

Newsletter

Trinitytide 2007

The BCP and the Anglican Covenant

As we reported in our last issue, one of the most heartening things to come out of the recent Primates' meeting in Tanzania has been the news of progress on the development of an Anglican Covenant, which is to articulate what it means to be authentically Anglican. The draft Covenant, which has been commended by the Primates to the Anglican provinces worldwide for discussion and revision, includes the following statement: "Each member church, and the Communion as a whole, affirms ... that, led by the Holy Spirit, it has borne witness to Christian truth in its historic formularies, the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."

Clarification needed

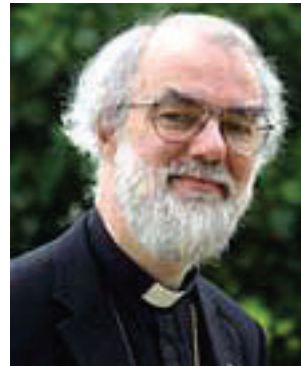
It is certainly gratifying that the Book of Common Prayer is acknowledged as foundational. However, the Prayer Book Societies in England, Canada and the U.S. are concerned that the BCP (in particular, its normative 1662 form) be recognized not merely as a historical artifact, but as the ongoing standard of doctrine and worship for



Prudence Dailey
English PBS

Anglicanism. This was clearly the intent of the Covenant Design Group; the Introduction to the Covenant declares that what it seeks to offer is "not the invention of a new way of being

Anglican, but a fresh restatement and assertion of the faith which we as Anglicans have received." Still, the statement that Anglicanism "has borne witness" in the BCP, rather than "bears witness", is rather ambiguous and is open to misinterpretation.



Archbishop Rowan Williams

The English, American and Canadian Prayer Book Societies are working to ensure that this point is clarified in the version of the Covenant that is eventually adopted by the Anglican provinces. The national Chairman of the English PBS, Prudence Dailey, has already been in contact informally with Archbishop Rowan Williams, who has assured her that there had been no intent at all to have the BCP relegated to the role of a mere historical footnote. He also noted that the drafting group had been dismayed to discover that many of the provinces of the Anglican Communion currently contain no reference to the BCP in their statutes.

One interesting sidebar to all of this is the question of how far the books of worship that have been adopted by the various provinces over the past few decades actually conform to Anglican doctrine. Our Canadian BCP of 1962 explicitly seeks to do so (see the Preface on page vii). However, not all books, even those nominally called "BCP", can make the same claim.

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The Choice Ahead

By Desmond Scotchmer

The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, which meets in Winnipeg in June, faces a choice. That choice is stark: whether to remain an integral part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, or, to use Primate Andrew Hutchison's words (quoted from the Windsor Report), to "walk apart" (Address, St James' Cathedral, Toronto, March 16, 2005).

This decision is being presented in the guise of a motion proposing a "local option" (i.e., as a proposal that each diocese may decide to permit same-sex blessings on an individual basis), a seemingly "softer option", that can be seen as giving those who have reservations about same-sex blessings a "way out".

But this is deceptive. To allow a local option would mean that blessing same-sex unions has been declared unilaterally permissible by the Anglican Church of Canada. Such a decision would be seen by the wider Anglican Communion as a vote to "walk apart" from the Anglican Church worldwide. It will fly in the face of the request from the international primates of the Anglican Communion, when they met in Dar es Salaam in February of this year. It will be tantamount to a vote for (dare we use such a strong word?) schism, certainly for "impaired communion". And we need to be clear about this: it would be "impaired communion", or schism, voted for and by the Anglican Church of Canada, not foisted upon an unwilling church by a wider Anglican Communion. It would be a made-in-Canada decision, that is, the responsibility for breaking the unity of the Anglican Communion would rest on Canadian shoulders. This is why the rest of the Anglican

world will be watching closely to see what the Canadian General Synod does.

Such a vote would not only affect the Anglican Church of Canada's relations with the Anglican Church around the world, it would affect the Canadian Church's relationship to itself. To separate from the Anglican Church worldwide would be to repudiate this church's historic understanding of itself as both Catholic and Reformed, standing under the authority of Scripture, as an integral part of the worldwide Anglican Communion. It would also repudiate the Anglican Church of Canada's own founding document, her constitution, as it were, the Solemn Declaration of 1893: "We declare this Church to be, and desire that it shall continue, in full communion with the Church of England throughout the world..." (BCP, p. viii).

High-level manoeuvrings

This proposed motion, that would determine the future of Anglicanism in Canada, includes a call for it to be passed by only a 60% majority at this single Synod, as a result of some last-minute manoeuvrings by the Council of General Synod (CoGS). After the last General Synod, in a step toward resolving the same-sex issue, a Primate's Theological Commission was set up, to determine whether the issue of same-sex blessings was one of doctrine, or only a matter of pastoral care, as had been previously argued. The Commission, which set out its findings in the St Michael Report in 2005, unanimously found that the issue was, indeed, one of doctrine. For Synod to pass any doctrinal change canonically, a 66% majority in all three orders (that is, members of General Synod voting in separate grouping of

laity, clergy and bishops) is required, at two successive General Synods.

The result of this tactic is to do an end run around the findings of the St Michael Report. Reasons cited in the Anglican Journal for the decision of CoGS are that the issue is divisive and has dragged on for so long, that it now needs a quick resolution. But this is absurd. The issue has indeed dragged on for some time, and is indeed divisive. It is divisive, because it is an issue that goes to the very foundations of the Anglican Church in Canada and its relations with the rest of the Anglican Church throughout the world. That is precisely why rules requiring that fundamental issues need a 66% majority at two successive Synods were established in the first place: to ensure that important issues could not be rushed through without sufficient discussion, and without a sizeable majority in their favour. This is merely due process and fairness. The fact that this canonical rule has been sidestepped leaves a lingering feeling of bad faith.

Insiders tell us that the agenda at General Synod will be extremely crowded, with one day being devoted to relations with Canadian Lutherans. There will likely be, we are told, little time for considered discussion on the same-sex motion. Yet the proposed motion involves momentous changes, changes that would cause the Anglican Church of Canada to cease being "Anglican" in any real sense of the word at all; indeed, arguably, losing any right, legal or moral, to retain the very name "Anglican".

Liturgical Revision

Astoundingly, General Synod is being asked at the same time to re-open the issue of liturgical revision. This is being done under the guise of

overall revision of all liturgical texts currently in use in the Anglican Church of Canada.

But now is entirely the wrong time to do anything like this. There is no common mind in the Church on this issue. It will be seen by many (including this writer) as the first step in an attempt to strip the Book of Common Prayer of its legal role as the standard of doctrine and worship within the Anglican Church of Canada, without sufficient debate as to the extensive ramifications of such an action. More seriously, it will cause further dissension, further disorientation and dislocation, further destabilization. Such a move would not just be regrettable, it would be an act of folly.

Significantly, it represents another example of the extent to which the Anglican Church of Canada is out of step with global Anglicanism. The wider Anglican Church throughout the world is even now moving to reaffirm the centrality of the Book of Common Prayer for Anglican doctrine and teaching, in the proposed Anglican Covenant (see the front page article, and the Easter edition of this newsletter, for full details).

At their ordination, every member of the clergy swore to uphold the Faith of Christ "**as this church has received it**". Similarly, every bishop is charged at their consecration with being a symbol of the unity of the church catholic. Pray God that our bishops and clergy remember their solemn oaths made before God and the congregation, that the unity of the Anglican Church worldwide may be preserved and its apostolic and Scriptural faith maintained unimpaired.

The Heavenly and Earthly Trinities

Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682)

The National Gallery, London



This painting invites us to dwell on the two unfathomable mysteries that lie at the heart of our faith: that of the Holy Trinity, and the dual nature of Christ, both God and Man, who was with the Father from before the beginning, and yet came down to earth to be one of us.

At the top of the painting is a representation of God the Father, adored by the heavenly host, and below him, the Holy Spirit. The Christ Child, both human and divine, stands in the centre of the painting, his face shining with heavenly glory, even as he stands revealed in the full weakness of a mortal child. He is elevated on a stone that is an altar: it is also both the stone which the builders rejected, and which is become the head in the corner (Matt 21:42), and the "stumbling block and rock of offence: and whoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed" (Romans 9:33, and 1 Peter 2:4-8). The tenderness of Christ's earthly parents is matched by their recognition of his Lordship, as evidenced by his elevation above them, and the gestures of their hands. St Joseph gazes steadfastly at the viewer, inviting all who behold to come and adore; the eye of the viewer is drawn up in a zigzag motion from his left hand through the figure of the Christ Child, and up towards the Father. His gaze also carries a reproach full of sadness that the time will come when the world will reject and condemn the Lord of Life, who stands before them as an innocent child. (Editor)

Vindication and Hope

By the Revd. Gordon Maitland

It is no secret that the Roman Catholic Church is planning to issue new English language editions of the Roman Missal and Breviary in the next few years. These books will have very different English translations of the Latin originals than those currently used in the Roman Rite. However, when first confronted with this news, most Anglicans will be forgiven for yawning and allowing their eyes to glaze over. What does this have to do with us? On the contrary, I hope to show in this essay how these new translations may have a great deal of effect on our own liturgical rites and also, indirectly, vindicate the English liturgical texts found in the Book of Common Prayer.

Those Anglicans who are knowledgeable of their history will be aware that most, if not all, of the English language liturgical texts found in the Book of Common Prayer were the work of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer (1489-1555). While some of the texts are original compositions penned by the Archbishop (e.g. the penitential introduction to Morning and Evening Prayer, the Preface to Holy Matrimony, the exhortation given to the candidates by the Bishop in the service of Ordination to the Priesthood, etc.), most of them are translations of older, Latin texts. These include the Canticles at Morning and Evening Prayer (the *Te Deum*, *Benedictus*, *Magnificat*, etc.) and many of the unchanging parts of the Eucharist (the Creed, *Sanctus*, *Agnus Dei*, Lord's Prayer, *Gloria in Excelsis*, etc.)

In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Catholic Church, now prepared to allow the vernacular to be used in the

celebration of her rites, decided that it would use modern English instead of the Tudor or traditional English which was used by Anglicans. At first this work of translation was done piecemeal, but it was then decided that a committee should be set up to standardize the English texts used by all the English speaking countries in the world to avoid confusion. It was not long before other English speaking liturgical churches (Anglicans, Methodists, Lutherans, etc.) decided that they would set up their own commissions to standardize the (contemporary) liturgical English used in their rites. Thus, there came into being a veritable alphabet soup of committees to decide which translations of the traditional Latin texts would be used in modern worship. Despite the principled objections of English scholars and groups like the Prayer Book Society, Anglicans replaced the older translations made by Cranmer with new texts fashioned by committees and later incorporated into contemporary rites such as the Book of Alternative Services. It would be helpful to list some of these committees in order to better understand how we have come to the place we are in today.

The International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) is a Roman Catholic committee which was organized in 1963, and its texts have been used in the current Missal translation of 1973.

The International Consultation on English Texts (ICET) was an ecumenical group formed from many different churches and started in 1969, with the encouragement and participation of ICEL. ICET's objective was to devise acceptable texts for all the ecclesial bodies involved in

this informally structured group. ICET published three editions of "Prayers We Have in Common" (1970, 71, 75) before it disbanded in 1975. One of the ecumenical texts that was rejected by the Roman Church (but accepted by the other churches) at the time was the ICET version of the Our Father ("save us from the time of trial"). A simple glance at the "Acknowledgements" page at the back of the Book of Alternative Services (p.925) shows that the English translations of the Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, Nicene Creed, *Kyrie*, *Gloria in Excelsis*, *Sursum Corda*, *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*, *Gloria Patri*, *Benedictus*, *Te Deum*, *Magnificat*, and *Nunc Dimittis* (in some cases with adaptation) were all products of ICET.

The **Consultation on Common Texts** (CCT), an ecumenical group formed under ICEL's leadership in the early 1960s, produced many of the ICET translations. The CCT also produced a Common Lectionary (1983), a Revised Common Lectionary (1992), and other "ecumenical" liturgical texts.

In 1983, ICEL, CCT, and several other smaller English-speaking groups joined in rejuvenating the ecumenical liturgical text effort — and in 1985 these groups formed the **English Language Liturgical Consultation** (ELLC) as the successor to ICET — with a major additional objective to incorporate feminist, or "inclusive", language in texts used for worship. In 1988, the ELLC published "Praying Together", a revision of the ICET "Prayers We Have in Common". For examples of their translations see the ELLC (this acronym is pronounced as "elk") web site:

<http://www.englishtexts.org>.

In the 1990's 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 was being proposed by the ELLC people, 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* (Authentic Liturgy) which gives 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* (Clear Voice) to advise the Congregation on matters of translation of liturgical texts into the English language. At this point it would be worth quoting some sections from *Liturgiam Authenticam* to get a sense of the concerns being expressed:

“Ever since the promulgation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy [at the Second Vatican Council], the work of the translation of the liturgical texts into vernacular languages, as promoted by the Apostolic See, has involved the publication of norms and the communication to the Bishops of advice on the matter. Nevertheless, it has been noted that translations of liturgical texts in various localities stand in need of improvement through correction or through a new draft.

“The omissions or errors which affect certain existing vernacular translations, especially in the case of certain languages [e.g. English], have impeded the progress of the inculturation that actually should have taken place. Consequently, the Church has been prevented from laying the foundation for a fuller, healthier and more authentic renewal.

“For these reasons, it now seems

necessary to set forth anew, and in light of the maturing of experience, the principles of translation to be followed in future translations whether they be entirely new undertakings or emendations of texts already in use and to specify more clearly certain norms that have already been published, taking into account a number of questions and circumstances that have arisen in our own day. In order to take full advantage of the experience gained since the Council [i.e. Vatican II], it seems useful to express these norms from time to time in terms of tendencies that have been evident in past translations, but which are to be avoided in future ones.

“The words of the Sacred Scriptures, as well as the other words spoken in liturgical celebrations, especially in the celebration of the Sacraments, *are not intended primarily to be a sort of mirror of the interior dispositions of the faithful; rather, they express truths that transcend the limits of time and space.* [emphasis added] Indeed, by means of these words God speaks continually with the Spouse of his beloved Son, the Holy Spirit leads the Christian faithful into all truth and causes the word of Christ to dwell abundantly within them, and the Church perpetuates and transmits all that she herself is and all that she believes, even as she offers the prayers of all the faithful to God, through Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

“... it is to be kept in mind from the beginning that the translation of the liturgical texts of the Roman Liturgy is not so much a work of creative innovation as it is of rendering the original texts faithfully and accurately into the vernacular language. While it is permissible to arrange the wording, the syntax and the style in such a way as to prepare a flowing vernacular text suitable to the

rhythm of popular prayer, the original text, insofar as possible, must be translated integrally and in the most exact manner, without omissions or additions in terms of their content, and without paraphrases or glosses.

“Even if expressions should be avoided which hinder comprehension because of their excessively unusual or awkward nature, the liturgical texts should be considered as the voice of the Church at prayer, rather than of only particular congregations or individuals; thus, they should be free of an overly servile adherence to prevailing modes of expression. If indeed, in the liturgical texts, words or expressions are sometimes employed which differ somewhat from usual and everyday speech, *it is often enough by virtue of this very fact that the texts become truly memorable and capable of expressing heavenly realities.* [emphasis added]

“Thus it may happen that a certain manner of speech which has come to be considered somewhat obsolete in daily usage may continue to be maintained in the liturgical context. In translating biblical passages where seemingly inelegant words or expressions are used, a hasty tendency to sanitize this characteristic is likewise to be avoided. These principles, in fact, should free the Liturgy from the necessity of frequent revisions when modes of expression may have passed out of popular usage.”

Oh, that these kinds of principles could have been kept in mind by both Roman and Anglican revisers during the 1960’s and 1970’s when liturgical change was being implemented! In addition to enunciating certain principles for translating liturgical texts from Latin into the vernacular, the *Liturgiam Authenticam* report also made some very specific recommendations:

“In referring to almighty God or the individual persons of the Most

Holy Trinity, the truth of tradition as well as the established gender usage of each respective language are to be maintained.

“Particular care is to be taken to ensure that the fixed expression “Son of Man” be rendered faithfully and exactly. The great Christological and typological significance of this expression requires that there should also be employed throughout the translation a rule of language that will ensure that the fixed expression remain comprehensible in the context of the whole translation.

“Insofar as possible in a given vernacular language, the use of the feminine pronoun, rather than the neuter, is to be maintained in referring to the Church.

“Certain expressions that belong to the heritage of the whole or of a great part of the ancient Church, as well as others that have become part of the general human patrimony, are to be respected by a translation that is as literal as possible, as for example the words of the people’s response *Et cum spiritu tuo* [And with your spirit], or the expression *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa* [through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault] in the Act of Penance of the Order of Mass.

“The Creed is to be translated according to the precise wording that the tradition of the Latin Church has bestowed upon it, including the use of the first person singular, by which is clearly made manifest that the confession of faith is handed down in the Creed, as it were, as coming from the person of the whole Church, united by means of the Faith.”

(For those who are interested in reading the whole of the *Liturgiam Authenticam* report, the entire text may be found here: adoremus.org/liturgiam_authenticam.html#anchor6328545.)

Needless to say there were many liberal Roman Catholics, particularly

in North America, who did not like what the report had to say. *Liturgiam Authenticam* struck at the heart of the whole revisionist agenda. The people most resistant to implementing the report were the members of the ICEL committee, who were, for the most part, the same people who had made the old translations in the 1960’s and did not like the fact that their work was considered substandard. In an ironic twist of fate, those who had been most eager to trash the traditions of the Church and implement revolutionary liturgical change in the past were now the most obstinate resisters of renewed change in the present! The Roman Church, being the highly centralized structure that it is, simply “renewed” ICEL in 2003 by firing all of its members and appointing new ones. The new ICEL has been working hard at new English translations of the original Latin liturgical texts and these have, for the most part, been approved. The process of implementing *Liturgiam Authenticam* is now well under way and new versions of the English language texts of the Mass and Divine Office (the Breviary) are set to appear in the next few years. The ordinary Roman Catholic in the pew can expect a very different worship experience once the new translations are published for official use. In keeping with the principles quoted above, the people will no longer say “And also with you” as the response to “The Lord be with you”, but will instead say, “And with your spirit”. The Nicene Creed will no longer be recited in the plural (We believe in one God ...), but will instead revert to the first person singular (I believe in one God ...). These, and many other changes, will give the modern Roman Mass a much more traditional flavour. It should also be mentioned that the Lord’s Prayer is to remain in traditional language (Our Father who

art in heaven ...).

The readers of this article may well ask, what does all this have to do with members of the Anglican Church of Canada? I want to suggest that, indirectly, *Liturgiam Authenticam* should give to Prayer Book Anglicans both a sense of vindication and hope for the future.

There is a sense of vindication because the Prayer Book Society has for years complained about the flat, bland, banal, trivial and sometimes ungrammatical nature of contemporary English liturgical prose and now it would appear that the Roman Catholic authorities have come to exactly the same conclusion. It has already been mentioned that some sections of the *Liturgiam Authenticam* report sound like the same kind of thing traditional Anglicans have been saying for decades. Thus, dissatisfaction with modern liturgy is no longer the fringe pastime of a few cranky reactionaries but a mainstream concern of many people who wish to see genuine renewal in the Christian Church, both within and outside of the Roman Church. It must also be said that Archbishop Cranmer’s English translations of Latin texts are, indirectly at least, vindicated by *Liturgiam Authenticam* as well because his English translations were (and still are) accurate and mellifluous translations of the Latin which are eminently suitable for the seemingly worship of Almighty God today.

The changes taking place in the Roman Church are a source of hope for traditional Anglicans as well. Those changes are part of a much larger movement within that church to re-connect people with their roots and uphold continuity with the past rather than repudiate everything that came before Vatican II. This change in the climate of discourse can be seen among liturgical scholars also and it

cannot fail to have some impact on Anglicans eventually since we are still engaged ecumenically with each other.

As was shown above, the reason groups like ICET and ELLC came into existence was to produce uniform English language texts which would be used ecumenically by most of the English speaking Christian denominations. Once the new editions of service books in the Roman Church are promulgated, we will no longer have ecumenically agreed upon worship texts. What will be the response of Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, etc., to this new situation? The non-Roman churches could ignore what Rome has done and continue to use the ICET texts. This would not only result in adding tensions to already strained ecumenical relations, but would have other repercussions as well. For example, most of the musical settings for the Eucharist and the Divine Office canticles come from Roman Catholic publishing houses and there will be little incentive for them to keep publishing ICET text worship music for the relatively small number of churches who continue to use the old texts. On the other hand, Protestants could respond to this change by beginning a long and expensive revision of their own contemporary language rites to make them conform to the changes in the Roman Church. However, for Anglicans there is already a solution close at hand which does not involve a lot of expensive revision and that is to use the fine English liturgical texts already to be found in the Book of Common Prayer. The Prayer Book translations are much closer to the new texts being proposed by Rome than the old ICET texts. "And with thy spirit" is almost identical to "And with your spirit", whereas "And also with you" is not even close. It must be emphasized at this point in time that

there is no reason for the Anglican Church of Canada to move ahead with liturgical change until everyone has had a chance to see what the new Roman liturgical texts look like. It would be foolish for General Synod to authorize a revision of its services only to have to reconsider all the work done in the light of what Rome has published. This is one of the reasons why the Prayer Book Society opposes revision of our rites at this time.

Changes in worship in the Roman Catholic Church in the 1960's and 1970's were, in part, a stimulus to change in Anglican worship during the same period of time. It may very well be the case that new changes in a more traditional direction, which are

certainly coming in Roman Catholic worship in the near future, will be a stimulus to change in the same direction in Anglican worship. It may be that the prayers of faithful Anglicans that we be delivered from the inanities of contemporary worship will be answered and the fit and proper worship of the Triune God will once again resound from the sanctuaries of our Anglican churches. God grant it may be so.

The Light of the World

William Holman Hunt (1827-1910)



"Behold, I stand at the door and knock."

Rev 3:20.

This beautiful painting hangs in St Paul's Cathedral, London. The door upon which Christ knocks is the door of the human heart, it must be opened from within, but it is obstinately shut against the Redeemer's call, and is overgrown with branches, the result of many years of neglect, wilful stubbornness, and sloth. (Editor)

"I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Ps. 119:105.

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