular churchgoers in two dioceses, one in England, one in New Zealand. It is the third element that is likely to be most interesting to members of the Prayer Book Society, but I must make a comment or two on the 'textual analysis'. Despite the subtitle, there is very little criticism in the book. Dr Davies makes a well-merited adverse comment on a bewildering succession of images in one of the eucharistic prayers of *Common Worship* (p. 128); elsewhere (p. 134) he asserts of the language of 'modern' liturgical texts that 'Its rhythms and imagery possess dignity and occasional beauty'. Nothing, however, is done to support this assertion; and within Dr Davies's 'approach' nothing *could* be done. He adopts the stylistics of David Crystal, which is rather like French *explication de textes* and consists of an exhaustive report of the grammar and rhetoric of a text. This sometimes throws up interesting facts, like the unusualness of 'pre-modification in the form of address (to God or to the congregation)' as in 'Almighty and everlasting God' or 'Dearly beloved brethren'. But I think 'stylistics' is a misnomer, because unlike criticism, where comment on style is central, it does not allow us to offer opinions or make judgements, it only reports facts. Dr Davies agrees that beauty cannot to be apprehended by stylistics but declares it 'personal and subjective' (p. 203). It seems to follow that beauty does not really exist; which is untrue.

Dr Davies thinks that the only alternative to something like his factually accurate analyses of texts is 'assertion and counter assertion' (p. 148): that is, he denies the possibility of criticism as reasoned discussion. He also objects to 'our' in Dowden's opinion that the Prayer Book is long-enduring because 'in it our spiritual desires and aspirations, our gratitude, our joy, find adequate utterance' (p. 147). Dowden, he thinks, is claiming to speak on behalf of others without authority. No, he is in the 'third realm' of what is neither subjective nor objective, but where common judgement is possible. 'Subjective judgements … cannot be resolved by stylistic analysis', Dr Davies rightly says (p. 88), but it does not follow that there can be

no reasoned criticism. Dr Davies's restriction to the objective makes criticism impossible. Let us leave all that.

I am not competent to make a sociological assessment of Dr Davies's survey techniques, but his results are in any case interesting and give some solid evidence about what people in the pews *actually* think about worship. The Prayer Book Society can get some modest encouragement from them.

In the groups surveyed there were substantial minorities who 'like the language of worship to be traditional' and much smaller minorities who disagreed. Only 20% agreed with 'I find traditional language is a hindrance to proper worship' and in England a majority disagreed. The figures about the use of *thou* were not so encouraging.

Many respondents gave intelligibility and accessibility by outsiders as reasons for using 'modern' language, without necessarily liking it. (I liked the comment that modernization of the liturgy is a kind of taking up of a cross.) But despite what is often said, few thought that the Prayer Book is actually unintelligible, and few examples were given. The 'exclusive' third-person singular *he* (actually a misnomer because this is the form that can include the feminine) caused offence to less than 20% of the *female* respondents (despite a flaw in the question, which assumed that to call God 'he' is to make him 'specifically male': in French *jugement* is masculine but not male).

The favourers of the 'modern' used arguments like the need to keep up with the world, but actual progress or improvement was rarely claimed. Many of all shades of opinion were worried that the great range of choice in the modern liturgies was damaging the notion of common prayer.

As to theology: the downplaying of the need for repentance was generally welcomed by the favourers of the 'modern', along with the lesser emphasis on the almighty power of God. For better or for worse, changes including changes of style were recognized to have theological significance.

Prayer Book Society members who can afford £47.50 should keep this book by them to cite actual hard evidence against the common view that the Prayer Book is dying naturally.

Two further surveys are desirable, but would be very difficult to organize. Something like Dr Davies's questionnaire should be given to a group of people who had given up regular church-attendance during the last twenty-five years; then we could see what sociological evidence there is for any causal link from innovation in the liturgy. Then, a cross-section of the whole population, not just Church of England regulars, should be given a very simple examination in the language of liturgy traditional and modern. It would be pleasant to *prove* that Cranmer is at least as easy to understand as the alternative simple set of *Common Worship* collects.

NOTE

As a practitioner of stylistics Dr Davies is not always as sharp as he should be. Perhaps I am the only person to have made (in an essay in *The Real Common Worship*) the obvious remark that if prose is printed out in lines like verse it will tend to be read like verse. Anyway, Dr Davies answers nobody else. That some of the lines in the *CW* eucharistic prayers are metrically regular verse is undeniable, and Dr Davies does not deny it. He does say that 'it is difficult to find any examples of metrical regularity in these [eucharistic] prayers apart from the five indicated by Robinson' (p. 102). On the contrary it is embarrassingly easy. I argued that any short English phrase (up to five or six syllables) can be either prose or verse, depending on context, so I will cite only longer groups that are unmistakably verse, and I will restrict the examples to two per *CW* eucharistic prayer.

A Accept through him, our great high priest [iambic tetrameter]
in songs of everlasting praise [iambic tetrameter]

B Dying you destroyed our death
rising you restored our life [7.7. like 'Never further than Thy cross/ Never higher than Thy feet']

C All glory be to you, our heavenly Father [hendecasyllable]
the duty and the service that we owe [blank verse]

D [and several others] Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might [7.5 trochaic, like 'Father let me dedicate/All this year to Thee']

E So, Father, we remember all that Jesus did,
in him we plead with confidence his sacrifice [hexameters]

F Embracing our humanity [iambic tetrameter]
Look with favour on your people [trochaic tetrameter]

G Father, we plead with confidence
his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross [iambic tetrameter and hexameter]

H and made for all the perfect sacrifice for sin [hexameter]
we offer you this sacrifice of praise [blank verse]

N.B. that this is all very bad verse is an opinion that could be challenged, though as far as I know nobody has made the challenge; that it is verse is just (by the purest application of stylistics) a fact.

Ian Robinson
(*Ian Robinson's many books include* Prayers for the New Babel (1982) *and* The Establishment of Modern English Prose (1998))

PETER TOON: *Worship without Dumbing-down*
Preservation Press, 2005 ISBN 0 907839 90 8 £8.60

I used to belong to an English evangelical Anglican church which was strongly influenced by American trends in worship. We would have approximated to the target readership of this book, which is specifically written for Episcopalians in the USA, a generation of whom have no experience of traditional Anglican liturgy. I cannot imagine my former congregation being won over to the 'Common Prayer Tradition' when on page 4 their approach to worship is described as follows: 'They are probably not there in the first place to extend their horizons, not to cultivate a spiritual and heavenly mindset, not to be challenged by the Word of God … But, rather, they are there to satisfy some kind of spiritual or moral curiosity …' Such an indictment is simply unfair, I know from experience.

This is a good and necessary book, which makes many important points. Its weakness is a tendency to overstate its case, which a sympathizer may profitably overlook, but for the unconvinced to whom this is written the apology is left exposed.

The subtitle is *Knowing God through Liturgy*. The aim is to demonstrate how the tradition of worship according to the Book of Common Prayer is especially conducive to the growth of the Christian in the knowledge of God. Many themes are presented by a combination of instruction, which is equally applicable to many forms of liturgy, and polemic, which specifically contrasts the Prayer Book with modern worship. Most chapters end with lengthy quotations from classic Anglican divines, which are of interest but add little to the argument.

The first chapter describes the American experience, and throughout one has to watch, and give thanks, for not all the same liturgical damage has been inflicted over here. Indeed, some has been reversed with *Common Worship*, and now we even have an Archbishop of Canterbury prepared to defend Cranmer's 'recapitulation'[1], or what Dr Toon calls 'the double and deepening logic of faith' in the acts of penitence in the communion service.

After establishing the foundation of the Common Prayer Tradition, and highlighting the theological weakening in modern liturgy, the knowledge of God is expounded through a study of his person and attributes and his covenant relation with his people. We are then led through an exploration of Baptism and Confirmation, Morning and Evening Prayer, the Psalter, Holy Communion, and the church year. A recurring message is that while none of this liturgy is immediately wholly understandable on first hearing, if this is a path to the knowledge of God, then it must provide both access for all and the possibility of ever deepening maturity, discernment and commitment. The rich citation of scripture ensures that this is so.

[1] Sermon preached in Oxford on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of the martyrdom of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, 21 March 2006.

In many places Dr Toon touches the spot. In one sense the participation of the laity has increased in our worship, but with the customization offered by *Common Worship* the ownership of the liturgy is more in the hands of the priest than ever. The overuse of secular language such as 'community' and 'initiation' portrays an individualistic view of the Church as an association of persons, rather than view the Christian's primary identity as being a part of the body of Christ. The fashionable theology of a social Trinity is often a construct for the projection of our own human political arrangements. We are in danger of losing our appreciation of the wonder of the Incarnation, for God's immanence is taken for granted, since we no longer begin the knowledge of God with his transcendence.

At other times the arguments are strained. The popular use of the word 'relationship' is objected to when describing our union with God. There is a fair point about the relative richness of biblical terminology, as also with regard to 'community' already mentioned, but surely we are allowed, at least beyond formal liturgy, to make an effort to express our faith in modern vocabulary? The formula 'Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit' cannot be criticised for being open to a modalist interpretation without also criticising the *Gloria Patri* for being open to tritheism. A theological point cannot be sustained for 'I believe' in preference to 'We believe', the better argument against change being the confusion of variants. The church cannot undo decades of change in convention across society and prescribe a formal dress code for worship.

But for many these will be minor distractions from a strong central theme. The final chapter, 'God is Love', describes how eloquently the Prayer Book speaks of the divine love, whilst the worshippers, without any contradiction, are left in no doubt that they are sinners who begin the knowledge of God with fear. There is no wedge between God's wrath and his love. Attention is drawn to the harm done by sentimentalizing God's love, and it might have been said that the modern reluctance to speak of God's wrath is parallel, caused by an inability to perceive it as anything other than emotion.

I am left yet more convinced that the 'dumbing-down' of modern worship is a flattening out of the whole faith. God is less loving, less merciful, less holy and less angry. We are less sinful, less sanctified and less glorified. The church is less spiritual and less mystical. If this book can kindle an appreciation of the Common Prayer Tradition for any who are discontented with the easy and superficial, and thirsty for maturity and depth in their knowledge of God, then we have been well served. Such people exist, not least in my former church.

Mark Hart
(The Revd Dr Mark Hart is rector of St Peter's Plemstall and St John's Guilden Sutton in the diocese of Chester.)

Letters

'DEVOUTLY KNEELING'

From the Revd Canon M.C. PATERNOSTER, Wells

May I offer a comment on Peter Toon's article 'Devoutly Kneeling' (*Faith & Worship* No. 58)? His concern is mainly, it seems, with the growing practice of standing instead of kneeling; mine is, rather, that people *sit* even when exhorted to kneel. I spent most of my active ministry in Scotland. When I went north, some forty years ago, the practice of standing for creed and gospel, sitting for epistle and sermon, and kneeling for prayers and to receive communion was almost universally observed. I found when I returned to England that this was true no longer. As a parish priest I often had difficulty in persuading the elderly and infirm that in their case it was all right to sit during the prayers and receive communion standing; even though they could not kneel, they felt they ought to. Now I find that a majority of those who are perfectly capable of kneeling never apparently dream of doing so. It has to be admitted that the reordering of churches (such as Juliet Hole discusses in the preceding article) has in some cases rendered kneeling almost impossible: altar rails have been removed and pews replaced by chairs which are often set too close together. I have even come upon a clergyman instructing his congregation 'please sit for the prayers'.

Dr Toon ends his article, 'let us acquire the habit of devoutly and humbly kneeling'. It seems to me not so much a habit to be acquired as a once-universal practice to which we ought to return.

LITURGICAL WORSHIP

From LADY BUCKLEY, Bearsted, Kent

Reading Canon Evans' letter (*Faith & Worship* No. 58), I discovered what I have sorely missed for a dozen years or so. When a service is taken in the way he describes, an individual member of the congregation can relax, slot in, and be carried along, undisturbed by jarring elocution, dramatic style, awkward emphases or careless mistakes, to open their own heart and mind to God. At such services in the past (I realise now) I too was gratefully able to do my part 'as carefully and well as may be'. Which is why, afterwards, I often emerged inspired, having shared in 'real satisfaction of the spirit'. No amount of friendliness, fellowship, chat, or coffee (however desirable they may be for other reasons) can take the place of those rich treasures. And if we cannot find those treasures in church, where else are they to be found?

'KNOWING THE UNKNOWABLE'

From Mr DEWI HOPKINS, Bangor

The point I wished to make was that philosophers expose themselves to the danger of holding positions that do not accord with their real beliefs. This is what I take Johnson to have meant by his remark about the pebble. As Professor Gomme correctly suggests (*Faith & Worship* No. 58), more sophisticated arguments are inclined to get one into a 'tangle'.

(Letters of appreciation have also been received for Juliet Hole's article 'Authentic Encounters'.)

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