

MANDATE

The Bi-Monthly Magazine of the Prayer Book Society

Volume 27, Numbers 2 & 3

March / May 2004

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The Disfigured Face of the American Church: Self-Inflicted Pain 1964–2004

Where can I find a church that uses the 1928 Prayer Book?



Please remember to be generous to the Prayer Book Society in your Christian giving and also to mention it in your will.

We list parishes using the 1928 BCP by state or area, their ecclesiastical jurisdiction (Episcopal Church or "Continuing Church"), and all of their services, if from the 1928, or the ones that use the 1928 BCP. The Reformed Episcopal Church uses a Prayer Book which includes both the 1662 (Church of England) and much from the 1928.

An excellent reference is the *Directory of Traditional Anglican and Episcopal Parishes*, published by the Fellowship of

Concerned Churchmen. This directory does not tell what prayer book is used. You may order from the editor, Mrs. Jane Nones, 4800 Dupont Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55409, telephone: (612)824 3933.

Please let us know of other parishes that use the 1928 BCP. We are glad to know of them, and also that folks are reading *Mandate*. Since we can only list each parish once, it might be a good idea to keep the issues of *Mandate* that have this column to use for future reference.

New Hampshire

Charlestown

Church of the Good Shepherd (Anglican Church in America)

20 Sumner Street

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 418

Charlestown, NH 03603 • 603 826 4110

Sunday 10:00 am Holy Communion
(1st, 2nd, 4th)

Morning Prayer (3rd)

The Rev. Brian R. Marsh, Rector

Conway

St. Margaret of Scotland Pro-Cathedral (Anglican Church in America)

85 Pleasant Street (Route 153)

Conway, NH 03818 • 603 447 2404

Sunday 9:30 am Morning Prayer/Holy Communion

The Rev. Jeffrey Swayze, Rector

The Rev. Angelo D'Onofrio, Rector Emeritus

Jefferson

Mission of the North Country (Anglican Church in America)

St. Agnes RC Church Building, Jefferson

Mailing Address: P. O. Box 556

Lancaster, NH 03584 • 603 788 4597

Sunday 10:00 am Holy Communion
(2nd - 4th)

Morning Prayer (1st)

The Rev. Curt Hanners

Laconia Area

St. Michael's Chaplaincy (Anglican Church in America)

Winter Street (New Hampshire Veterans Home Building)

Tifton, NH

Mailing Address: 1 Crawford Street
Plymouth, NH 03264

603 536 1794

Sunday: Call for information

The Rev. Dean Steward, Chaplain

Manchester Area

St. Luke's (Anglican Church in America)

3 Limbo Lane

Amherst, NH

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 131

Amherst, NH 03031-0131

Sunday 10:00 am Holy Communion

The Rev. Dean Steward, Rector

The Rev. William McGinnis, Assistant

The Rev. Lawrence LaFleur, Deacon

The Rev. William Morrill, Deacon

Please write the Rev. Fr. David C. Kennedy, SSC, at 7231 Hearth Stone Ave., Boynton Beach, FL 33437-2920 if you know of parishes that use the 1928 BCP. Needless to say it will take a long time to list them all! Praise God for that!!!

THE MANDATE

March / May 2004

Volume 27, Numbers 2 & 3

Editor: The Rev'd Dr. Peter Toon • Design/Layout: Boldface Graphics

The Officers for the Year 2004 are:

President: The Rev. David Kennedy, SSC, of Florida • Vice-President: The Rev. Dr. Peter Toon of Tennessee and England

Treasurer: Dr. T. Herbert Guerry III of Georgia • Secretary: Mrs. Miriam K. Stauff of Wisconsin

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Reflections from the Editor's Desk

The PBS grows a New LEG

The Rev'd Dr. Peter Toon M.A., M.Th., D.Phil (Oxon)

Since 1971 the Society for the Preservation of the Book of Common Prayer, now the Prayer Book Society of the U.S.A., has been a society of individual members with support also from some churches. The prayerful and financial support of individual persons has without any doubt been the backbone of the Society. Without in any way losing this important LEG, the Board of Directors has decided to grow a new Leg, in order to meet the special needs of American Anglicanism at this time of crisis of identity and purpose.

I am very pleased and privileged to make the following announcement: **The Board of the Prayer Book Society of the U.S.A. has resolved to seek by God's help and guidance to bring into being: A FELLOWSHIP OF EPISCOPAL & ANGLICAN CHURCHES which use an edition of the historic BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.**

May I quickly add and emphasize that there is no intention whatsoever that this fellowship shall be a denomination or an ecclesial jurisdiction.

Rather, the plan is that this fellowship promoted by the Prayer Book Society will be: A voluntary association of parish churches, congregations and mission stations that are committed to the historic Anglican Way and united in using an edition of the classic Book of Common Prayer: e.g., the 1662 BCP, the 1928 BCP, or the 1962 Canadian BCP. It will be non-denominational and embrace the variety of Anglican groups.

The purpose is: To create and to develop a means of contact and fellowship between churches from different jurisdictions and denominations in order primarily to encourage & support each other; and then, in fellowship, as the Lord leads and enables, to find, in prayerful conversation and study, improved ways to serve the Lord in such areas as worship, teaching, preaching, evangelism, church planting and music, and particularly how to commend the use of the classic BCP to others.

How we hope it will work: The churches –big and small, high and low, rich and poor – will be held together by four means, by an annual meeting of representatives, a website, a mailing of a newsletter and a semi-annual magazine. Initially, the maintaining of the web-site, the production of the newsletter & magazine and the general administration will be provided by the Prayer Book Society until the Fellowship becomes mature enough to begin to provide its own minimal organization. The newsletter & magazine

would be sent in bulk to the member churches for internal distribution there.

Further explanation: It is expected that each parish or congregation will pay an annual membership fee and having paid this, will be eligible to send two representatives to the annual meeting of the Fellowship, where ways and means will be gradually developed for the administering and growth of the Fellowship as need arises and opportunities came along. The actual annual fee has not yet been determined but it is probable that initially parishes of less than 50 members would pay \$100.00, more than 50 but less than 100, \$200.00, 100-200, \$300.00, and over 200, \$400.00 a year. For this they will receive bulk mailing of the newsletter and the magazine. (Initially these publications will be subsidised by the Prayer Book Society for the membership fee will not cover the costs while the Fellowship is small & growing.)

How to express an interest: **It is proposed that this Fellowship will be inaugurated by Whitsuntide/Pentecost of 2004 and that the first annual meeting of reps from member churches be in 2005.** Please call 1-800-727-1928 or 610-490-0909 and leave your church name and number and we will call you. Or write to the PBS secretary via e-mail, Debbie@bee.net putting in the subject area, "Prayer Book Society Fellowship."

Please bring this to the attention of your Rector and Vestry and let us cause this new LEG to grow with strong muscles to serve the Lord with vigor.

In closing let me make several announcements. First of all, a sad word. The Rev. Wayland Coe, who has been our President for the last two years, has had to step down due to a medical condition which has restricted his sight. He remains a Director. Let us pray for him and his family.

In the second place, we intend to have a page in this magazine devoted to Letters from Readers. Please send letters to me at peter@toon662.fsnet.co.uk or at the PBS address in Pennsylvania.

Thirdly, please support the Society by buying what we produce and make available. See page 16 and then call 1 800 727 1928! For example, new for 2004 is the booklet, *An Act of Piracy. The Truth behind the Episcopal Liturgy of 1979*, which will only cost you \$5.00 including postage. And also *Annotated Order for Holy Communion*, the 1928 Service with explanatory notes for \$7.00. Why not get several for distribution to others, who need to recognize that the 1979 Prayer Book is not really and truly the classic and historic Book of Common Prayer? Thank you.



About Wayland Coe's Eyesight

Mrs. Janet Coe

Last summer, my husband, Wayland Coe, the Rector of St. Thomas' Episcopal Church in Houston, Texas, and President of the Prayer Book Society of the U.S.A., began having vision problems in his left eye. The disturbance in his vision seems to come and go until he finally sought help from a retinal specialist who was recommended to him by a parishioner. The doctor diagnosed a condition known as Central Retinal Vein Occlusion, or CRVO, which, as the name suggests, is a blockage in the vein that leads away from the eye through the optic bundle. The traditional treatment for this condition is oral steroids which function to keep the macula from swelling. Prolonged swelling of the macula can cause central vision blindness.

After two rounds of steroids without any relief, the doctor administered an injection of steroid directly into the eye in hopes that this would reduce the swelling. This was the last hope to save the eye from permanent macular damage. Unfortunately this attempt came too late and the damage was done. He lost the central vision in the left eye with blurred peripheral vision remaining.

With this loss of vision, some adjustments had to be made but none so great that life did not continue unabated. Many people have lived most of their lives with vision in only one eye, as has his father, and he knew there would be challenges but none so great that he would not adjust. I often commented on that fact, but I had one remaining fear: that possibly one day through an accident of some sort, he could lose the other eye. I comforted myself with the thought that the chances of such an accident were very slim. Onward through life we marched.

Just a few days before Christmas, Wayland woke up in the night and saw the same warning signs in his right eye that he had experienced before with his left eye. The next morning we were at the ophthalmologist's office and indeed, the right eye had CRVO. As the left eye had taken months before permanent damage was done, Wayland and the doctor agreed to wait until after Christmas when he would return for an injection of steroids in the right eye.

On Christmas Eve, another dramatic change

took place. Wayland started having blank spots in the vision of his right eye. This problem became worse over the next twenty-four hours. By Friday morning his vision was greatly impaired. The doctor, thankfully, saw us immediately. The steroid injection was administered and the good news was that the macula had not begun to swell. Our hope was that this treatment would keep the macula protected.

However, upon further investigation, the doctor determined that due to the sudden change in vision on Christmas Eve, the problem in the right eye was not CRVO, rather it was an arterial problem. The doctor was greatly concerned at the prospect of what was happening. He told us that for this type of event to happen in one eye in a man of his age

was rare enough, but for this to happen to the second eye was "off the charts." He immediately sent us to a round of other specialists in search of the cause of the problems.

After seeing a rheumatologist, a hematologist, our general practice physician, and a cardiologist, only one problem surfaced. Wayland was diagnosed

with an elevated level of homocystine which is an amino acid by-product in the blood. An elevated level of homocystine has been known to cause heart attack and strokes and there also seems to be a relation to CRVO. This condition is treatable with medication. We, however, are still searching for the cause of the arterial problem.

Today we are left with the obvious question: Will Wayland's eyesight return to normal as these homocystine levels return to normal? The answer is that there is no promise that he will ever regain his full vision. Every one responds to these problems differently. We were told not to get our hopes up. He could get some of his vision back or he may never again regain the lost vision. It is simply a matter of time and God's will.

The impact on his life is that Wayland cannot read without greatly enlarged print. He is unable to drive at all. He has difficulty recognizing faces. He cannot see more than a few feet in front of him. He is legally blind. The life adjustments have only just begun.

Yet, there is always hope. We recently visited the Lighthouse, formerly known as the Lighthouse
Continued on Page 13



Andrew, Abby, Wayland, and Janet Coe

The Disfigured Face of the American Episcopal Church

1. Homosexuality & “The American Religion”

The Rev. Leander S. Harding, Ph.D.

Gene Robinson was elected and consecrated a bishop because he had become an accomplished practitioner of “The American Religion.” To understand what this means, read on!

The American Religion

Harold Bloom, an iconoclastic literary critic at Yale, wrote a book published in 1992, with the title *The American Religion*. Using an argument developed by Msgr. Ronald Knox in his magisterial work on Enthusiasm and by the Presbyterian theologian Phillip Lee in his book *Against The Protestant Gnostics*. Bloom makes a convincing case that the real American Religion that is the unofficial but actual spiritual mythos which gives shape to the American worldview and energy to the American religious quest is some form of Gnosticism. The Gnostics, ancient and contemporary, teach that the true and deepest self is a spark of divinity which has become lost and imprisoned in a corrupt world. The drama of salvation is the drama of rediscovering this secret self and reuniting this spark with the divine one. This is accomplished by access to a secret knowledge or “gnosis” which is unavailable to the uninitiated. Gnostic versions of Christianity have been a problem for the church from the earliest times. The struggle with Gnosticism caused St. Irenaeus (130-200 A.D.) to write his chief work “Adversus omnes Haereses.” Gnosticism is hard to kill and has many contemporary fans including the scholars of the Jesus Seminar who champion the Gnostic Gospel of Thomas.

Bloom thinks that it matters little what is on the label, the flavor of the product is more often than not Gnostic. “Mormons and Southern Baptists call themselves Christians, but like most Americans they are closer to ancient Gnostics than to early Christians. I have centered on Mormons and the Southern Baptists than on other major denominations . . . but most American Methodists, Roman Catholics and even Jews and Muslims are also more Gnostic than normative in their deepest and unwariest beliefs. The American Religion is pervasive and overwhelming, however it is masked, and even our secularists, indeed even our professed atheists are more Gnostic than humanist in their ultimate presuppositions. We are a religiously mad

culture, furiously searching for the spirit, but each of us is subject and object of the one quest, which must be for the original self, a spark or breath in us that we are convinced goes back to before the creation.” (*The American Religion*, p. 22)

The quintessential American Religion is the quest for the true and original self which is the “pearl of great price,” the ultimate value. Finding the true self requires absolute and complete freedom of choice unconstrained by any sources of authority outside the self. Limits upon personal freedom and choice are an affront to all that is sacred to the American Religion. When the self determining self finds “the real me” salvation is achieved and the ultimate self has achieved contact with the ultimate reality. Finding your true self is to the contemporary Gnostic the same thing as finding God. For the Gnostic the purpose of the religious community is to facilitate the quest and validate the results.

The contemporary Gnostic church, which can appear in both conservative and liberal forms, is the community of those who know that they have found God because they have found their own uncreated depths. For both the Southern Baptist and the latest devotee of the New Age salvation is often reduced to personal experience, which can only be validated by those who have had similar “deeply personal” experiences.

Notice how perfectly the contemporary presentation of homosexuality fits the American Religion. A person who discovers that he or she is Gay has recovered his or her true self and “come out” and come through what the Gnostics called the “aeons” in this case levels of personal, familial and social oppression that hinder and constrain the true self. It is a heroic and perilous journey of self-discovery which would be familiar to a first century Gnostic like Valentinus. That the means of liberation is sexual practice is even a familiar theme. Some ancient Gnostics were ascetic but others counseled sexual license. Both stratagems can come from the same contempt of nature and are different ways of asserting the radical independence of the self.

Being Gay and The American Religion

Here is the point. Gene Robinson was elected Bishop of the Episcopal Church in New Hampshire not in spite of being Gay, not as an act of



toleration and compassion toward Gay people, but because he is Gay and as such is an icon of the successful completion of the quest to find the true and original self. He has been chosen for high religious office because he represents high religious attainment. He is being recognized and receiving regard for being an accomplished practitioner of the American Religion. According to this Gnostic logic divorcing his wife and leaving his family to embrace the Gay lifestyle is not some unfortunate concession to irresistible sexual urges but an example of the pain and sacrifice that the seeker of the true self must be willing to endure. That natural, organic and conventional restraints must be set aside is time worn Gnostic nostrum. From the point of view of this contemporary Gnosticism, if the church does not validate such a noble quest for enlightenment then it invalidates itself and shows that is no help in the only spiritual struggle that counts, the struggle to be the "real me." Because Gene Robinson has "found himself" he has according to the Gnostic logic of the American religion found God and is naturally thought to be a truly "spiritual person" and a fit person to inspire and lead others on their spiritual journey which is to end in a discovery of the true self which is just so the discovery of the only real god, the Gnostic god.

Seeing the elevation of Gene Robinson through the lens of the mythos of the American Religion explains some of the fanaticism of his defenders, explains why so many bishops of the Episcopal Church including the Presiding Bishop would be willing to take such institutional risks. Here is a paradigm of salvation that echoes deeply in the American soul and promises to restore a sense of purpose to a mainline church which has lost confidence in the story of salvation told by the orthodox tradition of the church. Inclusion becomes the fundamental value for the church because it allows the church to have a real purpose of validating that people have indeed found their true identity, and thus found God. Gay people become icons of hope. These people have "found themselves" and hence by force of Gnostic logic "found God." To celebrate Gays in the life of the church, not accept but affirm and celebrate, is to celebrate the church as a truly spiritual community with real spiritual power which can facilitate and validate the salvation of souls. The church leaders who are risking everything for Gene Robinson are in their own way

and according to an heretical but powerful vision trying desperately to find a spiritual vocation for the church that has some liveliness and connects deeply with the deepest yearning of the American soul. The Presiding Bishop and his company of supporters think they are regaining the lost keys of heaven. That these newly discovered keys are not the real thing but Gnostics imitators of the keys of St. Peter will be lost on those who are drunk on the promises of the American Religion of the true, free and uncreated self.

This analysis is a caution to those of us who think of ourselves as conservative. The fault line in the current church controversy is not between orthodox "conservatives" and revisionist "liberals," but between versions of the American Religion preferred by the cultural right and the cultural left and a tradition of genuine orthodoxy that is everywhere subverted to the service of the idol of the radically independent and uncreated self. There is much loose talk about the Holy Spirit and claims of "a personal word of the Lord" which are so obviously heterodox on the lips of the new bishop of New Hampshire parallel routine claims made in "conservative" circles.

In many cases we read the Bible in a highly individualized and devotional way with a complete indifference to its original context in the life of the people of Israel and to its ecclesial, social-political and doctrinal implications. A "personal relationship" with the Lord is vital to true religion but this relationship can be conceived in ways that discount the relevance of sustained study of scripture and doctrine or make them practically irrelevant. The famous 20th century Revivalist, Billy Sunday, was fond of saying that he didn't know anymore about theology than "a jack rabbit knows about ping pong." It is unlikely that similar enthusiasms in our own time will be able to resist the lure of the idol of the American Religion. At the moment we are astounded by enormities provided by the subversion of the Faith by the proclivities of the cultural left. There is no particular reason why the Gnosticism of the cultural right should not produce different but equally astonishing enormities.

The antidote is the same it has ever been; complete immersion in the Scriptures, close attention to the story of Israel as Israel, to our Jewish roots and close attention to the teachings of the Church Fathers, the Reformers and other exemplars of the Great Tradition.



The Disfigured Face of the American Episcopal Church

2. A Civil War in the U.S.A.

The Rev. Dr. Louis R. Tarsitano

A civil war has raged among American Anglicans, whether they call themselves “Episcopalians” or something else, for more than a generation. I have spent my entire 26 years as an Anglican priest in that struggle. That civil war has recently and notoriously become a world-wide scandal, as the General Convention of the mainline Episcopal Church in the United States of America (ECUSA) has declared that sodomy is no longer a sin, but a state of life that can be blessed by God, so that a man who divorces his wife and later begins living sexually with another man can be a proper candidate for election and consecration to the episcopate.

Now, I hate to say this, but the orgy of shock and horror in Episcopalian and Anglican circles that followed this “baptism” of behavior declared immoral by God himself was not really very credible, except among the bishops and representatives of some of the Anglican churches in South America, Africa, and Asia, who are still trying to get their minds around the fact that they have been lied to with a stunning regularity by so many of their First World counterparts. All is not well with the revised and neutered Anglican religion of the industrialized nations, or notably charitable under the regime of the revisionists, despite what Third World believers, with their stubbornly biblical Christianity, have been repeatedly assured.

Strangest of all, however, has been the amazed reaction of America’s Episcopal clergy. The average young boy with a mild interest in sports knows more about the history and statistics of Major League Baseball or of Professional Football than entire legions of Episcopal clergymen will admit to their having known about the events in their chosen profession, in their national church, or even in their own dioceses during the past few decades. A puzzled look was seen on a great number of their faces when Episcopal Presiding Bishop, Frank Griswold, candidly remarked that the consecration as bishop of a man living an openly homosexual life was the culmination of thirty years of effort.

From the 1970s to 2004 – an overview

That effort, by the way, wasn’t that subtle. Even the fuzziest sleepy-head, for example, might have noticed when the General Conventions of 1976 and 1979 replaced the historic statement of Anglican doctrine, discipline, and worship, *The Book of Common Prayer*, with an entirely new book. The

“new religion” of the “new book” was promoted as “more contemporary,” which it was, but only in certain narrow ways. It was partly just another example of the banality of trendy, post-Vatican II liturgy. It was partly an exercise in what would later be known as “political correctness,” with an “inclusive Psalter” and an ordinal that italicized personal pronouns, so that he could become she. It was mainly an effort, however, to accustom Episcopalians in “progressive” parishes to the treatment of the received Christian Faith as nothing more binding than a series of antique religious metaphors and optional modes of “spiritual” thinking, including the central, self-revealed doctrine of God the Blessed Trinity.

Also not very subtle was the ordination of women, beginning in 1976. Taking whatever position one chooses on the subject, one must still admit that the New Testament teaches that women are not to have spiritual authority over men in the Church (e.g., 1 Timothy 2); that the Church understood the New Testament’s teaching on authority in this way from the beginning, as reflected in her practice; that the vast majority of Christians alive today belong to churches that maintain the all-male apostolic ministry; and that almost twenty centuries in, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church simply lacks the authority to say “nuts” to any of the above, let alone to all of the above.

Nonetheless, from the late 1970s through the 1990s, the new book and the new ministry were enforced in many dioceses with what amounted to a scorched-earth policy. Priests were deposed, whether for leaving the Episcopal Church in protest of these innovations or for remaining in the Episcopal Church to resist the new order from within. Parishes were sued for their property, shut down, or simply seized to eradicate the old ways. Acceptance of the ordination of women was made a requirement to hold any office in the Episcopal Church, clerical or lay, with only a few brave dioceses bucking the trend. Through all of this, an eerie silence prevailed in most of today’s centers of Episcopalian protest against Gene Robinson, the homosexual bishop of New Hampshire. Some of the bishops that signed manifestoes of protest against Mr. Robinson had themselves persecuted parishes to death in support of the new regime, which they only now perceived as having gone too far in this particular instance.

But where was everybody else? Many of the clergy were just plain afraid of drawing vindictive



episcopal attention to themselves, a motivation that is easier to understand and to forgive, than it is convenient or helpful to the spiritual welfare of the Church. A great many others, however, had a personal stake in the revised religion. Once again ignoring Scripture and history, the Episcopal Church conformed itself to the American “divorce culture,” in which the need for individual self-fulfillment has the power to nullify vows, neutralize discipline, and redefine Holy Matrimony. Both the clergy and the laity divorced and remarried in increasing numbers, and those numbers expected not just sympathy or mercy in the Church, but active affirmation and approval. In fact, a fair number of the clergy began to preach and write in favor of divorce and remarriage, especially their own, as “goods” in and of themselves. After all, whereas once they were maritally unfulfilled, now they were happy, and any question about their conduct would have to be taken as a direct insult to their new wives, husbands, “life-partners,” etc.

At this point, moreover, the secular divorce culture and the ordination of women are so much a part of the everyday life of the Episcopal Church that it is impossible to tell if any significant number of Episcopalians have ever understood the profound changes in faith and practice necessary to accommodate them. The theological definitions of words such as “man,” “woman,” “humanity,” “nature,” “order,” “matrimony,” “fidelity,” and “obedience” have had to be adjusted in the direction of a revised doctrine and discipline never known before in the historic Christian Church. The Holy Scriptures now offer only “ideals” of marriage, sex, and ordination, rather than revealing God’s explicit will for their use by the faithful.

This shift toward relativism and re-definition left a theological vacuum that was filled, not with some other organizing principle of theology, but by a secular “rights doctrine.” In Scriptural terms, a “right” is a duty owed another according to the righteous will and judgment of God. In this sense, the Ten Commandments can be considered a bill of “rights”—of right actions and duties toward God and man, as decreed by God. The endowment of rights by the Creator found in the American Declaration of Independence is compatible with the Scriptural view. In the Declaration, rights are understood as social, as a proper society is created and judged by the justice of God.

The modern secular “rights doctrine,” on the other hand, views rights as individual possessions and entitlements possessed by individual persons by virtue of their mere existence, essentially in opposition to the claims of others, including God. Under a secular rights doctrine, rights are as numerous as the desires of each individual person, and that person is entitled to satisfy each of his desires and to view as hostile anyone or anything that interferes with their fulfillment. Thus, while

the Scriptural and social doctrine of rights seeks righteous harmony among men under God, the secular rights doctrine presupposes conflict among men on the basis of conflicting desires, viewed as rights, so that in practical terms there must always be winners and losers in the never-ending competition for rights.

In the end, the secular rights theory reduces human interaction to a struggle for dominance. The presupposition that rights can and must be in conflict explains in large part the bitterness of the struggles over revised worship, the ordination of women, the ability to divorce and remarry at will, and now, finally, the “right” to choose a sexual partner of one’s liking, whatever his or her sex. As the fallen human heart and its desires continue to assert themselves, there can be no doubt that further “rights” will be asserted at the expense of traditional Christianity and traditional Christians.

Reflecting on 30 Years of Innovations

Consider, then, the effect of thirty years of these and lesser revisionist enterprises. Important self-destructive and self-defeating principles had been planted and had taken root in the Episcopalian mindset. Biblical doctrine, for example, can be rendered obsolete by changing times. Moral law is specific to particular eras and cultures, and void in any other circumstances. He and she can be interchanged because, no matter what the Scripture says, there is no significant difference between male and female in the functioning of the modern, egalitarian church. Personal happiness and fulfillment are the conclusive experiential proofs of any religious practice. Perceived rights are the ultimate value. Most of all, the silence of the Bible is more conclusive than its words. It isn’t the “bad” divorce or the “bad” use of authority by women that the Episcopal Church has embraced, but the “good” divorce and the “good” use of authority by women that the Bible never mentions and, therefore, does not, cannot forbid.

There’s one more thing. Many of the clergy (and to be fair, a good number of the laity) were simply bored, suffering from accidie. Sometimes called “sloth,” accidie is one of the Seven Deadly Sins, and it involves a distaste for the regularity of Christian duty, which is taken as monotony—the same old liturgy, prayers, morality, doctrines, Scripture readings, and discipline. Sometimes accidie leads to spiritual paralysis, but it can also, as it did with many Episcopalians, take the form of a frenzy of experimentation and the desire to try “the latest thing,” until the latest thing in this case became an actively homosexual bishop and the blessing of same-sex intercourse.

People who had rarely, if ever, raised a peep about revision or its enforcement, rose in protest: “But homosexuality is against the Scripture.” Yes, the ruling revisionists replied, but when we

changed doctrines, ordained women, and normalized divorce, you joined with us in granting that changing times and needs have the power to trump Scripture.

"But the Church has always taught that homosexual acts are sins," the protesters pleaded again. Of course, replied the revisionists, but the Church never ordained women before or allowed divorced and remarried men to serve in the ministry, and you have embraced these departures from history and tradition. Why shouldn't people of diverse sexualities have the same rights to happiness and self-fulfillment as others, whatever was true in the past?

Then the protesters desperately argued, "But marriage is between a man and a woman." Sure, answered the revisionists, under archaic theories of patriarchy and sexual differences. But we did away with all that when we ordained women, and if he and she can be interchanged at ordinations, why not at weddings?

Now arguing in circles, the protesters repeated, "But the Bible condemns homosexuality." You just don't get it, sighed the revisionists. The Bible only condemns the abuse of homosexuality, not the loving, faithful, committed homosexuality that our General Convention has identified as a gift from God. The good homosexuality is an absolute right of those who identify themselves as homosexuals.

The Episcopal train has left the station, and in the rough hands of thieves who are determined to drive it in their own way and for their own use. And from these hijackers' point of view, it doesn't matter if they wreck the train, as long as it never travels in the old way or serves its former purposes again. Meanwhile, many of the efforts to recover the train, or at least to return it to the Anglican Way, have been more about self-expression and participation in meetings than about accomplishing anything useful. Twigs are offered where heroic chunks of theological fuel are needed, and no matter how much one loves those who make such offers, the temptation remains to give them a good shake for their lack of comprehension of the magnitude of what must be accomplished to salvage the Anglican Way from both its enemies and its hapless friends.

Traditionalists, Orthodox, Conservatives & Extra-Mural Anglicans

When I called myself an "Anglican traditionalist" earlier on, I did so because words like "conservative" and "orthodox" have taken on very odd meanings in the current Anglican controversies. Certain bishops, for example, who have enthusiastically ordained women, surrounded themselves with divorced and remarried priests, and almost completely abandoned the historic liturgy of the Church, are called "orthodox leaders." Episcopalians who will go along with every bit of the revisionist agenda, except the most recent initiative in favor of the homosexual lifestyle, unblushingly call themselves "conservatives." Whatever is in their hearts, they offer in practice only a choice between taking one's revisionism straight or with soda.

Similarly, the "extra-mural Anglicans," groups of people claiming an Anglican heritage, but outside the institutional limits of the Episcopal Church, have had a mixed success. Some of the groups have relations with Anglican churches in other nations, and some do not, but there has been a distressing tendency among them either to imitate the hubris and coercion of debased late Episcopalianism, albeit under new management, or to dream of recreating the Anglican Way as they deem it should have been from the first. Both of these approaches are a-historical and ideological, so it is only by the grace of God that a number of decent, honest parishes have been founded outside the Episcopal Church to continue the traditional Anglican Way, however thin they may be on the ground, and despite the errors common to all new movements.

For a traditional Anglican, the unifying factor among these disparate enterprises is mostly frustration. To achieve their purposes, revisionists, heretics, and apostates have denied the existence of any permanent, objective content in the Anglican Way so often that even people who despise their agenda, would-be Anglicans themselves or appalled onlookers from other traditions, have begun to believe the "big lie" of Anglican vacuity as a fact. They have also forgotten that while Anglicans have generally never claimed the necessity of being an Anglican to be saved, they usually have insisted that one must be an Anglican to be an Anglican. But what does that mean?

The Genuine Anglican Way

The logical place to begin is with the English Reformation itself. When she reached her maturity in the seventeenth century, the Reformed English Church understood herself to be the ancient catholic church of Britain with a renewed focus on the sovereignty of God's grace and a life defined by the Holy Scriptures and the witness of the undivided Church of the first five centuries. One need not concur in this position, or admire the human vagaries of its maintenance, to recognize that it is, nevertheless, "something," and not an invitation to "anything goes."

As the Anglican Way spread around the world, the boundaries of reformed catholic faith and practice were maintained, neither by a special "teaching office" or magisterium, nor by a supreme bishop or super-synod, but by a series of written formularies: the Book of Common Prayer; the Ordinal; the Catechism; and the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion. The ecumenical Creeds determined who was a Christian; the formularies determined who was an Anglican.

Some years ago, while I was traveling in England, some men working on a canal found what looked like a giant plug, stuck into a giant drain. Nobody remembered what it was, and so the men pulled it out. It was a plug, and it was a drain, and the water ran out of the canal. Much the same thing happened when Anglicans forgot that the formularies were the framework holding their national churches and communion together. When they began to tinker with them, or to replace them outright as in the United States, the framework collapsed and the content of the Anglican Way started its way down the drain.

For this reason, most of the help or advice that has been offered to American Anglicans has been worse than useless. The Anglican Way and the Anglican Communion cannot be saved by developing a stronger, centralized government around the Archbishop of Canterbury and the other Primates of the various Anglican churches, to which all Anglicans will owe obedient fealty. If Anglicans should agree that such an arrangement were proper, then we all owe the Bishop of Rome or the Patriarch of Constantinople a sincere apology. The original justification of the English Reformation was based on the twin principles that, within the universal Church, the church in a particular nation has the godly authority to govern itself within the boundaries of the revealed Christian faith and that one national church does not possess the authority to intervene involuntarily in the life of another national church.

At first, it may seem that these principles work in favor of the revisionists, but just the opposite is true. When followed, the Anglican Way is a Christian way, and the supreme duties of every Anglican are to say “yes” to God in all things and to say “no” to man when conscience requires it, willingly paying the temporal costs of divine obedience. All the American Anglicans have to do to continue being faithful Anglicans is say “no” to revisionism, begin again with the formularies as their baseline, and gather together to say their prayers. It is unfortunate, of course, that Episcopalians have permitted their General Convention to claim all of their real estate and other temporal property, to be used as a weapon against them, but the property is always of less value than God’s grace. Furthermore, it simply isn’t reasonable for the Americans to expect foreign churches and foreign bishops to take some sort of ecclesiastical action that will secure property for them under American civil law.

There is, of course, something that the various bishops, archbishops, and primates of the Anglican Communion can do for the Americans. They can face facts and admit that the American revisionists and their General Convention, whatever they are, are not Anglicans according to the only standards that exist, the historic formularies. After all, the Church of England did not recognize the reor-

ganized church in the newly independent United States as Anglican, until the Americans adopted a Book of Common Prayer consistent with her own. And there is nothing that stops the churches of the Anglican Communion from working and praying with whatever Americans they judge to be their fellow faithful Anglicans.

The only real hang-ups are these. First, there is the pretense that a communion of churches that began as a protest against a universal ecclesiastical government is somehow itself just such a universal government and empowered to declare who may pray with whom in all the nations of the world, enforcing this and that jurisdictional boundary. Under the traditional Anglican Way, neither a bureaucracy nor a study commission is necessary to determine that sodomy, or anything else contrary to Scripture, is a sin. Second, there is the additional pretense that the Episcopal General Convention can claim not just property, but also ownership of the Anglican identity in America.

Last of all comes the almost infinite capacity of contemporary Anglicans for self-defeat and uncharity to one another. Especially in the U.S.A. and in the other Anglican churches of the industrialized world, one may be whatever one wants, one may try to remake the Church however one desires, as long as one isn’t traditionally Anglican. Those whose “bright idea” is that all will be well if only the Anglicans would be more like the Romans, the Orthodox, the Presbyterians, the Pentecostals, or what have you, all have some place to go if their schemes blow up and exterminate the Anglican Way. In fact, it is hard to imagine why they have not moved on to their model churches and traditions, where their visions are already realized. I, for one, would not dare to argue that they might jeopardize their salvation by such an act of honesty.

But, then, I’m an Anglican and unable to accept universal claims except from Christ. Other people may have their Plans “B,” “C,” “D,” “E,” and “F,” but people like me are stuck with a single option—our conviction that our calling is to follow Jesus Christ in the traditional Anglican Way. We don’t want to force that calling on anybody else, but that’s not the same thing at all as pretending that the traditional formularies leave the meaning of the Anglican Reformation or of the word “Anglican” itself up for grabs. And it would be very convenient if those who do not wish to be Anglicans would leave us in peace to pick up such pieces as remain and to get on with our lives. We don’t mind their efforts to convert us, for such efforts are every believer’s obligation. But we will resist, until the Lord releases us, any attempts, hostile or friendly, to re-define us out of existence.

[Dr. Tarsitano is the Rector of St. Andrew’s, Savannah, Georgia, and co-author with Dr. Toon of Neither Archaic nor Obsolete, a study of the language of prayer, available from the PBS Office.]

The Disfigured Face of the American Episcopal Church

3. Is “The Network” built on sand?

The Rev. Dr. Peter Toon

The recently formed Network of thirteen dioceses within the ECUSA has stated that it intends to maintain Christian orthodox in faith and morality and live within the constitution and canons of the same Church. These dioceses are: Albany, Central Florida, Dallas, Florida, Fort Worth, Pittsburgh, Quincy, Rio Grande, San Joaquin, South Carolina, Southwest Florida, Springfield, & Western Kansas. Some of its members have stated that they regard certain acts of the General Convention of 2003, and of the Presiding Bishop with other Bishops since then, as unconstitutional. These acts are all to do with the permitting of same-sex blessings and the consecrating of Bishop Gene Robinson of New Hampshire, who celebrates living in a same sex partnership.

It may be observed that the logic of this position is this. That before the General Convention of 2003, there was nothing fundamentally wrong with the Constitution and Canons of the ECUSA. In other words, what was agreed and done in late 2003 concerning sexual relations by the General Convention, and supported by a majority of dioceses, is judged by “The Network” as being unique in terms of the long list of innovations introduced and imposed by the General Convention since the 1960s.

We all agree that sexual matters go to the core of human feeling and so an innovation which goes against the traditional taboos and standards of western culture – not to mention against Islamic and much tribal culture of the Global South – and which pioneers new understanding, definitions and practical sexual arrangements within the human rights culture and the personal fulfilment ethos of western culture, is going to create a lot of interest & condemnation around the world. So it is not surprising that Christian leaders of the Global South as well as Muslim clerics have condemned the recent sexual innovations of the ECUSA. This widespread horror has given “The Network” a wave of background publicity and support, which have tended to strengthen its case in the public arena and media.

Yet, what is judged by conservative human culture to be an innovation and aberration of a uniquely serious kind may not be – in God’s way of judging things – uniquely wicked. In fact, it may,

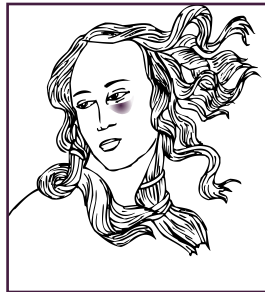
for example, be the fruit, the growth or the result of an earlier innovation (or innovations), which in God’s sight may be of a greater wickedness. And, it may well be the case that unless the earlier innovations are corrected then the official and offending ECUSA sexual aberrations of 2003 will remain and will multiply.

The Climax of a Process

In the case of the ECUSA, a very strong case can be presented for the position that the consecrating of Gene Robinson was the climax of, or one special fruit of, a process of the implementing of “justice” in the same ECUSA. That is, the real source of this innovation in “justice” are earlier major decisions taken by the General Convention and put into canon law (and to which, apparently, most of the members of “The Network” had/have no special disagreement).

Consider that since the 1970s the General Convention has taken as its theme a topic or phrase taken from the so-called “Baptismal Covenant” found in the Prayer Book that was approved in 1976 & 1979 to replace the received, classic Book of Common Prayer (1928). One aspect of this covenant is that the baptised in the ECUSA are to work for “justice and peace.” These words have been consistently understood against the meaning given to them in the revolutionary 1960s. In other words, they belong to the culture of human rights and of personal therapeutic self-fulfilment. So, for example, it is justice to work for the right of a human being to have a life & experience, which are true to her/his sexual orientation. And true peace in the church is only reached when each person is free and empowered to be and to express who she or he really is.

In fact what “The Network” does not seem yet to have seen sufficiently clearly – and this is supremely important – is that the making of the 1979 Prayer Book [basically in essence “A Book of Alternative Services”] into the official Prayer Book of the ECUSA was a major change in the worship, doctrine, polity, discipline and morality of the ECUSA. It enabled the ECUSA to have the outward show of both a semi-traditional liturgy & the use of an ancient title, while pioneering the entry of all kinds of doctrinal, moral and practical innovations into the life of the Church. Take, for example, the



very name given to the new Prayer Book of 1976/79 in which, regrettably, dishonesty is enshrined as a characteristic of the changing ECUSA. Knowing that it was surely breaking the Commandment, “Thou shall not bear false witness,” but justifying itself on the basis that the end justifies the means, the General Convention chose to call its new prayer book of varied services (in which were all kinds of influences from feminism and the values of the 1960s) by the ancient and hallowed name of “The Book of Common Prayer,” as it also confined the authentic Book of Common Prayer to the status of a historical document. And then it proceeded to persecute those who chose to continue to use the classic Book of Common Prayer (i.e., the American 1928 edition which descends from the 1662 BCP).

Further, “The Network,” while it makes all kinds of claims concerning its commitment to the uniqueness of holy matrimony and of the latter being the only relation in which there should be sexual intercourse, does not yet seem to have realised that the canon law of the ECUSA, and the very position of not a few of the members of its dioceses, actually stand for something other than the uniqueness of holy matrimony. That is, they stand – at least partially – for a conservative form of the divorce culture which has dominated American society since the 1950s. In other words, “The Network” has not yet publicly admitted and confessed that the allowing of divorced persons to be remarried in church, and the allowing of clergy to continue in office & pastoral leadership after divorce and remarriage, are in real terms a major contributing cause of the actions of General Convention in 2003 in allowing same-sex blessings and confirming the election of Gene Robinson as bishop. After all, if the so-called heterosexual person is given rights to personal fulfilment according to orientation in multiple marriage arrangements, why should not the homosexual person be treated “in justice” the same way? Further, there seem to have been no objections to Gene Robinson based upon the fact that he is a divorced man and as such is unsuitable to be a bishop! Likewise, the trial of Bishop Righter several years ago was not on the charge that he has 3 wives alive; but, that he ordained a gay man – an amazing charge and brought by bishops now represented in “The Network”!

Then, also, “The Network,” by allowing without question the presence of ordained women, does not seem to have fully realised just how much the ordaining of women contributed to the change in doctrine and morality in the ECUSA and so is a major contributory cause to the consecration of Gene Robinson. Women were first ordained in the 1970s and it was very much seen by many then as an issue of justice and human rights. After they were ordained, the same justice cried out for a language to be in place in the liturgy & Bible which was true to their identity; and, so it was, that inclu-

sive language came into the 1976/79 Prayer Book & Psalter and in greater measure – for God as well as humanity – into the various Liturgies approved by General Convention in the period from 1980 to 2003. Further, belief in the ordination of women as of divine institution became in the 1990s an article of faith for office-holders in the ECUSA. Had women not been ordained certainly Robinson would never have been considered for consecration.

Getting things Right

I suggest that for “The Network” truly to become by heavenly grace the righteous remnant of the ECUSA and to be a root, from which godly church order can grow, it surely must take seriously the fact that it is based upon a Formulary (the 1979 prayer book) and upon Canons which – even with the best will in the world – cannot be justly described as commending a biblical, Anglican orthodoxy. As a minimum, “The Network” needs to recover the classic Formularies of the Anglican Way – BCP, Ordinal & Articles – in order to regain its Anglican identity and orthodoxy. And, at the same time, it needs to do a most serious review of the Canons and the way that they are interpreted in order to know which it must set aside. In terms of the ordaining of women it needs, as a basic minimum, to commit itself to the doctrine of Reception. And, of course, and importantly, to do all this while seeking to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness and to be active in mission and evangelism. The thirteen dioceses need to look in four directions at the same time – up to the enthroned Lord, back to the Scriptures and the classic Anglican tradition, forward in hope of the Second Coming, and around upon the world in mission and evangelism.

Despite the courage and energy expended by devoted founders and members of “The Network” this movement will most probably collapse, even though it has at the moment the support of thirteen Primates of the Anglican Communion. It will do so because it is presently built upon sand. Let it be founded upon rock.

Thirteen Global Primates state “ECUSA has separated itself”

In February 2004, thirteen Primates have issued a statement on the current state of affairs in the Anglican Communion. The full text of the statement follows:

“We, Primates of the Global South greet you in the name of our Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The actions of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America (ECUSA) in the election, confirmation, and consecration of Canon Gene Robinson have created a situation of grave concern for the entire Anglican

Communion and beyond. Their actions are a direct repudiation of the clear teaching of the Holy Scriptures, historic faith and order of the church.

They also constitute a clear defiance of the Primates of the Communion, who warned at their October meeting:

‘If his consecration proceeds, we recognise that we have reached a crucial and critical point in the life of the Anglican Communion and we have had to conclude that the future of the Communion itself will be put in jeopardy. In this case, the ministry of this one bishop will not be recognised by most of the Anglican world, and many provinces are likely to consider themselves to be out of Communion with the Episcopal Church (USA). This will tear the fabric of our Communion at its deepest level, and may lead to further division on this and further issues as provinces have to decide in consequence whether they can remain in communion with provinces that choose not to break communion with the Episcopal Church (USA).’

The world needs to know that the rebellious and erroneous actions of ECUSA are contrary to the teaching of the Anglican Communion and represent a departure from five thousand years of Judeo-Christian teaching and practice. By their actions, ECUSA has separated itself from the remainder of the Anglican Communion and the wider Christian family.

We appeal to all the faithful to be diligent in prayer and faith and call upon Anglicans across the communion to engage in loyal witness to the risen Christ and to resist and confront the false teaching undergirding these actions and which is leading people away from the redeeming love of Jesus into error and danger.

We ask you to join in our repentance for failing to be sufficiently forthright in adequately addressing this issue in the past, and we invite you to stand with us in a renewed struggle to uphold the received truth found in Jesus and His word.

We re-affirm our solidarity with faithful Bishops, clergy and church members in North America who remain committed the historic faith and order of the church and have rejected unbiblical innovation. We offer our support and the full weight of our ministries and offices to those who are gathering in a Network of Anglican Communion Dioceses and Parishes now being organized in North America. We regard this Network as a hopeful sign of a faithful Anglican future in North America. We invite those who are committed to the preservation of historic Biblical faith and order, to join that work and its essential commitment to the Gospel.

Finally, we appeal to you to sustain us in prayer, and to intercede especially for Anglicans in North America. ‘Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen (Eph 3:20-21).’

The Most Rev. Peter Akinola, Nigeria; The Most Rev. Drexel Gomez, West Indies; The Most Rev. Greg Venables, Southern Cone; The Most Rev. Joseph Marona, Sudan; The Most Rev. Benjamin Nzimbi, Kenya; The Most Rev. Henry Orombi, Uganda; The Most Rev. Fidele Dirokpa, Congo; The Most Rev. Donald Mtetemela, Tanzania; The Most Rev. Bernard Malango, Central Africa; The Most Rev. K.J. Samuel, South India; The Most Rev. Alexander Malik, Pakistan; The Most Rev. Yong Ping Chung, South East Asia; The Most

Continued from Page 8

resources to help make the necessary changes in lifestyle. We also had a visit from a representative who demonstrated some incredible products that will enable him to read his books again. There are special binocular type goggles that should help him see his son play on the bagpipe competition field and see his daughter dance in the annual Scottish Festival. He probably will never be able to drive again, but we are never without hope in that area either.

Life looks much more promising now than it did those first panic stricken days after Christmas. The outpouring of prayers has been the most powerful help of all. We both are continuing to hope

and pray that God will return to him his vision and fullness of health in body and soul. If the body does not heal then we will continue to make our lifestyle changes and do the best we can. We have been so blessed by God’s hand in this ordeal that we are unable to count the blessings.

We never know what our Lord has in store for us and for our lives. I hope that we will soon see what the reason for this episode in our lives is. We may never know. What we do know is that we are not on this walk alone. We walk daily with our Lord knowing that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28).

Twenty-Five years on.

The Irish Church follows the liturgical innovation of the American Church

What is *The Book of Common Prayer*? The answer until recently was straightforward. It is an edition in English or another language

of that Prayer Book which was approved by King and Parliament in England in 1662 for use in the Church of England and in the British Empire. Later, each of the provinces of the Anglican Communion either prepared its own edition of the *BCP* 1662 to relate to the public realities of its region & culture, or it simply used the *BCP* 1662 itself.

The story becomes complicated because from the 1970s another type of Prayer Book emerged in the Anglican Family, that which may be called “A Book of Alternative Services.” This contained multiple Rites for Holy Communion and several for the Daily Office. The Rites themselves were usually offered in both contemporary language and traditional language. In England there has been *The Alternative Service Book* (1980) replaced by *Common Worship* (2001) while in Canada there has been *The Book of Alternative Services* (1985).

Behind the scenes during the last thirty or so years there has been a determined effort by some liturgists and bishops in the West/North of the Anglican Communion to redefine “Common Prayer” (see for full details Chapter 2 of *Common Worship Considered, a Liturgical Journey Examined*, by Peter Toon, Edgeways Books, 2003). Some national Churches have decided to transfer the title, “The Book of Common Prayer”, from the historic, classic editions of *The Book of Common Prayer* (1662 or based upon it) to a modern “Book of Alternative Services.”

It will not be a surprise to learn that it was in the USA that this major and far-reaching innovation began. There appeared in 1979 what was called “The Book of Common Prayer according to the use of the Episcopal Church” and the publicity surrounding it stated that it was the new edition of the American Prayer Book, which appeared first in 1789 and was minimally edited in 1892 & 1928. However, anyone who opened this new Book dated 1979 knew that it belonged instead to the new genre, the “Book of Alternative Services.”

Regrettably, there was little if any condemnation from outside the USA of what was an act of piracy, a lie, and an innovation in worship & doctrine, and so it is not surprising that other provinces in part or in whole later followed the example of the Ameri-

can Episcopal Church – e.g., the Church in Wales in 1984 & 2004, the Church in the West Indies in 1995 and the Church in Ireland in 2004.

In May 2004, the Church of Ireland will begin to use its own new *Book of Common Prayer* according to the use of the Church of Ireland. Unlike the West Indian Book but like the American Book (and also like the English *Common Worship*) it contains Rites both in traditional and contemporary language. Thus there are two basic forms of the Service of Holy Communion, one based on the text of the *BCP* of 1662 and one following the modern structure and contents. The latter has three Eucharistic Prayers and many variations for season and circumstance. The former has dropped the use of “the Holy Ghost” preferring “the Holy Spirit”. Also there are two basic forms of Morning & Evening Prayer, one based on the *BCP* 1662 and one similar to the modern Rite in the American & West Indian Prayer Books.

At the official website of the Irish Church we read that: “The Church is again to have one unifying *Book of Common Prayer*, including within its covers material in both traditional and contemporary language. It is to be hoped that parishes which hitherto have worshipped more or less exclusively in one idiom will now, at least occasionally, try out material which is in a different style to what they normally experience.” Here the conversion of the title “Book of Common Prayer” is fully evident. There was a time not long ago when the Irish Church had one Prayer Book, its own edition of the basic *BCP* of 1662. This went through two editions, those of 1871 and 1926. Then came the era of trial, experimental and new services during which time the Irish Church produced the *Alternative Prayer Book* (1984) and then the *Alternative Occasional Services* (1993). Now selections from the two streams, the *BCP* & the innovative, are bound together into one volume and the old, traditional name of *The Book of Common Prayer* is used for the new collection. This new Book also becomes the chief Formulary of the Irish Church.

Will this trend – of pirating the name and making a falsehood acceptable – soon be taken up by provinces in Africa and Asia?

1928 Prayer Book Church Near Nashville, Tennessee



Holy Cross Church, Franklin, Tennessee, (metropolitan Nashville area) was founded in the mid 1980's and is a traditional Anglican parish

of the Episcopal Missionary Church, Diocese of the South under the jurisdiction of The Right Reverend William Millsaps, EMC Presiding Bishop. The Rector is The Right Reverend Lucien Lindsey, Suffragan Bishop of the diocese, assisted by The Reverend James Bristow.

We are a parish family of diverse ages and backgrounds committed to living and witnessing "the Anglican Way."

We recently completed construction of the first phase of a three-phase expansion of our church buildings, and we are now worshipping in our new church. With all bills for the construction paid, the Church was consecrated this past All Saints Day.

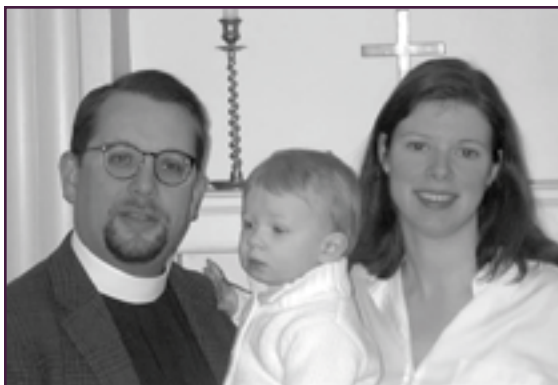
The reformed Catholic Faith is taught and practiced at Holy Cross. Reflecting the traditional comprehensiveness of authentic Anglican heritage, we do not overlook opportunities for evangelical endeavor. Clergy and Laity of the parish have been active in the establishment and nurture of new congregations in the diocese and in ecumenical ministries which do not compromise our faith.

Our motto is "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." Believing that the 1928 American Prayer Book (to use Dr. Toon's words) "exists to enable repentant, believing sinners to worship the Holy

Trinity in the beauty of holiness, separated from the world, as they look unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of their salvation," our worship is of that Prayer Book with devotional enrichments from the Anglican Missal. We believe that the Prayer Book provides "a daily discipline of praise and thanksgiving, confession and petition, intercession and supplication so that God's people remain in communion with their Lord as they go about their daily lives." A sung Eucharist is celebrated each Sunday morning, preceded by Sunday School and followed by a time of fellowship. Weekday celebrations of the Eucharist are said each Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings with a celebration on Wednesday at Noon. On Prayer Book Holy Days there is an evening celebration of the Eucharist at 6:30.

Our corporate life as a parish centers on the Eucharist and our Blessed Lord's presence in Word and Sacrament. We have seen that the traditional Prayer Book "exists to make people holy, to bring a people in worship unto the heavenly kingdom where they shall be lost in wonder, love and praise as they enjoy the Beatific Vision."

For more information, visit our website: www.holycrossanglican.org



New Board Member

The Reverend Eddie Rix of Wynnewood, Pennsylvania has been elected as a Board Member of the Prayer Book Society. He is pictured here with his family.

What is the Connection between the Consecration of Gene Robinson & the Use of the 1979 Prayer Book in the Episcopal Church?

Loud and many have been the protests against the consecration as a bishop in the Episcopal Church, USA, of Gene Robinson, an openly gay man living with his male partner. And he and his friends have proudly defended his lifestyle and his elevation.

A variety of reasons have been given as to why the Diocese of New Hampshire and the General Convention of the ECUSA took this step in 2003 to elect and confirm this man as bishop, when the greater part of the Anglican family of Churches around the world made it clear that they vehemently opposed such a step. Here are some of the reasons given by opponents for this action of the ECUSA, which, we must remember, occurred constitutionally by a majority vote in both the diocesan and national conventions.

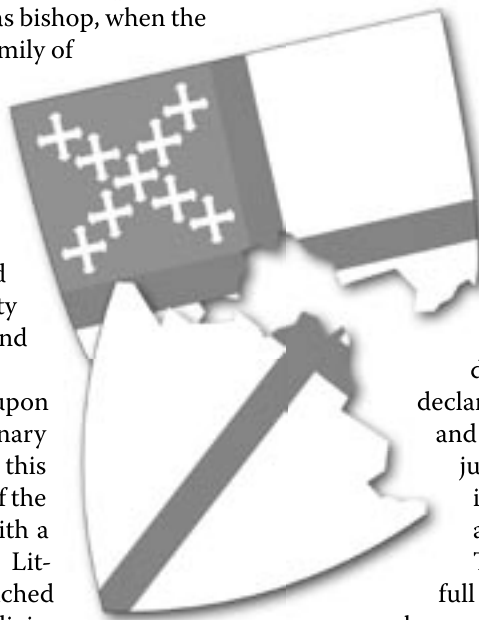
1. The ECUSA took upon itself in the revolutionary 1960s, and developed this in later years, the role of the Enlightened Church with a traditionally-shaped Liturgy. Its bishops preached an enlightened religion and morality in tune with the latest trends within liberal culture. Therefore the Episcopal office was seen as the promoter of "prophetic causes" and the baptismal covenant of the new liturgy was seen as the commitment of the people to these same causes.
2. The ECUSA set aside the traditional view of the authority of Holy Scripture for faith and conduct. Therefore, it does not, perhaps cannot, hear and heed the clear condemnation of homosexual acts

found in the OT and NT.

3. The ECUSA allowed – even welcomed – contemporary experience, especially progressive movements in society, to guide both its interpretation of the Bible and its view of the moral life. Therefore, it is in practice guided by the principles and ethics of modern liberationist movements, which assert the rights of persons to self-worth & self-fulfilment according to their nature and orientation.

4. The ECUSA has a doctrine of God which declares that He/She is LOVE and that this LOVE requires justice for all in the sense of inclusion of all, whoever and whatever they are. Therefore, LOVE requires full space and place for those whose orientation is homosexual, just as it does for those who are heterosexual or even bi-sexual. The God of love is the affirmer of individual and personal preferences.

I think that all of these explanations are correct as far as they go in terms of explaining the changing character of the Episcopal Church, from being the "bridge Church" between Catholicism and Protestantism up to the 1960s and then turning into the "enlightened Church attuned to liberal culture" of the 1970s. However, I do recognize that it is a complex story with a variety of dimensions and causes



from social to theological.

In this complex story of causation, I want to argue that the rejection of the classic *Book of Common Prayer* (1662 – 1928) as its Formulary and its replacement by the 1979 Prayer Book (which bore the name of the historic Book while rejecting much of its doctrine and piety) has played a major role in the preparation within the ECUSA for the possibility of the consecration of a “gay” man. The basic reason for this claim is found in the often-repeated statement by ECUSA liturgists and bishops that “the law of praying is the law of believing.” That is, that which is in the public Liturgy and is heard often becomes very readily the belief system, the assumptions or the mindset of the users of that Liturgy. And this of course is compounded if the sermons, teaching and ethos surrounding liturgy is of the same nature as the essential content of the Liturgy. So my argument is that the use of the 1979 Liturgy, and especially the “contemporary language” rites and texts therein, prepared the way for receiving all kinds of innovations by conditioning the members of the ECUSA to see those innovations as compatible with the faith they prayed, and thus to be acceptable even if odd or strange.

The place to go and look for a summary of the basic and innovative doctrines and ideas within the 1979 Prayer Book is its Catechism or “Outline of the Faith.” This was produced by a small committee, which was charged with putting into question and answer form the basic teaching that they found explicitly or implicitly only in the Rite Two services of the new Prayer Book (which were approved on first reading in 1976 and then on second reading in 1979). Since the House of Bishops was aware that there was a real difference between the doctrines in the traditional language Rite One texts and the modern ones known as Rite Two, they asked for a Catechism based only upon the law of worship of the latter. This ensured an “enlightened” Catechism.

Within the very first section of this Catechism, the careful reader discovers the dominant doctrine concerning human beings which was fundamental to the public religion and morality of the Episcopal Church from the 1970s through to 2004. It is the novel doctrine that being made in the image of God (a traditional Hebrew and Christian expression based upon Genesis 1: 27) is all about human beings as creatures having freedom and exercising choices. Within the cultural context of the 1970s this way of expressing what it is to be in the image of God was obviously understood by many in terms of the view of human moral agency and freedom that was widespread at that time – the view found not only in popular songs but also in the ideology of the liberationist movements of the time and the philosophy of left-of-centre political parties, not to mention of many academics and media personalities.

For a description in depth and detail of the dominant ways in which the “enlightened culture” of the 1960s and 1970s saw the nature of human beings and their place in society, one can turn to such authors as Alasdair MacIntyre and his book, *Whose Justice, Whose Rationality*. However, what is found in detail in such writers is summarised with great clarity by Philip Turner in connection with the Episcopal Church in an essay published in 2003 (“The Episcopalian Preference”, *First Things*, November 2003, pp.28ff.). Dr Turner clearly shows that:

1. The Episcopal Church from the 1960s presented itself as an enlightened alternative to the moral and theological rigidities of Rome and the enthusiasm of evangelical Protestantism. It embraced an enlightened religion tuned into the latest trends within secular, liberal culture. So, it is not surprising that the notorious & heretical Bishop James Pike of California, who publicly denied basic Trinitarian Theism was neither prosecuted nor disciplined in the late 1960s by the House of Bishops or by the General Convention of the Church.
2. The office of Bishop began to be used from around 1970 as a prophetic lever or instrument to shake people free from the supposed incrustated and outdated doctrines and positions of the past. The illegal ordination of women in 1974 and then the illegal ordination of “gay” women and men from 1977 onwards were examples of actions by bishops claiming to act prophetically to relieve the oppressed and downtrodden. In fact, the ordination of women and then of sexually-active homosexual persons became a “justice” issue to be taken up and furthered by a “prophetic” episcopate.
3. **The Episcopal Church absorbed and worked from a new kind of innovative, western morality where each human being is seen as an *individual*, who is wholly unique, as a *self* that has a particular history and needs, and as a *person* who has particular rights that allow him/her to express his/her individuality and to pursue well being. And for human being as moral agents who see themselves as individuals, selves and persons, sexuality becomes both a marker of identity and a primary way of expressing the preferences that define identity. Therefore, what is called “sexual orientation” and its expression are seen as very important in the new moral order.**

4. The sirens of modernity sound so sweet to the Episcopal Church because it has lost a full sense of the transcendence God and has majored on the immanence of God, so that its theology leans either towards pantheism (the mind or essence of the world is God) or possibly to panentheism (the world is included within the being of God). Thus the standard type of sermon is as follows: "God is love; God's love is inclusive; God acts in justice to ensure that everyone (all types) are included; we should work with God as co-actors and co-creators in this great drama in making the world what She/He desires it to be."
5. The God of the Episcopal Church is the Image of the ideal society that the new moral order points to – the inclusion of preference. God is the all inclusive one. She/He is loving inclusion, the affirming of preferences, and that is all. Gone are the old themes of the divine hatred of sin and the loving of holiness and righteousness! The God of this Church is on this estimate simply an idol, the projection of the new moral and social order, worshipped by the adoring members.

Now in this context, it is not difficult to see that the freedom which is seen as essential to being human by the Catechism is basically that described above. It has no reference to established norms and order in the tradition of the Church, but is generated from within each human being. Truth is in being true to oneself as one knows oneself through one's feelings and expresses oneself through ones orientation and actions (which, of course, in the estimate of the old doctrines, is wholly to misunderstand one's real self and one's standing before the holy God).

Now let us consider the doctrine of moral agency and freedom in the Prayer Book of 1976/1979.

It is, I think, relatively easy to see the relation of the enlightened view of moral agency and human freedom to such innovations as the blessing of second and third marriages of divorcees in church, the ordaining of women to the Ministry, the ordaining of "gay" persons and the blessing of "gay" partnerships, the support of a woman's right in terms of abortion, the right to choose how to address God in prayer and not to be bound by biblical categories, and so on. It is perhaps more difficult at first sight to discern the influence upon the Prayer Book. However, it is there for eyes to see not only in the definitions of human nature and sin in the Catechism but also in the understanding of Covenant both in the Catechism and in "the Baptismal Covenant." In the latter a free individual takes on the duty of pursuing peace and justice in the world. It is there also in the translation of

certain Canticles and of the Psalter (see e.g., the Song of Simeon in Rite Two). Further, it is there in the multiple choice offered within the Liturgy for, on the modern view, individuals, selves and free persons need choice to be who they are. To be restricted to one liturgy and one only, as in the historic editions of *The Book of Common Prayer*, would be to exist in chains and to be tied to the old order of things.

Not often noted, for it is perhaps too obvious, is that this novel commitment to freedom of choice is demonstrated in the very title of the 1979 Prayer Book. The Liturgical Commission followed by the House of Bishops and then the whole General Convention felt that they were free of all reference to and duty towards established order and to traditional views of truth and honesty. They believed that they had a modern duty to be what they were and to do what they had to do in order to be true to themselves. Their God of truth wanted them to be true to their inner feelings and to the cause they espoused. Therefore, without so much as an explanation, excuse or argument they decided that they would call their book of multiples services, "The Book of Common Prayer," even though they well knew that in other provinces of the Anglican Family much the same book was being called "An Alternative Service Book" or "A Book of Alternative Services" and the ancient title was reserved – as it had been since 1549 – for that form of Prayer Book which truly contains common (one rite for all) in contrast to varied and optional public prayer (multiple choice).

Therefore the constant use of the pirated name of the 1979 Prayer Book and its commitment to the innovative, enlightened view of moral agency and human freedom made a major contribution week by week and year by year to setting the context wherein the Episcopal Church, which created the 1979 Book, went on to consecrate Gene Robinson. Of this man, Dr Turner writes: "Here is a unique individual, who is a self with a particular history, and a person who has a right to express his preferences and put his talents to work in the world he inhabits. To deny him that right on the basis of sexual preference is to deny him his personal identity." Of course, the ECUSA did not deny that right and Robinson is very comfortable with the 1979 Book.

Regrettably and tragically, most of the opponents of this consecration of Gene Robinson within the ECUSA treat this 1979 Book as not only the acceptable Formulary of their Church but also as the source of their weekly liturgies. In doing this, they help – perhaps unwittingly – the ECUSA prepare for more innovations, as they also bind themselves into the enlightened, liberal view of human moral agency and freedom associated with this book – again perhaps, without wholly realising this! –P.T.

The Catechism

in the 1979 Prayer Book of the ECUSA

The holy, catholic and apostolic Church has been given the great commission to preach the Gospel of the Father concerning his Son, the Lord Jesus

Christ, to the world and to make disciples of all nations. This commission stays in place until the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory with all the holy angels to judge the living and the dead.

Arising out of this, it has been the common practice that, after a person has heard the call of God in the Gospel, turned from sin, believed on the Lord Jesus Christ unto salvation, and is desirous to be a committed Christian, then that person is prepared by a minister of the local church

for baptism and church membership. The name given to those who are being prepared for entry into full participation of the life of the church is *catechumens*, and the basic content of what they are taught is usually found in a *Catechism*. These two words come from the Greek word, *catechesis*, meaning “instruction”, which was the word used in the early Church of that which was given to converts before they were baptized, usually at Easter Eve. Later, when the Church contained Christian families, a child of Christian parents was baptized as an infant as occasion offered, and then as a young person was taught the Catechism before Confirmation and/or full church membership.

In the Anglican tradition, the Catechism, the body of instruction, has been printed in *The Book of Common Prayer* in relation to the Services for Baptism and Confirmation. It contains brief explanations of the Creed, the Commandments and the Lord’s Prayer, together with further brief explanation of the two Sacraments, Baptism & the Lord’s Supper.

From old to new Catechism

The Catechism found in the American editions of *The Book of Common Prayer* of 1789, 1892 and 1928 followed the style and content of that of the English edition of 1662 by providing expositions in question and answer form of the Creed, the Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer and the Sacraments. And the 1928 edition also has “Offices of Instruction” as services of worship for teaching the content of the catechism. Used imaginatively and with

due preparation these can still be most useful and edifying for congregations.

This tradition of using the Creed, Commandments and Lord’s Prayer was all set to continue in *A Catechism* (1973) prepared for the proposed new Prayer Book by a committee headed by Bishop Stanley Atkins of Wisconsin. However, the House of Bishops and the Standing Liturgical Commission

decided that what was needed was something more relevant, credible and accessible, a catechism which would reflect the spirit and content of the new services in the modern structure and language that were being approved for the new Prayer Book of 1976/79.

So a small committee headed by the Rev’d Dr. Robert H. Greenfield was set up to prepare the draft of the new catechism. Its task was to examine these new services produced by the Standing Liturgical Commission that were already approved or were currently on trial and to deduce from them the doctrines they contained and proclaimed. The reason for

this method was the maxim so often stated at that time – *the law of praying is the law of believing*. In other words, Christians believe what they pray and thus to know what they should believe they need to examine carefully what they pray publicly in liturgy that is approved by the appropriate church authority.

It will be observed that great trust and confidence is here reposed by the House of Bishops in those who had created and were still refining the new services of worship, the new public liturgy of the church, due to be approved in 1976 and then 1979. It is assumed that they what they had composed and had been approved by the General Convention and/or the House of Bishops was wholesome, godly and orthodox. Further, the House of Bishops placed great confidence in the inductive method used by the committee as well as of the abilities of the committee members to establish what it is that Episcopalians of the 1970s actually believed, taught and confessed. In contrast, the content of



the old style of catechism in the traditional Prayer Book and from Bishop Atkins stayed with basics and with a tradition of brief explanation of them that go back to the early Church through the medieval period.

We may say that the old type of catechism required no innovation, merely updating of language; but the new method required first confidence in the new texts and secondly in the powers of men rightly to communicate what is in those texts. Ultimately the liturgical experts were defining what the Episcopal Church was to receive and believe as Christian doctrine.

The new Catechism approved by the House of Bishops is found on pages 845 to 862 of the 1979 Prayer Book. In the brief introductory explanatory comments we are informed that it provides an outline of instruction for use in parishes, a brief summary of the Church's teaching for an inquiring stranger who picks up the new Prayer Book, and the basis for a simple service of instruction. However, it is cast in the traditional question and answer format for ease of reference.

Traditional Format with Innovative Content

Although the format is traditional, the doctrinal content of the new Catechism is not so for it intentionally seeks to be modern. This is reflected first of all in the order of content, for it begins not with God or the Bible but with "Human Nature." In the second place, the modern is reflected in the view taken of human beings in this section as also in that which deals with sin.

In order to see the significance of the doctrine of humanity set forth in the Catechism, it is necessary to recall certain aspects of the mindset of the leaders of the Episcopal Church during the 1960s into the 1970s. A significant minority in the House of Bishops and the General Convention was committed to the position that the vocation of the Episcopal Church in the vast American supermarket of religions was to be the purveyor of an enlightened religion in a liberal culture, supported by supposedly new learning and new experience. Along with this developed liberal vocation of the Church which is seen in its absorption of the divorce culture, its lack of serious interest in classical Christian dogma and doctrine, its ambivalence over abortion and euthanasia, and its acceptance of human rights ideology as a major source of morality, came the dominant 1960s view of the human person and of moral agency.

In the social and cultural context where there was commitment to preferences rather than to notions of ordered relations and the pursuit of the good, the view of the human being is very different from that of the traditional moral order. Dr. Turner explains that:

Members think of themselves not as

inhabitants of a pre-established moral order but as *individuals* who are utterly unique, as *selves* that have particular personal histories and needs, and as *persons* who have rights that allow them to express their individuality and pursue their personal well-being. For moral agents who think of themselves as *individuals*, *selves*, and *persons*, sexuality becomes along with money, both a marker of identity and a primary way of expressing the preferences that define identity. (*First Things*, Nov.2003)

This new form of moral agency wherein freedom to choose and freedom to be what you believe you are is the central theme has to be in place for a Church to support widespread divorce, divorce and remarriage, the rights of "gay" persons to be "themselves" and of women to be ordained.

Returning to the Catechism or Outline of the Faith, what one immediately observes is the emphasis in the first section upon human freedom as that which defines human nature. We are told that what it means to be made in the image of God is that "we are free to make choices: to love, to create, to reason, and to live in harmony with creation." Further, we are informed that the reason why we live apart from God and out of harmony with creation is that "from the beginning, human beings have misused their freedom and made wrong choices."

Of course, with a generosity of mind one can interpret this doctrine of freedom and being in the image of God in such a way as to make biblical and orthodox sense of it. However, within the powerful cultural ethos of the 1960s and the known history of the Episcopal Church in those decades, it is difficult to do so. Rather, one reads these statements as being religious ways of expressing in perhaps a minimal form the new view of moral agency and individual preference that has entered the Episcopal Church as it conformed to the world at this time and did so while believing that it was being true to its vocation of being relevant and credible to a new generation.

Further, it is important to note that this teaching on the freedom of the self to choose its preference is at the very beginning of the Catechism and actually sets the tone of the whole thing from the doctrine of sin through the idea of covenant to the doctrine of God. What is present in the Catechism in embryo, and which reached full development by 2003 with the consecration of an openly gay man as a bishop, is the nothing less than idolatry, for human preference is exalted above divine law.

There is not space here to show that the teaching within this Catechism, itself based upon the Rite Two texts, is deficient or even erroneous in such major areas as the doctrine of God as the Father, of God the Holy Trinity, of Jesus Christ, One Person made known in two natures, human sinfulness and so on. —P.T.

From uniformity to variety in the Eucharistic Prayer

Until Vatican II in the 1960s there was for the Roman Catholic Church in each local area one and only one authorised Canon of the Mass, the Prayer to the Father in the Name of the Incarnate Son for the consecration of bread and wine to become the body and blood of the same Incarnate Son. Likewise, until the 1970s within the Anglican Churches, in the local editions of *The Book of Common Prayer*, there was in each edition only one Prayer of Consecration, where the bread and wine were set apart for holy, sacramental use. Thus in both cases whatever were the aesthetic, cultural and ceremonial differences between parishes and congregations, there was in word and in doctrine unity through uniformity. Much the same was true of, and in fact remains true of, the Orthodox Churches, which possess two similar expressions of the Divine Liturgy, those of St Chrysostom and St Basil, and these are used at appointed times everywhere and so there is also unity with uniformity.

Therefore, we may claim that until 1970 within jurisdictions of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, in terms of the Church's primary offering of worship to the Father through the Son and with the Spirit, there was a local unity through uniformity of text and rite, and thereby there was unity in basic doctrine. We may also note that since 1970, while the unity through uniformity of liturgy has been maintained by the Orthodox Churches, it has been deliberately let go by the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches. For the average Roman Catholic parish there is a choice of using one Prayer out of four, but for special occasions and congregations the choice is even greater, at least one out of ten (see the latest edition of the Sacramentary, *Missale Romanum*, 2002). And for the Episcopal parish in the USA the choice is even greater for there is the opportunity also for a parish to create its own Prayer, as long as it keeps to the approved "shape" and recommended ingredients (see the Episcopal Prayer Book of 1979 and the Canadian one of 1985 and various booklets since then).

One Shape but varied Content

Unity in 2004 is therefore no longer in uniformity but it is through using a Prayer that conforms to a given structure or "shape" and contains specific items – e.g., the Sursum Corda & the Sanctus. Common Prayer has been revised to mean using a common structure and keeping to approved ingredients. So now we have unity in diversity, except with the Orthodox Churches.

Of course, all kinds of good reasons can be

produced for the creation of each of the optional Eucharistic Prayers. These can range from following ancient patristic models through conforming to medieval shapes to accepting modern ecumenical agreements. However, the plain act is that unity is strained by variety for in one parish at different Eucharists a variety of Prayers may be used and also in the next parish a related but different variety may be in place. Instead of taking into memory and into heart one Prayer, the devout worshipper is now required to be alert to note which Prayer is being used and to adjust his mental attitude to benefit from it. No wonder that traditional Eucharistic devotion has diminished in recent decades.

For whom was the change from unity through uniformity to unity with diversity made? It would seem that the answer must be that it was made in the first place to satisfy the liturgists, who had become very much aware of other shapes of Eucharistic Prayer than the one used in their jurisdictions; and they wished to make some or all of these available to their own constituency, for their edification. In saying this one cannot help but note that the surrounding western culture was one, and remains one, that places a high priority on choice and on achieving maturity through the exercise of choice. It seems that the liturgists were not unaffected by the prevailing culture in their offering multiple choice; further, it also seems clear that some parishioners were also grateful for the new variety for they had become bored with the repetition of the same Prayer week by week.

Diversity as a Virtue

These days, of course, diversity is regarded as a virtue and we are called "to celebrate diversity" in many areas of life. Diversity, however, is really a value-free term. It is a way of stating a condition of unlikeness amongst beings or things and of reporting the differences as a fact. Yet the actual existence of diversity – in this case the availability of multiple rites – is regarded by some leaders as good in and of itself. That is, the diversity itself is seen as a benefit and positively helpful. Having noted this, it is also important to add that, within Roman Catholicism at least, there is a real concern about divergence from historic language (cf., *Liturgicam Authenticam*). It would appear that no matter how well meaning the ideological calls for diversity might be, in practice, serious people who aren't necessarily "conservatives" at all are seeing with their own eyes that disunity is the result of variation, rather than a new inclusiveness. Also in practice, it would seem that any liturgy designed to

be inclusive of a particular group must also exclude one or more other groups. A feminist inclusive liturgy, for example, ends up excluding people who are traditionalists and people who wish to use consistent Scriptural terms to speak of God, of which "our Mother" is not one. Diversified liturgies are not parallel or centripetal, but centrifugal!

Having noticed the celebration of both choice and diversity in our secular society, we would not want to argue that no good of any kind has come of this change where the aim is to gain and experience unity through diversity; but, we would like to suggest that much that is good in the Christian life has been lost. Examples are the importance of memorisation and devout habit, the clear presen-

tation of the Church's doctrine through one clear statement through this unique Prayer, the reality of a felt and real unity via uniformity (which allows differences in style and setting).

One real problem for a jurisdiction, which starts on this path of writing and authorising multiple forms of this Prayer, is that in principle there is no upper limit to the number of options. This position has been reached now in the Episcopal Church of the USA and in the Church of England, for both allow the creation of a Eucharistic Prayer by each local parish to meet its own special felt needs. It would seem that only those who can see the **shape** in the variety and pluriformity can also truly perceive the unity.

The Prayer Book Society of the U.S.A. has pleasure in announcing the publication of a Book, which explains in the clearest of terms why it has consistently for many years stated that the ECUSA 1979 Prayer Book is neither a genuine Book of Common Prayer nor a true Formulary of the Anglican Way.

Neither Orthodoxy nor a Formulary.

The Shape and Content of the 1979 Prayer Book of ECUSA

It is written by two priests who have been studying liturgy, doctrine and the language of prayer for a long time, and who have cooperated in the writing of several books. They are:

*The Rev'd Dr. Louis R. Tarsitano, who is a professor of English and the rector of an Anglican church in Savannah, Georgia; and
The Rev'd Dr. Peter Toon, who is a retired professor of theology and the rector of two village parishes in the Church of England.*

In the Book, the authors explain the necessity of Formularies for the public profession of Christianity and show what are the Anglican Formularies. Then they examine the major aspects and parts of the 1979 Prayer Book to see whether they rise to the level required to be an orthodox formulary. In particular they look at the Catechism, the Eucharist, Baptism and doctrine through language. Further, the authors explain what has been understood to be Common Prayer through the centuries and demonstrate that the 1979 Book belongs to the modern type of prayer book known as "A Book of Alternative Services."

Many Episcopalians will not like the conclusion of this Book but all serious-minded clergy and lay leaders ought to read it if they are truly concerned with the reform, renewal and regeneration of the Anglican Way in the U.S.A.

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The Preservative & the Transformative

Two Approaches to Public Worship

We all are aware that there are differences in the Anglican Way over what we call churchmanship. One church has bells and smells with bright eucharistic vestments while another has no bells and smells and the clergy are in black and white. What may not always be recognized is that underneath this difference of churchmanship there is another concerning the shape and content of the texts of the liturgy.

From the 1940s on, there were two main schools of liturgics. One, the **Preservative**, attempted to study what was best in each liturgical tradition and to foster and re-enforce such good things as it found. The other, the **Transformative**, which came to the fore in the 1960s, believed that its job was three-fold: 1) to give the churches the liturgy that academics determined they should have; 2) to re-shape the Church via the new liturgy; and 3) to re-make the world by liturgy – through creating transformed, activist people in search of peace and justice.

The **Transformers** hated the accustomed worship of ordinary people the way a Round-Head soldier in the 1640s hated a statue of a saint dressed in clothes and surrounded by candles. They hated the churches as “communities” that were not engaged in the world according to their own novel, social theories. They hated the continuity of Christian tradition. They idealized the early Church of the third century and their reconstruction of its Liturgy and Worship in a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-linguist Roman Empire.

The **Preservers** hated novelty for novelty’s sake and believed that much of the change being sought was for the sake of change in order to appear to be relevant, up-to-date, meaningful, credible and authentic. In contrast they had looked for and still hoped for gradual, sensitive and gentle reform of the received Tradition of liturgy, language, doctrine, and music.

Because the western world, and the churches as part of it, went through and were much affected by the social and cultural revolution that we call “the 1960s,” the **Transformers** came out on top in the 1970s both in Rome and in Protestantism. In 2004 they are still out on top although a lot of questions are now being asked in Rome about where they are going. We recall that the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) was interpreted in the late 1960s and

1970s in **transformative** style by R C commissions and thus there were radical changes in the Liturgy of the R C Church and in the way texts were translated for use in it.

In the Anglican Way, the **Transformers** triumphed and presented the Churches with the creation of forms of alternative service books to push out the use of the traditional liturgy. [In the ECUSA the plan to provide a gentle revision of the 1928 edition of The BCP became by the 1970s a major project to provide a totally new set of Rites and Services. In the C of E, in contrast, the BCP was retained and alongside it the ASB was published.]

The clash between **Preservers** and **Transformers** was/is also seen in the translation of the Bible. The **Preservers** stand for the essentially literal approach of the KJV, the RV and the RSV while the **Transformers** stand for the dynamic equivalency approach of the NIV and the NRSV. Thus into the new liturgies of the **Transformers** went canticles, responses and psalms rendered into English according to the dynamic equivalency theory and including politically-correct renderings (e.g., “Happy are they...” for “Blessed is the man” in Psalm 1.)

A majority of ECUSA clergy, of both a liberal and conservative kind, think that the only viable option is the **transformative** for they believe that its provision of a Catechism of Liturgy with a basic Shape brings us nearest to the early church ideal and suits the widespread desire for freedom and choice in modern society. They have not yet realized that what they think is THE right way of Liturgy and Bible translation is only some thirty or forty years old at the most!

The **Preservers** have tenacity, courage and perseverance. They will be around when the **Transformers** have expended all their energy and lost their vision. The latter will come to see that Jesus Christ is the same Yesterday, Today and Forever, and thus the worship of his Father in his Name has a definite solid continuity through space and time in the Church of God until the Parousia of Christ Jesus. The **Preservers**, however, to be true to their heritage must be transformed and vitalized by the very grace of God which they uphold, or they will be lost in a dead orthodoxy.

[Peter Toon (developing some thoughts expressed by Lou Tarsitano) March 18, 2004.]

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