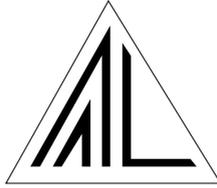




Australian Journal  
of **Liturgy**

VOLUME 16 **NUMBER 2** 2018





AUSTRALIAN ACADEMY OF LITURGY

# Australian Journal of **Liturgy**

VOLUME 16 **NUMBER 2** 2018

Editor	Angela McCarthy
Associate Editor	Doug Morrison-Cleary
Editorial Panel	Robert Gribben Charles Sherlock Anthony Kain Marian Free

*AJL is the journal of the Australian Academy of Liturgy and exists to further the study of liturgy at a scholarly level, and to comment on and provide information concerning liturgical matters with special reference to Australia. AJL is published twice a year.*

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Cover: The former Presbyterian Church at Kirklands in northern Tasmania, from its graveyard. Built in 1836. It is now in the hands of a private trust.  
Photo: Robert Gribben

# Australian Journal of Liturgy

## Volume 16 Number 2 (2018)

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(Book reviewed by Angela McCarthy)

# Editorial



This issue focuses on material that is relevant for our January 2019 conference - **'The Art of Liturgy'**.

Two esteemed members of the Academy of Liturgy provide articles that focus on aspects of the material culture that is needed for liturgy and which is necessarily designed with the needs of liturgical practice in mind. Robert Gribben gives us a wonderful historical insight into three Tasmanian churches of the Scottish tradition and how the architecture of these spaces is arranged to suit the means of liturgical action. Charles Sherlock offers insight into another designed

aspect of liturgy – liturgical texts. Since the Second Vatican Council texts for Christian denominations have all undergone change and even the principles behind the change are changing and so we continue to work on that aspect. A recent publication by Charles is reviewed in this issue. He deals with the many designed aspects of liturgy and how to make them work in the 'performance' of liturgy. The third paper included in this issue is from a Korean PhD student, Jonghyun Kim. He deals with the subject of online worship and our age of digitisation. One of our previous conferences held in Melbourne in 2011 focussed on this issue and we can see that it is a world wide concern.

The conference preparations have proved fruitful and we have included two special events as well. At the beginning of the conference we will be having an evening event that will launch the Mandorla Art Award theme for 2020 which will be led by Archbishop Kay Goldsworthy who has a great affinity for the arts and artists. On the last evening of the conference we will have an evening celebration where the Russell Hardiman Library will be dedicated. Russell has been a long-term member of the Academy and started the WA Chapter. He has Alzheimer's and has bequeathed his extensive liturgical library to the University of Notre Dame. His formed collection of liturgical material is an artefact in itself and the University will locate it within St Teresa's library in Fremantle. That will be a special occasion for Russell's family and friends as well as the Academy.

Since we are dwelling on the arts that are needed in liturgy, the Mandorla Art Award is well placed to help in developing artists to work within religious themes and therefore be available for Church needs. Recently I spoke with John Paul who has won the Mandorla Award twice. His 1990 work, 'Annunciation' has always fascinated me and is one of the artworks held in our winners' collection at New Norcia Museum and Art Gallery.



*Ante lucem*  
Acrylic on Board  
30cm x 24.5cm

The subject for this artwork is one of the most popular throughout Christian history but John gives it a very different treatment to others that we have seen. In August I had a series of conversations with John by email and phone to talk about his work. One of my initial questions was about the character of Gabriel, painted as a Maori warrior. He told me that at the time he was living with a group of Maori people and they had given him a book about Maori mythology and hence Gabriel is like one of their mythical creatures. Whenever we hear of angels in the Scriptures the first words they say are 'do not be afraid' and so they evoked a fearful response but in later centuries we have turned them into something that is often feminine and certainly not male and scary. In John's own quirky humorous manner he has a FIFO (fly in fly out) angel in the background who he said is a miner/minor angel in contrast to the major angel Gabriel. A play on word and image. The dog, usually iconographically indicating faithfulness, in this work also indicates joy as it bounces around the action of the angel taking Mary to a place that is unknown. The weaving of the bodies together under the wings is the overshadowing, a rich scriptural term that refers to the virginal conception. The fish on the dish with the knife refers to the future sacrifice

and like so much religious art this is contextualised in the place of creation, Western Australia, as can be seen in the landscape and wildflowers.

John elaborated further:

The symbolism [is] both giving and scary. Gabriel is scary because of what he brings. He has come to bless and also curse Mary. He robs her of her freewill, she has been chosen. Her life is suddenly over and a new one has been written for her. The only positive thing in all of this is, Mary wants the child, she wants his gift. That child is everything to her and she withholds nothing from it. What she gives she gets in return. And then when he has grown up and wants to leave, she lets the love of her life go. That is the true meaning of sacrifice, as my friend used to say. Mary is the engine of love, she has given him his power and that is what he takes to the world. Then the other part of the curse, the worst nightmare of all. She is forced to watch her son's brutal death. Finally, another symbolic opposite, the resurrection, he lives on in another form.

While theologically I would contend that Mary chose of her free will to accept God's request through Gabriel, the contemporary way in which this work is presented with the juxtaposition of cultures and context awakens a desire to explore this whole subject over again. It is only a small work but in vibrant colours with a rich red for Mary's dress that is magnified by a red surround in the frame. The perspective is icon-like as it draws you into the action.

The call for papers for our conference is still ongoing and there are details later in this issue. The keynote speakers are myself (talking about the St John's Bible), Jarrod McKenna from Cornerstone Church in Perth (active in art, liturgy and social justice) and Peter Blackwood (talking about icons). Much to do and much to see and hear at this conference that will engage all our senses! We hope to see many of you over this side.

**Angela McCarthy**

# Three Tasmanian Holy Tables in the Scots tradition

Robert Gribben



**Robert Gribben**, a former editor of AJL and a Life Member of AAL, is emeritus Professor of Worship and Mission of the Uniting Church Theological College in Melbourne and the former United Faculty of Theology. He wrote *A Guide to Uniting in Worship* (1988) of the Uniting Church (in 1990), and a commentary on two of the Eucharistic Prayers in the second UIW (2005), *Uniting in Thanksgiving* (2009). He has a particular interest in the ecumenical dimensions of liturgy. He can be contacted on [rgribben@ozemail.com.au](mailto:rgribben@ozemail.com.au), and would be interested to hear of any other Australian examples.

## ABSTRACT

*Tasmania guards three unique examples of architectural arrangements for communion in the Presbyterian tradition. They represent a stage in Scottish liturgical history between the early practice of setting up long trestle tables, then permanent ones, in the nave or by the wall of a church, and the 19<sup>th</sup> century custom (borrowed from Zwingli and 17<sup>th</sup> century English Puritanism) of the congregation remaining seated in the pews, and the elements being brought to them by elders. The solution was to create a space within in the congregation's box pews, with a small table, into which the communicants went and sat in turn to receive communion. This article gives the historical, ecclesial and liturgical background to these arrangements, describes in detail the different provisions in the three churches at Kirklands, Oatlands and Evandale and sets them in their context.*

## The Tasmanian treasures

The three formerly Presbyterian<sup>1</sup> churches in this article were each first built by a newly-ordained immigrant Scottish clergyman in the decade from 1836 to 1846 in northern Tasmania. Each preserves an arrangement for the distribution of holy communion unique, as far as I know, to Tasmania and perhaps Australia – joining a diminishing number of examples left in Scotland. Modern liturgical use has left them without purpose, and some of the associated vessels and other appurtenances, for instance, specially designed linen cloths, are in danger of loss.

<sup>1</sup> Kirklands is in the safe hands of a Private Trust; Oatlands and Evandale are Uniting Churches

We know that every generation brings new understandings, expressed in changed liturgies and architectural settings, but here we may still glimpse an older custom – for the moment.

## Scottish Reform in the 16<sup>th</sup> century

The 16<sup>th</sup> century Reformation in Scotland was very different from that in England. In the latter, a king detached a national church from its universal parent (at least in western Europe) with perhaps an initial innocence as to how much change would follow. The change was made under the force of law, an Act of Uniformity of 1534 which severed the English Church from Rome. Each of his successors until 1662 passed such an Act, and the resultant greater insistence on uniformity, royal and parliamentary, was a major cause of the fragmentation of 17<sup>th</sup> century English Christianity.

Scotland's reform was more piecemeal and gradual, and largely from the bottom up, if laity and congregations can be regarded as at the Church's foot. The late Professor Nigel Yates summarizes it this way:

The Reformation in Scotland was essentially a religious *coup d'état* in which a vigorous reform lobby, with a good deal of popular support, forced a reluctant, even hostile, monarchy to accept that Scotland could not, as a corporate nation, remain part of the western Catholic church.<sup>2</sup>

In terms of governance, the reform involved the replacement of an episcopal system based in Rome with what became known as Presbyterianism, which gave authority to representative councils (or courts) in each parish called a 'session.' They consisted of two kinds of elders, both ordained to their specific role. The 'ruling elders' (elected lay members) met with the 'teaching elder', the pastor, to oversee the discipline, nurture and mission of a congregation. A pastor (or minister) was 'called' by the congregation and approved by the presbytery,<sup>3</sup> which had responsibility for a geographical area.<sup>4</sup>

This arrangement began in Calvin's Geneva, and was brought to Scotland by John Knox in 1560. Congregations formerly Roman Catholic then began to elect 'kirk sessions' in an uneven movement across Scotland, from the lowlands to the highlands. It all took time, with such pleasant inconsistencies on the way as Catholic bishops continuing as now democratic chief pastors, and priests moving from saying low

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<sup>2</sup> Nigel Yates, *Preaching, Word and Sacrament, Scottish Church Interiors, 1560-1860*, T & T Clark, 2009, 5; one of his several books also covering English and European liturgical and architectural change. The classic study, which Yates brings up to date, is the now rare George Hay, *The Architecture of Scottish post-Reformation churches, 1560-1843*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957, which I was able to read in the library of New College, Edinburgh.

<sup>3</sup> I am using the past tense, writing from a Uniting Church perspective; Presbyterians elsewhere in Australia and the world continue these practices in various forms.

<sup>4</sup> Above these developed synods, and a General Assembly for the whole of Scotland.

masses to presiding over a less frequent Scots Communion, with both continuing bishops and liturgies changing according to the whims of king and parliament. The 'liturgical altar of the Roman mass gave way to the long communion tables of the Reformed rite flanked by benches at which the communicants sat'.<sup>5</sup>

Scotland experienced the practical problem of all the reformed churches, namely the insufficient numbers of former Catholic clergy or newly ordained Reformed pastors, to take services everywhere. To hand were literate former clerks not regarded as qualified to be ministers, and schoolmasters, who were appointed 'readers'. The *Book of Common Order*, which Knox prepared on Genevan patterns<sup>6</sup> was published in 1562 and remained the standard liturgy in Scotland for eighty years. Note that it was a *book*, and public reading from it intended, and although it allowed some flexibility, deviation from its content and meaning on the fancy of the preacher was not an option. This is by contrast with what replaced it during the Commonwealth (from 1645) and continued to be used by Nonconformists after the Restoration of the monarchy (1660), the *Directory of Public Worship*. That has been rightly described as a liturgy consisting entirely of rubrics.<sup>7</sup>



A lead Communion token 1.6 cm square stamped 'Kirk 1736'; on the reverse WCD = West Calder, in West Lothian, Scotland.

### John Knox's liturgical reforms

Knox's liturgy consisted of two sections, an Ante-Communion which began with confession, led to a scriptural lesson, a sermon, and concluded with intercession, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed. The second part was the eucharist with the familiar essentials, but with an Exhortation and 'fencing of the Table' before the Thanksgiving. It ended with a hymn of thanksgiving and a 'Benediction'. A Reader could conduct the first part of the service, and then the Minister would enter the church, suitably robed, preach the sermon and preside over the Holy Supper. 'Fencing' meant two things: in early churches with earthen floors, the literal hammering of stakes around the table to accommodate the parishioners ready for communion, others standing outwith (as the Scots say),<sup>8</sup> and second, an exhortation to remember the dread consequences of communicating unworthily. However, the elders had already visited each communicant member and their family, reminding them of their solemn obligations

<sup>5</sup> George Hay, op. cit., 58

<sup>6</sup> Knox was an exile from Queen Mary's Catholic England, first in Frankfurt, and then in Calvin's Geneva, where he was minister to the English congregation there.

<sup>7</sup> It was devised by the Westminster Assembly of 1644, which consisted largely of 'Independents' (Congregationalists) with a minority of Scottish delegates. It describes what should happen in a worship service but does not set down the actual words to be used.

<sup>8</sup> The gate in the fence was called a 'yett', and the stakes a 'traviss'. Once floors were boarded, the fence became 'virtual', but just as effective

in the weeks before Communion Day (which settled into a quarterly pattern). Those who were approved a metal (later paper) token, which the communicants gave back to an elder at the gate to the fenced area.

## The matter of Sitting at Table

The liturgy followed in Scotland began with a *Forme of Prayers* which Knox produced in 1541, based on the service of the English congregation in Geneva, then adapted in the Westminster *Directory of Public Worship* (1644) and imposed on the ‘Three Kingdoms.’ This rubric set the pattern:

After this Exhortation, Warning and Invitation, the Table being before decently covered, and conveniently placed, that the Communicants may orderly sit about it, or at it, the Minister is to begin the action with sanctifying and blessing the elements of Bread and Wine set before him (the Bread in comely and convenient vessels, so prepared, that being broken by him, and given, it may be distributed amongst the Communicants; The Wine also in large Cups);...<sup>9</sup>

The key point to notice is the phrase ‘*the Table being...placed, that the Communicants may orderly sit about it, or at it*’, which embraced both the English Puritan habit (remaining in their seats, the elements being brought to them) or ‘at it’, and the Scots custom of coming forward to sit at Table. It was composed by a parliamentary committee!

John Knox had been involved in the earlier deliberations in England in anticipation of the *Book of Common Prayer* of 1552. The Privy Council that year debated the proper posture for receiving holy communion. Cranmer argued for kneeling, John Knox for sitting. Knox insisted on sitting for communion (since he believed the apostles did). He lost, but his main concern is expressed in the ‘Black Rubric’ which he successfully argued was to be inserted,<sup>10</sup> that is, that kneeling was a sign of humility and should by no means imply veneration of the consecrated elements.<sup>11</sup>

Note also the importance of the Table. Temporary tables, narrow trestles, with benches for sitting on, were set up in Scottish churches for communion days. A permanent Table was not required.<sup>12</sup> Seating on ordinary Sundays was positioned in relation

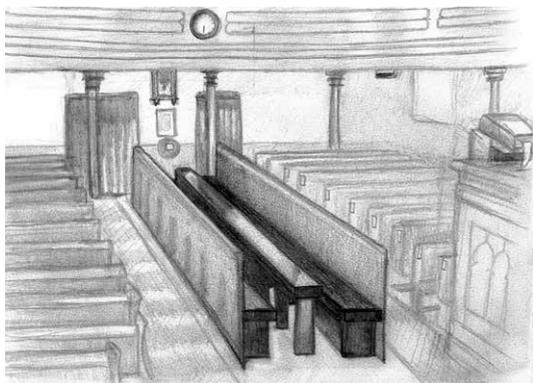
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<sup>9</sup> The text is found in Bard Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church*, Collins, 1974, 369.

<sup>10</sup> He achieved this in a sermon before King Edward VI. The rubric was printed in black, rather than red, because it was a late addition. It was removed in the Elizabethan 1559 BCP, and curiously, replaced in 1662 (with some word changes).

<sup>11</sup> This despite Knox’s ‘high’ sacramental doctrine – see the first Scots Confession of Faith, which he largely devised. Knox held that *weekly* communion was the scriptural norm; however, pre-Reformation infrequent communion (at Easter, if then) had set an almost unbreakable pattern, exacerbated by the paucity of clergy.

<sup>12</sup> A permanent table, at first quite small (e.g. Oatlands) and later larger, under the central pulpit was introduced with later (19<sup>th</sup> C) changes in communion practice.



An artist's impression of the arrangement in a Church of Scotland (Presbyterian) building of about the same period as our Tasmanian examples: St Modan's Kirk, Benderloch, Ardchattan, in Argyllshire, built 1838-39. The communion pew is permanent, central, open at both ends. [Drawing: Michael Saunders]

to the pulpit, preaching being the heart of Reformed worship. As fixed seating was adopted for churches during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, long communion tables and their benches became a permanent feature, often running from the pulpit down the nave towards the door, or along a long side wall.<sup>13</sup>

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some Scottish churches provided a block of seats in the front rows, with hinged backs and movable benches, with adjustable bolts, in alternate rows, for the administration of the sacrament; these seats were offered to the poor on ordinary Sundays.<sup>14</sup>

What we have just described is regarded as the original Scots way of communion.<sup>15</sup> The Westminster *Directory* was almost entirely a liturgy of English Puritanism, and the Scots differed sharply on custom at certain points, and especially to communion being delivered to people seated in their pews.

## From 'sitting at' to 'sitting about' the Table

This leads us to the next liturgical change we need as background. The growth of Scottish cities from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century meant that the more efficient urban church buildings did not have room for a congregation to move to sit at a central table. So-called *quoad sacra* churches in burgeoning suburbia were additional chapels to the

<sup>13</sup> The entire long communion pew from Tulloch Free Church of 1844 from Livingston, West Lothian, has been removed to the National Museum in Edinburgh and is on display.

<sup>14</sup> George Hay, op. cit., 182-3, has architectural drawings of the arrangement. In the 1950s, examples were still visible in about a dozen Scottish churches, loc. cit. and see *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 1954, article separately published (I own a part-copy).

<sup>15</sup> This was also part of English practice during the Commonwealth. See the description by Richard Baxter of his practice at Kidderminster in 1657 in Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England, From Andrewes to Baxter and Fox, 1603-1690*, Princeton University Press, 1973, p. 321. Baxter was an episcopally-ordained priest who, being unable to accept the 1662 BCP as mandatory, was ejected from his living. The Communion at the first Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1948 was administered to people seated on individual chairs at a long table, in the nave of the Groote Kerk at Amsterdam, the hosts being the Dutch Reformed Church.



Early individual cups were shaped like tiny chalices; these glass ones from Scots Church, Hobart, Tasmania.

parish kirk, whose parish had civil or governmental responsibilities in addition to ecclesiastical.<sup>16</sup>

In any case, in St John's Church, Glasgow, and especially during the 1820s ministry of the influential Dr Thomas Chalmers, the English Puritan/Congregationalist mode of receiving was trialled in Scotland.<sup>17</sup> The Assembly roundly condemned the innovation (as it did later over the use of individual cups)<sup>18</sup>, but the people voted with their behinds. Chalmers borrowed another Puritan custom of draping long white 'houcelling' cloths<sup>19</sup> along the backs (and over their book boards) of pews, so that the whole congregation seemed to sit at the same table.<sup>20</sup>

The Minister and Elders having communicated at a central (and now permanent) Table, the Elders carried first the bread and then the wine to the end of pews and the people passed each along to the elder at the other end, who returned the vessels to the Table.

We can now turn to examine the three Tasmanian churches.

## Kirklands<sup>21</sup>

The Minister of the West Kirk of Calder, west of Edinburgh,<sup>22</sup> Dr James Mackersey had two sons. In 1823, the elder son, James, emigrated to Van Diemen's Land and obtained 120 acres of land near Campbell Town. His father was concerned that there was no church in the countryside around James, so sought a young clergyman who

<sup>16</sup> *Quoad sacra* meaning 'concerning sacred matters', the civil and ecclesiastical parishes coinciding in most cases in Scotland (and England). See also Nigel Yates, op. cit., 83.

<sup>17</sup> The practice began earlier but is usually associated with Chalmers. He strongly opposed civil interference in church affairs, such as in a congregation's right to call a minister. In 1843, 470 clergy walked out of the General Assembly and formed the Free Church of Scotland with Chalmers as Moderator. Alexander Campbell at Otlands was from a Free Kirk, and Robert Russell at Evandale was a student of Chalmers. Mackersey at West Calder was Church of Scotland.

<sup>18</sup> One account of this controversy can be found in A. K. Robertson, *The Individual Cup: its use at Holy Communion*, Church Service Society journal. Accessed on 3 Feb. 2018 at <http://www.churchservicesociety.org/sites/default/files/journals/1978-Nov-2-12.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> 'Housel' is a Middle English term for giving the eucharist to someone. For their introduction see W. D. Maxwell, *Concerning Worship*, Oxford University Press, 1948, 94-95. Nigel Yates, in his *Preaching, Word and Sacrament* suggests 'This is in fact a survival of the pre-Reformation houselling cloths used to drape the altar rails and to prevent any of the consecrated bread falling to the ground. It is perhaps ironic that one of the most Protestant of the 'reformed' churches of Europe should retain this interesting vestige of Catholic practice' (p. 87). Perhaps.

<sup>20</sup> It may divert Anglican readers to know that Dr Pusey favoured houselling cloths, and so used them at Christ Church, Oxford as late as 1856; it was also the custom at St Mary the Virgin (the University Church) and at Trinity College until later. See J. C. Bowmer, *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, Westminster: Dacre 1951, 9, fn 4.

<sup>21</sup> I am very grateful for the assistance of its Chairman, Mr John Taylor, for access to and further information about Kirklands

<sup>22</sup> He must have been serving the Auld Kirk of 1643, already falling to pieces. My ancestors for several generations were parishioners of the West Kirk of Calder, the present building dating from 1870.



L: Kirklands Church, showing the central pulpit; with a communion table within each front pew.  
 R: One of the communion pews at Kirklands, with a bench either side for communicants.

might emigrate with a view to building a parish and a church. The colonists were to supply the salary. In the end, his younger son, John (1789-1871), who had been a lay preacher in the West Kirk, agreed to go, and in the Presbyterian custom, was ordained for the purpose and sent out, arriving at the Macquarie River in 1829.<sup>23</sup> By dint of his own commitment and financial generosity, a magnificent Georgian manse of some 12 to 14 rooms, was built in 1829,<sup>24</sup> in which initial services were held, then, finally, in 1836, a proper kirk.

The building is rectangular box with a gabled roof (probably originally thatched)<sup>25</sup>, external walls rendered, and two one-light gothic windows in the long side. It sits on high ground away from trees, and nearby is its old cemetery, making a notably beautiful rural setting. There are two rows of eight box pews, their doors making a ‘fence’ much favoured in wintry Scotland, with a broad central aisle, the pulpit, with overhead tester, at front centre, with the entrance at the other end. Each pew has a fixed bench, all facing the preacher. The two front pews have no door, and the space is deeper, so that a narrow table has been placed in the middle of each, with a bench on each side, one with its back to the pulpit. Each pew would seat four comfortably, perhaps five communicants. The table in front of the pulpit is simply the Minister’s desk; the significant ‘Lord’s Table’ was in the special pews, not in front of the Minister. During the distribution, members would come in order and sit at these tables, this taking some time – but the building is not large.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> The story of his struggles to find the money, legal rights and labour to achieve his purpose can be found in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography: Mackersy, John (1789-1871)*, by Lex Finlay, vol. 2 (MUP), 1967 and online.

<sup>24</sup> Margaret Morey describes it in detail through the memories of several generations of ministerial families in *The Manse Folk of Kirklands*, Campbell Town, 1986.

<sup>25</sup> I owe this detail to a suggestion by Mr Taylor.

<sup>26</sup> The 1842 census counted 60 residents in the surrounding properties, including convicts; many were Scottish emigrants and Presbyterians. Morey, op. cit. 16.



L: Oatlands Church, looking at the central pulpit with one side aisle visible;

R: Across the pews with their dividing fence, with the tables down with their original cloths, and the benches moved to provide seating on both sides.

## Oatlands

Presbyterians met in a private house in the Oatlands district from 1832, and successfully called a minister first in 1837, but serious thought about a church building waited for his successor, the Rev. Lachlan Mackinnon Campbell from Skye (1821-1907) who arrived in Launceston in 1853. The Free Church Presbytery of Tasmania (known as the ‘Wee Frees’) immediately appointed him to Oatlands.<sup>27</sup> The scattered congregation began raising funds. Some Crown land was released for a church, manse and glebe. They rather rushed to get a building up, against the warnings of Mr Campbell, and the rough stone kirk opened on 12 October 1846, with tower and spire, was washed away by a severe storm in 1858. By 1860, the present church was opened, built in the ‘early English style of the 13<sup>th</sup> century’,<sup>28</sup> and has stood firm on a rise in the present very charming town. It was named the ‘Campbell Free Church’ after him, and he remained in the charge for 54 years. The first Sacrament was celebrated in February 1854 with 14 communicants.

The building is of honey-coloured local freestone,<sup>29</sup> with single gable, and a pointed tower (a ‘breach spire’) over the entrance. The long centre box pews of cedar, nine rows, are built across the church, with a dividing bar midway along the centre, with an aisle on either side and then small box pews to the window walls. In front is a clutter

<sup>27</sup> The two Presbyterian Churches, the Free (connected to the original Seceders and the one related to the Church of Scotland), united in Tasmania in 1896. For local history that follows, see Stephanie M. Burbury, *A History of the Campbell Memorial Church, Oatlands, 1832-1992*. A spiral-bound photocopy, with no pagination, was kindly lent me by the Rev. Dennis Cousens, Uniting Church Midlands Patrol Minister. The Tasmanian Information and Research Service/LINC Tasmania lists one other history, of the same year, by Malcolm Mackay, annotated as ‘preliminary’; there are also references in various articles, as well as some historic records. Unfortunately, Burbury says nothing of the communion arrangements.

<sup>28</sup> Burbury, *History*.

<sup>29</sup> A stone able to be cut in any direction.

of elder's chairs, flower pot stands and font, and an enclosed, altar-shaped table, which represents the transition to a more Anglican style of architecture favoured in the late Victorian era.<sup>30</sup> The second front long pew has an arrangement whereby the back of the pew each side can be unbolted and lowered 45° to form a table. The bench is then moved, so that there is one either side of the table. Each pew would seat five, and thus all four would seat twenty communicants at a sitting. Some of the long cloths with which they were covered, are still kept, as well as some of the cloths to be draped over other pews (the 'houseselling cloths').

## Evandale

Also in the north of the state, by the South Esk river, Evandale's former Presbyterian Church (now Uniting) is known for its elegant Classical – or Greek Revival - style, its Doric columns in the porch as well as the beautiful wood in the interior. A young Scot, the Rev. Robert Russell (1803-1877) arrived there in 1838, going through the same negotiations with Governor Macquarie to obtain land, and leading worship in private homes meanwhile. And again, with astonishing speed, the church was ready for use and dedicated in September 1840.<sup>31</sup> Russell had studied under Dr Chalmers; at retirement in 1873, Russell promised to return to Evandale twice a year 'and with them partake at the communion table'<sup>32</sup>

St Andrew's communion pew is built into the box pews on the left of the central pulpit (the liturgical north-east corner). It is more accommodating than those at Kirklands, providing a seat also on the third side, against the (liturgical) east wall so that the seating arrangement is a U in shape, closed by the fence and gate of its box pew. Perhaps ten people could enter and be seated at a time, the Minister or elder handing in the elements from the gate. Brass candlesticks are fixed into two sides of the fence, six in all, thus marking this as a space of sacred significance.



The communion pew at St Andrew's, Evandale. It occupies the front corner of the church adjacent to the pulpit. The pew behind it runs along the wall. Note the three brass candlesticks on two sides, and the seating on three.

[Photo: Jeff McClintock]

<sup>30</sup> The Scottish liturgical revival, both Presbyterian and Episcopal, was a High Church movement, sometimes known as Scoto-Catholic, inspired by the Oxford Movement, and the Cambridge Ecclesiologists (who were chiefly interested in architecture). In the Kirk, a Church Service Society was formed in 1865 and promoted both research and experimentation. A detailed account of change can be found in George B. Burnet, *The Holy Communion in the Reformed Church of Scotland 1560-1860*, Edinburgh, 1960 esp. 277ff.

<sup>31</sup> The property is beautifully kept, and the whole Georgian village is National Trust classified.

<sup>32</sup> *Launceston Examiner*, Sat 18 Jan 1873 p 2 (Trove). He is buried in St Andrew's kirkyard.

One of Mr Russell's sermons in his *Memories of a Colonial Ministry*<sup>33</sup> is called 'The Marriage Supper' and the text is Rev. 19:9, 'And he saith unto me, "Write, 'Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb"' (King James's Version) and begins, 'Brethren, we have again the near prospect of sitting down at an earthly supper of the Lamb'. How near the prospect was is not clear (the very day, or in anticipation?), and his sermon entirely concerns the heavenly feast.

The original table is covered with red beige, over which a fair linen cloth would have been placed. The wood used throughout the church is (I am told)<sup>34</sup> Australian cedar from the Hawkesbury region of NSW - rather ironic when one considers the desirability of Tasmanian timbers, but I assume the early colonists hadn't yet realised the potential of wood like king billy, huon pine, blackwood, and the like.

### Some reflections

Dr Chalmers' abandonment of the long table and seating for successive groups of the congregation, was prompted in large part by the length of time which that mode of communion took. The exhortations and sermons were also shortened for the same reason. The introduction of fixed pews - not until the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Scotland<sup>35</sup> - radically altered the mobility of the congregation, and it is much easier to stay seated - but Zwingli advocated it because of the gain of stillness and silence before the sacrament he so revered. In the Scottish, it was also a distinction from the practice of the *Book of Common Prayer*. The Methodists precisely modified the 18<sup>th</sup> century Anglican inheritance by inviting members to come forward and kneel at the altar rail in 'tables', each small company being dismissed with a scriptural verse before making way for the next.

Whatever the pragmatic and less than lofty reasons for liturgical change (architecturally speaking), these reminders of other ways of celebrating the one eucharistic feast are significant for the communal memory. In the scattered communities of colonial Tasmania, the Scots built the sacred places which gave meaning to their faith and distinctive worship. Encountering these signs of past faithfulness raises questions for our own time and practice. The Uniting Church will need to be imaginative in its responsibility to keep these spaces available for such encounters.

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<sup>33</sup> Robert Russell, *Memorials of a Colonial Ministry*, Edinburgh 1883, Sermon XIII (of twenty). A copy may be consulted in the State Library of Victoria (S252 R91).

<sup>34</sup> My thanks to Jeff McClintock for providing this information.

<sup>35</sup> Burnet, op.cit. 268.



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# How three Anglican liturgical distinctives have changed: a case study in liturgical revision

Charles Sherlock



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## ABSTRACT

*Drafting liturgical texts for a new context involves recasting existing resources of the Christian tradition, new composition, and sensitivity to the doctrinal, spiritual and cultural issues of the time. With this in mind, three distinctive elements of the Holy Communion service in the Book of Common Prayer are analysed. Each was the work of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer: one was taken from earlier sources; one was a new use of the biblical text; and one was a new composition. Each element is considered in the light of how they are used in current Australian Anglican rites, thus offering a 'case study' of issues in the contemporary ministry of liturgical composition.*

## Introduction

Growing up in Anglican rectories, my Christian identity was shaped by regular use of the *Book of Common Prayer (BCP)*. Indeed, it was the only form of Christian liturgy that I experienced until my twenties, when the first 'little bookies' of new trial services came around. I participated actively in these experimental services in modern English, and played a part in the introduction of *An Australian Prayer Book* (1977). Then in 1989 I found myself on the Liturgical Commission of the Anglican Church of Australia, asked to prepare a new prayer book. The outcome was *A Prayer Book for Australia* (1995).

Over recent decades, what is thought to be authentic 'Anglican' liturgy has steadily moved away from the provisions of *BCP*. Much of this is welcome and desirable. Given its influence in shaping my identity in Christ, I delight in *BCP*, in part no doubt due to nostalgia. Nevertheless, I recognize that *BCP* services are appropriate for use

in very few contexts today. It took Anglicans in this land a lot of energy to move liturgically from sixteenth century England to third millennium Australia, and in doing so, some distinctive elements of *BCP* have been effectively left behind.<sup>1</sup> What matters is less their use, than reflecting on key issues of theology and liturgy which they express.

This paper thus considers three elements of *BCP* Holy Communion. Each is an Anglican 'distinctive', in that they do not appear in the liturgies of other Christian traditions, but are disappearing from Anglican usage. Each goes back to the work of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, of whom I admit to be somewhat of a fan.<sup>2</sup> Each is treated in varying detail in the classic Prayer Book commentaries, now rarely consulted by Anglican clergy.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, I have quite often found myself reviewing research proposals from younger clergy on some aspect of Anglican liturgy which anyone who did the old ThL subject 'Prayer Book' would know is well-ploughed ground!

Before proceeding, a difference of ethos between *BCP* and modern eucharistic rites should be noted. *BCP* Holy Communion reflects an ethos of 'godly quietness', and focuses on Christ's saving passion: to 'celebrate' the eucharist meant code for everything being done 'decently and in order'. To 'celebrate' today means doing so in a spirit of friendly inclusion, and with a stronger sense of Christ's being raised from the dead. Further, at several points in *BCP* Holy Communion a gentle highlight is followed by a 'decline' in feel. The effect is one of 'waves' that slowly build, until 'released' at the end of the service in the Hymn of Praise, 'Glory be to God on high' (the *Gloria*), expressing our 'sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving'. The joy in Christ is real, but restrained.

On, then, to consider three distinctive elements of the *BCP* heritage: the 'Collect for Purity', the function of the Ten Commandments, and the 'Prayer of Humble Access'.

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<sup>1</sup> One aspect of *BCP* that must be left to the dustbin of history is the 'principle of uniformity': 'there shall be but one Use throughout the Realm' (as the Preface to *BCP* affirms). This change was a major agreement at the 'Future of the Prayer Book Tradition' conference at Trinity College Theological School, May 2018. That said, the *Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia* section 4 states that the *Book of Common Prayer*, together with the Thirty-nine Articles, be regarded as the authorised standard of worship and doctrine in this Church, and no alteration in or permitted variations from the services or Articles therein contained shall contravene any principle of doctrine or worship laid down in such standard.

<sup>2</sup> For example, Charles Sherlock, "The Food of the Soul. Thomas Cranmer and Holy Scripture", *Australian Journal of Liturgy* 2/3 (1990) 134–141.

<sup>3</sup> A 'Prayer Book Protestant' outlook undergirds C. Neill, C. and J.M. Willoughby. *The Tutorial Prayer Book* (London: Church Book Room, 1963; first published 1912). The classic 'Anglo-Catholic' commentary is F. Procter and W.H. Frere, *A History of the Book of Common Prayer with a rationale of its offices* (London: Macmillan, 1961; first published 1905); available electronically at <http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/Procter&Frere/index.htm>.

## The Collect for Purity<sup>4</sup>

Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hid:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love thee,  
and worthily magnify thy holy name,  
through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Attention to the origins and theology of this much-loved prayer illustrates how Cranmer both retained and reformed the heritage of the Catholic faith in England. It was one of the priest's prayers before presiding at mass according to the Sarum rite (c. 1085); the prayer was distinctive to Sarum, not being found in other medieval rites (e.g. York, Bangor or Roman). But its origins are earlier again: Daniel notes that 'it is found in a Sacramentary of Alcuin, Abbot of Canterbury about 780'.<sup>5</sup>

The Latin of the Sarum text is:<sup>6</sup>

Deus cui omne cor patet et omnia voluntas loquitur, et quem nullum latet secretum; purifica per infusionem sancti Spiritus cogitationes cordis nostri; ut perfecte te diligere et digne laudare mereamur. Per Dominum Christum.

Translated literally, this is:

God to whom every heart is open and to whom each will addresses, and before whom nothing lies secret; purify by the infusion of the Holy Spirit the reflections of our heart; that we may merit to perfectly value and worthily praise you. Through Christ the Lord.<sup>7</sup>

Cranmer enriches the (typically Latin) bald 'Deus' to 'Almighty God'. Today this carries ideas of power as in the Latin *omnipotens* (God all-mighty). But, as elsewhere in liturgical texts, it echoes the divine Name revealed to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob:

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<sup>4</sup> It is described as the 'Prayer of Preparation' in APBA; in its Holy Communion service, it is retained in First Order, an option in Second Order, but omitted in Third Order.

<sup>5</sup> Evan Daniel, *The Prayer Book: its History, Language and Contents* (26th edition, Redhill: Well Gardner, Darton & Son, 1948; first edition 1901) 345.

<sup>6</sup> Maskell, William, *The ancient Liturgy of the Church of England according to the uses of Sarum York Hereford and Bangor and the Roman Liturgy arranged in parallel columns with preface and notes* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1882) 6. My copy is signed 'Barry Marshall' and dated Lent 1, 1948 – two earlier owners are listed on the flyleaf.

<sup>7</sup> An English translation is known before Cranmer's time, "on a blank leaf between two treatises in English, forming part of a volume of religious tracts" from a York monastery of around 1420: Maskell, 7.

'El-Shaddai' (Genesis 17.1; 28.3; 35.11; 48.3), rendered 'Almighty' in English versions. 'Heart' was a favourite term of Cranmer's.<sup>8</sup> With deep roots in the scriptures (see for example Exodus 28.29-30; 35.21-22; Deuteronomy 6.5-6; 1 Samuel 16.7; Matthew 5.8; 6.21; Romans 10.8-10) and Augustine of Hippo ('our hearts are restless ...'), it not only avoids the philosophical disputes of the Reformation over 'body / soul' issues, but expresses a firm Anglo-Saxon sense of fleshly reality. Indeed, 'heart' threads its way through the *BCP* Holy Communion service to articulate the *experience* of participants, from 'incline our hearts / write thy law on our hearts' to 'that their hearts may be truly thankful' to 'Lift up your hearts!' and the closing blessing, 'The peace of God ... keep your hearts. The Collect for Purity is where this, our spiritual journey, begins.

Yet it is not 'every' (*omne*) but 'all hearts' and 'all desires', giving a *corporate* rather than *collective* sense. It is not just that my, or her, or his, or our hearts and desires are each open and known to God, but that *all* are, together. The positive 'lies secret' is turned into the passive, 'are hid': God knows our pasts, as well as our present ('hearts') and hopes ('desires').

Two typically 'reforming' shifts can be seen in Cranmer's rendition. The first is in changes of translation. The Latin *omnia voluntas loquitur* carries the sense that it is the will (*voluntas*) that takes the initiative in our relationship with God; rendering this by 'desire' reflects Augustine's notion of the *desire* of human beings, made in the divine image, being intrinsically directed to God and the good, though weakened and (apart from grace) made incapable of re-direction once diverted to creaturely things. Along similar lines, translating *loquitur* – active in meaning, though passive in form – by the passive 'known' returns the initiative to God. And 'All desires known' is quintessentially English, echoing the spirituality of mystics like Julian of Norwich ('all things shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well').<sup>9</sup> If 'hearts are open' has a sense of God's present action, 'desires' brings into view God's knowing our hopes at their best.

Even so, we sinful mortals need to be 'purified' in order to worship God aright. Apart from being Latinate, 'purified' can carry unhelpful cultic connotations. 'Cleanse' avoids these, echoes Psalm 51 and is strong English. Such cleansing happens by the Spirit's *infusionem*: translating this as 'inspiration' (a Latin term!) avoids the idea of grace being 'imparted' – and English ears perhaps hearing 'infusion' as about making tea! As to what is cleansed, 'thoughts' may seem a bit weak for *cogitationes*:

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<sup>8</sup> This paragraph owes much to a sermon preached by Bishop Stephen Sykes at a 1989 conference in Durham to mark the 500th anniversary of Thomas Cranmer's birth. He was born and raised in Aslockton, near Nottingham, where I was on study leave in 1989. On Cranmer's birth date, my wife Peta and I went to this small village to toast the good archbishop at the local hostelry, The Cranmer Arms, only to encounter fellow Australian (now Bishop) Paul Barker!

<sup>9</sup> *All Desires Known* (London: SPCK, 1992) is the title of Janet Morley's book of contemporary liturgical resources: some of the collects in this book are taken up in *APBA*.

'reflections' is my attempt to render it. But 'thoughts' is ordinary English, and 'our hearts' are where sin has its beginnings.

The second reforming shift is by the omission of 'merit', a concept which had come to represent the sharp difference between medieval and Reformation understandings of human-divine relationships. The purpose clause of the collect ('so that ...') is then grounded in the work of the Spirit, rather human activity.

And the 'end' (aim) of this praying? That we may 'perfectly love' God, not in the sense of *eros* or mere feeling, but with 'committed affection', *diligere*, echoing the 'first and great commandment' (Matthew 22.38). A pleasing filling out of the Latin calls us to 'worthily magnify your holy name', alluding to the opening words of the Song of Mary (Magnificat, Luke 1.46-55), and identifying the object of our praise.

In sum, the way that Cranmer took a prayer for the existing tradition, taking doctrinal and linguistic (and so cultural) considerations alike into account, offers an instructive case study in the adaptation of existing liturgical texts.

## The Ten Commandments

Reading the Ten Commandments ('Decalogue', Exodus 20.1-17) is another distinctive of *BCP* Holy Communion. Following Bucer's comments on the 1549 book, Cranmer inserted them in 1552 to enable the people to first celebrate the First / Old Covenant, before coming to celebrate the New.

Sometimes reciting the Commandments is seen as an act of penitence, but this had already taken place in Morning Prayer.<sup>10</sup> Repentance as preparation to receive communion comes later, as a response to the Ministry of the Word. Reciting the Commandments here is an communal act of covenant commitment, as the responses show. 'Lord have mercy' is not a plea for forgiveness, but for help: after each Commandment we ask, 'incline our hearts to keep this law', concluding 'write your law in our hearts by your Holy Spirit', echoing the promise of the 'new covenant' (Jeremiah 31.31-33).

But the full text of the Ten Commandments has some issues. Holy Communion (First Order) in *APBA* shortens some, not so much for reasons of length, but so as to avoid misunderstandings about what God's 'jealousy' (2) and 'holding guilty' mean (3); about six-day literalism (4: Deuteronomy 6.14-15 gives celebrating freedom as a motive for sabbath-keeping); seeing today's land as a reward for family loyalty

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<sup>10</sup> Until 1871, the regular Sunday service in the Church of England was by English law specified to be Morning Prayer, the Litany, and the first part of the Holy Communion (which included the sermon). The service continued to the Lord's Supper if sufficient communicants had 'given notice unto the curate' three days prior, as the introductory rubrics to the service provide.

(5); and husbands 'owning' of women (10). All this makes for a sobering example of the importance of ongoing interpretation of the scriptures and ongoing revision of liturgical resources.

NB: Reading Jesus' summary of the Law (Matthew 22.37-40) instead of the Decalogue was proposed by Archbishop William Laud in his 1637 revision for Scotland; the 1927-28 'Deposited Book' provided it as alternative to the Decalogue. These alternatives, adopted in most modern Anglican books, are scriptural, but are typically used to introduce the general confession, including in Holy Communion (Second and Third Orders) in *APBA*. But this practice does not convey the sense of covenant renewal that the congregation's responding to the recitation of the Decalogue enacts.

### The 'Prayer of Humble Access'<sup>11</sup>

Before considering the contents of this prayer, some comment on its location is needed. For people used to modern eucharistic rites, notably Holy Communion (Second Order) in *APBA*, this prayer can feel quite odd here. Why this place? At this point in the Sarum mass, and in Cranmer's initial revision (1549) there came the intercessions for the people of God. Having transferred these to follow the Ministry of the Word, a 'gap' would have been felt. This prayer, drafted originally for the 1548 'Order of Communion',<sup>12</sup> filled the 'gap' beautifully.<sup>13</sup>

And so to the contents of the prayer:<sup>14</sup>

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed

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<sup>11</sup> It is called the 'Prayer of Approach' in *APBA*; it is retained in First Order, is optional in Second Order (placed between the Prayers and confession / absolution) and omitted in Third Order.

<sup>12</sup> The 1548 'Order' was preparatory material in English – Exhortations, Invitation, general confession and absolution, and the Prayer of Humble Access – inserted into the Latin mass just before communion was administered, as a temporary measure. These were taken up into *BCP* 1549; its various components were moved around in the 1552 revision to clarify potential doctrinal issues. No further changes of significance were made in subsequent editions of *BCP*.

<sup>13</sup> Colin Buchanan, *What did Cranmer think he was doing?* Grove Liturgy Series 7 (Bramcote, Notts: Grove, 1976) 27 notes that this placement reflects the successive experiences of the prophet in Isaiah 6: the vision of God 'lifted up' and the 'Holy Holy Holy' song (*Sanctus*) leading to his sense of unworthiness, eased by the seraph touching his lips with a live coal, cleansing them to speak.

<sup>14</sup> In modern Anglican rites, including *AAPB* and *APBA*, the clause 'that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body, and our souls washed through his most precious blood' is, in my opinion, unfortunately omitted. The intention is to avoid an implicit dualism between 'body' and 'soul', and the naive association of body with bread and wine with soul. But 'body' and 'soul' speaks of the whole person being involved, including its physical dimension, and conveys in earthy terms the spiritual benefit of receiving the sacrament.

through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. *Amen*

Perhaps more than any other prayer in *BCP*, it articulates the sense of ‘reserve’ in God’s presence: ‘we do not presume.’ Yet it came to be one *BCP*’s prayers most loved by lay people.<sup>15</sup>

The phrases ‘come to your table,’ ‘crumbs under your table,’ and the reference to God’s nature as ‘always to have mercy’ allude to the account of Jesus’ healing the daughter of a ‘Gentile woman of Syrophoenician origin’ (Mark 7.24).<sup>16</sup> Matthew’s account records that Jesus refused to act on her behalf, saying ‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel’ (Matthew 15.21-28). But the woman

came and knelt before him, saying, ‘Lord, help me.’ He answered, ‘It is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.’ She said, ‘Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters’ table.’ Then Jesus answered her, ‘Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.’

Not only was the daughter ‘healed instantly,’ but this Gentile woman’s faith – exercised against all odds, even the attitude taken by Jesus towards her – led Jesus to widen his understanding of those to whom he was sent: not only the lost sheep of Israel, but all who are under the power of evil or in need, since ‘God so loved the world’ (John 3.16).

For Cranmer, the healing of the Gentile Canaanite woman’s daughter expressed the essence of eucharistic encounter: humble, not arising from our being or action, but the merciful gift of God to those desperate enough to come to the Lord’s table for its crumbs. As we feed on Christ’s flesh and blood ‘by faith in our heart with thanksgiving’ (the words of administration), he dwells in us and we in him, a deeply *personal* sense of ‘holy communion’ with our Lord.

The phrase ‘we are not worthy’ is sometimes criticized as demeaning for just-forgiven Christians to say (the ‘humble grumble’).<sup>17</sup> But the negative accurately reflects Paul’s words in 1 Corinthians 11, and a congregation that wants to say ‘we are worthy’ is a worry! Some contrast the phrase with ‘you have deemed us worthy’ in the third-century prayer attributed to Hippolytus. ‘Deemed us worthy,’ however, recognises that of ourselves we are indeed not worthy to stand before God. Acknowledging that ‘we

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<sup>15</sup> The diversion of the Prayer to an Appendix in the 1993 draft booklet of Holy Communion (Second Order) brought about the largest amount of correspondence to the Commission, asking that it return to the main text. Where it ‘sits’ in a four-fold shape Thanksgiving is difficult, however: see the commentary on Second Order.

<sup>16</sup> For a detailed analysis, which at some points contests the way this passage is used in the Prayer, see Alan Cadwallader, *Beyond the Word of a Woman: Recovering the Bodies of the Syrophoenician Woman* (Adelaide: ATF, 2009).

<sup>17</sup> This accusation has more force in relation to the communion invitation that includes ‘Lord, I am not worthy to receive you’ (*APBA* page 146), which is individual rather than communal, comes well after the confession of sin, and sharply interrupts the sense of thanksgiving.

are not worthy' does not stop us going forward to the Lord's table, but is an honest approach to praying that we might feed on Christ's flesh and blood.

One might think that the dramatic wording, 'to eat the flesh of ... Christ, and to drink his blood', would see offence taken by some, perhaps concerned that it makes Holy Communion sound like a cannibal feast. Few if any Anglicans have found these words problematic, however: the strongly personal nature of eucharistic communion in view here is welcomed. And that Thomas Cranmer drafted the prayer might assist some! More significant, however, is the wording 'flesh and blood' (John 6.53-57) rather than 'body and blood', as in the eucharistic texts 1 Corinthians 10 and 11. In John 6, a passage dear to Cranmer, eating and drinking Christ's flesh refers to 'believing on the one whom God has sent' (John 6.30).<sup>18</sup> The chapter concluded with Jesus contrasting 'flesh' with 'spirit' (as in John 3.6): 'It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life' (John 6.63).

In sum, the 'Prayer of Humble Access', woven from perhaps unexpected biblical texts, gently deflects 'carnal' ideas about feeding on Christ. But far more, it offers a profound expression of believers' personal encounter with their exalted Lord in the eucharist.

## Conclusion

None of these three elements are essential for an authentic and fulfilling celebration of the eucharist. But they draw attention to aspects of enduring significance:

- in liturgical revision, taking the heritage of the past seriously, and doing 'invisible mending' along theological fault-lines so as to foster spiritual growth;
- in the eucharist, recognizing and enabling the participation of the faithful in the unity of the First / Old and New Covenants; and
- sustaining both a respectful approach to the Lord's table, where the death of Christ is proclaimed, and the personal nature of believers' holy communion with their Lord.

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<sup>18</sup> Cranmer delighted in John 6, taking it to refer to believing in Christ through the ministries of Word and sacrament alike, rather than having a primarily eucharistic reference. See Charles Sherlock, "The Food of the Soul. Thomas Cranmer and Holy Scripture", *Australian Journal of Liturgy* 2/3 (1990) 134-141.

# Virtual Worship Service and Physical Worship Service on Spiritual Formation

Jonghyun Kim



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## Introduction

Can we worship God through media such as the internet or television without going to church? Korean Christians have often discussed the effects of virtual worship. In 2018, most Korean churches provide internet services for absent members who are sick or who are at work. Church websites provide not only pre-recordings but also the live-streaming of services. These services bring people together in worship beyond the limits of physical space and time. Given that digital worship functions as a supplement to physical worship by helping all people participate in worship, we can ask: Could physical church be entirely replaced by digital worship services, or would we lose something in doing so? And if digital worship could serve as a replacement, why should we go to a physical church at all? What is the spiritual benefit of going to a church building instead of worshipping through the internet?

To answer these questions, this paper will explore what the worship service spiritually gives to people who are physically participating in liturgical practices. To shed light on this, I will examine three social scientists—Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Pierre Bourdieu, and Michel Foucault—with relation to liturgical practice. Particularly, I will use Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, Bourdieu's *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, and Foucault's essay "Technologies of Self." All three scholars focus on the importance of the human body in relation to the formation of human identity, even though each scholar places a different emphasis on the human body. Using the three scholars' thoughts on embodiment, my paper will focus on how the worship service contributes to spiritual growth, and ultimately argue for why we need bodily participation and physical space and symbols.

## The Role of Internet Technology in Christian Worship

To begin with, it is clear that using technology to supplement worship is not simply a good or bad thing. As noted by Charles Sherlock, the influence of technology has already permeated the practice of worship.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, in most Korean Protestant churches, scripture and hymn texts are projected onto a screen, eliminating the need for each parishioner bring a Bible or hymnal. Outside of the church, recorded or live worship services can be provided to people anytime through websites such as YouTube and Vimeo. Traditional churches also use email and chat rooms to provide opportunities to participate in bible study. Even the Roman Catholic Church, which initially resisted the idea of using virtual reality to participate in Eucharist a decade ago, has reconsidered the importance of internet technology by making use of services such as Eucharistic adoration online and participation in online chants and prayers.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, today most people are much more familiar with and comfortable in using internet technology. In their school, workplace and home, they communicate with other people and share information through diverse internet-communication spaces such as Facebook, blogs, podcasts, and Twitter.

Sherlock goes so far as to say that for modern people, a computer, TV or church projector is not merely a tool but a 'significant item of liturgical furniture' like a cross or stained glass window.<sup>3</sup> His point is that the screen could be understood as a sacramental element to reveal God's grace for those who are living in the contemporary digital era. Indeed, for internet-savvy users, screens might be a holier object through which they experience God's mystery, than a physical church space. Moreover, we cannot overlook the usefulness of internet technology for sick people or those who are working on Sunday. For them, the computer or TV screen would be the best way to participate in a worship service. Bill Easum and Bill Tenny-Brittian also suggest that digital worship can 'accomplish *everything* that the typical church can accomplish including communion, baptisms, offerings, sermons, singings, and so on.'<sup>4</sup>

Within this understanding of today's situation, the relationship between technology and liturgy might inevitably form and nurture a person as a Christian in the world. In this regard, we need to further examine how Korean Protestants gain spiritual benefits, and which ones, through the internet. I will examine *Tonghap* Korean Presbyterians (my denomination).<sup>5</sup> This examination will also bring to light a comparison of the effects of traditional physical worship, with its contemporary alternative.

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Sherlock, "Liturgy on Screen: A Critical Evaluation," *Australian Journal of Liturgy* Vol. 12:4 (2011): 186.

<sup>2</sup> Pamela Dawn Chesser, "The Virtual Mystery: A Liturgical Theological Argument against Celebrating Holy Communion on the Internet in the United Methodist Church" (PhD diss., Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2014), 14.

<sup>3</sup> Sherlock, "Liturgy on Screen: A Critical Evaluation," 187.

<sup>4</sup> Bill Easum and Bill Tenny-Brittian, *Under the Radar: Learning from Risk-Taking Churches* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), viii.

<sup>5</sup> Korean Presbyterian church is divided into four groups: *Chongshin*, *Tonghap*, *Koshin* and *Gizang*.

## Worship Service Experience via the Internet

As noted above, today's churches offer diverse opportunities to help their congregants' spiritual life through the internet. Let us first consider the sermon. An internet worship service could allow a person, who cannot physically participate in church worship, to listen to and watch the sermon. In Korea especially, a great emphasis on the sermon can be found in most Protestant worship services.<sup>6</sup> The length of the sermon (35-40 minutes) for Sunday worship is the longest part of the service, which is about one hour in total. And in most cases, the Eucharistic rite is rarely performed, perhaps two to four times a year.<sup>7</sup> The lack of other elements of worship practices tends to make Korean Protestant believers think that worshipping God is the same as listening to the sermon.<sup>8</sup> As a result, people enjoy accessing sermons anytime through any personal mobile device or computer. The internet not only provides their pastor's sermon but also popular preachers' sermons from around the country. It is believed to be helpful to experience diverse sermons and to know what God said in the biblical text.<sup>9</sup>

Korean Christian education scholar Hee-Ja Kim points out that Korean people are now able to transcend time and space on the internet or television when they listen to sermons, and are able to enjoy diverse educational seminars and worship services.<sup>10</sup> Kim highlights the highly digitalized Korean social and ecclesial environments. Most Korean churches operate their websites 24 hours a day, and through websites they provide sermons, educational seminars, Christian performances, hymns, and counselling centres. About forty Christian internet broadcasts provide preachers' sermons beyond both their own congregations and their own denominations, to all interested viewers. By broadcasting foreign languages as diverse as English, Japanese, Chinese, French, and Spanish, the sermon service also contributes to propagating Christianity throughout the world.<sup>11</sup>

According to Jennifer Cobb, 'cyberspace is clearly working to break down national boundaries with unprecedented speed. When we look out our virtual windows, the neighbourhood we see is global, not local.'<sup>12</sup> Cobb insists that today's people should go beyond the limitation of time and space, especially when they cannot participate

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<sup>6</sup> Seung-Joong Joo and Kyeong-Jin Kim, "The Reformed Tradition in Korea," in *The Oxford History of Christian Worship*, eds. Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 489.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Hwarang Moon, "A Liturgical Comparison of the Conservative and Liberation (Minjung) Churches in South Korea and Their Impact on Korean Society," *Worship* 89, no. 3 (May 2015): 221.

<sup>9</sup> Hee-Ja Kim, "Worship and Education in Digital Environment: Focused on Christian Cyber Intermediary," *Christian Education & Information Technology* 24 (Korea Society for Christian Education & Information Technology: Dec. 2009): 7-8. <http://www.dbpia.co.kr/Article/NODE0132087>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 9-10.

<sup>12</sup> Jennifer J. Cobb, *Cybergrace: the Search for God in the Digital World* (New York: Crown, 1998), 110-111.

in worship physically. This is because all can join in worship through cyberspace. This means that we can expand our community into a global community and overcome a narrow understanding of localized Christian community.

Further, Cobb emphasizes that cyberspace, which is created by the internet, does not provide information in only one direction. Rather, cyberspace is a communication space between people that goes beyond their physical and spatial limitation.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, people can see someone's prayer request and also simultaneously share their own concerns and prayers, and can respond and pray for other people's needs or concerns. In addition, educational seminars are easily broadcast. Across all of these uses, cyberspace can protect the anonymity of those who share their personal difficult issues, creating a comfortable counselling channel for them to open up and share their concerns and problems. In this regard, Kim also sees that the internet as a 'cyber intermediary' that could be a helpful medium through which to worship and educate modern Christians.<sup>14</sup>

## **Christian Worship as Embodied Nature**

Notwithstanding the diverse benefits of the internet service, we cannot overlook the importance of physical worship to form and nurture Christian spirituality. Providing sermons and other services (hymns and counselling through websites or mobile devices) internet services could help people keep their personal relationship with God; but it cannot be considered worship. Rather, the internet should be considered an instrument to help personal devotion or physical worship. This is because we cannot ignore the embodied communal characteristic of worship by a gathered people. According to liturgical theologian James White, Christian worship starts from the gathering of a congregation to form the Body of Christ, which we call Church. By gathering in the same space and time, Christian worship creates a common place 'to meet God and to encounter' our neighbours.<sup>15</sup> Advocates of digital worship argue, though, that the internet also creates common gathering space through cyberspace. They insist that internet worshippers can 'join worship at any time with a click on the play button on the interactive internet webpage.'<sup>16</sup> This implies that a digital worship service can just as easily form the Body of Christ.

French philosopher Merleau-Ponty contends that we do not simply possess our body but through and by repeated bodily action, we learn and gain something.<sup>17</sup> His

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>14</sup> Kim, "Worship and Education in Digital Environment: Focused on Christian Cyber Intermediary," 10-11.

<sup>15</sup> James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, revised and expanded edition (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 29.

<sup>16</sup> Mark U Edwards, Virtual Worship: A Theological Challenge, *The Christian Century* 117 no 34 (Dec 2000): 1262.

<sup>17</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London & New York: Routledge, 2013), 151.

contention is that our perception or meaning-making primarily comes from what we are physically doing. As noted by Merleau-Ponty, our learning is not only the working of our logical thinking in our head or mind, but rather our body is an important part of our learning. Suggesting an implicit agreement with this claim, Christian worship is traditionally composed of diverse bodily actions such as kneeling, standing, praying, handshaking, hugging, sharing the bread and wine, and singing together.

Although the sermon is the main part of my denomination's current worship structure and practice, we cannot overlook the importance of worship space and the solemn atmosphere in which we listen to the sermon. White contends that worship space has a sacred nature to worshippers to remember what God did for them and for their family and close members.<sup>18</sup> White does not mean that the worship space itself has sacred nature. He notes that the sacred nature of worship space is created through our liturgical practices such as kneeling and praying in front of the cross in the sanctuary. By expressing our thanksgiving to God by singing hymns and praying together, we remember what God does for us. The experience endows the place with a sacred nature.<sup>19</sup> In her book, *The Worshipping Body*, Kimberly Long also emphasizes the importance of worship space. For Long, worship space cannot be the same as our ordinary spaces such as our bedroom, living room, and office.<sup>20</sup> This is because '[our] space reflects what happens in it.'<sup>21</sup> Indeed, diverse liturgical actions such as singing, bowing, and praying happen within worship space. Korean Protestants certainly still perform these actions, despite our emphasis on the sermon. Given this, the embodied actions are an important element in our spiritual formation.

Regarding the relationship between our body, space and time, Merleau-Ponty further states that 'we must not say that our body is in space, nor for that matter in time. It inhabits space and time.'<sup>22</sup> His statement emphasizes that our body cannot be separated from where we are living. For Merleau-Ponty, our bodily experience is inhabited perception, which is already intertwined with our physical space and time. Most Korean Protestants (in my experience) stay to pray in their own seat instead of immediately leaving after worship service.<sup>23</sup> This is because they have already been saturated with the solemn atmosphere of sanctuary. This behaviour suggests that listening to a sermon online cannot create the same experience of God as living through a sermon in a physical worship service. As an embodied perception, listening to a sermon in a physical worship service does not mean merely listening to a sermon

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<sup>18</sup> White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 81.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Kimberly Bracken Long, *The Worshipping Body: the Art of Leading Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 96.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 140.

<sup>23</sup> In the case of my congregation, most congregation members continue their devotional prayer with a postlude about ten minutes long. Some people continue to pray standing at their seats. Other people kneel to have more personal prayer time.

like a lecture through a mobile device, but means being in a place that synthesizes worshippers' diverse living experiences of God within liturgical space and time.

Within this understanding of embodied perception, my church's worship space cannot be understood as an ordinary place for our members.<sup>24</sup> Most of my congregation's members are descended from parents who fled from their hometowns in North Korea because of the Korean War (1950-1953). Their parents built their church building in their new home. When my congregation enters the sanctuary, the place reminds them of their parents' prayers and singing that expressed thanksgiving and tears because of the help and grace of God in difficult times of their lives. By using the same seat that was used by their parents, the new generation can remember how God helped and guided their parents' lives and their own. They are led to anticipate God's continuing grace and guidance for their lives and their children.

## Worship as Shaping Our Disposition

Liturgical theologian Byron Anderson contends that 'the practice of worship writes theology and identity into and onto our bodies.'<sup>25</sup> Anderson insists that what we are doing in worship is what we believe (*Lex orandi Lex credendi*: 'the law of praying is the law of believing'). Here, he sees our Christian belief ingrained in our body and bone through repeated worship practices every week. According to Anderson, gathering in worship Sunday after Sunday brings us to know what it means to form Christ's body. When we pray in kneeling or bowing to God, our behaviour reveals how we understand the relationship between God and ourselves. When we confess our sin to God and listen to God's forgiveness through the minister's lips, we know who we are and where we are.

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu says human practice is not a result of prior social conditions such as rules or values.<sup>26</sup> Rather, our practice plays an important role in forming and shaping our social and cultural identity. He uses the concept of *habitus* to articulate his theory of practice. *Habitus* can be best illustrated through the word 'disposition.' He sees *habitus* as not merely a repeated habit in our ordinary life, such as habitually sitting on a bus or in a classroom, but 'a way of being' or 'a habitual state' that implies a 'tendency' or 'inclination' to others and our world.<sup>27</sup> According to Bourdieu, my denomination's prayer of the people (intercession) could be understood as a practice to create our responsible life to our neighbours and the world.<sup>28</sup> This

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<sup>24</sup> My hometown church is *Dongkwang Church* in Pusan, Korea.

<sup>25</sup> E. Byron Anderson, "Liturgy: Writing Faith in the Body," *Liturgical Ministry* 20, no. 4 (2011), 172.

<sup>26</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 73.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 73. Note 1.

<sup>28</sup> Most Korean Presbyterian church Sunday services follow the prayers of people (intercession) immediately with the finishing sermon instead of performing the Eucharistic rite. As a result, the intercession prayer could be one of important elements of my denomination worship service.

is because the intercession prayer is not meant to focus on achieving an individual person's need or desire to God, but the prayer is a supplication to God expressing communal concerns such as relieving sick or suffering people from their difficulty. Moreover, the intercession prayer deals with Korea and the world's issues beyond personal or local or congregational concern. Praying together lets us leave ourselves behind *through* a shared space and shared action.

Bourdieu goes farther, speaking directly of the motions of worship. He says, 'The oppositions which mythico-ritual logic makes...reappear, for example, in the gestures and movements of the body, in the form of the opposition between the straight and the bent.'<sup>29</sup> Opposing movements in a space actualize our social and cultural identity, and are not simply movements. The words without the motions would lack the reinforcement of *habitus* that Bourdieu describes as having an important role in all traditional modes of worship.

If we apply Bourdieu's idea of gestures and movements, our going into a church building for worship service is not merely to assemble to celebrate something; it is an action to engage in our commitment to God and other people. By leaving our individual space on a Sunday morning to join our worship service, our identity is actualized as responsible Christians who serve God and other people who expect our participation in church as noted by Phillip Pfatteicher.<sup>30</sup>

In the same way, the final section of a worship service does not simply notify a congregation that worship service has ended. When the service is over, we listen to our commitments to the world and to others through the lips of our pastor, who tells us, 'Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold on to what is good; do not return evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak, and help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.'<sup>31</sup> Hearing this, we recognize that our service to God and our community cannot be limited to the church building. By coming out from the church building with the Charging, we learn that our responsibility and service to God and others should continue in our real lives. Likewise, physically going to the worship space from our individual space and being sent from the worship space into our world creates a different level of spirituality compared to internet service. Listeners of digital sermons are passive and merely watch liturgical actions through mobile devices without leaving their personal spaces.

Further, liturgical theologian Nathan Mitchell, notes that liturgical movements and gestures do not merely express a religious meaning. Borrowing French philosopher

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<sup>29</sup> Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 94.

<sup>30</sup> Philip H. Pfatteicher, *Liturgical Spirituality* (Valley Forge, PA: Bloomsbury Academic, 1997), 182.

<sup>31</sup> Hotz and Matthew T. Mathews, *Shaping the Christian Life: Worship and the Religious Affections* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 94.

Michel Foucault's idea of 'technologies of the self,' Mitchell states that the ritual practice is a 'technology' to acquire 'embodied skills' or attitudes.<sup>32</sup> According to Foucault,

Technologies of the self, which permit individuals to effect by their own means, or with the help of others, a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality.<sup>33</sup>

My denomination's worship practice is filled with diverse ritual technologies such as gathering as the body of Christ through worship, kneeling in the pew as our humiliation and obedience to God, passing peace with others by using handshaking and hugging as reconciliation with other people, and sending into the world as our continuing service and responsibility toward the world.<sup>34</sup> By doing this, the liturgical practices as a 'technology of the self' do not merely teach Christian thoughts or theological ideas but rather create 'a particular kind of self.'<sup>35</sup> From the understanding of Mitchell's liturgical practice as 'a technology,' I will further explore what kind of spirituality is formed by a physical worship, in order to articulate the spiritual benefit of going to church instead of worshipping through an internet service.

## **Worship as Shaping a Christian Identity**

As we have seen, online worship tools are used as useful instruments that provide diverse services such as sermons, educational seminars, hymns, and counselling centres. Furthermore, the internet creates a cyberspace in which to meet other people beyond limited time and space. However, if the thinkers discussed above are correct, internet service is not a substitute for a physical worship service. My intention here is not to reject the usefulness of internet service or cyberspace to help those who cannot physically participate in worship service. But it cannot be considered as a true replacement for the traditional, physical worship service.

For those who are living in the digital era, computers, TVs, or church projectors could be understood as essential liturgical elements through which to encounter the biblical texts, but we must not consider the screen as identical with the sacrament. Rather, the fullest encounter with the words of God should be through 'sacramental listening'

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<sup>32</sup> Nathan D. Mitchell, *Liturgy and the Social Sciences* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1999), 65; Michel Foucault, "Technologies of the Self" in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: The New Press, 1998), 224.

<sup>33</sup> Foucault, "Technologies of the Self" 225.

<sup>34</sup> The Presbyterian Church of Korea, *The Book of Common Worship* (Seoul: Publishing House The Presbyterian Church of Korea, 2008), 27-39.

<sup>35</sup> Derek Knoke, "Generating Movement in the Social Sphere: Implications from Ritual Studies for the Relation of Theology and the Social Sciences," *Worship* 87, no. 2 (Mar 2013): 110.

to awaken our identity as part of the body of Christ in the midst of congregation.<sup>36</sup> Further, listening to and watching a sermon is not the same as Christian worship even though we should not deny the usefulness of the digital alternative to help those who are sick or working on Sunday. It is primarily through the embodied nature of Christian liturgy that we form and nurture a responsible Christian identity for the world.

As noted by Merleau-Ponty, our understanding of the learning process cannot be limited to thinking in our head, but should be expanded to include our body and the physical space in Christian worship. By praying, kneeling, and singing in worship space, we learn who we are and who God is. Weekly Christian worship is a practice to create Bourdieu's *habitus*, to renew our responsibility to our neighbours and the world.

Furthermore, Christian practice is not simply a celebration. When the liturgy acts on our body, according to Foucault, worship practice could be considered 'a technology' to make a certain human identity. Although we hardly deny the useful dimensions of internet service as noted above, internet service cannot produce the same spiritual benefits of a person's spiritual growth compared to the physical worship service. Digital worship tends to focus on getting knowledge of Christianity by listening to educational seminars and sermons. On the other hand, physical worship service provides diverse opportunities to participate in worship practices such as kneeling, handshaking, and sharing peace with one another. Someone who favours internet services may argue that they also provide cyberspace to participate in worship service. However, we cannot ignore the benefits of spiritual formation from physical participation. Kneeling or bowing in our prayer time is a technology to learn humility and respect to God. And, we should recognize that a sermon is not the same as a lecture in a classroom, because of the traditional response structure of worship, through thanksgiving with our praise and prayer using God's words.<sup>37</sup>

Christian philosopher James K. Smith contends that liturgical action is not just a religious action but is 'practicing for the Kingdom of God.'<sup>38</sup> Smith's contention does not mean our liturgical action itself creates the Kingdom of God. Rather, his intention is here to insist that we practice the coming of the Kingdom of God by participating in worship space. By sharing peace with one another, singing together, sharing the bread and wine at the same table, we can physically imagine how we live in the Kingdom of God. Listening to the sermon, we can think about what his Kingdom is. By doing this, even though an internet service could provide useful information for our spiritual

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<sup>36</sup> Sherlock, "Liturgy on Screen: A Critical Evaluation," 192.

<sup>37</sup> The Presbyterian Church of Korea, *The Book of Common Worship*, 27-39.

<sup>38</sup> James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2009), 131.

growth, we cannot overlook the importance of 'a technology of the self' through physical worship service.

## Conclusion

Attending a physical worship service and practicing the motions in a place made sacred by our communal sense of the body of Christ, we have access to a different way of spiritual formation with relation to God, our neighbours, and ourselves. But as we noted at the beginning, digital worship services simply cannot be dismissed. We are already living in a highly digitalized social and ecclesial situations, and we are by now very comfortable using personal devices such as iPads or smart phones. Those tools give us diverse opportunities to listen and watch religious content and develop our spiritual lives. The internet should be considered as a useful instrument to support and maintain our relationship with God during the ordinary days from Monday to Saturday. Further, as pointed out by liturgical theologian Teresa Berger, the development of internet technology and the growth of its users blur and blend the boundaries between physical and virtual reality.<sup>39</sup> However, we should not ignore the risk posed by the popularity of digital worship, which might truncate our formation as Christians living together in the world. We ought to reconsider the importance of the embodied characteristics of Christian liturgy, to properly balance the influence of internet technology on contemporary liturgy.

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<sup>39</sup> Teresa Berger, "Participatio Actuosa in Cyberspace? Vatican II's Liturgical Vision in a Digital World," presented at the 24th Congress of Societas Liturgica, Wurzburg, Germany, August 6, 2013, [http://www.saintjohnsabbey.org/files/6513/8306/2879/Berger\\_Participatio\\_Actuosa.pdf](http://www.saintjohnsabbey.org/files/6513/8306/2879/Berger_Participatio_Actuosa.pdf)

# Celebrating Richard Connolly at 90!

Paul Taylor

In liturgical music circles, the name Richard Connolly is associated with some of the finest hymnody produced during the twentieth century liturgical movement – anywhere in the English-speaking world! Born in Sydney in November 1927, Connolly initially trained for the priesthood at St Columba's College, Springwood, NSW, where he undertook organ lessons with Spanish priest-composer, Fr Joseph Muset-Ferrer (1890-1957), Organist of Barcelona Cathedral but at the time a refugee from the Spanish Civil War. Later, at Propaganda Fide College in Rome, Connolly came under the influence of other priest-musicians, including Dom Hébert Desroquettes, OSB at the Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music, and Maestro Nicola Praglia at Propaganda Fide. He was also a member of the Gregorian Schola which sang the Propers at Papal Masses in St Peter's Basilica. His studies in Chant doubtless influenced the modal flavour of many of his later works. His early training in organ, composition and exposure to the riches of the Church's plainsong and choral tradition were to pay dividends in the years that followed.

Leaving his seminary formation in 1950, Connolly completed a Bachelor of Arts degree (including studies in Latin, History, English Literature and Philosophy) at the University of Sydney (1952-1955) and simultaneously worked for *The Catholic Weekly* as proof reader and film reviewer. In 1956 he commenced work at the ABC and was eventually appointed Head of Radio Drama and Features. One of his early claims to fame was the composition in 1960 of "There's a Bear in There" for the children's TV programme, *Play School!* Connolly was blessed with an innate gift for both setting words to memorable tunes, but also setting music that was appropriate for the liturgy. He believes his later colleague, Prof. James McAuley (1917-1976), wrote poetry that was characterised by "the best words in the best order" (cf. Richard Connolly, "Hymnody and Poetry" in *The Summit* 30:2 (May 2003) 14-16). McAuley's hymn texts often feature single-syllable words that evoke powerful emotive or visual images, for example, "Christ, our star, our map, our road to the Father's high abode." Connolly it was who was able to set these texts alight with music that was both accessible and dignified. He believes the Latin phrase *Laeti bibamus sobriam ebrietatem Spiritus* (tr. joyfully let us drink the Spirit's sober drunkenness) is the phrase that perhaps best captures his approach to liturgical expression and ceremonial (see his "Some Thoughts on Hymns" in *The Summit* 29:2 (May 2002) 15-16).

It was Connolly's early association with the Living Parish Series of publications championed by three Sydney priests, Frs Ted Kennedy, Roger Pryke and Tony Newman that was to prove crucially influential for Church music in Australia [see Francis Ravel Harvey, *Traveller to Freedom: The Roger Pryke Story* (Freshwater Press, Sydney, 2011) pp. 147ff]. During the mid-1950s, it was Ted Kennedy who introduced Connolly to James McAuley. Recognising that each man was gifted in both music and poetry, Kennedy suggested they collaborate on some hymns for the processional parts of the "low Mass" which was pastorally common at the time, with a view to facilitating the participation of the people. Connolly's and McAuley's first collection, *We Offer the Mass* (1959), comprised various hymns such as "Father, We Praise You" (Entrance), "From Many Grapes and Grains of Wheat" (Offertory), "Where there is Charity and Love" (Communion) and "Holy Father, God of Might" (Recessional). Common to each hymn was the use of responsorial form (refrain, verse, refrain, verse, etc.), inspired by the recent psalmody of French composer, Joseph Gelineau SJ (1920-2008), which was hoped to enable the participation of the people with the assistance of a cantor or small group of singers leading the refrain and verses.

What made Connolly's and McAuley's contribution so successful was the publication of their hymns in *The Living Parish Hymn Book* (1961-1968; accompaniment edition 1964) that eventually sold over one million copies through the local Catholic parish and school network, making it one of the best-selling religious books in Australia's history! Their second collection of hymns for the Church's year was entitled *Hymns for the Year of Grace* (1963) later revised as *Year of Grace, Hymns by Richard Connolly and James McAuley* (Sydney: Willow Publishing, 2012) comprising familiar favourites such as "Come, O Jesus, Come O Lord" (Advent), "May This Lenten Discipline" (Lent), "O Jesus Crucified" (Good Friday), "By Your Kingly Power" (Easter) and "Jesus in Your Heart We Find" (Sacred Heart). Their last significant contribution from the Living Parish period was a collection of lesser known (or infrequently heard) hymns for sacraments entitled *Songs of the Promise* (1968), the better known of which is "A Song of Cosmic Praise" (or "Sing a New Song, Sing a New Song") (for further information on this collaboration, see Richard Connolly, "Making Hymns with James McAuley: A Memoir" in *The Australasian Catholic Record* LXXII:4 (Oct. 1995) 387-398).

A sign of the quality of Connolly's and McAuley's hymnody is that it has been recognised by other Christian traditions here in Australia via its inclusion in *The Australian Hymn Book: With Catholic Supplement* (Collins, 1977), the AHB's hymnal counterpart in the United Kingdom published as *With One Voice*, and the second edition of AHB entitled *Together in Song: Australian Hymn Book II* (HarperCollins, 1999). Many of their hymns appear still in Catholic Worship Book II (2016). Hymn texts and tunes of the McAuley-Connolly calibre that transcend denominational boundaries can be considered "pure gold" and have become a treasured expression

of ecclesial unity during ecumenical services both in Australia and abroad. Some may argue that in the interests of “inclusive language” some of the earlier hymn texts appear to be “exclusive”, however, it is not unreasonable to suggest that many “classic” texts such as those by McAuley and Connolly are best left in their original form – as we do with Christmas carols and Shakespearean texts – and for users to appreciate anew their “historical context”. Fine poetry can transcend the limits imposed by political correctness - given a chance!

After a period of time in England (c. 1988-2001), Connolly returned to Sydney and continued to compose liturgical music, producing Mass settings such as *Mass of Our Lady Help of Christians* (Cantica Nova, 2010) and a collection of Common Responsorial Psalms (Willow Publishing, c. 2015). His outstanding contribution to Church music has been recognised by his being awarded the Doctor of Arts degree (1999), *honoris causa*, from the University of Notre Dame, Australia and The Dempsey Medal (2017) from Sydney’s Archbishop Anthony Fisher, OP following Connolly’s 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday in November 2017. Richard Connolly says that, apart from his family, the compositions with James McAuley were “the best thing I did in my life” (*The Catholic Weekly*, 4 March 2018, p. 15). Church musicians and parishioners around Australia owe Richard Connolly a big THANK-YOU for gracing the Church’s liturgy with hymns that have perdured over nearly 60 years and for providing a very worthy response to the Conciliar call to participate in the Church’s sung prayer. Richard Connolly – *ad multos annos!*

*Dr Paul Taylor is Executive Secretary of the Bishops Commission for Liturgy of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

### Like a dry weary land without water...

**A**s I sit down to write this report, I am in the Southern Highlands of NSW. And it is dry. Painfully dry. The NSW Government has declared all of the state to be affected by drought. The words of the psalmist become hauntingly real...this really is a dry weary land without water (Ps 63:1). And at the same time, in news bulletins the numbers of those killed in the earthquake and the tsunami which followed in Sulawesi seem to climb ever higher. In the face of these natural disasters how do we lead our people to worship and to pray in ways which lead them out of the childish lolly shop prayer (God give us what we want) to an authentic encounter with the God of Creation? Or must we stay silent before the mystery?

### The 2019 National Conference

Registrations are now open for our conference, *The Art of Liturgy* to be held at the University of Notre Dame Australia in Fremantle WA from 15-18 January 2019. The Arts, as an expression or application of human creative skill and imagination, produce works which are appreciated for their beauty or emotional power. As such, the Arts have power to transcend the everyday and take us beyond ourselves. Our conference will tackle questions such as: What is the value of the Arts to our worship? What is the interplay between the two? How do we bring the Arts to our worship, and incorporate them in meaningful and valid ways? How do the Arts challenge those who come to worship? What can the liturgist learn from the artist? You might consider presenting a short paper which seeks to address or explore one of these questions – it is not too late to submit a proposal – they are due in by 1 December 2018.

The Conference Committee, comprised of the National Executive and the Convenor of the WA Chapter, has worked to finalise details of the budget and the timetable to ensure that we enjoy a successful conference. A number of events associated with liturgy and the arts have been incorporated into the Conference programme. We will also benefit from the visit to UNDA of the St John's Bible – a unique opportunity to

view first hand the first hand-written and hand-illuminated Bible since the invention of the printing press.

Check our website [www.liturgy.org.au](http://www.liturgy.org.au) for further updates and for a link to the Registration Page.

## **The Future of the Academy**

As you are aware, the Executive of the Academy currently rotates between various state chapters. In years gone past, this was a necessary way of managing the administration of a national academy long before the ease which modern communications now affords us. While state-based gatherings are probably still the most useful way of gathering across our vast land (and beyond), is a rotating executive still necessary? Especially if it disenfranchises those chapters unable to take on executive roles because of a lack of active members. Is our Constitution still fit for purpose? Probably not, because we do not operate according to it in every instance. While we will not have answers to these questions ready in time for the General Meeting at the Conference, it seems it is time to start a conversation about the future of the Academy, with the aim of reviewing the governance of the Academy (including the Constitution) and then proposing any new models for approval at the 2021 Conference, possibly to come into effect by the 2023 Conference. It is a long timeline, but in such matters I am convinced we do better to hasten slowly.

## **For all that has been thanks...**

At the conference in Fremantle, the national executive will formally move to the stewardship of the NSW Chapter. Hence, this is the last time I shall write to you as President of the Academy. I wish to thank you for your encouragement and support. It has been an immense privilege to serve you and the Academy as President over the last four years. I wish also to thank the various Council members with whom I have served. I have valued the time I have spent with them at Council meetings, and their willingness to share their wisdom and insights for the good of us all.

I especially wish to thank the other members of the Executive: Chris Lancaster as Secretary/Treasurer; and Gary Deverell (2015-2016), and Kieran Crichton (2017-2018), as Victorian Chapter Convenors. Like all good organisations, the president is merely a figurehead, quite literally presiding over meetings, and the real and hard (and often boring and monotonous, but always necessary) work is done by these others on the Executive. Our Academy is no different! I have benefitted from and esteemed their wise counsel, their attention to detail, their generosity, hard work,

and ever-present good humour: With Paul, I can say: *I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you.*

I look forward to seeing you all in Fremantle.

**Anthony Doran**

Anthony.Doran@cam.org.au

## FROM THE CHAPTERS

### **NSW Chapter** – Doug Morrison-Cleary

We continue to meet on Wednesday afternoons in the Pennant Hills area. Our meetings have explored how to celebrate a Creation Season within our current lectionaries, and current liturgical issues in our own settings. Our numbers have been a bit diminished this year, and so we are planning on exploring new places and times next year. We are also in the middle of preparing to take our turn at the national leadership of the Academy at January's Conference. Our final meeting of the year will be on 21 November at 4:30pm at the Spirituality Centre at Mount St Benedict, Pennant Hills.

### **SA Chapter** – Alison Whish

The next meeting of the SA chapter will be held on Tuesday 27 November with a celebratory lunch at 1pm followed by the meeting at 2pm. We will be finalising our presentation for the conference and possibly discussing a paper by Rev Dr Michael Trainor and Dr Mary J. Marshall on "Problematic Christian hymns", a discussion paper originally written for the Australian Council of Christians and Jews. Any members who find themselves in SA on the 27 November are especially invited to join us. Email [roy@uniting.com.au](mailto:roy@uniting.com.au) to find out where we will be.

### **WA Chapter** – Angela McCarthy

The WA Chapter remains thoroughly engrossed in the preparation for the conference. Our next meeting is on Thursday 25 October. We have increased our membership this year which has given us a greater diversity and that has been welcomed by us all. Our final meeting for the year is usually at New Norcia but a date has not yet been confirmed. Should any visitors wish to join us they are welcome and can contact the convenor by email: [angela.mccarthy@nd.edu.au](mailto:angela.mccarthy@nd.edu.au)

## Queensland Chapter – Marian Free

The Queensland Chapter continues much as usual. We meet on the first Tuesday of every second month and discussion usually ranges around the liturgical calendar and the differing experiences and practices of our members. We share resources and provide encouragement. At the most recent meeting in October we looked at the ways in which our traditions marked (or not) St Francis' Day and whether or not our traditions observed the Season of Creation. One member, Geraldine Wheeler, shared with the group her small publication on the Canticum of the Sun which is illustrated with her beautiful paintings (these were being exhibited at the time for the Season of Creation).

During the year we have also devoted some time to the Conference topic and explored the work of a number of local Christian artists.

We continue to find it difficult to settle on a meeting time that is convenient for all our members but we have discovered that a lunch time meeting twice a year (in addition to our evening meetings) is very popular. Once a year we also enjoy the hospitality of Joe Duffy and other members who live on the north coast. This is a great chance to catch up with members who cannot always attend our Brisbane meetings. Not only were members treated to an excellent lunch, but they were also given a tour of the newly completed Stella Maris Maroochydore Church. (For more on the church see - <http://catholicleader.com.au/news/catholics-shed-tears-of-joy-at-the-opening-of-the-new-maroochydore-church>) Our final meeting of the year is always a dinner hosted by David Pitman and his wife Marcia.

While we are never short of topics to occupy us, we have decided that going forward we will focus on specific topics at each meeting. These will be prepared and presented by a member, and while they won't preclude general discussion, they will provide more of a structure to our gatherings.

## AAAL Victorian Chapter Convenor – Kieran Crichton

### Chapter Meetings

Since the last edition of *AJL*, the Victorian Chapter has met twice – in July and September.

July has often been a fairly quiet meeting in our chapter, given that it falls in the middle of winter and has to compete with some important gatherings in other parts of the world, such as the biennial *Societas Liturgica* congress. But our July gathering was very different affair to previous years: we welcomed over 40 people to the meeting, of whom three quarters were guests of the chapter. Our July Chapter Meeting was graced

with a presentation by Fr Gerald O'Collins SJ, titled *The Missal That Never Was: the Suppressed Translation of 1998*.

Fr O'Collins' questions about and critique of the 2010 *Roman Missal* centre on six points:

- the texts of the Mass are to **proclaimed and understood**;
- The **vocabulary** makes use of a lot of words that don't reflect good English usage;
- The abandonment of **common texts** has been a great loss for ecumenism;
- **Non-inclusive language** is a significant problem of the usage of the 2010 Missal
- The **alteration of translation principles**;
- The **Pelagian tendency**, with prayers speaking of our meriting heaven.

These issues were traced through an exploration of collects from the Latin of the 1970 *Editio Typica* of the *Roman Missal*, and followed through comparison with the 1998 and 2010 translations. At many points the differences in style were palpable, with the easy flow of the language of the 1998 texts standing in very stark contrast to the complex and sometimes baffling 2010 versions. Fr O'Collins mentioned the expansion of the body of collects in the 1998 Missal through the inclusion of alternative thematic prayers that gathered the themes of the readings in the three year cycle.

This meeting was easily the biggest gathering of the AAL Victoria chapter in quite a long time, and was well-supported by a broad audience including chapter members and the general public. Having such a large group presented the opportunity to road-test a method of peaceable engagement for reflections, questions, and discussion. With the help of a live Q&A website people were encouraged to submit questions in real-time during Fr O'Collins' presentation, and this led to some quite fascinating discussion. Here is a sample of the questions:

- Given the precedent of the English translation of la Bible de Jérusalem in the 1960's, why have literary figures and poets seem to have been deliberately avoided in the Missal translation?
- How true is it that the 'original' 2010 translation was actually mucked up by Vox Clara's interference...and that what we've ended up with is not the 'original' 2010?
- What freedom exists for priests to use parts of the 1998 Missal (eg: the collects and post-communion prayers)? Has anyone been punished because they used these texts? What could the hierarchy do if a complaint were made?
- Could you use the relevant 3 Year Collect as a conclusion to the General Intercessions...similar to the way the Ambrosian Rite has a collect to conclude the liturgy of the word?

- The 2010 texts seem to have such emphasis on the depravity and sinfulness of our humanity, and such a focus on the next life not this life. Any comment?
- Given that the translation post-Vatican II were ‘road tested’ to see how singable they would be by Percy Jones (eg the Gloria) was there any attempt or interest in whether the 2010 texts were effective when sung?

The finest reflections came at the end of the meeting, and both addressed the issue of a desire for a sacral language.

- Colleen O’Reilly remarked on the similarity of tone and syntax between the 2010 *Roman Missal* and the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*, and wondered if there was a desire on the part of the translators of the *Missal* to defend or preserve a style of liturgical piety that was perceived to be in danger or risk of loss?
- Fred Shade wondered if a sacral language is helpful, commenting that his tradition still worships with texts composed during the Victorian era. Fr O’Collins reflected that the use of courtly Byzantine Greek or legalistic Latin reflected high uses of these languages that were nevertheless clearly understood at the time they were composed. But this is not how English-speaking people should be encouraged to pray in the current day, and may not be helpful in the end. He invited everyone to consider the language of the Psalms, the original prayer book of Christians, and Jesus’s command to pray using simple and direct language.

Our **September** Chapter gathering focussed on Deacons and Liturgy. 25 people were present, as well as a lot of energy in the room.

The topic evolved from reflection upon some of the ways we speak about the diaconal character of ministry – after all, most priests in Anglican and Catholic churches have been deacons first, and many speak of feeling that their ministry continues to be diaconal. And we also speak of the Church itself as diaconal, in service in the world. So this meeting opened up the question: what do deacons think they’re doing in diaconal ministry?

Our panel included four deacons, **Natalie Dixon-Monu** (Uniting Church), **Tony Aspinall** (Catholic Church), **Christine Barren** and **Carole Lloyd-Flanders** (Anglican Church). It is interesting to reflect that as each panelist spoke about their ministry context we could trace a movement from the margins to the centre of the worshipping community. The panel presented a rich and enlightening picture of the ministry of deacons across the three traditions. There were some interesting common threads and differences.

Natalie spoke of the prophetic, priestly, and pastoral dimensions of her experience of diaconal ministry, and shared a story about wearing her clerical collar to visit a police station with a Muslim friend that prompted the officer who greeted them to

quip that he hadn't been expecting a multifaith delegation. This prompts reflection on the particular character of deacons in the Uniting Church of Australia, who are able to preside at Eucharist. Other traditions limit the deacon from this role, and within Australian Anglicanism there has been some debate about opening presiding at Eucharist to deacons.

The role of boundaries calls for reflection. Tony spoke of how some clergy regard parish boundaries as sacrosanct, and that this can make it difficult to set up programs where they are needed if the priest is unwilling to be supportive. Christine spoke of asking her regional bishop whether she should be licensed to the parish or to the bishop – the latter being more in the spirit of the diaconate in the early Church. Should the deacon be an agent the bishop can send when there is a clear need?

Worship and mission are the key words that came from the discussions around the meeting. Peter Weeks summed this up by reflecting on the loss and need to retrieve the word Mass, from the sending in the Latin rite: *Ite, Missa est*. The call is to go out into the world, to be apostolic in daily life. What we lose from the retreat of talking of Mass is the sense of being sent to mission.

So, after all this, what do deacons think they're doing in ministry? I think this conversation revealed a tension in understanding how diaconal ministry connects the world and the gathered community. Each speaker in some way reflected that coming to worship raises a question: is worship a way to gather the fragments of my week, that helps me to understand it all and bring it to God, or is worship the source of energy that prepares me for what lies in the week ahead?

## Comings and Goings

We welcome two new Chapter Members:

**The Very Rev'd Fred Shade** is the vicar of the Liberal Catholic parish of St John the Beloved and vicar general of the Australian province. Fred has a background in music, and is part of the liturgical commission of the Liberal Catholic Church of Australia.

**Sharon Boyd** is a recent arrival in Melbourne, and has come to take up the role of Professional Specialist in liturgical education in the ACU Centre for Liturgy. Sharon has qualifications in liturgy from University of Notre Dame (Indiana), and since 1994 has been actively involved in liturgy education across all levels of parish life, in religious communities, parishes and secondary Colleges. She has taught Religious Education at secondary level and has worked extensively as a Counsellor in both Catholic Primary and Secondary Schools.

Welcome to Fred and Sharon!

## New Book

**Garry Worete Deverell's** new book *Gondwana Theology: A Trawlolway man reflects on Christian Faith* has just been published. Garry is Vicar of the Anglican Parish of Black Rock, Turner Fellow at Trinity Theological School in the University of Divinity and a member of the National Congress of Australia's First Peoples. *Gondwana Theology* will be launched on 27 November by Bishop Chris McLeod, National Indigenous Bishop in the Anglican Church in Australia at St Stephen's and St Mary's Anglican Church in Mt Waverley. Congratulations Garry!

## H F Leatherland Prize

For the first time in a number of years, the Victorian Chapter of the AAL together with the University of Divinity has been able to award the H F Leatherland Prize. Harold Leatherland founded the Ecumenical Liturgical Centre within the Melbourne College of Divinity (the predecessor to the University of Divinity). The ELC was folded into the Victorian Chapter when it was established in 1989. This year, the H F Leatherland Prize has been awarded to **Adam Couchman**, a student at Eva Burrows College. Adam's essay was entitled *Performing in the Theodrama: a Theocentric Vision of Christian Worship*. In his essay, Adam draws on the work of Adrienne von Speyr in conversation with James Torrance and Kevin Vanhoozer to explore what it is for worship to be at the heart of the Trinity. The examiners remarked on Couchman's fresh approach, observing how 'it was particularly satisfying to see classical Chalcedonian doctrine – and that very well understood – closely integrated with *liturgical* analysis.' Congratulations, Adam!

# BOOK REVIEWS

**William A. Dyrness, *Senses of the Soul: Art and the Visual in Christian Worship* Brehm Center for Worship, Theology and the Arts, Art for Faith's Sake Series, Cascade Books: Eugene, Oregon, 2008.**

William Dyrness is an American theologian in the Reformed Tradition, a Professor of Theology and Culture, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, who has always had an interest in visual art. His doctoral thesis (Strasbourg University, France), explored the relationship of theology and visual art, with a focus upon the work of the French artist, Georges Rouault.

*Senses of the Soul* is a study which has arisen from the process of a qualitative survey of the thoughts and understanding of church members, clergy and lay, in ten different churches in the Los Angeles area, Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic, about visual art and the visual dimension of Christian worship. Those who participated in the extensive questionnaires and interviews cover a range of church experience and also diverse professional occupations, including some artists and others engaged in the film industry. It is a study which examines these responses, seeking to identify differences between the traditions of worship, the importance of the visual for those within each tradition and even the range of responses within a tradition. Dyrness also uses a concept of the imagination which relates to a personal inner picturing of story, relationships with one's visible context and one's faith experience.

The book contains chapters reflecting on Protestant worship, Orthodox worship and Catholic worship, each discussing the insights given by participants from these traditions. Then there are chapters on beauty, how art and worship may be understood as relating to everyday life, and the power of images. Whereas the churches in the Orthodox and Catholic traditions can be clearly grouped, participants placed under the 'Protestant' heading include people who worship in Brethren, Pentecostal and Episcopalian churches. Protestant traditions without a voice here include the Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and Churches of Christ traditions.

Dyrness acknowledges the limitations of the process according to the sample of churches and people chosen, but finds common emphases in understanding with the different traditions which offer valuable insights.

The word 'art' is not one which is used by the Orthodox for their icons and the whole visual setting of their churches. Art for them relates to the realistic western images painted and sculpted by the time of the Renaissance and beyond which are rejected as not serving the purpose of the icon, which is sometimes described as a window to

heaven. He finds that all aspects of the church setting and the liturgy are given great value as contributing to the totality of the worship, the liturgy of the church.

Images are seen to function in a range of ways within the devotion and prayer of Catholics for whom the Eucharist is central to their worship. He finds some divergent views about developments since Vatican II and understands the Catholic position as midway between the Orthodox and the Protestant approaches.

Through the interviews with those included under the Protestant heading he concludes that images (or art), function more as a visual language interpreting scripture and given theological explanation. More of the Protestant respondents understood their worship to be firstly inner response to God that found expression verbally and then as lived discipleship, although the visual art could find a place.

The broader culture for these people is, of course, early 21<sup>st</sup> century California with which Australians may find both common features and cultural differences. This is a study of complexity and depth, raising a range of points for discussion and widening understanding in ecumenical consideration about the place of the visual in the breadth of traditions of Christian worship.

**Geraldine Wheeler**  
Queensland Chapter

**Nancy Chinn, *Spaces for Spirit: Adorning the Church*, Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago, 1998.**

While unable to claim *Spaces for Spirit* as my favourite book on liturgical art (I have no favourite) I find it interesting and challenging. Nancy Chinn is an American artist, living in California, who found herself dismayed about the drabness of the Protestant church building where she worshipped, in spite of its lofty architectural forms, and was inspired to encourage changes in what the worshippers saw as they listened, prayed and sang.

This book contains the personal thinking of the artist, the story of her ventures into liturgical art, many photographs of her designs in churches and sections about the techniques and processes she has used, both individually and with group participation. Much of her work is achieved with huge, long strips of cut paper designs or painted light-weight cloth, metres long and well over a metre wide, hanging from church ceilings against church walls or above the heads of worshippers. One may describe them as liturgical installations. She tells of how sometimes they are designed to change during a service of worship, as on Easter morning.

The order of the book is arranged firstly to present most of the colour plates, then to offer chapters which consider art, the artist and the church, the practicalities of design, some case studies, working with church groups and committees and then further sections about the art and its technicalities. An interesting aspect is the grouping of photographs often to show the development of the artist's ideas from natural forms, e.g. systems of above ground tree roots, to a paper cut design or painted forms on transparent cloth which are viewed to reveal different patterns, light and shade, textures and colours behind as well as in the work. Some designs are figurative while others are abstract with a focus on colour or texture.

The artist has sought to bring together both beauty of design and congregational involvement in making contemporary liturgical art. Her work became widely ecumenical and congregations in different traditions have engaged her to work with them, even into the era of digital technology.

### **Geraldine Wheeler**

Queensland Chapter

P.S. I have a recollection of meeting Nancy Chinn in Melbourne, perhaps at a meeting of AAL in the 1990's. Perhaps someone has records which could confirm her visit.

### **Aidan Nichols OP, *Lost in Wonder: Essays on Liturgy and the Arts*, Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2011.**

Even though this book has been published for some time now, it is timely to review it considering the Australian Academy of Liturgy conference which will be held in January at Notre Dame Fremantle with the theme 'The Art of Liturgy'. Nichols' book explores many aspects of the arts that are the vehicles through which the Liturgy becomes a time and a place of revelation for the worshipping Christian.

The title for the book of essays is taken from a Wesleyan hymn and expresses Nichols' position that the Liturgy is the principal context in which we learn how to wonder, and how to be awe-filled and lost in our praise.

The first three chapters explore the work of three major contributors to the Catholic Intellectual Tradition and Liturgical Theology: St Thomas Aquinas, Romano Guardini and Joseph Ratzinger.

St Thomas and Nichols are both part of the Dominican Order and Nichols appreciates his capacity to understand signs when he says "The Liturgy is a pattern of signs and symbols which speak to our senses of the spiritual realities they seek to represent" (3). This understanding of the nature of the experience where we use our senses to receive

and from there understand our spiritual reality is intrinsic to the unfolding heart of the Liturgy. We are created in God's image as sensitive and sensuous human beings who receive an understanding of divine realities not only through our intellect but through our capacity to feel and it is the arts that engage that part of human nature and bring the sense of the divine to the fore. Later in Chapter One Nichols carefully attends to St Thomas' treatment of the Liturgy and Sacraments because this is where the priesthood of Christ becomes so fruitful. As we become fully engaged in the sacramental action we are drawn into the symbols themselves through the intentional opening of our senses to the art that carries the symbols. This engagement with Christ leads to our sanctification.

In Chapter Two Nichols links two great minds who contributed to the Second Vatican Council: Romano Guardini and Joseph Ratzinger. In 1918 Guardini wrote *On the Spirit of the Liturgy* which was then echoed in 1999 by Ratzinger's work *Introduction to the Spirit of the Liturgy*. The connection is certainly not coincidental and Nichols gives a clear history of each of these great men and the way in which their theologies come together. They both relied on "the same sources for their work: the Bible, the Fathers, and the high mediaeval divines for theology, while for philosophy they rely on the ancient Greeks and a wide-lens scanning of the subsequent history of culture and thought" (25). Guardini's development was influenced by the Benedictine community of Maria Laach and particularly, one of the monks, Dom Odo Casel. These names of course are foundational to what we call the Liturgical Movement which formed much of the theology that underpins the changes brought to the Liturgy by the Second Vatican Council. Nichols suggests that Ratzinger's later work is what Guardini's ground breaking work might have looked like if he had listened more carefully to some of the Benedictines who critiqued *On the Spirit of the Liturgy*.

Chapter Three explores the Eucharistic Theology developed by these great thinkers and the way in which the Mass is celebrated in living out the reforms of Vatican II. It is not always successful in its parish context and might benefit from the integration of earlier practices and a more thorough view of our liturgical history. However, always keeping in mind that perfection belongs to God alone.

Part Two of *Lost in Wonder* examines four settings of the rites that we celebrate: architecture, icons, sacred art and music. Each of these has a profound way of capturing the senses and enabling the human creature to be open to experiences of the divine. When discussing sacred architecture in Chapter Four Nichols describes considerable conflict in the post-conciliar Church about the way in which the 'assembly' is to be symbolised and placed within the sacred structure. Extremes have been experienced where the new architecture is remote from beauty and becomes a practical expression of the secular culture. This of course is problematic, but using

forms that do not enable the reforms of the Liturgy can be just as problematic. There is still much to be done to really understand what is the best way to gather the four elements that make up the presence of Christ in the Liturgy: the Person of the Priest, the Word, the Eucharistic Species and the People of God who gather to sing and pray (SC 7).

Chapter Five examines the place of icons in Liturgy. This I find to be particularly interesting as his examination of Russian icons is very good. In the Western Roman Church there is limited expression through icons and at times an iconoclastic position is taken. Nichols takes the position that much can be learned from the way the Russian Orthodox Church was able to theologise and saturate the culture with images that were able to enliven the senses and deepen a spiritual relationship within the Liturgy. Nichols suggests that the use of holy images in the home, the domestic Church, is worth encouraging.

Chapter Six centres on Paul Claudel's approach to sacred art. Again, this is an area where there is much contention within our communities. Some of our local churches are devoid of art altogether and instead rely on pious images and statues that have never been touched by artist but yet attempt to do the same work as real art. The incarnational core of Christianity has enabled our art to be representational whereas other faiths cannot allow images of God. For Christianity, the incarnational is experienced in the sacramental and each of these is drawn into the other by the sensory experience. Where this experience is rich and the deepest senses are stimulated, the human conversation with the divine becomes a reality and we learn of God through this lived experience.

Chapter Seven provides a theological perspective on Church music. Nichols concludes that there are three principles that must be pre-eminent. The Liturgy mirrors divine action and so music must firstly be receptive to that divine impulse and the creative product must ensue from that impact. Secondly, 'art music' is going to have a 'mysteric character' which will lift the hearts of the faithful and so the work of a choir of excellence will be necessary. This of course is an ideal that can only be achieved where the resources are available. When such resources are not available, well led music by a trained cantor and competent accompanist can do much to open the hearts of the faithful as they pray and sing in the Liturgy and become the Body of Christ.

Part Three of Nichols' work holds the conclusions that he draws around what art and Liturgy can give to each other and what the Church can derive from that experience. Nichols speaks of the principle of artistic beauty and the principle of artistic truth (178). When they combine to enrich the experience of the beauty of the crucified and risen Christ then the spiritual health of the Church will be improved. As a

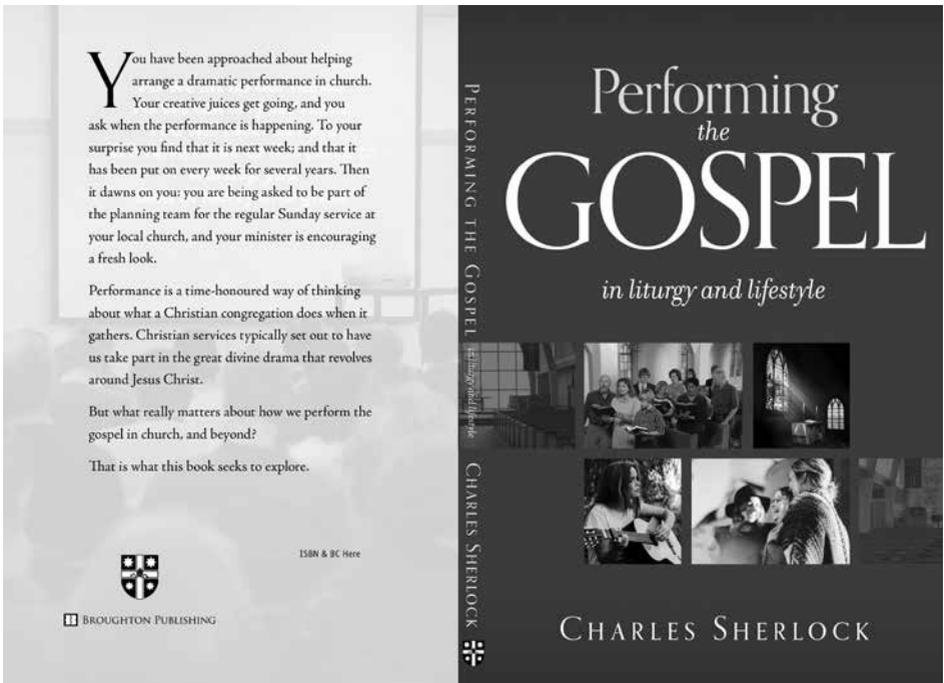
final comment it is worth noting that this book was written in the context of the new English translation of the Roman Missal. While that continues to cause some controversy, the different views on what is truly beautiful and leads us to God will be lived out in the experience of the local Church. The hope that the latest translation in its closer adherence to the Latin *editio typica* will restore beauty to the Liturgy will continue to be disputed.

**Angela McCarthy**

West Australian Chapter

**Charles Sherlock, *Performing the Gospel in Liturgy and Lifestyle*, revised edition, Mulgrave Victoria, Broughton Publishing, 2018.**

The title of this book drew from me an immediate sense of concern. ‘Performance’ is not, in my experience, something associated with liturgy. In fact, in training leaders for liturgy we make a concerted effort to ensure that performance is not the mode of proclamation. Performance ends with applause and since liturgy is about God, and for God, not us, then how can a renowned liturgist talk about performance and liturgy in the same breath.



Sherlock makes his point in the introduction that ministers are called to perform with their God-given skills the roles that have been given to them by their community. But it is not just those 'out the front' who get to do the performing. All Christians are called to perform the gospel and each participant and each part will differ. It is the Spirit who prompts us to be members of the Body of Christ in offering our praise to the Father (p.4). Therefore, I agree, that performance is a useful way of understanding what we are doing in 'integrating internal attitude and external activity' (p.5). All of us at some time or another have been a performer of sorts. Even a two-year-old performs. What an authentic performance requires is an understanding of the action and the response so that what the actor provides in performance always comes from somewhere within themselves and their own experience. Seeing our role in liturgy in this light is valuable.

Chapter 1 gives the necessary background to worship. Having read many similar descriptions or theories of liturgy and worship, this one is fresh and interesting. Worship requires community and our own experiences to be integrated but if our experience is central then we are on dangerous ground. The basis of worship has to be our response to God's love which embraces our whole lifestyle as Christians. We celebrate what God is, does and means for us (p.19) and that helps us perform the gospel is daily living. In the second section of this chapter Sherlock clears the distinction between liturgy and worship. Liturgy is a more precise term and is developed further in the third section where the background of the last century lays the groundwork for understanding what has occurred following the Second Vatican Council. What happened in the Catholic Church both paralleled and stimulated changes in the Protestant world and for the Anglican world it provided the stimulus for the revision of the *Book of Common Prayer*. The Chapter concludes with ways in which a community can reflect on their own worship/liturgy in their own context.

Chapter 2 gives a good outline of all the different spaces that are used for God and therefore have a sacramental character. The gathering space, people space, word space, table space, music space, ministering space – all are important and their functions must be well understood and integrated in a building that allows the embodiment of what we do. Design and structure are certainly important – from front door to sound system. The final section in this Chapter encourages an audit of the church building of one's own community. This is a valuable exercise in its own right as it awakens the place.

Chapter 3 leads the reader through the particular nature of the leaders of ministry in the life of the performance of the gospel. I particularly liked the first section of this chapter where there is an historical overview of the leaders of Christian communities in prayer and worship. How the actions of the early Christians were changed by political changes post-Constantine and how the notion of priest developed to what

it is today. Russell Hardiman, a long-time member of the Academy of Liturgy, used to say that unless you understood the history of liturgy you could never understand the actions of the present and therefore could not work towards positive changes. The second section of this Chapter unpacks the role of the presider and the other leaders of Christian liturgy. This is a responsibility because it can assist the community to encounter God and be changed or it can do the opposite. The third section leads the presider through a way of examining one's own value as person and performer and the final section again reflects on what is happening in one's own community.

Chapter 4 deals with words. As we are only finite creatures we cannot fully know our Creator but through the Word much has been revealed to us. These communications from God are 'material signs that signify divine realities' (p.101) which is sacramental in itself. The words themselves have deeper realities. The use of words in our communal prayer can be effective as well as affective' (p.105) and the consciousness of this fact must drive the leaders and the congregation to be careful of the words, careful of the action. Again, this aspect of liturgy is carefully laid out and concludes with a list of questions for reflection that are valuable.

Chapter 5 deals specifically with Scripture. The explanation of the value of a pattern of reading the scriptures is very good. The result of much work is *The Revised Common Lectionary* which stems from the three-year Lectionary that was a result of the Second Vatican Council. All of this work which has promoted quite dramatic change is worth reflecting upon.

Chapter 6 follows the pattern of previous chapters in discovering the need and use of music in liturgy. Music is 'an experience, embodied in time' which is vital in the performance of the gospel in liturgy (p.139). Over the last 60 years there have been many contributions to music that have been celebrated or contested and the array of needs, resources and responses is complex. Music is integral to liturgy and this chapter carefully outlines the value of what we do when we sing and why it works so well on the human person. The integration of music is therefore a principal action of the preparation.

Chapter 7 looks at the contemporary use of digital media – what is on screen. Much discussion has taken place over the value or disruption that projection screens impose on a worshipping community. Yet, the use of screens is widespread throughout Christian churches. How we use it and what is made available for the congregation is the important matter. Sherlock makes an interesting connection to the iconostasis of the Orthodox tradition where the images are critically important to the liturgy and to the prayer of the people. Is that how projection screens should work too? There is much of interest in this chapter.

Chapter 8 looks at the liturgical year and all its ramifications in Australia. If we query our communities closely they might not be able to tell us when the different seasons occur and what are the distinguishing dates, but the flow of time and the understanding that has come to us from very ancient times reflects on our 'now' and shapes our future.

Chapter 9, the concluding chapter, looks at how we can pray in our diversity and in our insularity. As our wider community becomes more secular do we need to become more closed in what we do? How can what we experience be formed into a 'common prayer' that is welcoming and sustaining? Being gathered and being sent remains the primary structure but this has to be carefully nurtured in the context of the community.

*Performing the Gospel in Liturgy and Lifestyle* is a valuable text for communities who wish to develop themselves amidst the turmoil and change of our contemporary context. As our communities in all denominations continue to shrink, the way that we perform the gospel must be given close scrutiny and this volume will be very useful in supporting such activity.

## **Angela McCarthy**

West Australian Chapter

### **Three resources for the St John's Bible**

**Susan Sink, *The Art of The Saint John's Bible*, Collegeville, Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 2013.**

Since I have become custodian of the Heritage Edition of Gospel and Acts of the St John's Bible (SJB) at the University of Notre Dame, this volume has been my trusted aide. There are seven volumes to the Heritage Edition: Pentateuch, Historical Books, Wisdom Books, Psalms Prophets, Gospel and Acts, Letters and Revelation. The illuminations and calligraphic details of each volume are described succinctly but give sufficient information for each aspect to help presenters and individual viewers to bring the artwork to life. In our contemporary world there is a lack of iconographic language as it is no longer widely used within our parish communities and places of education. In previous epochs the language of art that graced church walls and other places of gathering was understood and the stories revealed and treasured.

This book gives the artist, some information about the artist's style, the intent of the illumination, and often the context of the work and links to other similar and connected works in the whole opus. Each time I present the volume to a group I read and re-read this material and have therefore been able to develop a deep

understanding of the illuminations and text. The appendices are also of real value as they outline the timeline of the extraordinary project. The index of visual elements gives the name of the artist alongside each of the marginalia along with a title for clarity of understanding. Much of the marginalia is done by Chris Tomlin who is a botanical artist. An interesting aspect is that the botanical specimens are not perfect as the real world is not perfect. The next index lists the texts that have been treated differently to the usual calligraphy and it gives the contributing calligrapher for each text. This is useful when studying the SJB as you are able to link the various textual works. The index of artists is valuable in its short biographical listing with a full list of their works. Donald Jackson is the first to be noted and of course he is the principal contributor. He wrote and illuminated the entire book of Revelation. Understanding the background and context of each contributor is of value in understanding their perspective through the illuminations. Finally, there is a list of the committee on illumination and text comprising eleven people who were central to the decision-making process. There are others who were involved but this group provided much of the expertise needed for selection of illumination and direction for the entire work.

## **Angela McCarthy**

West Australian Chapter

## **Michael Patella, *Word and Image: The Hermeneutics of The Saint John's Bible*, Collegeville Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 2013.**

Michael Patella served on the Committee on Illumination and Text and is also a professor of New Testament at the School of Theology/Seminary of St John's University in Collegeville as well as seminary rector. This book on the hermeneutics of the SJB is a valuable resource in understanding the values and vision of the work itself. In 1996 the monks of St John's Abbey were considering what to do to celebrate the turning of the millennium with the thought in mind that they would like to contribute to the world something culturally notable for this generation. The St John's Bible project was the result. There are six points that give the grounding for this extraordinary project:

- to glorify God's Word
- to give voice to the unprivileged
- to ignite the imagination
- to revive tradition
- to discover history
- to foster the arts

Without exception these points have been achieved. This is an evangelisation effort that brings the best that humankind can offer in 'noble human endeavour' (p. xi).

The fifteen-hundred-year-old Benedictine tradition of copying and illuminating the word of God has resumed its noble place and the efforts of all those involved is reaping fruit throughout the world. The Heritage Edition has been loaned around the world and over 100 institutions have purchased the seven-volume set. Notre Dame University has the volume of Gospels and Acts on loan until August 2019 and so far, the many communities who have viewed it have been awe inspired and enthused about the Bible. There are some acute differences between the medieval illuminated texts and the SJB. This one is contemporary in its approach and context. Images such as the Annunciation, one of the most popular themes for art in our Christian European history, is absent. The only image of the crucifixion, again one of the most popular images in Christian art, is much more aligned to resurrection than to the agony on the cross.

Patella describes the hermeneutical key for understanding the SJB is encountering and experiencing the Word in sacramental form. The Word is life-giving and life-changing and so the tradition of biblical interpretation in text and image is, at the same time, dynamic and challenging. The translation chosen is the New Revised Standard Version because the committee decided that the scholarship that provides such textual fidelity to the Word would be the only one that could suffice for the diverse dimensions of this project.

Part 3 of this book is by Benjamin C Tilghman, a professor of art history, and he reflects on the history of illumination and calligraphy within the Benedict tradition. This supports the extraordinary work involved in revivifying the ancient traditions in a contemporary age.

Part 4 is the largest section and it takes the reader through each of the seven volumes as well as the leitmotifs employed throughout the SJB. The interaction between text and image, image and text, is constant and alive. There is a consistency throughout the entire bible that was carefully nurtured by the Committee on Illumination and Text (CIT). This part of Patella's book takes the reader through each illumination, small and large, and gives the background conversation and decision-making by the CIT and the resultant explanation. Some are much deeper and more complex than others but they all contribute to the six points that ground this remarkable work. There is also a very useful glossary, bibliography and index of Scripture that makes searching to particular themes and passages accessible. The work that was done in the latter half of the twentieth century of the development of the Lectionary, showed how integrated the biblical texts are from Genesis to Revelation. The links within such a broad

array of texts written across many centuries are shown through art and calligraphic interpretation within the SJB and finding those visual links makes the use of this noble work full of possibilities in opening the Word of God.

## **Angela McCarthy**

West Australian Chapter

### **Christopher Calderhead, *Illuminating the Word: The Making of the Saint John's Bible*, second edition, Collegeville, Minnesota, Liturgical Press, 2015.**

Christopher Calderhead was part of the team of artists who worked on the Saint John's Bible (SJB). This history of the development of such an extraordinary work takes us behind the scenes and through many interviews with the artists and scribes this astounding work unfolds. The first edition of this book was published in 2005 and it was then updated ten years later once the project had been completed. The whole project has been described as either complete madness or amazing good fortune for so many things came together to make it work when it seemed an impossible task for the 21st century. One story told by Jim Triggs when he delivered the Heritage Edition to Fremantle was that Donald Jackson, the artistic director of the project and calligrapher to the Queen, noticed that Chinese ink sticks were on sale in a shop in London that was closing down. He made several trips to purchase all of the sticks but eventually felt bad that he had them all so gave some to various calligrapher friends. Towards the end of the project they were running out of Chinese ink sticks and so he had to call his friends and ask for them back! In the end there were only two left over after 1150 pages of vellum being illuminated and hand written.

This project was much bigger than anyone had imagined and even the setting up of the scriptorium in Wales proved to be more difficult than expected. Some scribes who came to work on the project left because they did not think that this was a work they could complete or feel comfortable with. The style of calligraphy that Donald Jackson had developed did not suit everyone and actually mastering it proved to be difficult even for very skilled scribes.

Preparing the skins was an intense activity. Vellum is no longer used as in the past and the commercial preparation of vellum is diminishing. Even in the last century vellum was still used for major documents of importance and in musical instruments but plastics and other materials have taken over. The sourcing of a large quantity for the SJB project was therefore imperative. Jackson had also decided on a very large format that could be two pages alongside each other and used on both sides. This made it difficult but eventually found a reliable source, Cowley's which was Newport Pagnell, only a three-hour drive from the scriptorium in Wales.

The making of the SJB has complexities that one cannot even imagine at first. The intention is for the original vellum to be formed into a book and so each section has to be organised that the required number of sheets are sewn together and therefore what is on each section of vellum, like an open double page, has to reflect how the whole section is organised. The lining up of the sections to be written on by the calligraphers and then the remaining sections to be illuminated offer a very complex organisation. One does not want two different calligraphers to be on facing pages so there is much care needed in the layout. The team prepared their vellum and quills and tempora as well as the gold leaf that was to be applied. Each step is complex and demanding of very close attention.

Calderhead's book takes one through the process, the product and the people and since it is a coffee table sized book, it is extensive in the information available. However, the end result is to amaze us even more as to the size and craziness of such a project. The fact that it has succeeded is a monument to faith.

There are other texts that are available and there is an immense amount of information on the website: <http://www.saintjohnsbible.org>

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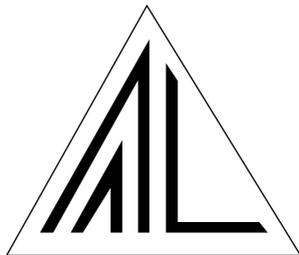
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