

The Prayer Book Society of Canada Newsletter

Easter 2016

The Prayer Book in Mandarin

Two young Chinese people, James Liu and Morning Wang, have recently been starting Mandarin fellowship groups in Toronto Anglican churches. And they are enthusiastic users of the Book of Common Prayer! Diana Verseghy, the president of the PBSC Toronto Branch, interviewed them to find out more.

Can you tell us a bit about your backgrounds and your journeys in the Christian faith? How did you become Anglicans?

James: I am from the city of Tianjin, in the north of China. I have a B.Sc. degree with a major in information technology, and worked for a while at a telecommunications company in China. I became a Christian in 1998, when I was sixteen. There are no denominations in most areas of the Christian Church in China, but many churches have denominational backgrounds from before. I was drawn to a church that had beautiful music and a very good choir. I joined the choir, and in later years, in churches in different cities, I became a choir conductor and took on teaching roles. For a long time I wished to enter a



Morning Wang and James Liu

Christian seminary. In China, to enter the seminary you have to write an examination. So I had to learn about church history, the Bible, and theology. And that really opened my eyes. Before, I didn't know anything about denominations – Methodist, Anglican, and Baptist etc. And I found out that the Anglican Church is amazing! I love this church! We have the best theology. We have the benefits of being a reformed catholic church without the extremes of some churches. Also, when I learned more about music, I found out that most of the hymnals that had I loved so much were Anglican hymnals! After that, I was active in church leadership until 2012, when I came to Canada to study for an M.Div. degree, at Tyndale University for two years and then at Wycliffe College since 2014. I officially started the Mandarin Ministry at St. James' Cathedral at the beginning of 2015. My wife and daughter have visited me here for the first time after such a long separation, and they've enjoyed every minute. As I am about to graduate this May, I hope that I can serve God with my family here.

Morning: I am from the city of Shanghai. I came to Canada to follow my husband Sam. He landed a year earlier than I did, in 1998, in Montreal, where he was studying at McGill University.

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When he graduated in 2001 he found a job in Toronto, so we moved here. One day I was watching a Chinese TV show called “Showers of Blessings”. It has testimonies of how people have come to Christian faith, and says that if you are touched by these stories, to call a phone number. So I did, and that started my Christian spiritual journey. I was baptized in 2002, and Sam was baptized in 2004. In 2011 I started studying with the Chinese ministry programme at Tyndale University, and that is where I met James. The Chinese teachers at Tyndale are mainly from the Chinese non-liturgical evangelical churches, which are very popular and influential in the Chinese community in the GTA. They often don’t have a very positive view of Anglicans or of any kind of liturgy! In the fall of 2012 my father-in-law became critically ill, so Sam and I had to go back to Shanghai for several weeks. When I came back, all my classmates already had placements for internships in various churches – all except me. I had nowhere to go. I told James about this problem, and he said he would see if he could arrange for me to come to the parish where he was doing his placement, St. Paul’s L’Amoreaux. My husband wasn’t enthusiastic about this idea – he is still a member of the local Chinese Evangelical Free Church, and shares their view of liturgy! But at last he agreed. James succeeded in getting me a placement at St. Paul’s L’Amoreaux, and that was the beginning of my journey in the Anglican Church.

You have started Mandarin fellowship groups in four Toronto churches. What does that ministry do?

James: On Sundays we have two Mandarin gathering services of BCP Morning Prayer, one at St. James’ Cathedral and one at St. George’s on Yonge. We also have a service for the children at the Cathedral based on the BCP Service for Young People.

On Mondays we have a fellowship liturgy for students based on BCP family prayers at St. Thomas’s Church on the University of Toronto campus. On Tuesdays we had a service of BCP Evening Prayer at St. Bartholomew’s in Regent Park last summer. The groups are doing very well. This year we are about to have around 15 people baptized at the Easter Vigil at the Cathedral. Last year we had 11. And last year we had six people baptized at St. George’s. Last fall after the huge explosion in Tianjin, we used the BCP penitential liturgy at a bilingual prayer meeting, “*Pray for China, Pray for Tianjin*” with an outdoor procession, and over 130 people came!

Morning: Most of our people don’t have any religious or Christian background. And in our international history books in China, usually anything related to Christianity is portrayed as bad, because it is associated with nations that occupied our country. So our people need to have the faith explained to them.

James: The liturgy is our teaching tool. When Chinese people come to the main service at the Cathedral, they may not understand English, but the liturgy teaches them. Anglican liturgy is really, really beautiful.

Morning: And very different from worship in the Chinese non-liturgical evangelical churches. In those churches, the first thing you usually see when you enter is a large screen with a Powerpoint sign saying, please silence your phone, do not keep chatting, prepare yourself for the worship. (But people keep chatting anyway!) And when I came to St. Paul’s L’Amoreaux (the first Anglican church I got involved with), I found it amazing – there was no Powerpoint on a screen at all! Nobody was chatting, and everyone would sit quietly in the pews or the chairs, waiting for the service to start. And at the end of the service, usually, in the non-liturgical

evangelical churches, after the preaching, people would get up and leave! They would rush to get out into the parking lot – like the end of a movie! But in the Anglican church everyone would sit still, because we still have the blessing at the end. And after the blessing, people are sent out. So it would be very, very awkward, even for the first time visitor, or newcomer, to leave during the middle of the service. Even if they don’t understand it, at the same time they pay attention to it. They respect the liturgy. The beauty of the liturgy speaks for itself.

Of course, we teach them too, as James has been teaching me, about the significance of the liturgy – for example, when to stand, when to sit, when to kneel, and so on. Once they understand that, they do it wholeheartedly. They become interested and involved, and engaged in the service. As Canon David Brinton, the Sub-Dean and Vicar of the Cathedral said, “Our faith is not only personal but public and corporate!” We have a leader, and congregational responses. It’s not like other churches where there is just the preacher. There, it’s like we are just watching a show. We have nothing to do! And then we start to judge – this one is a good preacher and that one is not. Because we are not involved!

Another example. Once I tried to set up chairs at St. Paul’s L’Amoreaux in a theatre-style seating arrangement. James made me undo it all, and he explained the reason for it. There are some elements that are very important in Anglican churches, and almost universal. There usually is a centre aisle, which leads to the altar. If we placed the seating like theatre seats, then the centre aisle would disappear – it would not be a straight road. And the reason it has to be a straight road is that this is the road that Jesus made by his body, which leads to the Communion table. The altar is the centre of our worship. It’s not the pulpit! I didn’t understand

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that. Everything I learned from the very beginning, I found very interesting. You can imagine, when I was studying at Tyndale University I didn't learn all this!

James: At Tyndale University, one of our courses required us to write a paper that would be a contribution to renewal across denominations. We decided to focus on mainstream liturgical churches – Presbyterian, Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist. (Some of these churches use large parts of the BCP in their liturgies.) We wrote a survey and interviewed lots of priests, seminary professors and so on, to get their advice and to find out what was needed to revive the liturgical churches. We called our project “Liturgy in Action”. It was a blueprint for using the BCP to share the Gospel and do disciple training. At the same time, we wrote a basic catechism course called “Essential Faith”, containing 25 lessons. Our aim was to show people how to share the faith. Often people are not comfortable sharing the Gospel – they don't know what to say. So they will refer people to their priest; as if sharing the Gospel was only the priest's privilege! But liturgy is something that every regular worshipper is familiar with. Most of them can recite from memory over half of the Sunday service. We can use this as a means to teach people about the faith.

Morning: And this teaching method works! There was a lady of the St. George's fellowship group before I officially came. One summer her parents came from China for a visit,

and they decided to attend a Chinese charismatic church. But then, when she went there, she felt that something was wrong. And she was able to pinpoint where and why it was wrong. She said, there is no confession! If there is no confession, certainly there will be no absolution. And it is not right, because the issue of sin is not properly dealt with.

James: I had already developed a fervent love of the BCP while I was in China. Back then, I was involved in editing the unofficial BCP of mainland China. The Prayer Book is our great inheritance – it is the most precious treasure of our Church. It gives us our identity as Anglicans. It is not just a book to be read, but a way of life. It is a gift from God to us in this generation. Not only do I use it for Sunday Mandarin Fellowship worship, but we have edited our own version of the BCP Daily Office based on the BCP family prayers, which is distributed to our groups every week. So every day, we are literally on the same page in our spiritual life! And then at different Bible study cell groups we come together to study the Word of God, by using the Scriptures that we read from that same Daily Office booklet during the week.

Morning: Only two hours in the church building for Sunday worship is not nearly enough. Actually, the BCP teaches us that we should have a daily spiritual life. Most of us work, we find it hard to pray the full BCP daily offices. That's why we have our family prayer booklets. The service

takes just ten minutes - starting with a psalm, then the lection for the day, meditation, then a canticle, the Apostles' Creed, personal and corporate intercessions, the Lord's Prayer, and then the Collect of the week. Each booklet covers Monday to Saturday. It's a good practice for a family! I was amazed one time by James' daughter. She is just past her fifth birthday, so still of

How can we have peace? It's not enough to shake hands – there is no peace! So this lady felt it was incomplete. And she came back, and brought a friend from that church. And she said to James, this is the right church!

So your liturgy of choice is the Book of Common Prayer – why?

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kindergarten age. She has not gone to school yet for various reasons, or had much reading. But she picked up one booklet and she started to read to me, because she learned reading by following these family prayers! And I told our parishioners, you know what? This can keep your family together. And you can share something really profound and meaningful.

James: We have spent a lot of time compiling our Mandarin-language BCP services. There have been several translations of the BCP into Mandarin in the past: from Taiwan in 1928, from Sichuan in 1932, from Shanghai also in 1932, from North China in 1937, from Singapore in 1956, from South East Asia, and from Hong Kong in 1998. We are comparing all of these translations, word by word, and choosing the best one in each case. For example, “Open thou our lips” is not well translated. Most of the translation versions say rather “Let us open our lips”, or simply “Help us open our lips”, which are quite different! “Open thou our lips” needs to be translated quite exactly, since it is from the Bible, like so much of the Prayer Book is. With the support of

Bishop Patrick Yu, we have started a Theological Studio at St. Leonard’s Anglican Church. This studio is designed as a research centre for the ministry field, just like a factory that produces tools to support our existing ministries. We hope that we can produce a Canadian version Chinese BCP, which will be a true blessing to our Chinese people.

Morning: And we want to make our translation a truly Canadian Prayer Book. For example, the Taiwanese translation is mostly from the United States. And they don’t pray for the Queen! There is a Hong Kong prayer book, but they don’t pray for the Queen either. So we compare all of the versions in detail, to find the best translation. We go back to the Latin, or to the Hebrew Old Testament, or to the Greek New Testament. It takes lots of time! Father Walter Hannam at St. Bartholomew’s has been very helpful in this. We are inspired in this work by the thought that our research has a meaningful purpose – we have a tangible ministry.

James: The Prayer Book is a living tradition, and shapes us spiritually. As the Lutheran theologian Jaroslav Pelikan commented, tradition is the

living faith of the Saints; it is not traditionalism, which is “the dead faith of the living”. We believe that the use of the BCP can be a force for revival in this post-modern society. The BCP shows us how to share the Gospel, and how to teach disciples.

Morning: We have nothing against ecumenism. But different denominations have different strengths. Our strength, our grounding and framework, is our BCP liturgy. James and I are focusing on this, and it’s working! We can learn a lot of good things from the non-liturgical evangelical church side, which is really good. We can learn from their passion! But it doesn’t mean we need to tear down our own strong framework. If we do that, we don’t know any more who we are!

James and Morning: As our faith continuously unfolds, it needs to be built upon our tradition. We are on our way. Being newcomers on the Anglican faith journey, we need lots of help and support from the people before us. We would like to thank all of those who are helping us through this great opportunity.

PBSC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Prayer Book Society of Canada will be held on Saturday, April 30th, at St. Barnabas’ Church, 70 James St., Ottawa, beginning at 2:00 PM. The annual Chairman’s and Treasurer’s reports will be presented, and the meeting will elect up to fifteen Councillors to serve as members of the National Council alongside the national officers. Bishop Peter Coffin has been invited to address the meeting.

Nominations are invited for the positions of National Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Recording Secretary. Nominations for these positions must be received by April 22nd, since these officers are elected by the branch chairmen. Nominations are also invited for the positions of Councillor and Honorary President, and these may be either submitted beforehand or presented at the AGM. Nominees for all positions must be members of the PBSC, and nominations require a mover and a seconder, both of whom must also be members of the PBSC. Nominations are to be sent to the national Recording Secretary, Ronald Bentley, at 737 Hot Springs Way, Gloucester, ON, K1V 1W8 (rbentley@sympatico.ca).

Notice is hereby given that subject to approval by the National Council, two proposed amendments to the PBSC constitution will be presented at this meeting: 1) That provision be made in the future for prior e-mail voting on matters of AGM business, and 2) That the national officers of the Society be elected by the National Council as a whole rather than by the branch chairmen only. Further details, if desired, may be obtained by contacting the National Chairman (e-mail grmaitland@sympatico.ca; phone 519-564-5989).

Redeeming the Time III: Further Reflections on the 30th Anniversary of the Book of Alternative Services

*By the Rev'd Gordon Maitland
PBSC National Chairman*

One of the most dramatic changes wrought by the Book of Alternative Services was the change of liturgical English. The archaic language of the Book of Common Prayer was replaced by the “contemporary” language of the BAS. One of the ongoing criticisms of the BCP is that it does not use a modern English idiom that is readily understood by modern readers. Furthermore, it is alleged that the liturgical language of the BAS is more ecumenical because it is used by all the English speaking Christians of the world. Many people were pleased when a Roman Catholic visiting an Anglican Church using the BAS would comment that the service was just like the one they were used to. However, since 2011 this is no longer the case. In fact, the contemporary English speaking liturgical scene is now a chaotic mix of voices. In this essay I hope to show how this came about, and what is really happening with liturgical language at the present.

If the landscape of liturgical prose were surveyed in 1960, it would be apparent among churches that used English language liturgical prose, that the field was dominated by the twin influences of the Book of Common Prayer and the Authorized (King James) Version of the Scriptures. The Anglican Church of Canada had just brought out a new revision of the BCP which maintained the liturgical language that it had inherited. The United Church of Canada used the “Book of Common Order” which used texts borrowed from the Book of Common Prayer, and the Presbyterian “Book of Common Order” used similar texts. Lutherans were divided among many different groups and synods, and many of them at this date continued to worship in “old world” languages

such as German and Swedish, but some of the precursor bodies which later came together to make the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (and its Canadian counterpart, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada) used the English language “Service Book and Hymnal”. This worship book also used liturgical prose similar to (and in some cases directly borrowed from) the Book of Common Prayer.

Up until the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Catholic Church used almost exclusively the Latin tongue for its liturgical rites. Even on the eve of the Second Vatican Council, Pope John XXIII promulgated a document entitled *Veterum Sapientia* which solemnly reaffirmed the necessity of using Latin for the Church’s worship. It is worth noting, however, that in bilingual Latin/English missals published for the use of the laity, the translation of the Latin used a traditional English consistent with the language of the Book of Common Prayer. The Scripture lections were taken from the Douai Rheims version of the Bible.

The event which changed everything in regards to traditional liturgical prose was the decision by the Roman Catholic Church to begin to use the vernacular in its worship and to use a contemporary English style for that vernacular. In article 36 of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*), promulgated on December 4, 1963, allowance was made for the introduction of the vernacular into the administration of the sacraments. However, it was to be for “the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority . . . to decide whether, and to what extent, the vernacular language [was] to be used.” Furthermore, it was intended that bishops in neighbouring regions which employed the same language

were to consult with one another to ensure uniformity.

It was with this mandate in mind that a number of English speaking episcopal conferences set up the International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) in order to produce standardized English translations of the liturgical books of the Roman Rite, the originals of which were, of course, in Latin. After the publication of the *Novus Ordo* in 1969, ICEL produced a standardized English translation of the new Missal which was published in 1973. This version of the translation of the Latin texts was to remain in use for the celebration of the Mass until replaced in 2011.

In 1969 the Vatican published an important document (in French) entitled, *Comme le prévoit*, which provided the guidelines and instructions as to how the Latin texts were to be translated. This document was critical as to the English translations which were subsequently produced. What the members of the Consilium had in mind in terms of translation technique was what is today known as the *dynamic equivalence* method of translation. It is not a literal word-for-word kind of translation but a more paraphrastic approach. It was by following these translation principles that the response to the presider’s greeting – “The Lord be with you” (*Dominus vobiscum*) – was rendered “And also with you” which is not a literal translation of *Et cum spiritu tuo*. This response was supposed to convey the “true meaning” of the phrase “And with your spirit” and was considered more acceptable.

In 1969 a body known as the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT) was formed in North America. This organization emerged from ecumenical meetings of Roman

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Catholic and Protestant liturgical scholars held in the mid to late 1960s. Its mandate was to develop agreed versions of contemporary English language liturgical texts used in common by the churches involved in the consultation. A similar body called the Joint Liturgical Group (JLG) was set up in the United Kingdom, and other groups with complementary aims were set up in other English speaking countries as well. With the assistance of ICEL, the Consultation on Common Texts and the Joint Liturgical Group set up an international body called the International Consultation on English Texts (ICET). The texts which this body worked on were the Lord's Prayer, the Creeds (the Nicene and Apostles' creeds), the unvarying texts of the Eucharist (the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Sursum Corda*, *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*, and *Agnus Dei*), and the canticles used in the Offices (the *Gloria Patris*, *Te Deum*, *Benedictus*, *Magnificat*, and *Nunc Dimittis*). These texts were published as "Prayers We Have in Common" in three editions from 1971-1975. The texts were quickly adopted by the churches which were members of the consultation and appeared in the experimental rites produced throughout the 1970s. They were incorporated into the final, standard liturgical books which appeared around the beginning of the 1980s, such as the Church of England's "Alternative Service Book" (ASB), the North American "Lutheran Book of Worship" (LBW), and the Anglican Church of Canada's Book of Alternative Services (BAS). A peek at the acknowledgements on page 925 of the BAS will confirm this fact.

However, there was another intellectual current at work in the 1970s that would begin to seriously impact liturgical texts in the 1980s, and that was the feminist movement and its concerns around the perceived sexism and patriarchal bias in Biblical and liturgical texts. These concerns were articulated in books such as Marjorie Procter-Smith's, "In Her Own Rite:

Constructing Feminist Liturgical Tradition". Partly in response to these new intellectual currents, a successor body to ICET (which had ceased to function in 1975) was formed from ICEL, CCT, and several other smaller English-speaking groups. In 1985 the English Language Liturgical Consultation (ELLC – pronounced as "elk") came into existence. In 1988 the ELLC published "Praying Together" which was a revision of the ICET texts from "Prayers We Have in Common". These versions of the Lord's Prayer, Creeds, Eucharistic texts and Office canticles appeared in the revised service books of many denominations after this time. They appear, for example, in "Celebrate God's Presence: A Book of Services for the United Church of Canada" and "Evangelical Lutheran Worship" (used by the ELCIC and the ELCA).

In the 1990s the American Roman Catholic bishops attempted to get approval from the Vatican for inclusive language revisions of texts in the Roman Rite similar to what had been already developed by ELLC, but this was rejected by the Roman authorities. Partially in response to this initiative the Vatican department, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, issued in the spring of 2001 a document entitled *Liturgiam Authenticam* which was meant to replace *Comme le prévoit* in giving principles to be followed in translating all liturgical texts into the vernacular languages. In the same year the Congregation for Divine Worship set up a committee of English-speaking bishops entitled *Vox Clara* to advise the Congregation on matters of translation of liturgical texts into the English language.

It is quite evident from reading *Liturgiam Authenticam* that the dynamic equivalence approach to translation was being abandoned and replaced by a reversion to formal equivalence principles of translation. Thus, any translation produced is a fairly literal and formal one. One

can also discern in this document a considerable "pushback" to many of the concerns which gave rise to the revision of texts to accommodate inclusive language in other Christian traditions. However, there is more in *Liturgiam Authenticam* than a reaction to current trends in liturgical revision. There is also an underlying rejection of some of the worldview shaped by modernity. This attitude is reflected in Peter Elliot's critique of the old ICEL texts:

The didacticism of the current ICEL texts embodied a stage in history when communication was the key to everything – the era of Marshall McLuhan and the "global village," when mankind reached for the stars and we could hear men talking from the moon. Clarity, comprehensibility, access to data and information, and the triumph of the Enlightenment were also marked by the jostling of ideologies, each claiming to carry the light and future whether of "modern man," "secular man," or "socialist man", to use the language of the pre-feminist vocabulary of those times. But there is little place for mystery if communication is based on being consciously modern and enlightened, hence in control of meaning. Mystery eludes human control.¹

The principles enunciated in *Liturgiam Authenticam* led to a new English translation of the Roman Missal which came into effect on the First Sunday in Advent in 2011. Needless to say, the appearance of *Liturgiam Authenticam* was not warmly received by many scholars in the liturgical "establishment" who were now witnessing the undoing of all their work over the last forty years. In an address to the *Societas Liturgica* conference in 2007, Dr. David Holeton lashed out at the style

¹ Peter J. Elliot. "Liturgical Translation: A Question of Truth" in *Antiphon* 10.3 (2006), 232

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of the new English translation of the Roman Missal:

It seems very odd indeed to some of us to see proposed texts put into the manner of speech that is highly reminiscent of the language that Anglicans (and many English-speaking Protestants) once used before they finally realized that the language of the liturgy needed to be understood by the faithful of our time and not those of the sixteenth century. This revision to archaic patterns of speech may work at some English universities but it is thoroughly classist and I cannot imagine it receiving a wildly warm welcome in the average pew ...²

In other words, the problem of the new translation of the Roman Missal is that it sounds too much like the liturgical prose of the Book of Common Prayer! This angry and bitter outburst by one of the principal architects of the Canadian Book of Alternative Services shows the depth of feeling which has accompanied the introduction of the new Roman texts.

Even the brief survey of English language liturgical texts in this paper reveals that there is less uniformity in English texts across the various churches in North America than at any other time in history. The Roman Catholic Church has produced English translations of ritual texts without reference to any other church. Likewise, the Eastern Orthodox churches have produced translations which not only differ from those used in the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches, they differ across different jurisdictions within Orthodoxy. While many of the Protestant churches in North America have adopted the ELLC texts, there are many others who continue to use the ICET texts or some other translation.

² David R. Holeton, "Ecumenical Liturgical Consensus: A Bumpy Road to Christian Unity" *Studia Liturgica* 38.1 (2008), 14.

The Episcopal Church in the USA and the Anglican Church of Canada continue to use the ICET texts in the 1979 American Book of Common Prayer and the Book of Alternative Services respectively, although both churches have authorized the use of ELLC texts in various optional or supplementary rites. Some of the more conservative churches, such as the Lutheran Church – Canada and its American sister the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod continue to use the ICET texts but have not authorized the ELLC texts. The Anglican Church in North America, a dissenting body of Anglicans from the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada, has just published a set of provisional worship texts for the Eucharist and Offices entitled "Texts for Common Prayer".³ These services use a combination of the ICET texts, modernized versions of Cranmerian texts and some of the new Roman texts. For example, the *Gloria in Excelsis* is the ICET text, but the response to "The Lord be with you" is "And with your spirit" as it is in the new Roman Mass. Thus, it would appear that the broad consensus which prevailed in the North American churches in the use of traditional English liturgical prose in the years previous to 1960 has given way to a cacophony of voices using many, and in some cases radically dissimilar, texts for their worship.

There appear to be two broad trends in regards to liturgical language. The Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Churches and the conservative Protestant or Evangelical Churches all appear to be moving towards a more "classical" or conservative kind of liturgical prose for their worship texts. The more "liberal" or progressive Protestant Churches appear to be sticking to the ELLC texts or something along the same

line. The same thing is happening in regards to Biblical texts as well, with "conservative" churches using the English Standard Version (ESV), Revised Standard Version – Catholic Edition (RSV-CE), the New King James Version (NKJV) or something similar, while the "progressive" churches stick with the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) or some similar inclusive language version.

The ironies of this story should not be missed. Anglicans abandoned their traditional liturgical prose in the 1970s, and adopted the old Roman Catholic ICEL texts, in order to be more ecumenical. Since then, the more progressive protestant churches have moved on to the more radically inclusive ELLC texts and the Roman Catholic Church has abandoned the ICEL texts in favour of their own translations. This leaves the Anglican Churches as among the few still using the old ICEL/ICET texts. The Anglican Church of Canada discarded traditional liturgical prose in order to be ecumenical, only to be left ecclesiastically isolated by texts no one else uses.

In closing, it is worth noting that although the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches have, generally speaking, moved to using contemporary English for their rites, the one prayer which remains in traditional liturgical prose for all these churches is the Lord's Prayer. Even many of the Protestant churches continue to print the traditional version of the Lord's Prayer as an option in their service books. Thus, if there is reason for hope, it might yet be found in the fact that the one prayer which may be said to be genuinely ecumenical across all Christian denominations is the prayer that our Redeemer himself taught us to pray. Perhaps the quest for common English language liturgical texts may be found in the petition, "thy kingdom come."

³ "Texts for Common Prayer," http://anglicanchurch.net/?/main/texts_for_common_prayer, Anglican Church in North America.

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