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THE LITURGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE
CATHEDRALS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND
1980 TO THE PRESENT DAY

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ABSTRACT

The contention of this thesis is that the development of liturgy in the Cathedrals of the Church of England over the last 25 years gives a unique insight and illustration of the way in which worship has developed within Anglicanism in this country.

At its beginning, the theological context of this study is set: specific examination of cathedral identity and mission leads to a number of questions about the nature and purpose of cathedrals: particular reference is made to recent reports concerning the future of cathedral ministry.

There follows a detailed exploration of liturgical development throughout the Church of England, concentrating on the Church of England's response to international liturgical developments, trends in language, and the production of prayer books.

In the central chapter of the thesis, considerable time is spent examining specific changes of emphasis in the liturgical life of cathedrals. Special treatment is given to attempts to make worship accessible; fresh understandings of sacred space, pilgrimage, and processional; and a consideration of the tensions and complexities arising from the diverse roles which cathedrals are called to adopt, as diocesan churches, as churches with gathered congregations, and as the seat of the Bishop.

The next chapters examine the recent liturgical history of two contrasting cathedrals in depth: Coventry and Durham.

That detailed examination roots our theological reflection in the contemporary life of cathedrals, and leads to conclusions about identity, liturgical experimentation, mission, pastoralia, and pilgrimage. These conclusions lead to an assertion of the centrality of cathedrals in the present mission of the church, and that the liturgical development and distinctiveness of cathedrals is key to that centrality.

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Chapter One: Identity, Liturgy and Mission: the context of cathedral worship

Introduction

Speak to an average parishioner in a Church of England church about liturgical development, and they are likely to interpret that as ‘changing the service’ – by which, they mean changing the language of the service. They are to be sympathised with – since 1967, the Church of England has undergone a series of textual changes in its liturgies, following around four hundred years of working from a more or less standard textual corpus.¹ But recent liturgical developments have been about far more than changing texts: they relate to setting and space, the theatre and context of worship.

English Cathedrals have undergone this change along with other churches and worshipping communities in the Church of England, though, inevitably, in very different ways. Cathedrals have a distinct role, not least in the areas of liturgy, spirituality and mission. An attempt at identifying these roles was a consequence of the Archbishops’ Commission on Cathedrals, which gave great emphasis to worship in the context of mission.² What emerges from the report, and from other writings in this area, is that a cathedral needs a sense of identity in order to provide the right context for worship in order for cathedral liturgy to be an agency of mission. Furthermore, a clear understanding of cathedral identity is the vital context in which good liturgy can be produced and executed.

¹ Perham, New Handbook of Pastoral Liturgy, SPCK (2000) p. 10

² Heritage and Renewal: the report of the Archbishops’ Commission on Cathedrals, CHP (1994) p. 17 ff.



Identity

How does a cathedral determine its identity? Principally, of course, by housing the *cathedra*, the Bishop's throne. In his essay *Locus Iste: Cathedral Theology*, Stephen Platten believes that the identity of the cathedral as the Bishop's church, and the centre of his teaching ministry, ought to be re-discovered:

[The cathedral] 'is the place within which the teaching role of the bishop is concentrated. Traditionally, the cathedral was the auditorium within which the bishop gathered both clergy and people to expound to them the Christian faith; the tradition was handed on, on behalf of the Church, by the Bishop in his cathedral ... it is a tradition that cathedrals and bishops can and ought to rediscover.'³

Platten goes on to define cathedral identity in terms of sacred space. This is not only due to the obvious truth that a cathedral is a church, and therefore a house of God and his worship, but also due in many places to a localised cult formed around a saint. Durham and Lichfield are good examples of this, housing the shrines of Cuthbert and Chad respectively. This focus on a godly figure or *patronus* underlined the Cathedral's identity, as well as enhancing the prestige of the bishop.⁴

Modern worshippers and visitors may well grasp that the Cathedral is, uniquely, the Bishop's church. But it so much more. *Heritage and Renewal* is less enthusiastic about Platten's emphasis on the relationship between bishop and cathedral, save in a symbolic sense, quoting the 1961 report *Cathedrals in Modern Life* with its reference

³ Platten, *Locus Iste* in Platten and Lewis, Flagships of the Spirit, DLT (1998) p. 125

⁴ *op. cit.*, p. 127

to cathedrals as ‘the visible counterpart of the episcopal system’.⁵ *Heritage and Renewal* prefers to speak of cathedrals as ‘shrines of faith’ and ‘descriptions of the majesty of God’.⁶

This particular paragraph goes on to state that ‘there is unanimity about the priority of worship in the function of cathedrals’ though this assertion receives no theological support either here or in the extended section on worship in the third chapter of the report on Mission.⁷

A better treatment is to be found in an essay by David Stancliffe, *Walking in Patterns*. Basing his exposition on Avery Dulles’ *Models of the Church*⁸ Stancliffe argues that cathedral identity is multi-faceted, and that for a particular act of worship, the cathedral needs to understand which facet of its identity, which model of cathedral, it is employing in that particular context. If this is not done, Stancliffe argues, the cathedral is in danger of losing its integrity, becoming merely ‘an umbrella under which a whole host of different activities take place – a building and resources which can be hired out to all comers’.⁹

Stancliffe’s models are worth detailed study. He writes of ‘Cathedral as Institution’, justifying the institutional life of the cathedral with liturgical theology:

⁵ *Heritage and Renewal* p. 8

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ *op. cit.*, p. 17 ff.

⁸ Dulles, *Models of the Church*, Dublin, Gill and Macmillan (1976)

⁹ Stancliffe, *Walking in Patterns* in Platten and Lewis, *Flagships of the Spirit* p. 53

‘[the institutional life of the Church] gives visibility and structure to the manifestation of Christ’s life in word and sacrament’.¹⁰

though he goes on to warn

‘where the institution takes on a life of its own, and is no longer subject to that perpetual recalling to transformation, good liturgy will be difficult to devise’.¹¹

(In passing we might note that this very problem was the spur for cathedral reform movement of the early nineteenth century. Lord Henley’s *A Plan of Church Reform* was scathing of cathedrals, writing of cathedral worship of the time as ‘a cold and pompous ceremonial’.¹² Though many resisted his critique (most notably Pusey), there was enough truth in his assertions to inspire the Royal Commission of 1852.¹³)

Stancliffe’s second model is ‘Cathedral as Community’. He explores the identity of the community, from those belonging to a statutory foundation to annual visitors. He encourages his readers to be drawn away from ‘static’ liturgical models and points towards a spirituality of pilgrimage which finds liturgical expression in movement – which includes meaningful rites of dismissal.¹⁴

The third model, which emerges out of the community model, is that of the gathered congregation. Here, Stancliffe argues that cathedral identity is more than that of the ‘parish church writ large’, and proposes a distinctive style of eucharistic celebration: ‘If it is not clear from the style of celebration that it is the bishop’s church, and the place where the ministry of the whole diocese is focused, or that it is the church of a

¹⁰ op. cit., p. 56

¹¹ ibid.

¹² Barrett, *Barchester: English Cathedral Life in the Nineteenth Century*, SPCK (1993) p. 285

¹³ The Commission was appointed to ‘enquire into the State and Conditions of the Cathedrals and Collegiate Churches in England and Wales’. See Barrett, op. cit., p. 287 ff.

community, charged with modelling a distinctive style of collaboration and trust, then something essential is missing.’¹⁵

This point raises problems about how the cathedral expresses its identity through worship. A liturgical style which is too clerically dominated would fly in the face of modern liturgical practice, where the balance between those who have a representative function in worship, as opposed to those who celebrate the liturgy through participation, is clearly desired.¹⁶ The distinction between the dual identities of bishop’s church and gathered congregation is not always as clear as Bishop Stancliffe hopes for. The dilemma is highlighted in *Heritage and Renewal*, where it is suggested that the cathedral congregation might be viewed in a different way:

‘The gathered congregations, the regular worshippers ... should not see themselves, or be regarded by others, as refugees from surrounding churches, but as bridges between the cathedral and the rest of the diocese’.¹⁷

Quite how individual members of a cathedral community might be bridges is not explained, but presumably the report is seeking to give some ecclesiological expression to the issue of identity that Stancliffe raises.

In their concluding chapter to *Flagships of the Spirit*, Stephen Platten and Christopher Lewis draw these threads together in an attempt to picture a practical model rooted in reality. They envisage a northern city where the cathedral is ‘a former parish church

¹⁴ Stancliffe, *Walking in Patterns* in Platten and Lewis, *Flagships of the Spirit* p. 60

¹⁵ op. cit., p.63

¹⁶ c.f. Perham, *New Handbook of Pastoral Liturgy* p. 93

¹⁷ *Heritage and Renewal*, p. 12

full of signs of industrial civic pride'.¹⁸ As well as the geographical and socio-economic identity which they give to this fictitious cathedral, they associate the cathedral's identity with the diversity of those who are connected with it:

'the congregation and its clergy are by no means the only ones who see it as their cathedral. Congregationalism is not an option, for who can say to whom the cathedral really belongs? Bishop and diocese, county and city, volunteers and visitors – all have a claim. They are not all Christian believers in the orthodox sense, for some with an interest in the cathedral may be very secular and some may belong to other faiths. Yet here is an explicitly Christian place, marked by Christian worship and activity, to which all may come and which may (if it does its job properly) express many of the hopes and fears of those who live in the city and beyond, and may also challenge them'.¹⁹

The writers of this essay conclude that a basic Pauline model of 'the body of Christ', used to justify many of the understandings of cathedral identity we have explored, is an error. They suggest a 'careful use of the theology of incarnation',²⁰ by which they mean dynamic community involvement, active presence and prophetic stance.

This understanding is fine as far as it goes, but it does not engage with the liturgical issue. How should this ecclesiological model find its expression in worship?

Stancliffe seeks to engage with this, and in his exploration of 'Cathedral as Herald and Prophet' begs that what he terms 'liturgical archaeology' be set aside, in order for something more creative:

'The challenge of the prophetic word demands a ritual vehicle for response, and we fail our congregations if we do not also give them an opportunity to respond in their language, to make a gesture not only of identification, but of self-giving.'²¹

¹⁸ Platten and Lewis, *Setting a Course*, in *Flagships of the Spirit* p. 176

¹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰ *op. cit.*, p. 179

²¹ *op. cit.*, p. 71

Perhaps it is the cathedrals themselves who need to make a ‘gesture of identification’ for as we have seen, there are two approaches to the whole question of cathedral identity. One may opt for the simple truth – it is the cathedral church, housing the Bishop’s throne, and from there stems a straightforward understanding of purpose and place. Alternatively, one may broaden the definition to embrace the realistic understanding of what cathedrals are now, and the diversity of uses to which they are put. After all, it is hard to know where the academic argument begins and ends. We would not want, I think, to spend too much time struggling to find a theological justification for using a cathedral as a fine setting for a historical film – or even the latest *Harry Potter* movie. At the same time, however, we have in fact hit on yet another aspect the problem of cathedral identity. Where should cathedral authorities draw the line when the wider community requests to use the cathedral building? For it is surely what takes place in the building, as well as what particular furnishings and adornments exist, which define what the cathedral is and what it stands for. Perhaps it is the multifarious use of the modern cathedral which has caused so much debate around the whole question of identity – a problem which our forebears perhaps had less of a struggle to define, when cathedral naves were used in much the same way as the *agora* of Greek civilisation.²²

Few would wish to argue with the dynamic community involvement of which Platten and Lewis speak, a model which finds sympathy with Stancliffe (who proclaims an ‘incarnational strand of solidarity’)²³ and the Archbishops’ Commission, with their

²² Interestingly, this commonplace view is largely known from complaints from religious authorities about secular misuse of cathedral naves.

²³ Stancliffe, *Walking in Patterns* in Platten and Lewis, *Flagships of the Spirit* p. 72

clear emphasis on evangelism and witness.²⁴ But there is surely place for a *via media* of a traditional understanding of the cathedral as uniquely the Bishop's church²⁵, while embracing the clear reality of how cathedrals are used in our modern age. This means that the living truth of what the cathedral is and what it is for needs to be made explicit.

Liturgy and Mission

It has become something of a cliché to suggest that worship is the shop-window of the church. While there is no doubt that good worship is a tool for evangelism, evangelism is not the reason why we worship. Bryan Spinks refers to the writings of J. J. von Allmen, arguing that worship 'is not *per se* addressed to outsiders, and neither is it even specifically directed to the Church.'²⁶ The object of all true worship is God, and the act of worshipping summons the church together as a distinctive community. Spinks goes on to concede that, while worship is not primarily an evangelistic exercise, there are, as it were, two 'by-products' which are concerned with mission: liturgical formation, i.e. the way in which liturgy shapes the worshipping community, and what Spinks calls a 'converting power', by which he means the ability of meaningful liturgy to touch the hearts of those who participate, however marginally, in worship.

²⁴ Heritage and Renewal, pp. 31 ff.

²⁵ Historically the concept of the Bishop's church is ambiguous, however – because of the relationship between where the Bishop resided and the historic rights and privileges belonging to Deans and Chapters. The Cathedral remains firmly, however, the place of the Bishop's cathedra, the focus of his teaching office; in the twentieth century, this relationship can be said to have been cemented through a greater involvement of the Cathedral in the consciousness of the Diocese through the increase in Diocesan services etc.

²⁶ Spinks, *Worship and Evangelism* in Liturgy for a New Century, p. 101

J. G Davies takes the connections between liturgy and mission even further. Arguing that all worship is rooted in what he terms the '*missio Dei*', Davies claims that 'true worship is only possible within the context of mission'²⁷, a conclusion reached following a complex examination of the relationship between God and the world as defined in the liturgical life of the people of God.

This approach is very much the same as that of the Archbishops' Commission:

'Worship always has a missionary reference – in giving glory to God, the primary purpose of worship, those present may be enabled to catch a glimpse of that glory.'²⁸

The worshipping life of cathedrals today is more varied than ever before. That appears to be a bold assertion until one considers the sheer variety of different services that now take place. The backbone of the daily life of every cathedral is the *opus Dei*, the daily round of Morning Prayer, Holy Communion and Evensong. In many places Evensong will be a choral service on most days. A high standard of music is, undoubtedly, a tool for mission in itself, and the Anglican choral tradition is uniquely placed to attract many people to cathedral worship who would be unlikely to attend worship in their local parish church. *Heritage and Renewal* acknowledges this fact (though somewhat grudgingly²⁹) before making a number of criticisms of cathedral music – even though that, in their research, the first answer given by those attending cathedrals when asked what they like best about their cathedral was the music.

Cathedral music is, however, rooted in a particular cultural idiom, and while the repertoire of the choral tradition provides arguably the finest accompaniment to the

²⁷ Davies, *Worship and Mission*, SCM (1966), p. 111

²⁸ *Heritage and Renewal*, p. 17

daily diet of cathedral worship, the many extra services that cathedrals now hold will need something different – not least because the professional musical resources of a cathedral will already have enough to do.

These special services fall into two broad categories: those initiated by the cathedral, and those where the cathedral responds to a request from an outside organisation. In the former category, many cathedrals have produced services which have proved to elicit a remarkable response. Carol services are an obvious element in this (Coventry, Lichfield and Winchester cathedrals have all, in the last two years, had to have extra Christmas carol services to respond to a seemingly growing demand), but there are also the responses to those in need: the annual Requiem, Remembrance Sunday, memorial services in the event of a national tragedy (such as the death of Diana, Princess of Wales), services for the victims of road accidents, and so on. But there also services which are designed to complimentary to the statutory provision, seeking to provide new liturgy outside the traditional cathedral idiom.

Then there are services where the cathedral responds to outside requests. Some of these will be obviously appropriate, such as services of a civic character, for the county, or for diocesan organisations. Cathedrals are under great pressure here, for in the context of mission, a cathedral is called to respond to such requests wherever possible, although pressures on diaries and personnel can be horrific. As *Heritage and Renewal* puts it:

‘All these groups believe instinctively that there will be a positive response from ‘their’ cathedral when a service is requested, and that the cathedral authorities will

²⁹ op. cit., p. 21

produce a form of worship which will reflect and interpret their own concerns and area of service.’³⁰

The report goes on to affirm cathedrals in this role, and provides cathedral Precentors and others with responsibility for liturgy and mission with a particular challenge:

‘If worship is taken seriously as an instrument of mission, those who produce such worship will see it as their duty to provide an appropriate vehicle which will help as many as possible to worship effectively ‘with the spirit and with the understanding’. This will involve sensitivity and sound judgement ... it is a matter of experiment and balance. Cathedrals are the liturgical laboratories of the Church; they have the freedom and the potential flexibility to meet the spiritual needs of many who may not be even on the edge of formal Church life but who may encounter the divine presence when they attend cathedral worship as members of a secular group for a special service.’³¹

Conclusion

This extraordinary challenge takes us back to the very heart of our exploration. For the attempt to produce mission-oriented liturgy in response to these demands will be all the more difficult when questions of identity and context lie unresolved. It is therefore vital that the ‘models of cathedral’ which David Stancliffe expounds are taken seriously: here is a way in which those responsible for worship can work out a context which enables the cathedral to maintain integrity and identity while seeking to respond to the needs of an individual group or organisation.

At the same time, sight must never be lost of what is most fundamental, that without the bishop’s chair the cathedral would have no reason to exist. In the first cathedrals the frequently central position of the *cathedra* made this identification far more obvious, though architectural taste for a reredos meant the almost universal

³⁰ op. cit., p. 18

³¹ op. cit., p. 19

transplantation of the cathedra into a stall in the choir.³² But the wider theological implications for liturgical theology are less about the precise place where the bishop sits and more about his presence and role in the life of the cathedral's worship.

Later on in the research for which this essay is a background paper, we shall be undertaking a detailed examination of several English cathedrals and their life, to try and formulate detailed and specific proposals for dealing with the issues raised, and also to review the role which cathedrals have had in the liturgical life of the Church of England since the introduction of the *Alternative Service Book* in 1980.

But the purpose of our research is less to explore how a particular cathedral has produced a particular service for a particular occasion: it aims to answer specific questions relating to the purpose and function of cathedrals as places of worship for the dioceses they serve, and for their own worshipping communities.

This thesis is in two sections: part one sets the scene for our analysis by charting the history of liturgy in the Church of England in the twentieth century. Chapter one explores the period leading up to the publication of the *Alternative Service Book*, and chapter two looks in more detail at the period leading up to the publication of *Common Worship*. The section concludes with specific points relating to the development of cathedral liturgy: questions of authority, identity, model and purpose.

Section two looks specifically at the practical consequences in English cathedrals of these developments in the wider church. We focus on two particular institutions, the

³² Cobb, *The Architectural Setting of the Liturgy*, in *The Study of Liturgy (Revised Edition)* SPCK

cathedrals of Coventry and Durham. There are enormous differences between the two, and both have undergone a distinct change in liturgical style in the last twenty years. By looking closely at the way the buildings have been used, movement, text, processional and music, we shall build up a picture of a shift in emphasis which our historical analysis underscores. We shall also examine the way in which bishops relate to their cathedrals, the views of deans and precentors, and the relationship of cathedrals to their dioceses in the widest sense.

Chapter Two

Text and Context: Liturgy in the Church of England 1928-1980

Introduction

Commenting at the conclusion of the process which led to the publication of the

Alternative Service Book, Colin Buchanan wrote:

The Church of England, bless it, gets so pre-occupied with texts, and we have given it all too much excuse to do so. Let us now move on to health-giving and creative practice.¹

The preoccupation of the Church of England with texts, while frustrating for many, is understandable and, in many ways, commendable. Understandable for a denomination born in the turmoil of the Reformation², commendable for a church rooted in the theory *lex orandi, lex credendi*.³ A good exposition of what this means for Anglicans can be found in the preface to the *Canadian Book of Alternative Services* 1985:

It is precisely the intimate relationship of gospel, liturgy, and service that stands behind the theological principle *lex orandi: lex credendi*, i.e., the law of prayer is the law of belief. This principle, particularly treasured by Anglicans, means that theology as the statement of the church's belief is drawn from the liturgy, i.e. from the point at which the gospel and the challenge of Christian life meet in prayer. The development of theology is not a legislative process which is imposed on liturgy; liturgy is a reflective process in which theology may be discovered. The Church must be open to liturgical change in order to maintain sensitivity to the impact of the gospel on the world and to permit the continuous development of a living theology.⁴

There is, perhaps, a further aspect: that the liturgy of the church does, to an extent, shape the belief and practice of the church. In other words, the interplay between liturgy and life is a two-way process. This underscores the pastoral context in which

¹ Buchanan, *Revision in the Church of England in Retrospect*, in ed. Stevenson, *Liturgy Reshaped*, SPCK (1982).

² See McCulloch, *Reformation*, Penguin/Allen Lane (2003) Chapter 12: Coda: a British Legacy 1600-1700 for a concise and full treatment.

³ The law of prayer is the law of belief

Anglican liturgical revisions have rightly come to be set. Indeed, it was as a result of pastoral experience, first the experience of 19th century so-called slum priests, second the experience of military chaplains in the First World War, which prompted the attempted revisions of the early twentieth-century which led to the debacle over the proposed Prayer Book of 1928. We should also remember the experience and influence of Anglo-Catholic parishes, who were keen to use devotional services (such as the veneration of the Cross on Good Friday), not in breach of, but in addition to, the liturgy provided within the *Book of Common Prayer*.⁵

The Liturgical Movement and its Effects

While the Church of England reeled as a consequence of the rejection by the House of Commons of the proposed Prayer Book both in 1927 and 1928⁶, things were not standing still on the Continent, and elsewhere. *A New Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship* describes the Liturgical Movement as ‘part of the reawakening of the Church’.⁷ The movement is often said to have begun with a seminal paper on ‘The True Prayer of the Church’ given at the 1909 National Conference on Catholic Action, held in Marlines, by Dom Lambert Beauduin.

Beauduin’s argument was based on his experience as an industrial chaplain, which led him to understand that society had become broken and individualistic. He argued that Christian liturgy must be reformed in order to re-establish a truly participative Christian spirituality among the laity. In order to do this, liturgy had to be reformed.

⁴ Church of Canada, *Book of Alternative Services* (1985)

⁵ Cuming, *A History of Anglican Liturgy*, Macmillan (1969) p. 210

⁶ Chadwick, *Hensley Henson: A Study in the friction between Church and State*, OUP (1983)

He proposed that the Missal should be available to lay people in translation (he did not go so far as to say that the Mass should be in the vernacular); also he believed, as Cranmer had done before him in a very different context, that the Daily Office should be something which the laity were encouraged to participate in.⁸ Though distinguished liturgical scholars have asserted that Beauduin ‘deserves his claim to the title ‘Father of the Liturgical Movement’⁹, there were others before him, notably Prosper Louis Pascal Guéranger¹⁰, a priest of the Diocese of Le Mans who is credited with re-establishing the Benedictine Order in France. He became the first abbot of the reconstituted abbey at Solesmes, and as well as encouraging a renewed interest in liturgical music, especially plainchant, he produced a popular devotional commentary on the liturgical year, *L'Annee Liturgique*,¹¹ as well as three volumes of *Institutions Liturgiques*¹², works which did much to bring about a fresh interest in Roman Catholic liturgy.

The Liturgical Movement gathered momentum, resulting in a Holy Week conference at the German abbey of Maria Laach. The abbot of Maria Laach between 1913 and 1946 was Ildephonse Herwegen, who founded an Institute of Liturgical and Monastic Studies there in 1931. Perhaps more important even than Herwegen was the liturgist Odo Casel¹³ whose writings have been assessed as

Providing the most important single body of theological interpretation of the liturgy in modern times.¹⁴

⁷ Ed. Davies, *A New Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, SCM (1986) p. 314

⁸ His arguments are most strongly expressed in his book *Liturgy the Life of the Church*, translated by Michel, Collegette Liturgical Press (1929).

⁹ Cf. Fenwick and Spinks, *Worship in Transition*, T and T Clark (1995) p. 25

¹⁰ 1805-75

¹¹ Published between 1841-1866

¹² Published between 1840-1851

¹³ 1886-1948

¹⁴ Shepherd, *The Liturgical Renewal of the Church*, OUP (1960) p. 32

Casel's writing faces criticism for his assertion of pagan rites providing the background for much early Christian liturgy.¹⁵ However he contributed to the rapid spread of a call for liturgical change, the influence of which began to reach England though not effectively until the end of the Second World War, due to an inherent conservatism among the Roman Catholic hierarchy and monastic institutions of the time.¹⁶

Archimandrite Serge Keleher, a pupil of the great liturgical theologian Alexander Schmemmann¹⁷, has identified a number of key characteristics of the twentieth century Liturgical Movement, about which there is a scholarly consensus.¹⁸ He states that Beauduin, Casel, Herwegen and others are united by a number of common themes: fidelity to the church, overwhelming reverence for the liturgy, revival of interest in patristics, desire to encourage liturgical knowledge amongst the laity, a love of liturgical chant, interest in Eastern Orthodoxy, a devotion to scripture, and a rootedness in monasticism.

These characteristics began to have an influence on the Church of England, chiefly due to the influence of one man: Gabriel Hebert. Hebert¹⁹ was the well-educated son of a priest, who, following his curacy, joined the Society of the Sacred Mission. His liturgical gifts were first expressed in the part he played in the revision of worship of

¹⁵ Chief among those critics was the French liturgist Louis Bouyer : see Irvine, Worship, Church and Society, Canterbury Press (1993) pp. 99 ff

¹⁶ Cf. Fenwick and Spinks, op. cit., p. 30

¹⁷ Alexander Schmemmann, the distinguished Estonian Orthodox liturgical scholar, 1921-1983

¹⁸ Keleher, *Whatever happened to the Liturgical Movement? A view from the East*, in ed. Caldecott, Beyond the Prosaic: Renewing the Liturgical Movement, T and T Clark (1998) pp. 69 ff.

¹⁹ 1886-1963

the Church of the Province of South Africa²⁰. He returned to England, and became involved with both the work of the Student Christian Movement, and also with informal conversations and links between the Church of England and the Scandinavian churches. Christopher Irvine asserts that 'Hebert repeatedly argued that the Church was most clearly seen to be the Church when the people of God gathered for worship'.²¹ Hebert's own contributions were immensely significant in fashioning the ideas of the Continental Liturgical Movement in an English context. Thus in *Liturgy and Society*²², Hebert distilled the *mysterientheologie* of Herwegen, and mixed in with it ideas he had drawn, not only from his Scandinavian connections, but also from English writers and thinkers such as T. S. Eliot, D. H. Lawrence and F. D. Maurice. He was to later influence Arthur Couratin²³ and others by his somewhat romanticised attitude to the place of the offertory, which was simplified by Dom Gregory Dix²⁴ in his famous work *The Shape of the Liturgy*²⁵.

After *Liturgy and Society* came *The Parish Communion*²⁶, a collection of essays which sold 2,500 copies in the first nine months of publication. This was to kick-start what came to be known as the Parish Communion movement, whose aim was the restoration of the Eucharist as the principal act of worship on Sundays in parishes and

²⁰ See Irvine, *A. G. Hebert*, in (ed. Irvine) *They Shaped our Worship: Essays on Anglican Liturgists*, Alcuin/SPCK (1998) p. 64

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 67

²² Published in 1935

²³ Arthur Couratin (1902-1988) was principal of St Stephen's House, Oxford, and, subsequently, a Canon Residentiary of Durham Cathedral, where he introduced the Sung Eucharist in addition to the customary service of Matins. Couratin's ceremonial for this service lasted for many years. His friend and colleague, Edward Ratcliff (1896-1967) ultimately held the Regius Chair at Cambridge, and asserted the notion that the Eucharistic prayer of the Apostolic Tradition concluded with the Sanctus – an inspiration behind *Common Worship*'s Eucharistic Prayer H, though I suspect that both of them would have dissented from other aspects of that particular prayer.

²⁴ 1901-1952. See pp. 6 ff.

²⁵ Published in 1945

²⁶ Published in 1937

cathedrals. This was born out of a deep theological sense that an ecclesiology rooted in being the Body of Christ must necessarily have its expression in a Eucharist-centred worshipping life.²⁷

Two other significant pieces of writing²⁸ are part of the backdrop to the establishing of the Church of England's first liturgical commission, which led to the Alternative Services Measure and, eventually, the *Alternative Service Book*. The first of these was Evelyn Underhill's classic book *Worship*²⁹, which echoed Hebert's sacramentalism, and was truly ecumenical, expounding the traditions of the Western and Eastern traditions, and those of a multiplicity of denominations. The second work was Dix's *The Shape of the Liturgy*, which has been memorably described by Ronald Jasper³⁰ as

a brilliant if untidy piece of work; and although some of his views have not withstood further examination, the book as a whole did more to stimulate an interest in liturgy in England than any other book of the period.³¹

Dix joined the Benedictine community at Nashdom when he was 35 years old, remaining there until his death. A liturgical historian and scholar, Dix (like many others at the time, such as Walter Frere³²) had been working on – and indeed, concluded – the pursuit of a single source for the earliest Eucharistic rites. Dix brought about a clarity concerning (a) the impossibility of discovering a single Apostolic

²⁷ Irvine, op. cit. p. 69

²⁸ How fascinating, though, that neither of these works were referred to in Bradshaw and Jasper's *A Companion to the Alternative Service Book 1980*, SPCK (1986).

²⁹ Published in 1936, at the same time as two other significant liturgical works from non-conformist sources, a *festschrift* to celebrate the jubilee of Mansfield College Oxford, and W.D. Maxwell's *An Outline of Christian Worship*.

³⁰ R. C. D. Jasper (1917-1990), chairman of the Church of England Liturgical Commission 1964-1980, Dean of York 1975-1984

³¹ Jasper, *The Development of the Anglican Liturgy 1662-1980*, SPCK (1989)

Eucharistic prayer on the basis that the evidence we have points of a diversity of forms of prayer, and (b) argued that what could be said to be universal was the shape of the liturgy. He demonstrated that the sevenfold shape of the Last Supper narratives evolved into the four fold shape once the Eucharist was detached from the common meal. Dix prophesied some of the thinking behind *Common Worship* with his assertion that it was shape and structure, not a classic text or rite, which was the primary source of the Christian Eucharist. As I have stated, Dix argued for a sevenfold shape: taking bread, giving thanks, breaking it and sharing it; taking the wine, and, similarly, giving thanks and sharing it. This seven-fold shape of the biblical accounts was translated into a fourfold shape in the liturgical traditions of the early Church – taking the bread and the cup, giving thanks over them, breaking the bread and sharing both. Paul Bradshaw is among those who have some criticism of Dix's scholarship, albeit that Dix's basic thesis has influenced and won acceptance from almost every generation of liturgical scholarship since:

Some would judge that to speak of a four-action shape is to give undue emphasis to actions that are essentially subordinate, and that it is really a two-action shape – thanking and sharing: we only take in order to thank, we break in order to share. A few would go further still and question the universality of even this pattern in early Christianity, suggesting that Eucharists without wine and Eucharists with the order cup-bread rather than bread-cup may have been more common than has usually been supposed.³³

Parish and People: the establishment of the Alternative Services Measure

The Second World War brought disruption to the progress of the Liturgical Movement throughout Europe. Following the war, the baton of liturgical reform was picked up by a new movement called Parish and People. Founded in 1949, it

³² Walter Frere CR (1863-1938), Bishop of Truro 1923-35. See Walter Howard Frere: His Correspondence on Liturgical Revision and Construction, SPCK/Alcuin (1954)

continued the theme that Hebert and his predecessors had established: that ‘the Eucharist should be the chief expression of the fellowship of the body of Christ in a particular parish’.³⁴ But the movement was also interested in the overall renewal of parish life, and published pamphlets and leaflets, organised conferences, and acted as a ginger group within the church at the time. In 1963, Parish and People merged with the Keble Conference Group; its influence waned, but not before it had managed to fluster the then Archbishop of Canterbury, who criticised its views on a number of issues,³⁵ and though Jasper asserts that the movement had done a good job of work, not everyone was pleased at its achievements. Michael Marshall, writing 12 years after the movement had ceased to exist, was scathing in his criticism:

It is perhaps the ‘parish and people movement’ which has done more than any other single movement to unchurch the people of the United Kingdom. It insisted on one sort of service (exclusively the Eucharist) for one sort of people at one sort of time. We must now recover a healthy diversity which is truly catholic in its flexibility.³⁶

The Liturgical Commission

It was in October 1954 that a resolution was passed in the Convocations to establish (or, rather, ask the Archbishops to establish) a Liturgical Commission. Prior to this a commission under the chairmanship of Sir Walter Moberly had proposed the redrafting of Canon 13, which would permit alternative services, that is, services which were alternatives to those already provided in the *Book of Common Prayer*, to be sanctioned for experimental or optional use. It was hoped that this provision would establish a legal framework within which a revision of the *Book of Common Prayer*

³³ Bradshaw, *Gregory Dix in They Shaped our Worship*, op. cit., p. 114

³⁴ Jasper, op. cit., p. 181

³⁵ Ibid.

might be set in motion (the Liturgical Commission was to have met for another 12 years before such a provision was finally established in the Prayer Book (Alternative and Other Services) Measure, passed in 1964.³⁷)

The first meeting of the Liturgical Commission was held at Lambeth Palace on 12th December 1955, a largely academic group under the chairmanship of the then Dean of Lincoln (formerly Bishop of Jarrow), Colin Dunlop.³⁸ The Archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fisher, had allowed Colin Dunlop more or less to choose his own team, and he opted for a group of clergy with specific liturgical interests. But that was the only freedom which Fisher did grant to Dunlop, and he maintained a tight control, both of the Commissions remit and what it finally produced. The first tasks set for the new Commission are worth noting:

1. A Schedule of 'agreed amendments' to the Prayer Book which might be given immediate statutory authority once Canon 13 became law. These would be simple, non-controversial changes which would make the book 'more usable and up-to-date' and would involve minor variations which were already widely used and accepted.
2. A further schedule of more radical 'variations' which would require experimental use for a period of seven years after the promulgation of Canon 13 and would include a great many elements of the 1928 Book.
3. New services of Baptism, which would take into account all the reports and proposals which the Church had produced since 1944 and including the 'York' rite of infant baptism.³⁹
4. A survey of the position of liturgical revision in the Church of England. This would be one of the preliminary study documents required in preparation for the Lambeth Conference of 1958, and would be needed by Easter 1957.⁴⁰

³⁶ Marshall, *Renewal in Worship*, Marshall, Morgan and Scott (1982) p. 62

³⁷ Bradshaw and Jasper, *op. cit.*, p. 24

³⁸ For a complete list of members of the first Commission, see Jasper, *op. cit.*, p. 231

³⁹ A simpler baptismal rite which emerged as a result of a report on Church and Youth by the Social and Industrial Commission of the Church Assembly in 1937.

⁴⁰ Jasper, *op. cit.*, p. 212

Following this initial work, which was not without its difficulties,⁴¹ the Commission produced a report *Baptism and Confirmation*, but it was rejected, not least because of opposition from within by the Dean of York, Eric Milner-White.⁴²

The Commission was chaired by Donald Coggan, then Bishop of Bradford, from 1960, and from 1962, significant changes appeared in the make-up of the Commission. For a start, Coggan had been appointed Archbishop of York, thus lending the Commission a new authority, and a direct connection with the House of Bishops; furthermore, two diocesan bishops were now appointed to the Commission, and also representatives of the laity. Now a representative group of the wider Church, rather than relating directly to the Archbishop, the Commission's whole basis had changed. In 1963, the Commission began to work closely with the Joint Liturgical Group⁴³, and in 1964, Ronald Jasper became Chairman. This marked a significant change in direction for the Commission's work: 'tinkering with 1662' to use Jasper's phrase, was no longer an option. Rather, a series of alternative services was clearly required. Underlying this was a sensible realisation of the comprehensiveness of the Church of England, and a desire to appeal to the breadth of English Anglican tradition.⁴⁴ This change in style, and another change in membership, was, in many ways, the point of conception for what was eventually to become the *Alternative Service Book 1980*.

⁴¹ Ibid. pp. 213 ff.

⁴² Fenwick and Spinks, op. cit., p. 72. Other strong opposition came from Michael Ramsey and E. C. Ratcliff, who commented 'Those who know and cherish the baptismal tradition and liturgy of the Church will receive York without welcome, and not without dismay', *Theology*, November 1960.

⁴³ Jasper, op. cit., p.227

Alternative Services

In 1965, authorisation was given for a number of services from the 1928 Book to be used experimentally: these services were known as Series 1, and their authorisation was for a period of seven years.⁴⁵ In December 1965 came Alternative Services: Second Series (1965), some radical re-workings and new compositions including the Daily Office, and a new order for Holy Communion, where 'Prayer Book forms had been blended with the structure of Justin Martyr and phraseology from Hippolytus's Apostolic Tradition.'⁴⁶ To the surprise of many, the new services were received with great enthusiasm at a liturgical conference held in February 1966, when the vast majority of members of both the Convocations and the House of Laity spoke approvingly.⁴⁷

Stormy waters lay ahead, however, principally in the Conservative Evangelical constituency of the church. The new Eucharistic rite disturbed evangelicals on two counts: the language of offering (which smacked of a Roman doctrine of the Mass) and prayer for the departed. Strong condemnation came from many sources, not least Dr Jim Packer, who spoke disparagingly of 'this Episcopal experiment in double-talk'.⁴⁸ Eric Mascall proposed a very Anglican theological compromise which makes a great deal of sense: the notion of sacramental signification, which in Jasper's paraphrase 'by which the Eucharist neither commemorated nor repeated the sacrifice of Christ, but made it sacramentally present: it was not a different offering of the same

⁴⁴ A full and fascinating treatment of this period of the Commission's history is found in Jasper, *op. cit.*, Chapter 10.

⁴⁵ Ed. Bradshaw, *A Companion to Common Worship*, SPCK/Alcuin (2001) p. 18

⁴⁶ Fenwick and Spinks, *op. cit.*, p. 73

⁴⁷ Jasper, *op. cit.*, p. 251

Victim, but a different re-presentation of the same offering.’⁴⁹ Couratin’s attempt at a way through won the acceptance of all the Commission bar one, Colin Buchanan. Couratin argued that ‘offering’ in the context of primitive eucharistic theology meant nothing more than putting the elements before God for God to do whatever he would wish to do in order that his children might be fed. Couratin argued that this was a valid, possibly the only valid reading of Justin Martyr, and of Hippolytus and Irenaeus, and that the enabling of a variety of ways of interpreting the meaning of this action was a quintessentially Anglican approach to the whole vexed question.⁵⁰

Buchanan differed from this thesis on two grounds: that our own Eucharistic theology had irrefutably changed since the time of Hippolytus, and that ‘offering’ was not part of the Lord’s Supper as instituted by Christ and recorded in Scripture.⁵¹ Buchanan’s dissent from the Commission’s collective view was formally recorded in a note to the Commission’s report.

This whole debate resulted in a cooler reaction than the Commission might have hoped for when the new services were presented to the Convocations. The debate was adjourned, and a great deal of scholarly writing ensued, sometimes with surprising results.⁵² A messy period of controversy was to follow, despite the best efforts of Archbishop Ramsey to support what the Commission had set out to try and achieve. Eventually the ‘offering’ was abandoned in favour of ‘to make the memorial’, and this climb-down on the part of the Commission enabled the rite to be approved, eventually

⁴⁸ Packer, *Eucharistic Sacrifice* (1962) p. 2

⁴⁹ See Mascall, *Corpus Christi*, in *Theology*, August 1961.

⁵⁰ Printed in the report of the 1966 Liturgical Conference, cf. note 49 above

⁵¹ Buchanan, *The New Communion Service – Reasons for Dissent* (1966) p. 4

⁵² See Houlden, *Good Liturgy or even Good Battlefield* in *Theology*, October 1966.

being authorised for use in 1967.⁵³ (Rites of Baptism and Confirmation, plus Morning and Evening Prayer, were authorized without difficulty in 1968.⁵⁴)

In a sense the timing of the Series 2 material was odd. Given the fact the Liturgical Commission was established in the mid-1950s, and that a large piece of work needed to be done in terms of prayer book revision and substantial tidying of the 1928 material, it is understandable that very little original work was able to be done in terms of language idiom. All these revised and new texts, despite the context of the age, were still couched in 'old' English, using what has been described as 'RSV language', which is to say using the 'thou' form for addressing God, and the 'you' form for addressing each other. So even though, for example, the Series 2 order for Holy Communion was a new development in terms of text and shape, the language was far from contemporary.⁵⁵ The philologist Stella Brook, who served for two years on the Liturgical Commission, had argued for liturgy which adopted a formal approach to language, so that liturgical language could educate as well as inform spirituality.⁵⁶ This view sat uneasily with the prevailing mood of the times. Large numbers of (primarily evangelical) clergy were keen for simpler, more direct, non-Eucharistic services which would enable families and the unchurched to worship in a more relaxed and open fashion. This appeal for what became known as 'Family Services' was heard, and prompted the Archbishops to point out that the Prayer Book (Alternative and Other Services) Measure gave clergy a certain degree of freedom to develop alternative forms of worship in their own local context. It is unlikely that this

⁵³ It is interesting to note that the other new services presented few problems, with the exception of proposed rites of Thanksgiving and Burial after Childbirth.

⁵⁴ Ed Bradshaw, op. cit., p. 18

⁵⁵ It should also be noted that the *New English Bible*'s New Testament was published in 1961; similarly the *Jerusalem Bible* translation in 1966, both in contemporary idioms.

⁵⁶ Brook, *The Language of the Book of Common Prayer* (1964)

excited many, for large numbers of clergy were already producing their own material anyway, inevitably with varying degrees of success. So despite the undoubted successes of Series 2⁵⁷, more was needed, and quickly.

In 1967, with help from Cecil Day Lewis, then Poet Laureate, the Liturgical Commission published *Modern Liturgical Texts*, which included contemporary versions of the Initiation rites, the Eucharist,⁵⁸ and popular common texts such as the Lord's Prayer, some canticles, and the creeds. The timing of this publication was deliberate: the Lambeth Conference on 1968 held a liturgical consultation, spurred on partly by an anxiety that member churches of the Communion who were also engaged in the process of liturgical revision were too easily aping the revised rites and linguistic idioms of the Church of England, and not including enough material from their own national and regional cultures and contexts.

The Commission's attempt to break new ground in terms of contemporary language was also influenced by the revisions of the Roman Catholic Mass, which were seeking to use direct forms of address in contemporary idioms, rather than use 'mock seventeenth-century language'.⁵⁹ As a result of these moves, the International Consultation on English Texts (ICET) was established. All major English-speaking denominations were represented on this body, which produced three reports in the seven years after its birth. Creeds and canticles found warm acceptance across the churches, though the ICET's attempt at revising the Lord's Prayer never won favour in the Church of England, 'lead us not into temptation' being preferred to 'do not

⁵⁷ A survey of 10% of all parishes, published in 1970, revealed that 76% of laity and 90% of clergy wished to continue using the Series 2 service of Holy Communion.

⁵⁸ This was entirely the work of Geoffrey Cuming, and was never discussed by the Liturgical Commission.

bring us to the time of trial'.⁶⁰ ICET was not the only group working in this area: the Joint Liturgical Group in England, which predated ICET by five years, had also produced proposals for radically different orders for Morning and Evening Prayer, the Calendar, and the Lectionary, work which had a considerable influence on the Church of England's discussions.⁶¹

So much activity in the field of contemporary English texts meant that 'like "man born of a woman"', Series 1 and 2 had but a short time to live'.⁶²

(Historically, we should note the advent of Synodical Government in 1970. Paul Bradshaw describes how this system simplified the procedure of liturgical revision:

...for instead of five Houses considering and voting on proposals, the three new Houses of Bishops, Clergy and Laity could now consider proposals together, although they still voted independently. A system was also devised whereby 'Provisional Approval' was required by two-thirds majorities in each House voting independently.⁶³)

The early 1970's saw the production of the Series Three services. The culture of liturgical revision in the church had changed considerably: whereas Series 1 and 2 still used the language (in one form or another) of the *Book of Common Prayer*, Series 3 was the first rite to be distinctly contemporary in terms of language: a major break in tradition for the Church of England.

⁵⁹ Fenwick and Spinks, op. cit., p. 74

⁶⁰ Even now the Church of England has no less than four official versions of the Lord's Prayer in use, though Common Worship only uses two side by side in its printed material.

⁶¹ Bradshaw, op. cit., p. 19

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Bradshaw, op. cit., p. 19

The Series 3 rite for the Holy Communion went to the House of Bishops in the spring of 1971, and to the General Synod the following November. The Liturgical Commission had worked closely with the Doctrine Commission for the first time, and these drafts lacked the theological controversies (i.e. concerning the anamnesis and the prayer for the departed) of the early drafts of Series 2. This was no doubt helped by an accompanying commentary, and other material which was designed to meet not only the questions of Synod but also parish clergy and educated laity.⁶⁴

It is also worth noting that it was at this stage that the importance of theatre in liturgy was beginning to emerge. The new Cathedral at Coventry was consecrated in 1962, just ahead of a time when Eucharistic liturgical theology was beginning to move away from the architectural models provided by the Gothic Revival (which Coventry is still influenced by⁶⁵) to the 'gathered' model more readily seen in the Roman Catholic Cathedral in Liverpool.⁶⁶ Some of the anxieties raised about Series 2 were believed to be related to action as much as to text, but it was still words, understandably, which dictated the Church of England's liturgical agenda at this time.

The Series 3 Eucharistic liturgy was ground-breaking for an Anglican rite in a number of areas: proper seasonal material was included (not only the handful of Eucharistic prefaces found in the *Book of Common Prayer* and Series 1 and 2), the Peace was no longer an optional part of the service, the style of Confession was completely different; there were many other features too.⁶⁷ That so radical a revision should win

⁶⁴ Including musical settings, a booklet, and even a film.

⁶⁵ Spence, *Phoenix at Coventry*

⁶⁶ Cobb, *The Architectural Setting of the Liturgy*, in ed Jones et al, *The Study of Liturgy (revised edition)*, SPCK (1992) p. 538

⁶⁷ Jasper, *op. cit.*, p. 317

such overwhelming approval in the Synod is indicative of a change in attitude towards liturgy, though critics outside the Church, especially in the national press, were vociferous in their opposition (and in 1975 the establishment of the Prayer Book Society was a crystallisation of the disturbance that the new rite had caused). It remains a fact, however, that in the month following its authorisation, the Series 3 service had sold over one million copies.⁶⁸

In the wake of the success of the Communion service, other liturgies followed quickly: in 1975 came the Daily Offices, and the Funeral service; the Marriage service and the Ordination services in 1977; the Lectionary in 1978; and Baptism and Confirmation, and the Psalter, in 1979.⁶⁹

Also during this period, the Church of England (Worship and Doctrine) Measure 1974 was passed. This was significant in two principal ways: first, it established once and for all that liturgical authority rested with the Church itself, and not with Parliament, as long as the *Book of Common Prayer* was to remain unaltered. This ensured that the kind of debacle that damaged Church/State relationships in 1928 was unlikely to be repeated. Second, the Measure superseded the Alternative Services Measures of 1966, which meant that liturgical revision of the Alternative Services was no longer subject to a restrictive time limit within which to operate.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ed. Bradshaw and Jasper, *op. cit.*, p. 27

⁷⁰ Ibid.

The Alternative Service Book

What was beginning to emerge with considerable clarity was the realisation that the Church could not simply continue producing new forms of services for experimental use. While the Liturgical Commission continued with its task of producing the full range of liturgies in contemporary language, the wider Church made decisions as to what the next steps would be. The General Synod received a report on *The Future Course of Liturgical Revision* in 1973⁷¹, and this led to the establishment of a Working Party under the then Bishop of Durham, John Habgood.⁷² After eleven meetings over a two-year period, *An Alternative Service Book*⁷³ was produced in 1975. This report proposed the publication of a single book in 1980, to fit the lifetime of the Synod. It was further decided that all the services in the book should be from Series 3 in modern language, with the exception of the Series 2 Communion service (which was to become Rite B in the final publication).

Work on the contents of the book fell to a Liturgical Commission with some new members, notably among them David Hope and David Silk. While the essential Series 3 material had been recently completed, the task now was to make language and style conform so that the different services in the new book complemented each other. Specific work was undertaken on transforming the Series 3 Communion Service into Rite A: the more radical proposals for this were rejected by the House of Bishops when they were sent to them for consideration in February 1978⁷⁴, and when the

⁷¹ GS161

⁷² See Pattinson, *The Processes of Revision and Authorization*, in ed. Perham, *Towards Liturgy 2000*, SPCK/Alcuin (1989) pp. 85 ff.

⁷³ GS284

⁷⁴ For a detailed treatment see Jasper, *op. cit.*, pp. 349-350

revised text was put before Synod⁷⁵, it received over one thousand amendments. This way of producing liturgy was later to be described by Bishop John Taylor as a ‘monstrosity of a process’ and by Colin Buchanan as ‘unique on the earth’s surface’. After a number of smaller decisions, such as some additional prayers and a subject index, and discussion concerning the Biblical translations to be printed in the lectionary – the final decision was to adapt a version of the 1973 lessons for Holy Communion Series 3, which used a mixture of various versions – final authorization was awarded to the Book in November 1979, which was planned to last for ten years, establishing a principle that ‘what was being produced was a book of authorized services and not an authorized book of services’.⁷⁶

The Alternative Service Book was published on November 10th 1980, and was launched in Westminster Abbey at the opening service of the newly-elected Synod on November 12th. At the time those who had been involved with its production, and not least Ronald Jasper, who had chaired the Liturgical Commission for the previous fifteen years, felt a deep sense of satisfaction. The ASB was to shape an entire generation of English Christians, for whom contemporary language liturgy, and not the Book of Common Prayer, was what they encountered and what nurtured them as they grew up in the life of the Church.

English Cathedrals, as we will later discover, embraced the ASB with caution. At both Coventry and Durham, the Sunday services continued to be from the *Book of Common Prayer*, and when the ASB rite was introduced for the Eucharist (at Coventry in 1982, at Durham on an occasional basis in 1987) Coventry was to remain

⁷⁵ Holy Communion Series 3 Revised GS 364

with the traditional language of Rite B. But this did at least enable Cathedrals to fulfil a bridging function in terms of liturgy, beginning to establish the principle, so enshrined in *Common Worship*, of using the best of both old and new material together, a principle which has been identified as underscoring a distinctively Anglican liturgical style.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Jasper, op. cit., p. 357

⁷⁷ See Stancliffe, *Is there an 'Anglican' liturgical style?* in ed. Stevenson and Spinks, The Identity of Anglican Worship, Mowbray (1991) p. 133

Chapter Three

From ASB to Common Worship: 1980-2000

Introduction

Once the *Alternative Service Book* (ASB) had come into use in November 1980, the members of the Liturgical Commission were rightly able to breathe a sigh of relief. The ASB was, after all, the culmination of a process which certainly had begun in 1955, with the establishment of the first Liturgical Commission¹, and more probably could be said to have begun with the attempted revisions of the *Book of Common Prayer* in 1927-8.

The ASB certainly marked a watershed in the Church of England's liturgical life. Media reports at the time commented on 'the major publishing event in the Church of England since 1662'. Gordon Wakefield has attributed something of the success of the ASB both to the emergence of an interest in liturgy from the Evangelical wing of the Church of England, and to the prolonged processes of consultation which took place before the book's final publication² (different processes were used for the promulgation of *Common Worship*, as we will discover).

Robert Runcie, then Archbishop of Canterbury, declared in the General Synod that 'the heroic age of constitutional and liturgical change' was over.³ This comment, for all its undoubted enthusiasm, was to be proved spectacularly wrong in the ensuing two decades. In the concluding chapter of his superb book *The Development of the*

¹ Though there had been various groups who had been entrusted with liturgical thinking before then. See Cuming *A History of Anglican Liturgy* Macmillan (1969) pp. 245 ff.

² Wakefield, *An Outline of Christian Worship*, T&T Clark (1998) p. 167

³ See General Synod proceedings for November 1908, volume 11

*Anglican Liturgy 1662-1980*⁴ (which in fact deals almost exclusively with Church of England liturgy), Ronald Jasper hints at some of the issues which either emerged in the wake of the ASB's publication, or were never really part of the thinking behind it. First he comments that the book was always intended to have a limited shelf-life, and that 'the inclusion of the date 1980 in its title marks it as the product of a particular period and culture, indicating that worship is an element in the life of the Church subject to change'; he goes on to predict a further liturgical revision, though one suspects that he did not imagine it would come as quickly as it did.⁵

So why did liturgical revision come to the Church of England so rapidly in the wake of the ASB? There are a number of reasons, tied up with (ecumenical) liturgical scholarship, pastoral experience, and shifts in theological emphasis. The ASB was a catalyst for liturgical reform, enabling the Church of England to break out of the fear of what might happen if 1662 forms were departed from, and to move forward in a new spirit.⁶

Reasons for change

Christian liturgy by its very nature is something which ought to change as the Christian community progresses and journeys through God's history.⁷

The ASB was born at a time of extraordinary change in the world and in the Church, and it is certainly the case that, historically, the liturgy of the Church has always responded to the changes of the world around it. One need only think of the liturgical

⁴ SPCK (1989)

⁵ Jasper, op. cit., pp. 360-1

⁶ See GS698 The Worship of the Church

life of the Church of England between 1548 and 1552, let alone 1662, to realise how rapidly liturgical style, content and theology can develop. While this example has a particular historical context, so do others, and the apparent *stabilitas* in the Church's liturgy between 1662 and the turn of the twentieth century seems to be accidental (providential?) and owing little to scholarship, teaching and pastoral response. The reforms brought about by the ASB loosened up the Church at large to have a new creativity about its worship, what Kenneth Stevenson has termed 'the effects of variety'.⁸

Scholarship

Liturgical scholarship was an important aspect of the pace of change. Gordon Wakefield, while commending the consultation that took place within the Church of England in the production of the ASB, was unconvinced by the ecumenical nature of the work, despite the adoption of a number of ideas from the work of the Joint Liturgical Group.⁹ This criticism is not totally fair: history clearly suggests a wide drawing on resources from the available scholarship of the time, some of which was within the Church of England, and some much wider. But this consultation was limited: clearly the work on the Hippolytan patterns of Eucharistic rite was an enormous influence on the Series 3/ASB services, and so many other areas as well.¹⁰ But other work which was unavailable or unsought meant that the ASB bore grave weaknesses, notably in the Daily Office, and in the pastoral rites of weddings and

⁷ Spinks, *What kind of book?* in ed. Perham, Towards Liturgy 2000: Preparing for the revision of the Alternative Service Book, SPCK/Alcuin (1989) p. 8

⁸ Stevenson, *Anglican Worship and Identity Today* in ed. Perham The Renewal of Common Prayer: Unity and Diversity in Church of England Worship, (GS Misc 412) CHP/SPCK (1993) p. 11

⁹ Wakefield, *op. cit.*, p. 166

¹⁰ Spinks, *op. cit.*, p. 9

funerals.¹¹ To describe the liturgical fascination with the Patristic era within Anglican scholarship of the 1950s and 1960s as an obsession might be regarded as too strong, but the majority of work was undoubtedly in this area, all under the powerful influence of Dix and the inheritance of Frere. Some of this most thorough work, while excellent, undoubtedly meant little to those who were anxious to provide accessible worship in difficult social contexts: hence the rise of so called ‘family’ and ‘all-age’ services, and other less structured forms of public worship.

Pastoral experience

The ASB introduced a degree of flexibility into liturgy: ‘these or other suitable words’ and other similar rubrics enabled a creativity which had not been possible in the BCP. This was a two-edged sword: many clergy had received limited liturgical formation, and were used to taking a service from page one through to the end with little or no variation. Others sat lightly to structured liturgies anyway, and the relative freedoms which the ASB inaugurated simply did not go far enough.¹²

One of the main issues in terms of pastoral experience was the question of language. This was a two-fold issue. First the form of address that should be used towards God: not the Thee/You issue which had been such a feature of the Series 2 and 3 debate, but of gender-inclusive address in an age when male-only terms were to prove offensive. More problematic and immediate for the Church of England was the use of inclusive forms of language within liturgy as a whole, prompting one of the first pieces of work of the 1986-91 Liturgical Commission *Making Women Visible: the*

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² See Perham, A New Handbook of Pastoral Liturgy, SPCK (2000) p. 16

*Use of Inclusive Language with the ASB.*¹³ Alongside these issues were also the criticisms levelled at the linguistic style of the ASB, the ‘succinct court address’ which had found favour in the Roman Catholic liturgies to stem from the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, and were such an influence on Series 3/ASB.

The American philologist Gail Ramshaw-Schmidt has written of

... contemporary English prayers in the terse style and simple vocabulary of freshmen compositions... it could in fact be argued that the passion of prayer requires evocative images and embellished phrases, that complex sentences need not be obscure, and that the brevity of prayers does not necessarily lead to better comprehension.¹⁴

Even Ronald Jasper describes the linguistic style of the ASB as ‘low-keyed’, comparing it unfavourably with the language of the *Book of Common Prayer*.¹⁵ Jasper issues a plea for the words to be used with ‘love and imagination’ in order to bring it to life.¹⁶ The text alone is not enough – the worship and liturgy of the church requires skilled leadership in order for it to be a transforming experience for the worshipper.

A further pastoral problem was the emergence of a seemingly large book, densely packed with text, in an age where literacy levels were deteriorating, and many churches were struggling to provide forms of worship for communities unused to handling books. In the only reference to liturgy in the 1985 report ‘Faith in the City’, we read this comment:

...to give people a 1300 page Alternative Service Book is a symptom of the gulf between the Church and ordinary people in the UPAs. We have heard calls for short, functional service booklets or cards, prepared by people who will always ask ‘if all the words are really necessary’.¹⁷

¹³ 1989

¹⁴ Ramshaw-Schmidt, *Our Final Praise: The Concluding Doxology*, in *New Eucharistic Prayers*, Paulist Press (1987) p. 211

¹⁵ Jasper, op. cit., p. 366

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ *Faith in the City: the Report of the Archbishop of Canterbury’s Commission on Urban Priority Areas*, CHP/CHP (1985) Ch. 3

This was to spur the Liturgical Commission to continue work already begun on producing a resource book of liturgical material from which clergy could produce their own services. This was a new possibility: while cathedrals and large parish churches had facilities to produce service booklets and special material, average-sized churches and communities were unable to do so. Technological advances meant that this was now realistic for everyone, and so a directory from which selections could be made, rather than one book containing all services to be worked through from start to finish, was a real option.

As we shall read in a moment, the Commission's latest piece of work was much more in the style of a directory¹⁸, but in a limited form. Much more was required, and the cries for change were emerging not only from parishes which had been producing their own material for informal services (which could be the best attended service on a given Sunday), but also from scholars and thinkers within the church who were sensing a change, and believed the Commission should respond in a different way. Bryan Spinks argued strongly for a directory-type book to succeed the ASB, but still a book nevertheless, arguing that a collection of common prayers enshrined in a book has been an Anglican norm, and vital for both clergy and laity.¹⁹ Michael Vasey was amongst those who agreed that an official book was essential, but also predicted that the advent of accessible computer technology would undoubtedly change the way in which parishes and other religious communities presented liturgical material.²⁰

¹⁸ Lent, Holy Week, Easter: Services and Prayers (1984)

¹⁹ Spinks, *op. cit.*, p. 12

²⁰ Vasey, *Promoting and Common Core*, in The Renewal of Common Prayer, *op. cit.*, p. 99

Most important in the argument towards some kind of book, and not only a directory of worship, was the need for the Church of England to have a corpus of written material which could be said to express what it believed. Anglican doctrine is enshrined, as every licensed minister knows from the Declaration of Oaths, in the *Book of Common Prayer*, the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion, and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons. Spinks argues that worship, rather than a doctrinal magisterium is the locus for any expression of Anglican unity, and that a resource book alone would not only be inadequate but actually harm any concept of common prayer. On top of all this, comes a debate about the written word versus the spoken word. Geoffrey Wainwright has written cogently of the relation between ‘the written, the read and the spoken word’, claiming that ‘liturgy is essentially spoken and heard’.²¹ Coupled with this is the discernible theological shift which we have already alluded to, the emergence of shape and movement in a distinctively Anglican style.²² The quintessential expression of this marriage of proclamation and processional, of text and movement, is found distinctively in the liturgy of English Cathedrals; though not to the exclusion of the parish church.²³

With this background, the work of the Liturgical Commission in the twenty years between the ASB and *Common Worship* was one of response to these issues, but in a different style to that of the Commission of the 1970s. Then, liturgical revisions to the Alternative Services of the 1960s and 1970s was brought about by a complex series of legal stages within the General Synod and House of Bishops.²⁴ The post-ASB Commission operated in a different way, not only by submitting what was essential to

²¹ Wainwright, *The Language of Worship*, in *The Study of Liturgy*, op. cit., p. 526

²² Perham, *A New Handbook of Pastoral Liturgy*, SPCK (2000) p. 9

²³ Stancliffe, *Is there an 'Anglican' liturgical style?*, op. cit., p. 133

the Synod, but also by bringing in new material which, not being alternative texts to those found in the BCP, did not need the same kind of Synodical approval. This meant that the Church was being gradually exposed to a whole wealth of new material which was commended for use, without having to go through the whole Synodical process, especially during the 1990s.²⁵

The material which was produced by the Commissions (there were four) during this period was prodigious and highly exciting. We shall examine briefly the principal work of each Commission in turn: so charting the emergence of a new liturgical style, and a new way of developing liturgy within the Church of England.

1981-1986

The principal piece of work²⁶ from the post-ASB Liturgical Commission was *Lent, Holy Week, Easter: Services and Prayers* (LHWE). In the relative liturgical calm in the years following the publication of the ASB, the Liturgical Commission could afford a certain degree of leisure about this piece of work. The movements and changes in theology and experience which we have discussed in the previous pages were still emerging, and the style of LHWE was very much rooted in that of the ASB, with little or no sense of attempting to anything very new. It was, however, an extremely significant piece of work, as it legitimised material which many parishes of

²⁴ See Buchanan, *Revision in the Church of England in Retrospect*, op. cit., p. 151

²⁵ See Perham, *Liturgical Revision 1981-2000* in *A Companion to Common Worship*, op. cit., pp. 32 ff.

²⁶ Other work from this period included *Services of Prayer and Dedication after Civil Marriage* (commended in 1985).

a more Catholic persuasion had been using for years, and also introducing such material to parishes who would not otherwise have thought to offer such a provision.²⁷

LHWE provided a complete liturgy for the principal days of Holy Week, and, though possessing a certain flexibility, were a long way removed from the 'directory approach' that the then chairman of the Liturgical Commission claimed for it.²⁸

Despite its inevitable link with ASB forms, LHWE did provide new material in terms of symbolic action, so vital to good liturgy and yet lacking within so much Anglican worship, even at this point.²⁹ Another important contribution of LHWE was its provision of additional material, principally an order for Night Prayer, which was 'smuggled in', despite not really being a Lent or Holy Week service at all.³⁰

1986-1991

There were a number of changes in the personnel of the Liturgical Commission, and a key factor was the change in Chairmanship of the Commission. Professor Douglas Jones had been cautious, and perhaps rightly so, after 1980, and Bishop Colin James proved to be surprisingly adventurous, not so much in his personal contribution, but by his allowing individual members of the Commission, from a variety of churchmanships, to have their head.³¹

²⁷ The work of the Joint Liturgical Group, *Holy Week Services* (1971, revised 1983) should also be noted, though was not perhaps as influential within mainstream Anglican parishes as it might have been.

²⁸ Cf. Spinks, *What Kind of Book?*, op. cit., p. 11

²⁹ See Wainwright, *The Continuing Tradition of the Church*, in *The Study of Liturgy*, op. cit., p. 559

³⁰ Cf. p. 7

³¹ I am grateful to Bishop Michael Perham, in conversation, for his insights into this period of liturgical reform.

A major contribution during this period was the report *Making Women Visible*, of which we have already spoken. Produced in 1988, it enabled the Church to feel more comfortable with the gender-exclusive language of the ASB in the remaining years of its life (which had, of course, been extended by ten years). Significantly, and astutely, *Making Women Visible* made no attempt at suggesting that Prayer Book texts should be conformed to inclusive language: again, this was to be a precursor of the *Common Worship* ideal of holding traditional and contemporary liturgies in parallel, without seeking to compromise either.³²

This period also saw the emergence, under the influence of Michael Vasey, of the concept of 'Rites on the Way', culminating in the publication of the report *On The Way*, which was essentially Michael Vasey's work.³³

The two most significant works of this period were *Patterns for Worship* (PW) and *The Promise of His Glory* (PHG).

I have already written of the work of Faith in the City, of the prevalence of 'home-made' liturgy for family/all-age services, and of the church's growing understanding of a developing non-book culture in certain social contexts. PW is the result of all of these. It first emerged in the form of a paperback report to General Synod in 1989, and comprised four sections: the first made provision for what was to become known as 'A Service of the Word', with instructions and outlines as to the use of authorized essential texts, while insisting on a particular order to maintain a distinctive Anglican

³² See James, Perham and Stancliffe, *Image, Memory and Text*, in The Renewal of Common Prayer, op. cit., pp. 30 ff.

³³ On The Way: Towards an Integrated Approach to Christian Initiation, CHP 1995/8

shape. The second section included sample liturgies that were worked out examples of what had been permitted in the first section. Many of these samples were printed on separate cards, and proved enormously popular both as a guide to others and also in their own right. The third, main section of the book was full of introductions, prayers of penitence, seasonal material, intercessions, new Eucharistic prayers, blessings and so on. It was (unlike the claims made for LHWE) a true worship directory, a mass of ingredients of approved material from which an act of worship could be put together. The fourth and final section was 'The Commentary' described by Michael Perham as ...an extended essay to help people think through issues of good and bad practice and to find what was appropriate in terms of their own church with its particular building, community and tradition.³⁴

PW took seriously the claims of Dix and others (as we saw in the previous chapter) that, ultimately, shape should be interpreted by language. The provision made in PW enabled vast variety to be achieved within a particular liturgical framework, and in Anglican terms, this was something quite new. This was not without its dangers. Alan Wilkinson has written that such an approach requires 'a degree of discipline and self-abnegation unfamiliar to many Anglicans'.³⁵ PW certainly sat at the opposite end of a spectrum which had the Prayer Book, and even the ASB, at one end. While some saw in it a flexibility which was inappropriate, PW proved popular – the Synodical process meant that was commended in two stages (in 1993 and 1995), and published in a completely new hardback edition (it has since been reissued in 2003 in a revised version with new material which conforms more closely to *Common Worship*).

³⁴ Perham, *Liturgical Revision 1981-2000*, op. cit., p. 30

³⁵ Quoted in Vasey, op. cit., p. 99

*The Promise of His Glory*³⁶ was a very different kind of book to either PW or Lent Holy Week Easter. The Liturgical Commission had taken the initiative in proposing such a work to the Bishops, remembering the success of LHWE and recognizing the need for good, imaginative and authorized material for the 'Incarnational' cycle of the liturgical year, running from All Saints through to Candlemas.

Perhaps the most significant difference in PHG is that it differs in two distinct ways from the ASB: in terms of language and in terms of calendar. While PHG contains fully worked out services, very much in the style of LHWE, the language is more poetic, and less formulaic. There is more imagination in terms of the texts that are provided (such as the beginning of the rite for the First Eucharist of Christmas, with its quotation from Richard Crashaw at the beginning of the service),³⁷ and a different sense of rhythm in much of the material. Reasons for this change in linguistic approach include the fact that there has been comparatively little material for this season within the Mediterranean Catholic world, often the primary source for the culling and development of new liturgical ideas. Consequently (and not least because of the influence of Bishop Kenneth Stevenson, of Scandinavian descent), much of the material for PHG was unearthed from within the Lutheran Protestant traditions of Northern Europe.³⁸

Calendrical change was brought about by a desire to clarify the beginning and end of the season which PHG covers. A clear start at All Saints was to be marked by a new proposed 'Kingdom Season' to replace the ASB's somewhat nebulous 'Sundays

³⁶ *The Promise of His Glory: Services and Prayers for the Season from All Saints to Candlemas*, Mowbray/CHP (1990)

³⁷ Perham and Stevenson, *Welcoming the Light of Christ: A Commentary on The Promise of His Glory*, SPCK (1991) pp. 64-66

before Christmas'.³⁹ At the other end of the season, the ASB's designation of Sundays after Epiphany made unclear whether or not such Sundays were a continuation of an Epiphany season, or not. PHG firmly proclaimed the end of (what I have called) the Incarnational cycle at Candlemas, moving directly into Ordinary Time from that point onwards until Ash Wednesday. This change is now formalised in the *Common Worship* lectionary. Indeed, PHG was, in terms of structure and language, more of a precursor to *Common Worship* even than PW – more of a directory than LHWE was, but still developing a formalised structure for services, supported by substantial additional material in the form of prayers, collects and other rites.

One final point which might be mentioned before we leave PHG is its willingness to embrace, and give theological coherence to, a variety of liturgical ideas and actions which have developed within Anglican worshipping life during this season. All Souls' Day, crib services, carol services, even a Christingle service, are all found here, with clear ideas about shape, content and execution. In this sense PHG is moving us ever closer to a *Common Worship* model of enabling what has developed locally, often unofficially, to be formally identified and legitimised for the use of the whole Church.⁴⁰

1991-1996

It was this Liturgical Commission that shouldered the main task of producing a replacement for the *Alternative Service Book* (if it was to be replaced) in nine years time. In 1993 David Stancliffe, the newly appointed Bishop of Salisbury, became

³⁸ See Perham, op. cit., p. 31

³⁹ This idea was eventually rejected by General Synod, though the *Common Worship* lectionary provision still makes room for these Sundays to use the colour red, and have appropriate readings etc. – a season in all but name.

Chairman of the Commission, and this marked a sea change in style and activity. Several years of the Commissions' work was spent 'in conclave', as it were, thoroughly examining all the material that was due to be revised, establishing small groups to work on individual texts, and fine-tuning them in the hope that, once they had been through the House of Bishops, there would hopefully be as little change as possible once the material had reached the floor of the General Synod, where it was less easily able to guide the final result.

In terms of new liturgical provision, the most significant event was the publication of *Celebrating Common Prayer* (CCP) in 1992. To the naked eye this would seem to be the private enterprise of the Society of Saint Francis, but a closer examination reveals it to be the work of most of the Liturgical Commission, headed by David Stancliffe and the late Brother Tristram SSF. CCP provided an office with a completely different shape to the standard Anglican office, with much richer material, and a completely different understanding of calendar by designating one day per week for a different Christian season.⁴¹ Bearing an introduction from the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, the book's semi-official status was confirmed, and became immensely popular.⁴² The enormous influence that this book had on *Common Worship* is obvious (though the *Common Worship* office is a simpler one to handle). As we shall discover in the next chapter, its influence in cathedrals was mixed, with some adopting it for only said services, and others ignoring it completely.

⁴⁰ See Vasey in *The Renewal of Common Prayer*, op. cit., p. 98

⁴¹ For more background to CCP see Roberts, Stancliffe, Stevenson *Something Understood: A Companion to Celebrating Common Prayer*, Hodder and Stoughton (1993)

⁴² At this time other forms of Daily Office were emerging such as the Durham Daily Office, and an office from the Northumbria Community; there were also 'private enterprises' from individuals such as Jim Cotter.

1996-2001

By the beginning of 1996, the Commission's detailed work at texts was essentially complete. But an unexpected turn of events had an important effect on the outcome of *Common Worship*. At the February 1996 meeting of General Synod, the House of Laity failed to give the proposed Eucharistic Prayers the required two-thirds majority. The reasons for this rejection have been well rehearsed in many places, but had the effect of ensuring that the Liturgical Commission took on board the importance of consulting the Synod and developing better communication with it. Furthermore, the rejection prompted re-workings which consistently found favour throughout the remainder of the Revision process.

When the Initiation Services were authorised (in 1998, one of the earliest *Common Worship* texts, and published in a different format to later material), there was considerable criticism from the parishes. Subsequent permissions were granted to simplify the material⁴³, but as a consequence, and in an exercise new to the Church of England, a number of parishes were licensed to experiment with revised material before its final authorization. Such 'road-testing' of new liturgy proved popular, not only because it increased a sense of consultation, but allowed good practice to modify what had only previously appeared on the page. When the Eucharistic Prayers were released, they came into this category, as did the Marriage and Funeral liturgies, the latter proving to be particularly successful.

⁴³ Miscellaneous Liturgical Proposals GS1342

Common Worship

Apart from a brief hiatus concerning ecumenical texts, principally involving debate about the wording of the 'incarnation' section of the Nicene Creed and which Lord's Prayer translation should be used⁴⁴, the Synodical process which gave final approval to *Common Worship* was a relatively smooth one. Bryan Spinks' powerful arguments towards a core book, first promulgated in 1993 in the face of a movement towards espousing a non-book culture, had won the day, and *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England* was born, though, like the ASB, separate services were also produced. The core book was intended to be a 'Sunday' book, though parishes were strongly encouraged to use the core book, plus electronic resources, to enable them to produce their own material of a high quality. The book includes 'A Service of the Word', born out of PW, which provides the model for the offices of Morning and Evening Prayer, much closer to CCP than to the *Book of Common Prayer*, and remaining faithful to what has become a familiar four-fold pattern of Gathering, Word, Prayer and Dismissal.⁴⁵ Then follow the Eucharistic Rites in two Orders, Order One broadly corresponding to the pattern of Rites A and B of the *Alternative Service Book*, and Order Two corresponding to the BCP rite in both traditional and contemporary language. Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child and the Baptism service precede Collects, Post-Communion prayers, Canticles and the Psalter.

⁴⁴ See Chapter 2, p. 15

⁴⁵ The roots of this order are found in the Jerusalem office of the early church, and other traditions, where the Daily Office is shaped around *eucharistia*, rather than the monastic offices which prevailed in the West, not least in the offices which Cranmer executed for the Book of Common Prayer. See Bradshaw, *The Daily Office*, in *Towards Liturgy 2000*, op. cit., pp. 30 ff.

Other *Common Worship* material is contained in separate volumes. To date, three have been published: the Initiation Services (see above), which preceded the publication of the ‘core’ book. *Common Worship: Pastoral Services* was published more or less at the same time as the main volume, with the Marriage and Funeral rites (together with a wealth of accompanying material), and Healing Services. The final book to have been published is a *Common Worship Daily Prayer: Preliminary Edition*. Published in 2001, this follows very much the shape of the office in CCP, and is deliberately designed to be temporary, to allow users to comment on it, and modifications to be incorporated into the finally published text. The Liturgical Commission is, at the moment, working on a new Times and Seasons book to succeed LHWE and PHG, plus the unofficial publication *Enriching the Christian Year*⁴⁶ together with material from PW. The ASB ordinal has been re-authorized to enable more work to be done on the *Common Worship* Ordinal, drafts of which suggest it will be very different from its predecessor.

Any examination of the liturgical development of the Church of England will highlight the unique advantages and disadvantages of what it means to create and offer authentic worship in an Anglican context. As we come to look at the liturgical development of Cathedrals, Coventry and Durham in particular, over the last twenty or so years, our historic analysis provides the foundations for a number of essential points, some of which we will have noted, others we will come to explore.

⁴⁶ Compiled by Michael Perham, 1993.

The question of authority and liturgical change

Right at the beginning of chapter two, we noted briefly the delicate balance which exists in Anglican worship between text and praxis, between what words are rightly used, and what actions and styles should accompany them. In a denomination where *lex orandi, lex credendi* would seem to be a principle enshrined in a more hallowed fashion than any other, we must consider the nature of who has authority over the fashioning and execution of liturgical texts which, under God, carry a heavy doctrinal weight. In Reformation times this issue was clearly to be seen in the anxieties that Prayer Book revisions highlighted with a view to sacramental theology.⁴⁷ In our own day, we can trace a similar problem over the issue of decision-making in a church where, in theory, doctrinal authority rests with the House of Bishops, but decisions about liturgical content are subject to revision line by line on the floor of the General Synod.⁴⁸ In part two of this thesis, we shall need to consider carefully what this means for Cathedral worship in an Episcopal church, where a variety of authorities – sometimes, the Chapter, Dean, Precentor, a committee, or a mixture – bear the responsibility for liturgical development. What boundaries constrain and have constrained cathedrals in their liturgical development?

The question of model and identity

In the introduction to this thesis, we began to tease out notions of cathedral identity, and began to posit the notion that, for a cathedral successfully to produce liturgy that is satisfying in the broadest sense, it must be aware of the model of being which it is adopting: be that diocesan church, bishop's church, church to the gathered cathedral

⁴⁷ See Cuming, *op. cit.*, pp. 109 ff.

⁴⁸ One of the few attempts to touch on this subject is Stevenson, *Anglican Identity: a chapter of accidents* in *The Identity of Anglican Worship*, *op. cit.*, Ch. 17

congregation or ministering to an 'external' organisation. Coupled with that, cathedrals are called to be 'bridge' churches: I will argue that they should be cautious of being too readily linked with particular styles of churchmanship, or language, or movement, and need to both model good practice in liturgy, and yet offer something which is distinctive and wholly integral to their individual calling as a particular church in a particular place, as Rowan Williams has commented:

The specific contribution Anglican contribution to the theology of liturgical construction and reconstruction has to do with the making of liturgy that connects the catholic pattern of life in the Body of Christ with the patterns of community that prevail in this place and time, of being concrete and local.⁴⁹

The history of Church of England worship in the twentieth century highlights the issues which arise out of the dichotomy between the expression of the local and the national, which has existed in many forms. For example, we have seen the importance of what has sometimes unfairly been described as 'liturgical archaeology' in the development of a different shape to Eucharistic worship in twentieth century Anglicanism. Without the work of Dix, Bradshaw, and a host of others, the Holy Communion services of *Common Worship* would have a very different form. As we look at the liturgical life of cathedrals over the last two decades, we shall seek to explore more deeply how far cathedrals have been a part of new movements within liturgy, and how far they have ignored them or developed in other ways. How far should a cathedral set a particular pattern for the diocese of which it is the principal church? What forms should such patterns take, and what models are they called to adopt?

⁴⁹ Williams, *Imagining the Kingdom* in *ibid.*, Ch. 1

The question of response and pastoral need

Although some cathedrals are parish churches, they are obviously in a different pastoral relationship to local churches in their variety of contexts. We have seen in our analysis of history that the Church has needed to respond to local need, and indeed, how that local need has often dictated how the church's worship has developed. For example, the desire for 'all-age' and 'family' worship in the 1950s and 1960s, coupled with the attempts to meet the needs of parishes set in a non-book culture in the 1980s, formed the essential backdrop to the work which produced PW. In a different context, the production of LHWE in 1984 was also a response to provide authorisation for what was already happening in many churches. When we come to look at how cathedral worship has performed this responsive and pastoral task, we see how cathedrals have sought to adapt liturgically in their regular worshipping life towards their gathered congregation. But also, and on a massive scale, we see how cathedrals have sought to reach out to those (a) who belong to a particular (often secular) group or organisation and wish to celebrate their work, or an anniversary, and (b) who are suffering and need a liturgical focus which provides pastoral liturgy for their need, for example, a service for victims of road traffic accidents, or those who have lost a child (both annual services at Coventry).⁵⁰ Should cathedrals actively take the initiative in seeking out groups and individuals to whom they could offer such services? What theological and pastoral model are cathedrals adopting here? Are there boundaries which the cathedral, as the bishop's church, dare not exceed? Or should the cathedral adopt a more challenging and prophetic stance, risking controversy and opposition in seeking to minister effectively to the diocese and the wider community?

These are the issues which will form the basis of the second section of our thesis: how shifts in society, theology and ecclesiology have enabled the liturgical role of cathedrals to develop so dramatically since 1980.

⁵⁰ See also Stancliffe, *Walking in Patterns*, in ed. Platten and Lewis Flagships of the Spirit: Cathedrals in Society DLT (1998) Ch. 4

Chapter Four

Cathedral Liturgy: Changes in emphasis

Introduction

Although the report 'Heritage and Renewal'¹ has no specific section (unbelievably) on worship and liturgy, it does make sporadic references to worship. In the introductory chapter on 'The Role of Cathedrals' the report identifies a number of reasons for the increased growth in cathedral congregations:

...a growing public taste for musical expertise, the growth of symbolic and commemorative services...liturgical practice, or its degree of formality, its level of activism, the sympathy of pastoral care, and perhaps even the beauty of the actual building.²

The majority of these reasons have a liturgical resonance. We have explored at the beginning of this thesis the relationship between liturgy and mission, between identity and model, touching also on the relationship between bishop and cathedral, in particular the historic and fundamental link grounded in the cathedral as the church which houses the Bishop's seat.³

We saw in the previous chapters something of the course of liturgical reform in the Church of England, especially in the latter years of the twentieth century, enabling us to understand the context in which liturgical change has been so prevalent in cathedrals in recent times. Having identified a number of issues as a result, we come to explore some specific areas of the interchange and relationship between liturgy and Cathedral worship. In this Chapter we shall explore the relationship between

¹ Heritage and Renewal: The Report of the Archbishops' Commission on Cathedrals, CHP (1994)

² *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11

³ See Chapter 1, pp. 2 ff.

architecture and worship, seeking to chart the influence of one on the other. We shall move on to consider the questions of identity which we have raised already, of model and ministry, before discussing the way in which actual liturgy has changed and developed in response to all these issues. Our discussion will have a general perspective on current thinking on the theology and practice of Cathedrals, but make particular reference to the contrasting Cathedrals of Coventry and Durham.

Setting the scene: a tale of two cathedrals

The contrast between the settings of Coventry and Durham cathedrals could not be more different, the magnificent towers of Durham soaring high above the River Wear on the rocky peninsula which was to become the resting place of St Cuthbert, compared with the long, cantilevered modern architecture of Coventry, cleverly incorporating the ruined parish Church cathedral bombed in the Second World War⁴, but surrounded on every side by oppressive 1960s and 1970s concrete hotels and halls of residence.

The history of both cathedrals is well-known; for our purposes, it is necessary to explore the dynamic of the architecture, and the space which it creates, both inside and out, as a context for liturgical worship. The re-discovery of the use of space, as we will see, forms a crucial part of our explorations.

Durham takes the form of a classic, cruciform cathedral, with nave, quire and two transepts. There are unique features too, all with liturgical purposes: the Galilee

⁴ 14th November 1940. The bombing was designated 'Operation Moonlight Sonata'.

chapel at the west end of the building (housing the tomb of the Venerable Bede)⁵, the chapel of the Nine Altars at the east end, and the feretory and the shrine of St Cuthbert.⁶ Coventry Cathedral⁷ is an altogether different building, a *hallenkirche*, conceived by the architect, Sir Basil Spence⁸ as

‘the Triumph of the Resurrection... a great nave and an altar that was an invitation to Communion, and a huge picture behind it...’⁹

The story of the building of Coventry’s new cathedral is a complex one, and well-documented in a number of sources¹⁰, not least the record of the architect himself in *Phoenix at Coventry*. For our purposes, it is worth noting at this stage a particular controversy in the design, the placing of the High Altar. The Bishop of Coventry, Neville Gorton,¹¹ had been headmaster of Blundell’s School, and while there, had re-ordered the chapel to a design by Eric Gill. This re-ordering involved the removal of Victorian furnishings and the placing of a central altar made of stone. On his appointment to Coventry, Gorton expressed a desire that the new cathedral should have a similarly styled altar.¹² His ideas moved on, however, undoubtedly influenced by the reservations expressed by the more conservative Provost, Dick Howard. So although Gorton had wanted a centrally-placed altar, his vision was never realised.¹³

⁵ AD 673-735

⁶ There are also the cloisters and remaining monastic buildings, which have also been rediscovered in recent times in the liturgy of the Cathedral.

⁷ Technically the term ‘Coventry Cathedral’ refers to both the ruined Cathedral and the new Cathedral as one church. In this thesis I am referring to the new Cathedral, using the term ‘Ruins’ to refer to the former parish church Cathedral which was destroyed.

⁸ 1907-1976

⁹ Spence, *Phoenix at Coventry: The Building of a Cathedral*, Harper and Row (1962)

¹⁰ See especially Louise Campbell, *Coventry Cathedral: Art and Architecture in Post-war Britain*, Clarendon/Oxford (1996)

¹¹ Bishop of Coventry 1943-1955

¹² Thomas, *Coventry Cathedral*, Unwin Hyman (1987), pp. 82-86

¹³ See Hammond, *Liturgy and Architecture*, Barrie (1960), p. 148

We shall come later to examine the consequences of the decision to have a 'traditionally'-placed altar at the east end of the chancel¹⁴ when we look in detail at the styles of liturgy which have developed at Coventry in the last twenty years. For now, it is worth noting that Spence's design, totally remarkable and much-loved from an architectural point of view, is controversial from a liturgical point of view. In 1960 Peter Hammond, then secretary of a short-lived organisation called The New Churches Research Group, criticises Spence for not allowing 'the work of the architect (to be) informed by that of the theologian'¹⁵. It is certainly the case that, while Spence was working to a personal vision of a church built around a 'strong, central Holy Table', it was still traditionally sited. This was not at all in keeping with the consequences of the liturgical Movement and its recovery of a more patristic Eucharistic understanding, as expressed in a number of churches which are contemporary with Coventry (such as St Paul's Bow Common 1956-60)¹⁶, and not least with the one other cathedral built slightly later than Coventry, the Roman Catholic cathedral in Liverpool.¹⁷ Though some continue to bridle at the liturgical frustrations brought about by what is a fusion of contemporary and Gothic styles, others see Coventry's non-centrally placed altar as a great advantage.

Michael Sadgrove¹⁸ describes Coventry as

all of a piece, a hall-church that magnificently discloses all of itself at once... a carefully devised liturgical space with its own inherent logic that defied tampering with.¹⁹

¹⁴ At Coventry the quire is known as the 'Chancel', partly due to the absence of a screen or pulpitum.

¹⁵ Hammond, op. cit., p. 31

¹⁶ See Cobb, *The Architectural Setting of the Liturgy* in *The Study of Liturgy*, op. cit., p. 541

¹⁷ The Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King. Sir Frederick Gibberd's (1908-1984) design was chosen, and building began in October 1962. Less than five years later, on the Feast of Pentecost, 14 May 1967, the completed Cathedral was consecrated.

¹⁸ Precentor of Coventry 1987-1995, Provost, then Dean, of Sheffield 1995-2003, Dean of Durham since 2003

It may be that a compromise needs to be found between the views of liturgical purists (who rightly wish to affirm the place of a fixed, permanent altar as not only a defining feature of a church building, but the very focus of Christ within it) and the views of pragmatists who are appreciative of ecclesiastical design, wish to remain faithful to an architect's vision, but also see the pastoral needs of contemporary worship which the gathered community around the table, not in serried ranks before it. As Michael Perham writes:

If we are to have some sensitivity to tradition, to art and to architecture, we shall sometimes have to compromise on two altars, provided that they are in separate 'rooms' of the building and that care is taken to make the new and central altar sufficient of a focus that the eye is not immediately drawn away from the celebration.²⁰

The problem, as we will see in Coventry, is how pastoral liturgy has been attempted, and is still, when two altars are essentially in one 'room'. Is it true, as Dean Sadgrove asserts, that 'the building always wins in the end'²¹?

Pilgrimage, processional and sacred space

One of the most influential liturgical works of the late twentieth century is, in fact, a book on church architecture. Richard Giles' *Re-Pitching the Tent*²² is a powerfully succinct account of the importance of liturgical space in terms of what it says about both God and the church. His starting point is that

for the first time in history we have a Church which is content to operate out of places of liturgical assembly which contradict, in their layout and design, the Church's own message and theological self-understanding. We are the first Christian generation which has attempted to separate liturgical design from theology... our work to

¹⁹ Sadgrove, *Naves and the dynamic of large performance spaces*, unpublished paper, and quoted here by kind permission of the author.

²⁰ Perham, *A New Handbook of Pastoral Liturgy*, op. cit., p. 43

²¹ Sadgrove, *ibid.*

²² Giles, *Re-Pitching the Tent: Re-ordering the church building for worship and mission in the new millennium*, Canterbury Press (1996)

proclaim the living God is thereby undermined and repudiated by buildings which speak of a geriatric God incarcerated in an old folk's home, the kind of rambling Victorian building that real families gave up living in years ago.²³

He goes on to explore the biblical and historical background to church buildings, and argues powerfully for the re-ordering of church buildings to be a priority for a church concerned with mission. Among the more powerful images he evokes is 'of seeing the great nave of Ely Cathedral completely empty of chairs, revealing a vast space which allowed the architecture to speak with powerful clarity'.²⁴ He invites Christian communities to establish buildings which avoid clutter and duplication, that strive for flexibility and simplicity, and take seriously the staging posts of faith that the principal furnishings of the church provide: the entrance and font, the lectern and pulpit, and the altar. He begs for an abandonment of 'our crippling liturgical self-consciousness'²⁵, and longs for a renewal of pastoral liturgy, and of church buildings, to aid the re-discovery of a Christian calling to be a pilgrim people.²⁶

Many cathedrals, of course, began as centres for Christian pilgrimage, not least Durham with its shrine of St Cuthbert, the very reason for its building in the first place.²⁷ While Coventry and many other cathedrals lack the focus of a *patronus* or local saint,²⁸ they are renewed centres for pilgrimage.²⁹ And while the dividing line between pilgrim and tourist may be blurred, it seems clear that a liturgical response is required.

²³ Ibid., pp. 8-9

²⁴ Ibid., p. 113

²⁵ Ibid., p. 174

²⁶ Ibid., p. 209-10

²⁷ ed. Austin, R. (editor) *The Rites of Durham*, Durham: Dean and Chapter, Durham Cathedral (1995)

²⁸ See chapter one, p. 2

²⁹ It is interesting that *Heritage and Renewal* includes no chapter on pilgrimage, though there is one on 'tourism' which contains no reference to the word pilgrim. Indeed, the report seems to only understand the concept of a pilgrim in terms of mediaeval history, see p. 35, paragraph 60.

Angela Tilby has written that

when people visit a cathedral they know that they are in a sacred space which is deeper and older than that of the contemporary Church...the visit is the worship. And though it requires staff to administer it and clergy to serve it, it is the building itself which actually mediates presence, strength, reconciliation and consolation.³⁰

Many cathedrals have been quick to recognise in recent years that they are buildings which were never designed for 'static' liturgy, but for liturgy which is an expression of a church which is a pilgrim people. This is no appeal to antiquarianism, but is rather an expression of a theological understanding of the people of God who have 'no abiding City'. Coupled with this sense is the rediscovery of the festive as part of liturgical orthodoxy, and the kind of distinctive liturgical theology within which Aidan Kavanagh is able to refer to a 'doxological' liturgical theology which is rooted in a 'festal quality' of liturgical celebration.³¹ Cathedrals are uniquely placed to reflect this rediscovery of the festal and the pilgrim models of liturgy, and for several obvious reasons. There can be no doubt that the popularity of pilgrimage can be tied to a recent fresh delight in spirituality, a longing for an experience of God, which naturally leads people to places which are known to be 'touching places', where there is a sense of encounter between the human and divine. While this takes an undoubtedly modern and rational form on the most part, the witness of the thousands upon thousands who seek miracles in Lourdes and Walsingham, and countless other places, testify to a remarkable spiritual and sociological phenomenon in an ostensibly secular age. A key anthropological interpretation of this speaks of 'the attributes of liminality' and 'the ritualized enactment of correspondences between religious paradigms and shared human experiences'.³² (This anthropological insight coincides

³⁰ Tilby, *The Sacred Grove*, in *Flagships of the Spirit*, op. cit., p. 162

³¹ Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, Pueblo (1984/1992), pp. 142-3

³² Victor and Edith Turner, quoted in Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place*, Ashgate (2003), p. 101

with a similar liturgical insight into the liminal nature of pastoral rites, principally finding its Common Worship expression in the funeral liturgy.³³⁾

For most cathedrals there is a sense of history and tradition which fosters such an understanding, whether or not they are in position of a shrine or important burial place. The rediscovery of pilgrimage as a powerful tool of Christian spirituality (which has emerged at the end of the twentieth century) has coincided with a fresh liturgical understanding of Christian journey. This finds an Anglican formula in the work of the Liturgical Commission (principally the work of Michael Vasey) on *Rites on the Way*, and has influenced the Initiation Services of *Common Worship* among others. It has found a practical outworking, however, in the use of sacred space within and without cathedrals. For some these traditions have become a fixed part of the liturgical calendar, such as the Youth Pilgrimage at Easter in and around the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Alban, and a similar pilgrimage to the shrine of St Chad (which also includes St Chad's well, sited in a nearby churchyard) in Lichfield.

In Coventry, the tradition of pilgrimage is complicated, because it is rooted not in a holy person, but in an historic event. Pilgrims come to see not only the remarkable new cathedral building, but also to pay homage in the Cathedral ruins, in commemoration of the bombing, not only of Coventry, but of other towns and cities in Britain during the Second World War. In Durham, there has been a noticeable change in register in the attitude of the cathedral to pilgrimage over the last twenty years, where there has been a growing awareness of the importance of the shrine of St Cuthbert (and of the Venerable Bede) in the tradition of the church in the North-East,

³³ See Perham, *The Funeral Liturgy*, in *Towards Liturgy 2000*, op. cit., pp. 53 ff.

with a consequent explosion in terms of the liturgical provision for the celebration of the saints, and the welcoming of worshippers. To quote Michael Sadgrove again:

Naves are not so much auditoria as processional spaces...liturgical processions at festivals to the altar of the saint being commemorated or, as at Corpus Christi, in and out of the church itself, not to mention space for pilgrims to wander about in – this is why naves exist...we will only ever recover the dynamic of nave space by understanding what drama they were invented for.³⁴

Alongside a renewed sense of the importance of pilgrimage has come a rediscovery of the importance of sacred space. For Giles this is fundamentally rooted in local experience. He asserts that ‘each liturgical space is a particular response of a local community of faith unique in God’s sight’.³⁵ John Inge recognizes the particular importance of cathedrals as sacred space in his *A Christian Theology of Place*:

...these buildings continue to witness in varying degrees against the dehumanizing effects of secularism in all its aspects, including the down-grading of the importance of place.³⁶

He also defends cathedrals against the critique of Christopher Rowland, suggesting that there is substantial prophetic potential in the sacred space that cathedrals provide. Inge comes to the interesting conclusion that churches might rediscover their potential as shrines, enabling them to speak as ‘sacramental signs, for that is what they are’.³⁷

However, Ralph Keiffer disagrees, arguing that sacramental signs do not speak for themselves:

Their ability to ‘speak’ is derived from what people are willing or able to attribute to them.³⁸

³⁴ Sadgrove, op. cit.

³⁵ Giles, op. cit., p. 143

³⁶ Inge, op. cit., p. 112

³⁷ Ibid., p. 122

³⁸ Keiffer, *The RCIA and sacramental efficacy*, *Worship* (July 1982), p. 333

Susan White applies this principle to Durham Cathedral itself, stating that the sacredness of the space is not because of the shrine of St Cuthbert, but because

It has been, is now, and (God willing) will continue to be used by faithful Christian people who are striving to live according to the Gospel, who gather to hear the Word of God and to learn what it means to act upon it, who seek a ministry of reconciliation and who seek to draw the Cathedral into that ministry in the name of Jesus Christ.³⁹

White develops her theme to an important conclusion, that responsibility for the sacredness of space rests not in the numinous – in terms of a sense of accumulated holiness through centuries of prayer – but with the contemporary Christian community who are called to develop a sense of anamnesis, which she defines as

The threefold enterprise of remembering, embodying, and handing on (repeating) the sacred use of space it inhabits.⁴⁰

White's conclusion is not one shared by all, including Inge⁴¹ and this author, who believes, as we will see, there to be a tangible holiness which results from the setting apart of space for liturgical use, and from a sense of history and spirituality which it is impossible to separate from the personal experience of generations of pilgrims, tourists, and believers of all kinds. As Stephen Platten has remarked:

These are places where at the very least there is a sense of presence. It may be nothing more than the presence of a historical context out of which the cathedral grew. It may be an overpowering sense of the numinous, or a compelling conviction that the world is a world of purpose and not meaninglessness and that there is a presence which convinces us of the truth of this experience. The one thing which subtly links together each of these different expectations is linked to an implicit theology...this implicit theological strand points to the grace of God working through humanity in often intricate, subtle and elusive ways.⁴²

But it is worth noting in parenthesis that it is not only cathedrals and churches which are rediscovering the importance of sacred space, but also secular organisations too.

³⁹ White, *The Theology of Sacred Space* in The Sense of the Sacramental, SPCK (1995) p. 42

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ See Inge, op. cit., pp. 39 ff.

⁴² Platten, *Locus Iste: Cathedral Theology* in Flagships of the Spirit, op. cit., p. 138

Carol Duncan has written of the development of public galleries and museums in terms of ritual space, referring to their fundamental purpose of ‘enlightenment, revelation, spiritual equilibrium or rejuvenation’,⁴³ leading one commentator to observe that such public buildings

...can be seen to be ritual spaces in many of the same ways as sacred buildings, including their outward appearance, their organisation, and the use to which everything inside them is put.⁴⁴

To quantify, or even attempt to quantify, what makes a particular space sacred is an impossible task. In this secular context, the attempt is made from the perspective of order and setting, of a particular layout, of a distinctive style and appearance which carries a kind of spiritual nuance. In the cathedral context, the attempt is an easier one: one can speak of the sacred nature of a particular holy site, of the importance of the bishops’ throne, of a building sanctified by prayer and worship for many centuries, which produces a tangible effect of holiness, as Eliot observed:

For the blood of thy martyrs and saints
Shall enrich the earth, shall create holy places.
For wherever a saint has dwelt, wherever a martyr has given his blood for the blood of Christ,
There is holy ground, and the sanctity shall not depart from it.⁴⁵

One of the ways in which cathedrals have responded in recent years to new understandings of using their sacred space is (a) the development of using different parts of the building to reflect different liturgical contexts, and (b) the rediscovery of processional as a liturgical form. Aidan Kavanagh writes of processional in a typically robust style:

⁴³ Duncan, *Civilising Rituals: Inside public art museums*, Routledge (1995) p. 20

⁴⁴ Richard Shakeshaft, *In what sense could museums and/or art galleries be said to be ritual spaces?* Unpublished thesis, University of Birmingham (2003).

⁴⁵ Eliot, *Murder in the Cathedral*, Faber (1969) p. 281

Moving together, even vicariously as at a parade, is a compelling human experience because of the solidarity with others which rhythmic and coordinated movement seems to make palpable. The key is coordinated rhythm of motion, speech, and music, all of which are best kept simple and repetitive so as to foster participation by making recourse to books and other printed materials unnecessary. Processions, whether penitential or festive, also need elements of ritual and artistic flair, as one so often sees in secular parades, trooping of colors, and even funeral corteges.⁴⁶

In the next chapter we shall look at specific examples of this as developed in Coventry and Durham: for now we may note the following:

1. Until very recently, the size of the congregation tended to determine which ‘room’ would be used as the setting for worship. For example, at Durham until the end of the 1980s, the size of the congregation determined which space should be used. On Sunday morning, the quire (which seats around 200 comfortably) was used both for Matins and the Eucharist. Experiments at the turn of the decade have resulted in a decision to use the quire for Matins (a ‘foundation’ service⁴⁷) and the Nave (using a ‘nave’ altar, not the High Altar) for the Sung Eucharist. Coventry is in a slightly different position as the ‘rooms’ are difficult to distinguish due to the lack of a screen – and so congregations for almost all Sunday services are seated in the Nave, which brings about some particular liturgical issues, as we will come to see.

2. The use of chapels for weekday celebrations of Holy Communion was determined by size and not by appropriateness to either the sanctorale or temporale, except according to some local custom. This has changed. At Durham High Altar celebrations mark principal Holy Days, and greater and more imaginative use is made

⁴⁶ Kavanagh, *Elements of Rite: A Handbook of Liturgical Style*, Pueblo Press (1982/1990) p. 52

⁴⁷ The distinction is made at Durham between ‘foundation’ services, i.e. Matins and Evensong, which are held according to statute and canon, with all parts led by the clergy, and ‘non-foundation’ services, i.e. the Sung Eucharist where there is room for regular lay participation, though this is yet to be fully realised cf. Chapter 5

of the various chapels and ‘re-designated’⁴⁸ altars that exist in the cathedral. For example, on the Feast of the Venerable Bede, the ancient practice was revived of using Bede’s tomb (in the Galilee Chapel) as an altar. Likewise an altar has been erected at the feretory (the shrine of St Cuthbert) and this is also used regularly. At Coventry there are a number of chapels which were integral to Spence’s design.⁴⁹ These had been used unimaginatively until relatively recent times, when a clear pattern of use according to the Calendar has developed. For example, the Lady Chapel is used on feasts relating to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Incarnation, the sanctuary of the Ruins on Fridays.

3. The use of more than one ‘room’ of the building for distinctive liturgical celebrations. For example, at Coventry on the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, the service began in the Ruins (representing the Old Temple), moving to the west of the nave for the reading of the Gospel (which was proclaimed from the ‘Chi-Rho’ which is set in brass in the cathedral floor, representing the New Temple which is Christ). The assembly then went in procession into the quire and nave for the remainder of the liturgy up to the post-Communion rite, when the whole assembly moved once again to the Baptistry and Font (located at the liturgical south-west of the Cathedral) for the Candlemas ceremony itself. This ‘multi-room’ approach was, in a sense, what Durham Cathedral was designed for, with its Galilee Chapel, unique in English architecture, which was used for particular Holy Week rites, and the Chapel of the Nine Altars, originally designed for many priests belonging to the same

⁴⁸ An altar stationed in the North Transept has been designated the Benedict Altar in recognition of Durham’s Benedictine tradition. There is also the Hild Altar and the Aidan Altar, both situated in the Chapel of the Nine Altars.

⁴⁹ Clockwise when viewed from the liturgical west: Chapel of Unity, Lady Chapel, Gethsemane Chapel, Chapel of Christ the Servant (also known as the Chapel of Industry). The Millennium Chapel of the Stalingrad Madonna was created in 2001 from a former storeroom below ground level.

foundation to celebrate their daily mass.⁵⁰ In recent times the Cathedral has been used imaginatively again to reflect different liturgical foci, even to the extent of using the Chapter House and Cloisters for the Easter Vigil.⁵¹

4. Processions, once the preserve (or, more accurately, thought to be the preserve) of Tractarianism, have become popular in Cathedrals once again. Advent processions date back some years in many cathedrals, including Durham, and they in turn take their cue from the more static but highly effective Christmas Carol services which were developed at the end of the nineteenth century.⁵² In our first chapter, we read of Stancliffe's particular belief in processional as an expression of the people of God as a pilgrim community.⁵³ While the clear theological ideal behind this view is incontestable, it is perhaps more to the point that a great building requires movement and drama within it; indeed, a great building cries out for movement within it on a great occasion. It may have sometimes been the perception that large numbers of people are required to make processions feasible, but in recent years, a key liturgical development has been the discovery that small and medium-sized congregations (a) are, in fact, easier to manage in the building, and (b) respond with enthusiasm to imaginative liturgical practice.

⁵⁰ See Stranks, *This Sumptuous Church* (revised edition), SPCK (1993) for many accounts of the liturgical use of Durham Cathedral over the centuries.

⁵¹ See further comment in Chapter 5, and appendix I

⁵² The original service was, in fact, adapted from an Order drawn up by E. W. Benson, later Archbishop of Canterbury, for use in the wooden shed, which then served as his cathedral in Truro, at 10 p.m. on Christmas Eve 1880. A. C. Benson recalled: 'My father arranged from ancient sources a little service for Christmas Eve – nine carols and nine tiny lessons, which were read by various officers of the Church, beginning with a chorister, and ending, through the different grades, with the Bishop.' The suggestion had come from G. H. S. Walpole, later Bishop of Edinburgh. (from the introduction to *A Service of Nine Lessons and Carols*, Kings College, Cambridge, 2000).

⁵³ *Flagships of the Spirit*, op. cit., pp. 59-62

On the feasts of Cuthbert and Bede in Durham, the cathedral foundation is joined by the entire congregation in procession to the respective shrines of the saints.

In Coventry, the patronal festival of the cathedral (St Michael)⁵⁴ is marked by a grand procession of choir, clergy and congregation which culminates in a ceremony before Epstein's statue of St Michael and the Devil which is set on the south wall adjacent to the cathedral's entrance. The victory of Christ over Satan is loudly proclaimed, before the assembly processes back into the cathedral for the prayers of intercession and the closing rite.

Such liturgical developments are made possible by a new flexibility within the provision of liturgical texts (by which I include rubrics and notes to order), but chiefly by a theological shift which acknowledges not only the pilgrim nature of the church (as suggested by Stancliffe), but also by a realisation that liturgy should use space in creative ways in order to fulfil what Kavanagh, as we have seen, refers to as its essential doxological nature.⁵⁵ A criticism might well be levelled that a uniformity within cathedral style is not welcome, and that a quasi-antiquarianism has crept into liturgical forms which seeks to ape a former age. On one level, the popularity of the rites we have described seems to fly in the face of such an argument; but also there is a solid academic base from which these new liturgical developments have emerged. This comes not only from within what might be thought of as a 'cathedral' context, but also a general liturgical context. Perhaps this has been best expressed by J. G. Davies' definition of the Liturgical Movement, which not only applies to the developments we

⁵⁴ Coventry Cathedral is dedicated to St Michael alone, and not St Michael and All Angels. This was a common dedication for monastic churches set on high places (Coventry is built on a hill), as in St Michael's Mount in Cornwall and Mont Saint Michel in Brittany.

⁵⁵ Cf. footnote 35

explored in the second chapter, but also applies to the recent developments within cathedrals in terms of procession and use of space:

(The Liturgical Movement) seeks a rediscovery of those norms of liturgical worship of the Bible and the early Church which lie behind Reformation divisions and medieval distortions, and which are fundamental to Christian liturgy in every time and place. It aims, however, not at an attempt to resuscitate the liturgy of the early Church in the twentieth century, but at the restatement of the fundamentals in forms and expressions which can enable the liturgy to be the living prayer and work of the church today.⁵⁶

It is this latter aspect of liturgy as ‘the living prayer and work of the church today’ which must always characterise any liturgical change. Bishop David Jenkins⁵⁷ is unconvinced by many of the changes that *Common Worship* and other liturgical developments have brought about. Driven by a sense of mission as well as a natural critical sense, he is anxious that the church is seen to be ‘moving the deckchairs on the Titanic’ at a time when a more acute approach to mission is required than ‘changing orders of service’.⁵⁸ But others are less sceptical. Dr John Arnold argues strongly that liturgical change has brought renewal to the life and worship of Durham Cathedral, speaking of the *Alternative Service Book* and *Common Worship* as ‘a gift to the choral tradition’, due to the flexibility which the Eucharistic liturgy allows in particular.⁵⁹

Changing the words

We have just read how John Arnold regards the changes of text brought about by liturgical reform as key to the late twentieth century becoming ‘the golden age of

⁵⁶ J. G. Davies, *A New Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, SCM Press (2nd edition) (1986) p. 314

⁵⁷ Bishop of Durham 1984-1994

⁵⁸ In conversation with the author, 30th April 2004

⁵⁹ In conversation with the author, 27th February 2004. See also *Cathedrals and God's Word of Life* in ed. Mackenzie, *Cathedrals Now: Their use and place in society*, Canterbury Press (1996)

cathedrals'.⁶⁰ The flexibility of new liturgical structures has meant that liturgy could be freed up from the apparent constraints of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Here we are principally speaking of Eucharistic liturgy – for Evensong and Matins are consistently sung to the Prayer Book order and text.⁶¹ This fact in itself gives us a clue to what seems to have happened in practically every cathedral in the land – that *Common Worship* has been adopted for the Eucharist, with *Book of Common Prayer* for the rest. How has this come about?

Let us first remind ourselves of what came about with the Alternative Service Book. The ASB, as we learned in chapters two and three, was a modern language prayer book. There was however, one exception – the Rite B order for Holy Communion, which took Prayer Book (more accurately we might say Series 2) language and placed it in the order which has been described as ‘the classical Western shape’ for the Eucharist. In many ways this Rite was anomalous in what was intended to be a piece of contemporary liturgy⁶²; though was included for reasons which were both pastoral and political. While one may be critical of this decision, it did demonstrate that both traditional and contemporary language rites were able to co-exist in a modern church. This enabled further thinking to be done which brought about a new consideration which *Common Worship* came to embrace with considerable success – that not only could two rites co-exist in the same book, but, to a degree, the language from those distinct rites could be included in the same rite, thus enabling a liturgical richness and an adherence to tradition which had not previously been though possible.

⁶⁰ In conversation with the author.

⁶¹ There are occasional exceptions to this norm, such as the order used for the celebrations for St Cuthbert, which essentially use the *Common Worship* order for Evening Prayer.

Michael Perham has articulated this very well:

In publishing within Common Worship both Prayer Book services and new forms, the Church has recognized that this approach, 'both... and', rather than 'either... or', enriches the Church and should continue... the hope also is that, quite apart from using complete orders of service, the existence of the two sorts of text alongside one another in the same book will encourage people to draw prayers and canticles from one sort of service into another, so that the rigid-dividing line between old and new falls away.⁶³

He concludes

If the Alternative Service Book of 1980 was introduced with a message that the Prayer Book was on the way out in a brave new world of liturgical renewal, the Common Worship message is rather different. Let there be a level playing field where classical and contemporary forms can both be used to the extent that the local community finds them helpful.⁶⁴

The assumption might be made that cathedrals have been successful in taking this notion seriously, and adapting the model for themselves. The truth, however, is slightly different. Though it is hard to find it acknowledged in writing, and it is difficult to quantify in assessment, cathedrals, in fact, have been a prime mover in the development of this idea of the mixing of old and new forms together. It has been part of the liturgical life of cathedrals for years, and over the last two decades has become acutely important. Cathedrals have been able to be 'bridging' places where old and new forms of liturgy, text, language and music have been blended together. Let us examine briefly a number of areas.

1. The Anglican choral tradition, such a vital aspect of cathedral life, has, interestingly, always been open to new compositional ideas which have been married without difficulty to the Prayer Book text. No cathedral uses only music by Byrd,

⁶² See Jasper and Bradshaw, A Companion to the Alternative Service Book, op. cit., pp. 255 ff.

⁶³ Perham, A New Handbook of Pastoral Liturgy, SPCK (2000) p. 63

⁶⁴ Ibid.

Gibbons and Tallis (composers contemporary to the Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552); music is also used by Stanford, Howells, Taverner, Rose, and Maxwell Davies.

Modern music and traditional language have fitted together without difficulty. A good example of this is the successful way in which Latin and BCP texts have continued to be used in both ASB Rite A and CW Order One. This has subtly enabled the mixing of old and new to seep into the liturgical culture of English cathedrals in a particular and distinctive way.

2. The office of Evensong, celebrated in most cathedrals on most days of the week⁶⁵, has made adaptations to the non-specific texts of the office in order to fit with contemporary needs, but without jarring in terms of context. For example, the Authorized Version of the Bible is no longer used to read from at Evensong, with modern 'classic' translations being used instead. Very often the readings will be prefaced by a brief introduction to explain the context to a congregation comprised of many visitors as well as regular worshippers. Prayers of intercession are usually led after the anthem, and these can draw on a variety of sources old and new, involve congregational responses as well as more traditional forms of bidding and collect, and include reference (rightly) to the needs of the contemporary church and world, using cycles of prayer, current affairs and pastoral need of the local community and region as a framework. This pattern long predates the developments of the ASB and *Common Worship*, again enabling a subtle awareness to develop of the ease with which, handled sensitively, the old and the new can happily co-exist.

⁶⁵ In Durham Evensong is sung every day excepting Monday; in Coventry every day excepting Tuesday and Friday (Evensongs are currently sung on Mondays as an experiment, using a student choir rather than the boy and girl choristers).

3. One of the major themes of our next Chapter will be the way in which ‘special’ services have come to dominate the ‘non-foundational’ worshipping life of cathedrals in recent years.⁶⁶ For now we should note that the necessary creativity required to produce discrete acts of worship for a diversity of groups and organisations with a consequent varying set of expectations has led Precentors and others responsible for the creation and development of worship to explore and experiment with a mixture of linguistic and liturgical forms. For example, the discovery is made that the ‘modified traditional’ form of the Lord’s Prayer⁶⁷ is the best known to a group of schoolchildren, and so is included in a modern language service. This stylistic variety enhances worship, and again shows how cathedrals have been able to take a lead in demonstrating an inclusivity and variety that was to become a hallmark of Church of England liturgy at the end of the twentieth century.

4. Hymnody is also a key factor, and not only in cathedrals. Again, though, cathedral worship, both of the foundational and non-foundational variety, has been able to establish the firm principle that contemporary hymnody can be used in a more traditional context, and vice versa. This, naturally, must be handled with care, and where it is well done, the cathedral provides a model for others of how, to quote the Precentor of Lichfield Cathedral, ‘old wine and new wine can be served at the same meal’.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Dean John Arnold speaks of an average of three special services per year in 1975, and seventy such services in 2000.

⁶⁷ The text found in the Book of Common Prayer as adapted for Series 2, and included in parallel in Common Worship texts with the contemporary version first used in Series 3 and the ASB.

⁶⁸ The Revd Canon Charles Taylor, Precentor of Lichfield Cathedral since 1994, in conversation with the author.

5. There is the question of the relationship between the cathedral and the diocese of which it is the bishop's church⁶⁹. How far should what the cathedral offers in its liturgical style differ from that which is offered in parish churches? Should they be complementary, or should they be the same? In the diocese of Salisbury, the Bishop has sought to make connections between the cathedral and diocese by instituting a number of points of liturgical reference, such as a Lord's Prayer sung to a simple setting based on music by Rimsky-Korsakov, which is used in parishes and the cathedral, when the Bishop is present.⁷⁰ John Habgood⁷¹ speaks strongly of how important he believes it to be that a cathedral should be offering something very distinctive to what parish churches are offering, partly in order that the cathedral should not be seen to be in competition with local churches. Lord Habgood chaired the working party which brought the *Alternative Service Book* into being, and introduced the ASB ordinal into use at his own ordination services in Durham Cathedral. But he remains convinced of how important it was that Durham, in his day, offered a relatively unchanging pattern of liturgical worship which was rooted in the BCP.⁷² Rather, Habgood believed that the bishop himself, not the cathedral and its liturgy, should be a model for good practice in the diocese. This reinforces the importance of the questions of model and identity of which we have been speaking – for if the cathedral is seen to be irrelevant liturgically to the Church of England's norm, what is that to say of the legitimacy of the cathedral as the bishop's church, as the mother church of a diocese, and as an important expression of Anglican doctrine by its own worship and witness? Others have disagreed with Habgood's analysis and

⁶⁹ See the discussion about this model of 'being cathedral' in chapter one, pp. 2-3, and also Stancliffe in *Flagships of the Spirit*, op. cit., pp. 64 ff.

⁷⁰ See Stancliffe, *God's Pattern*, SPCK (2003) for a description of his vision for the relationship between liturgy and the mission of the church.

⁷¹ The Rt Rev and Rt Hon Lord Habgood, Bishop of Durham (1973-1983) and subsequently Archbishop of York (1983-1995)

see that the model which the cathedral offers should be exemplary rather than complementary.⁷³

These questions are thrown into relief when the diocese comes to the cathedral for a great occasion (we shall see some worked examples in our next chapter) such as, on infrequent occasions, the Bishop's Enthronement, or a valediction to a diocesan officer; and then on more regular occasions, the Chrism Eucharist, the licensing of Readers and other lay ministers, confirmations, ordinations and the like. After all, it was John Habgood who introduced the ASB ordinal to Durham at a time when the cathedral was offering an almost exclusively Prayer Book diet. Behind this lay a desire to make parishes coming to the cathedral feel as though there was language, shape and style with which they could identify in what is, after all, 'their' cathedral church. A contemporary example of this may be seen at Coventry, where the Installation of Honorary Canons, invariably appended to the office of Evensong, has been worked into a Eucharistic liturgy. The thinking behind such a development is a pastoral one – a small number of parishes in the diocese of Coventry are familiar with a Prayer Book Evensong: the Eucharist is more familiar, and hopefully means that parishioners do not feel a sense of alienation when they attend their bishop's church, rather a sense of familiarity. Again, as with so-called 'special' services, cathedrals have had a 'bridging' ministry in a distinctive liturgical way, demonstrating the mixture of old and new texts, by the combination of choral settings of the mass, strong

⁷² In conversation with the author, May 4th 2004

⁷³ Among them two Episcopal contemporaries of his, Simon Barrington-Ward KCMG (Bishop of Coventry 1985-1997) and Mark Santer (Bishop of Birmingham 1987-2002), both of whom (in conversation with the author) expressed the firm belief that the cathedral must set a liturgical example to the parishes of the diocese, and that, as the bishop's church, it needs to be clear about the doctrine which is expressed by the worship which the cathedral offers.

congregational hymnody, choir texts from the Prayer Book but in the context of a contemporary language service, and so on.

Conclusion

Having considered the textual (chiefly) history of liturgy in the previous two chapters, viewing those changes through the lenses of cathedral liturgy produce some interesting results. Certainly, the two principal shifts in emphasis we have identified – the development of the theology and use of sacred space and processional⁷⁴, and the development of a mixed linguistic economy in terms of liturgical text – relate directly to the changes which *Common Worship* has, ultimately brought about. But we have also seen how cathedral worship has been able to have a subtle influence on the style of *Common Worship*, being a flagship, as it were, for the assimilation of old and new.⁷⁵

What is clear above all is that there is a new openness to liturgical development. We have moved away from a ‘static’ model of worship towards a ‘pilgrim’ model, an approach which is more willing than before to re-discover the glories of the dramatic processional and pilgrimage liturgies of the past, but without indulging in a rose-tinted antiquarian view which is too easily criticised as old-fashioned, out of touch and removed from the experience of contemporary Christianity. The liturgical engagement with the cathedral building has been key to this whole process. Peter Hammond’s critical (in every sense) work in this field in the 1960s gave a clear Anglican signal

⁷⁴ I have not spoken about the liturgical setting for the Eucharist at length in this chapter, and will do so further in the next.

⁷⁵ See *Image, Memory and Text* in The Renewal of Common Prayer, op. cit., pp. 33-36

that liturgy and architecture need to be developed hand in hand if church buildings are going to have a theological integrity. What we are discovering afresh in our own age is how our buildings, and cathedral buildings in particular, can be exploited to proclaim the truths of the Christian faith in a sensitive and yet dramatic liturgical medium, via music, language, shape and movement.

We now come to look closely at the liturgy in the cathedrals of Coventry and Durham over the last twenty years. We shall do so in three areas: first, the way in which the Sunday Eucharist for the gathered cathedral congregation has developed, particularly with reference to liturgical and architectural setting, congregational involvement and music. Second, how diocesan services have developed in terms of style and structure, language and model; and third, the major area of 'special' services, not only in the way they have been formulated and executed, but also to explore how they have come to influence the regular 'foundational' worship of the cathedral.

Chapter Five

Patterns of Worship (1): Liturgy in the Cathedral Church of Christ, Blessed Mary the Virgin, and St Cuthbert, Durham, since 1980

Introduction

In this chapter, we shall look systematically at the liturgy of Durham Cathedral, (then, in chapter six, of Coventry Cathedral), over the last twenty or so years, noting changes in language, movement, setting, use of space, and seeking to discover particular trends in liturgical theology in the wider church as a result of specific examination of these two very different cathedral churches. In our examination of the liturgy of Durham Cathedral, we shall look first at developments in the way that the cathedral's Sunday Eucharist has been executed, both in terms of language and setting; second, the development of diocesan and 'foundational' services, specifically the enthronements of bishops and installations of deans during our period, as a barometer for the general liturgical life of the Cathedral; also the annual commemorations of Saint Cuthbert and the Chrism Eucharist. We shall consider too 'special' services of the Cathedral, such as the Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors, and the Miners' Festival Service: these provide fine indicators as to changes in style in a variety of ways. Each section includes descriptions of particular acts of worship, and we shall chart both subtle and seismic liturgical shifts in cathedral liturgy as a result. We will then be able to marry the theological developments we have explored in our previous chapters with their practical out-workings in a cathedral context.

THE SUNDAY EUCHARIST

The Eucharistic celebration to which we are referring is not the quiet celebration of Holy Communion at 8am which has invariably used the *Book of Common Prayer* for many years, but the principal celebration which was introduced by Canon Arthur Couratin¹. For many years this service was a high altar celebration, with the congregation seated in the Quire of the cathedral. The liturgy followed the Prayer Book rite, and was essentially celebrated from two distinct positions: what might be termed the liturgy of the Word (i.e. as far as, but not including, the Offertory) was led from the end of the stalls, adjacent to the Cosin pulpit and the Hatfield throne. The remainder of the service was celebrated at the high altar, with three sacred ministers facing eastwards. In January 1980, the beginning of our period of study, this celebration was held at 1130am,² and was essentially unchanged from its original format and staging.

A question of Rite

It is remarkable to think that, despite the liturgical changes of the 1960s and 1970s, and the era of the *Alternative Service Book*, this was the Eucharistic status quo at Durham until 1990, when an alternating pattern of using the ASB and the BCP was established on a periodic basis. The history behind this development is a complex one, and though access to Chapter papers was not possible because of the relatively recent history of this study, a great deal can be gleaned from the music lists and orders of service held in the Cathedral Library.

¹ Cf. Chapter Two, p. 5

What we learn from these documents is that the Alternative Services Series 3 Holy Communion service was used for weekday celebrations of the Eucharist once a week.³ Those apart, no contemporary language foundational services are to be found. It was in Lent 1981 that Series 1 and 2 gave way to the ASB for weekday celebrations of Holy Communion, but never on a Sunday.⁴ While we know that the ASB ordinal was used in Durham during the episcopate of John Habgood⁵, it was not until Whitsunday, 7th June 1987⁶ that Rite A was first used at a celebration of the Eucharist at the high altar on a Sunday.

The next time Rite A was used on a Sunday was 1st May 1988, the Fourth Sunday after Easter,⁷ and then on 27th November, Advent Sunday. The library documents reveal a hesitant and somewhat inconsistent pattern of experimentation going on over the next few years. In 1989, ASB Rite A was used for the Sunday principal celebration on five occasions: February 5th (Quinquagesima, the Prayer Book designation for the Sunday, was still used), March 19th (Palm Sunday), May 14th (Whitsunday – not yet the ASB's *Pentecost*), July 9th (the Seventh Sunday after Trinity), and October 22nd (the Twenty-second Sunday after Trinity).

² Following Choral Matins, sung at 1015am

³ This celebration took place on Wednesdays at 730am in the Gregory Chapel. It might also be noted that Series 3 was used for the celebration of Morning Prayer during this period twice a week. Other celebrations of Holy Communion used the Book of Common Prayer, excepting Monday morning when Series 2 was used.

⁴ The weekday pattern for Holy Communion became Monday BCP, Tuesday ASB Rite A, Wednesday ASB Rite B, Thursday BCP, Friday ASB Rite A, Saturday ASB Rite B.

⁵ Lord Habgood was Bishop of Durham 1973-83.

⁶ The author can claim, happily, that he was present for this service. It might be noted, mischievously, that at this time the Cathedral was without a Precentor. The Revd Christopher Newlands was installed as Precentor 20 days later.

⁷ The service list records that the feast of St Philip and St James was transferred to the next day.

In 1990, however, things were very different. A new Dean was in post,⁸ and brought with him a sympathy for tradition, but also a desire to see changes made. We see a hint of something new with a small note alongside the Palm Sunday Eucharist, which was not only ASB Rite A, but was ‘beginning in the Galilee Chapel’. Rite A had been used earlier in 1990, on February 4th (The Fifth Sunday after Epiphany), but now a radical difference came about. Rite A was used at the 8am celebration of Holy Communion on Easter Day, and then at the 1130am celebration the following Sunday. From then until Pentecost, the 1130am Eucharist alternated between using the BCP and ASB Rite A. For most of the remaining year the Prayer Book rite was used, until November 4th, when ASB Rite A returned as the normative order for the Sunday Eucharist.⁹

For the next few years, a pattern of alternating the ASB and BCP on a seasonal basis was the way in which liturgical variety was established at Durham. It should be noted that, from the beginning of 1991, the Calendar of the *Alternative Service Book* replaced the Calendar of the *Book of Common Prayer* as the means of designating the Sundays, Principal Holy Days and Commemorations of the church’s year on all official liturgical documents at Durham. ASB Rite A was used for the first time on Ash Wednesday¹⁰, but the Sunday liturgy reverted to the Prayer Book during Lent, Holy Week and Easter Day. Rite A was restored on the first Sunday after Easter, BCP on Trinity Sunday, Rite A on July 28th (Pentecost 10), and BCP on October 27th (the twenty-second Sunday after Trinity).

⁸ The Very Revd John Arnold was installed on September 16th 1989.

⁹ With the exception of Remembrance Sunday.

¹⁰ The service was listed as ‘Holy Communion for the beginning of Lent’.

The Prayer Book remained in place on Sundays until February 16th 1992 (the ninth Sunday before Easter), when Rite A returned until Easter Day. Though we may by now be a little wearied by the seasonal shifting between rites, a new development emerges at this stage to add interest to what is going on. For the last three Sundays of Lent, the service lists have specific Eucharistic Prayers listed – Eucharistic Prayer 2 on Mothering Sunday, Eucharistic Prayer 1 on the Fifth Sunday of Lent, and Eucharistic Prayer 4 on Palm Sunday. When Rite A was restored again at Pentecost that year, the second Eucharistic Prayer was specified, and this specification of Eucharistic Prayers became the norm on each Sunday. The Prayer Book returned (together, interestingly, with its Calendar) on August 16th, and Rite A and its Eucharistic Prayers came back on October 11th (Pentecost 18). It was in 1992 that Rite A (with its 3rd Eucharistic Prayer) was used for the first time on Christmas Day.

In 1993 one detects that the inevitable final shift was all but decided. ASB Rite A was used for the Sunday Eucharist at the Cathedral until Easter Day (which was itself BCP). The Prayer Book was used for the remainder of the Easter season. Then, on the feast of Pentecost, 30th May, the Sunday Sung Eucharist returned to ASB Rite A: and thus a pattern was set for the next 3 years, with the BCP used for the Easter Season only. It was on Palm Sunday 1997, 27th March, which marked the beginning of the present pattern of having all principal Sunday Eucharistic celebrations according to a contemporary language rite.¹¹

The setting of the service

In the period of experimentation with language and order leading up to 1997, the setting of the service remained the same: the high altar and Quire of the cathedral. Occasionally the service lists reveal experimental use of a nave altar.¹² This is not a new phenomenon at Durham: it is well known that there was a Jesus altar positioned in front of the medieval pulpitum, set against the screen, allowing a peoples' mass outside the confines of the Quire. This would, however, have been a much smaller affair than modern concepts of a nave altar, and would not have, in any sense, been seen or envisaged as a substitute for the high altar.

The rightness of a nave altar in a building where the high altar is visible is a problem which faces both the cathedrals our study is concerned with. At Durham, there is at least a screen, though the Scott screen is itself a source of endless controversy.¹³ At Coventry, as we shall see, these problems are exacerbated by the lack of any kind of screen or physical threshold of any kind.¹⁴

It was in 1997 that a nave altar came regularly into use on a Sunday morning. The first occasion was February 2nd, the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple

¹¹ Common Worship Order One was established as Durham Cathedral's contemporary language rite on Advent Sunday, 3rd December 2000.

¹² The listing for Monday 26th September 1994 records a nave altar celebration of the Eucharist where the Bishop of Jarrow was President. The author has no information about the context of this service, and there is no printed order of service for this occasion in the Cathedral archives.

¹³ The Scott screen, so-called because it was erected during the restoration of the Cathedral by Sir Gilbert Scott 1870-1876

¹⁴ Michael Sadgrove's unpublished paper, *Naves and the Dynamic of Large Performance Spaces*, is a valuable and insightful contribution to the issues surrounding this contentious area for contemporary cathedral liturgy.

(Candlemas)¹⁵, followed by the next two Sundays. The Sung Eucharist on the next four Sundays of Lent was celebrated at the high altar, reverting to a nave altar on Palm Sunday, March 23rd. This was the situation for the remainder of 1997.

In 1998, the high altar was used on the Feast of the Epiphany (January 6th, not a Sunday), and for the evening Eucharist of Candlemas. The BCP, coupled with a high altar celebration, was the norm throughout Lent that year, with the celebration moving back to both the ASB Rite A, and a nave altar, on Palm Sunday.¹⁶ This pattern was repeated precisely in 1999 and 2000, though from 2001, even the Lent Sunday celebrations were held at the nave altar.¹⁷

Some reasons why

A very brief word at this point is needed to explain why such an apparently unsettled period of liturgical reform was undergone. The process of change at Durham was a difficult one for the Cathedral community to deal with, comprised of a number of distinct groups, some of whom were wedded, understandably, to the traditional setting for the Eucharist, but also those who wished to see change. As the congregation grew for the Sunday Eucharist, the Quire began to be a little on the small side to contain everybody comfortably, so there is an obvious practical point to be made with regard to seating.

¹⁵ This was also during a period when the Eucharist had been moved (together with Matins) back 15 minutes.

¹⁶ From Pentecost (May 31st) 1998, the Common Worship Calendar was adopted for use in Durham.

¹⁷ From 1998 the high altar is used for the celebration of the Eucharist on Principal Holy Days, with a pattern of Choral Evensong at 515pm and a Sung Eucharist at 730pm, the choirs alternating between the Cathedral Choir and the Cathedral Consort of Singers.

But there are theological issues as well. A collegiate format for congregational seating at the Eucharist is far from ideal: especially with the sightlines as they are in the choir of Durham. While a degree of intimacy and fellowship is undoubtedly lost by holding the celebration of the Eucharist in Durham's vast Nave (as opposed to its slightly less vast Quire), the focus of Eucharistic worship is restored.

The nave altar now in use is known as the Benedict altar¹⁸. This altar is located in the north transept during the week, and moved into position at the crossing ready for Sunday worship. It is a large altar table, and undoubtedly fulfils the requirements of the present Sunday liturgy, though there are some questions remaining about its use. These relate to the positioning of the choir, which in turn raises the issue of the relationship of both choir and congregation to the cathedral organ which is only able to speak clearly into the nave when using its powerful Bombarde section, which is overwhelming for a moderately sized congregation. There are also practical questions about the Liturgy of the Word: the readings are presently read by clergy, using the very formal lectern, and the prayers of intercessions are led by a fourth minister (often a Reader or Minor Canon) who is hidden from view, save for the leading of the prayers of the people from the central aisle of the Nave – a recent and welcome innovation. There is very little physical space around the altar and its sanctuary area, and, as this is the only point of administration of the sacrament, feels rather congested.

All these issues are well known to the cathedral clergy and musicians, and not listed here in any negative critical sense: but it is worth noting that there are always consequences, seen and unseen, which accompany any form of liturgical change.

These consequences have a pastoral impact, and theological and liturgical propriety, in the context of a gathered worshipping community, may need to be moderated to bring about a satisfactory context for worship which both honours God and also results in a nurtured and nourished *laos*. Furthermore, it could be argued that the nave of the Cathedral is itself hallowed by a celebration held in this way.¹⁹

DIOCESAN AND FOUNDATION SERVICES

During the period of our study, Durham Cathedral witnessed the Enthronement of three Bishops, and the Installation of three Deans. Numerous Canons were installed during the same period of time, and their installation services were uniformly traditional, taking place in the context of Choral Evensong. But it is the enthronement and installation services which provide a fascinating insight into the way in which Durham's liturgical imagination, both in terms of text, shape and movement, developed during these two decades.

Enthroning Bishops

David Jenkins, a former Professor of Theology and Religious Studies at Leeds University, was enthroned as Bishop of Durham on the feast of St Matthew, Friday 21st September 1984 at 7.30pm.²⁰ The order of service is simply structured, as follows:

¹⁸ Durham's origins as a monastic foundation are Benedictine.

¹⁹ See chapter 4, pp. 62-62 for further reflection on this point.

²⁰ I do not propose to spend a great deal of time in this thesis discussing printing, type faces and so on: though it is worth noting that both David Jenkins' and Michael Turnbull's Enthronement services are bound in heavy card and printed in two colours and a traditional type. Tom Wright's Enthronement is a radical departure from this style, in a modern Gill Sans type, with colour photographs, and a paper cover.

- The Entry of the Bishop, with the traditional knocking on the north door with the staff
- A Welcome from the Dean, fanfare, hymn and procession
- The Archbishop's Mandate
- The oaths of allegiance
- A prayer for the Bishop, followed by a short hymn
- The Enthronement, performed by the Dean, followed by a Te Deum
- The Installation into the Bishop's stall in the Quire²¹, followed by an anthem
- A brief Presentation to the congregation, followed by a hymn
- The Gospel Reading (John 16.12-24) read by the Bishop
- The Sermon, preached by the Bishop
- Prayers of Intercession led by the Bishop, followed by a hymn
- Blessing, Psalm (111), Dismissal and Hymn
- The Installation in the Chapter House

To a contemporary eye, there are few surprises perhaps. We should note, however, the total clerical domination of the service, with every single speaking part taken solely by the Dean or the Bishop. The service makes no use whatsoever of the Shrine of St Cuthbert; indeed, makes little reference to Durham's great *patronus* at all.²² The use of space is limited to a simple entry, necessary movement (viz. to and from the three Episcopal seats) – and following the Durham tradition, the Bishop is surrounded and

²¹ The Bishop is, historically, successor to the Abbot: hence he is seated on the south side of the choir in a reverse stall, the Dean's stall being on the north side. At Durham, therefore, the traditional designations of *Cantoris* and *Decani* are reversed.

²² The oath was taken on the Durham Gospels, dating from 700AD; these beautiful illuminated Gospels have no direct link with Cuthbert, except for the fact that it is thought that they were written by monks at either Holy Island, Wearmouth or Jarrow.

supported by the Cathedral Chapter (the Dean and Canons in those days) as he processes from one place to the other.

The language of the service is surprisingly prosaic, and uses a strange mixture of contemporary and traditional idioms, sometimes within the same block of text.

Just over ten years later, Michael Turnbull, previously Bishop of Rochester, was enthroned as Bishop of Durham on Saturday 22nd October 1994 at 2.30pm. Instantly one notes the difference in the timing of the service, but while there are few differences in the essential structure of the service, the content includes a number of radical departures from the 1984 service, as can be seen from the following outline:

- A welcome to the congregation from the Dean, followed by a hymn.
- The Entry of the Bishop, with the reading of the Archbishop's Mandate while the Bishop is still at the door. The Mandate was printed in full in the order of service.
- A procession to the Crossing for the Oaths, during which the Choir sang the anthem 'I was glad' by Parry.
- The Oaths, including the Declaration of Assent
- The Enthronement, which was followed by a modern song, The Servant King, as the Bishop was taken to his stall in the Quire.
- The Installation, followed by a contemporary setting of Psalm 67.
- Then a presentation by the Archdeacons and Suffragan Bishop of the Pastoral Staff of the Diocese, accompanied by a commissioning to ministry

- A series of Welcomes from civic, church and university representatives, followed by a hymn 'during which the Bishop will move around the Cathedral and receive gifts of welcome'.
- An Old Testament reading (Isaiah 55.6-13) read by the Moderator of the Northern Province of the United Reformed Church, followed by the Gloria in excelsis sung by the choir
- A Gospel reading (Luke 4.16-21) read by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle, followed by a hymn
- The Sermon, preached by the Bishop
- Prayers, led by the Bishop of Jarrow, and including a sung response from Taizé
- A hymn precedes the Blessing, which is followed by a choral blessing, then silence, then another hymn
- The Installation on the Chapter House

We see a number of significant differences in this service: the use of more modern music, greater congregational involvement in terms of responses to prayers and the informal welcome – which is a significant change. Ecumenical leaders take part for the first time by reading lessons, and the welcomes from other regional institutions are formalised. One also notes a much fuller text, with almost every word printed, including the Archbishop's Mandate.

It is interesting to note an attempt to impose a more obvious liturgical structure on the service: the welcome from the Dean at the beginning, prior to the traditional striking of the door with the Crozier. Also one notes that the Bishop is kept at the north door

as the Archbishop's Mandate is read, a satisfying piece of symbolism. But again we note very little in terms of the use of sacred space, with a purely pragmatic approach to processions and movement (save, perhaps, for the informal moment in the service where the Bishop moves among the congregation).

The end of the service is clumsy, an unhappy amalgam of hymns and blessings which give a sense of confusion – if the Bishop has given his blessing, why do the choir need to add another? The use of silence at this point is unexplained, and seems to be employed because no-one was entirely clear on what should happen in between the choral blessing and the concluding hymn.

Setting these two services side by side, we find clues as to how worship developed in English cathedrals during this time: some informality, a sense of structure, a little more movement, ecumenical and congregational participation. But to compare these with the third enthronement we shall look at, that of Tom Wright nine years later, is to see quite extraordinary changes in style and approach.

Nicholas Thomas Wright, formerly Lector Theologiae of Westminster Abbey and Dean of Lichfield, was enthroned on Sunday 12th October at 3pm. The service time is almost that of Choral Evensong, and there seems to be no difficulty about supplanting that foundation service with such a significant diocesan service. The order of service itself is described as 'the Inauguration of the Ministry of the Right Reverend Dr Nicholas Thomas Wright as Bishop of Durham', thus illustrating an early 21st century discomfort with the language of enthronement. The service is considerably different in structure from either of its precursors, though some of the traditional texts remain.

In the order of service itself, there is a lengthy introduction to the rite by the Dean, and a full page on the music chosen for the service. The service may be summarized thus:

- A welcome to the congregation before the service starts from the Dean
- The welcome to the Bishop at the north door, and the reading of the Archbishop's Mandate, and processional hymn
- The Declaration and Oaths, made at the Crossing, followed by the Veni Creator²³
- An anthem (Parry's I was Glad) as schoolchildren and the Chapter accompany the Dean and Bishop to the 'Cathedra in the Quire'
- The Enthronement and Installation, performed as one rite, and accompanied by prayers led by the children
- The Presentation to the congregation, followed by a hymn
- A structured liturgy of the Word, with Collect, Reading (Isaiah 55, read by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle), a psalm (84) and Gospel reading (Mark 8.34-9.1) with sung congregational Alleluias, and read by a newly-ordained Deacon
- The Sermon, preached by the Bishop
- The Prayers, which take the form of a short pilgrimage around the Cathedral, and led by local clergy and representatives from the University. The pilgrimage moved to the Miners' Memorial, the Font and the Crossing, interspersed with verses from Bunyan's Pilgrim Hymn.
- The Greetings, made informally during the singing of the Te Deum

²³ In the familiar English translation by John Cosin, 17th century Canon, Dean and Bishop of Durham.

- The Peace, followed by a hymn, during which the Cathedral Foundation processed to the Chapter House for the traditional installation in the abbatial chair: this was broadcast into the Cathedral
- The Thanksgiving, led by the Bishop of Lesotho²⁴ and lay people from the Diocese, interspersed with a sung response. This was concluded with the General Thanksgiving from the BCP.
- An act of Dedication, using a newly commissioned anthem, setting a collect of St Cuthbert. This included a period of silent prayer at the Feretory (the Shrine of St Cuthbert); the Diocesan Crozier was resting on the Saint's tomb, and was taken from there by the Bishop.
- The Blessing (in a solemn Episcopal form) and dismissal, followed by a hymn, and then a blessing of city, county and diocese from the north door.

This service is illustrative of many developments in Cathedral liturgy (and indeed, liturgy in general) which we have discussed in chapter four of this thesis. The principal changes are innovative: the use of children at the enthronement 'as a sign of gentleness and simplicity'²⁵; the expanded Liturgy of the Word, the Peace, Thanksgiving and act of Dedication, entirely new additions to the service. Coupled to these developments are the noteworthy use of lay people to lead prayers and thanksgivings, and a very different approach to the use of space, principally seen in three ways. First, the pilgrimage model for the prayers, moving around the building to significant theological and historical stations within the body of the Cathedral. Second, the placing of the installation in the Chapter House within the service itself, and then using radio microphones to transmit the ceremony into the Cathedral

²⁴ The diocese of Lesotho is twinned with the diocese of Durham.

building (we have seen how this ceremony was previously held at the end with no congregational participation whatsoever). Third, the use of the tomb of St Cuthbert, as a place of homage, as the 'home' of the Bishop's staff, and as a place of quiet reflection for the Bishop and his *familia* at the end of the rite. This is clearly indicative of a very different approach to sacred space and processional which has developed in cathedrals and throughout the church, as a response to new ideas and rediscoveries in liturgical theology.

This developed use of space and processional has also increased, not decreased, the undoubted verbosity of the rite. The 2003 enthronement is over twice the length of the 1984 enthronement service. While the former is undoubtedly better than the latter in many ways, a concern remains about the use of language, and how one can adequately respond to the need for both beauty and brevity in liturgical language.

Installing Deans

The first Decanal installation of our period of study comes right at its beginning. Peter Baelz, formerly Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology at Oxford University, was instituted and installed as Dean of Durham on Wednesday 6th February 1980 at 3pm.

The service was simple:

- Processional Hymn²⁵
- The Institution (including the Declaration and Oaths, a prayer and a blessing)

²⁵ From the Dean's foreword to the service.

²⁶ Dean Alington's 'Durham hymn', *God whose city's sure foundation stands upon his holy hill* (based on the University's motto *Fundamenta eius super montibus sanctis*, the opening words of Psalm 87)

- The Installation (performed by the Sub-Dean), followed by a formal word of welcome, and a hymn
- The Office of Choral Evensong
- Sermon (preached by the Dean)
- Hymn
- Blessing

This very simple order of service was followed, as with the Enthronement services, with a ceremony of installation in the Chapter House, which, intriguingly, took place in Latin.²⁷

Nine years later, John Arnold, formerly Dean of Rochester, was installed as Dean of Durham on Saturday 16th September 1989 at 2.30pm. Instantly, one is aware of the more accessible nature of the service, taking place on a Saturday afternoon, not a Wednesday afternoon as Peter Baelz's installation had done.

This service followed an entirely different shape, with no attempt at including or even replicating the office of Evensong:

- An introit, sung by the choir, was followed by Peter Baelz's hymn *Ring Christ, ring Mary*²⁸, *Benedict and Bede*
- The Institution, including prayers and the reading of Her Majesty's Letters Patent, followed by a psalm. All this took place at the Crossing.
- The Installation in the Quire.

²⁷ The Sub-Dean's words were *assignamus tibi locum decani et vocem in capitulo*.

²⁸ Written for the dedication of Durham Cathedral bells. The cathedral bells are named after the saints mentioned in the text.

- Formal welcomes from civic, church and university dignitaries in the Crossing.
- The Ministry of the Word²⁹, including a hymn, Old Testament lesson (read by the Canon in Residence), an anthem, New Testament lesson (read by the Dean), and then a sermon preached by the Dean.
- Prayers and Praise: this section included a hymn, prayers of thanksgiving led by Canons, and the Lord's Prayer; a penultimate hymn of praise, and collects and a blessing given by the Dean from the high altar. Alington's 'Durham hymn' ended the service.
- The Installation ceremony in the Chapter House (still performed in Latin).

This service still maintains a relatively simple structure, though still represents (as, arguably, the enthronement of Michael Turnbull) something of an intermediate liturgical feel. There is very little in the way of symbolism, no acknowledgement of the potential of the building, and only essentially pragmatic movement. The texts have a strikingly ASB-like feel to them, entirely lacking in any kind of poetry or lasting resonance. The service, written as a special order for a special occasion, does have the benefit of feeling better than simply being a liturgical aperitif to the normal diet of Choral Evensong: but one is still left with a thirst for something a little more refreshing.

Such a thirst was overwhelmingly quenched with the installation of Michael Sadgrove, formerly Provost then Dean of Sheffield, and Precentor and Vice-Provost of Coventry, as Dean on Thursday 20th March 2003 at 7pm. March 20th is the Feast of

²⁹ We note the ASB phraseology.

St Cuthbert; thus a firm stamp is placed on the rite from the beginning for being set on such a quintessentially appropriate date.

The broad structure of the rite is given on page three of the order of service:

The Gathering, as we unite together in worship

The Institution, Installation and Welcome, as the new Dean formally takes up his new ministry and is welcomed amongst us

The Liturgy of the Word, incorporating readings from the Bible and from St Bede's *Life of St Cuthbert*, and a sermon by the new Dean

The Pilgrimage, during which prayer is made at the Shrine of St Cuthbert

The Conclusion, as we give thanks for the communion of Saints and are sent out with God's blessing.³⁰

It is important for our purposes to flesh out some of the detail of the rite:

- Introit, greeting to the new Dean at the West End, and processional hymn
- Liturgical greeting and responsory led by the Bishop, and an introduction read by the Vice-Dean, silence, and the collect
- The Institution, which was performed at the Crossing, and included the new Dean's investiture in his cope
- The Installation, performed by the Vice-Dean in the Quire
- The Welcome in the name of various local institutions and communities, and international representatives; and congregational applause, together with a response by the Dean
- The Liturgy of the Word; this included a reading from Bede's *Life of St Cuthbert*, silence and an anthem; the Gospel (read by the Dean) and sermon. This was concluded by a hymn (St Patrick's Breastplate)
- The Pilgrimage was a procession by the Cathedral foundation to the Shrine of St Cuthbert, led by the Bishop. Following further readings from Bede's *Life*,

³⁰ from the Institution and Installation of the Very Reverend Michael Sadgrove as Dean of Durham p. 3

Northumbrian pipes were played, and the Lord's Prayer followed, together with a collect.

- The Conclusion began with a hymn, collect, solemn blessing, and sung dismissal, with the choir singing Psalm 150 as the foundation procession left for the Chapter House, where the installation ceremony was performed in English.

The author had the privilege of attending this service, and can attest to its length,³¹ but also to its splendour. The building was used almost in its entirety, due to the inclusion of the so-called 'Pilgrimage'. The size of the congregation and the restrictive nature of some of the pilgrimage 'sites' (such as the Feretory) meant that for entirely understandable reasons only members of the cathedral foundation were able to take part. This meant that a truly wonderful use of space, while visually striking, had the effect of leaving the most of the congregation both physically and spiritually static. This point must, however, be set aside the imaginative use of those objects and symbols, unique to Durham, which found an imaginative and successful liturgical use in this service.

Furthermore, as with the Enthronement of Bishop Wright the same year, we see the unashamed adoption of St Cuthbert and his shrine as an important historic and spiritual connection between contemporary holders of ecclesiastical office and the inheritance of faith which is theirs to both embrace and expand. Writing about the potential development and contemporary use of the cathedral's other Shrine, that of

³¹ Two hours

the Venerable Bede,³² Canon David Kennedy, Precentor of Durham, is keen to establish the theological credentials of such a development in the cathedral's liturgical life:

At the Reformation, in response to perceived abuses concerning the cult of saints, there was a systematic desire either to destroy shrines or replace them with decent places of burial. We can be grateful that in Durham, the latter course was followed for both St Cuthbert and the Venerable Bede. It is, we believe, quite clear, that from the 16th century the sites of the two shrines remained places of honour and grateful remembrance, but not places of devotion and rarely places of pilgrimage. However, the twentieth century has seen a re-evaluation of such sites. This, in part, is due to the catholic revival in the Church of England, but also to other important factors. These include, a delight in and appreciation of our history, new and theologically positive views of the doctrine of the communion of saints by both protestants and catholics, a developing appreciation of the potential of ancient cathedrals and churches as holy places, the renewal of the arts, the importance of particular places for prayer, and the recovery of the idea of pilgrimage.³³

Fascinatingly, this takes us back to where we started, reminding us of the origin of so many cathedral sites, and the beginning of pilgrimage and the development of processional and pilgrim liturgies. So we have a clear understanding that much contemporary development of the use of sacred space is a rediscovery, not only of what great cathedral buildings were designed for, but also of a degree of understanding about individual and corporate spirituality of which our forebears were acutely aware.³⁴

Before we move on to look briefly at some other diocesan services, let us note the use of non-biblical texts in these later liturgies. Bede's *Life of St Cuthbert* is an obvious choice for such a service, and is to be welcomed and applauded; but may we remind ourselves that the use of such material has been unusual in formal liturgical settings

³² Situated in the Galilee Chapel (Lady Chapel) at the West End of the cathedral

³³ The Reverend Canon Dr David Kennedy, *The Shrine of St Bede*, unpublished paper written for the Chapter of Durham Cathedral, February 2004. Reproduced by kind permission.

³⁴ Cf. pp. 62-65 for discussion of this point.

until relatively recently. Cathedrals are now beginning to be more creative in terms of the resources they use, even on grand occasions such as those we have been reviewing; this is yet another way in which recent liturgical changes have had a freeing effect on those responsible for the creation of both formal and informal cathedral worship.

CELEBRATING SAINT CUTHBERT

No survey of the worship of Durham Cathedral in recent years could fail to include a reference to the way in which Saint Cuthbert has been celebrated in recent times. We have already noted how the present Dean's installation was fixed for St Cuthbert's day, and Dr Kennedy's succinct explanation of the way in which attitudes towards commemoration of saints, and Durham's saints in particular, have relaxed.

For several years, the format of St Cuthbert's Day was fixed, and was always of interest. The main celebration was not the Eucharist (though the 730am celebration of the Eucharist was held at the high altar in the saint's honour), but Choral Evensong with a procession to the tomb. The Cathedral foundation gathered around the tomb itself, with members of the congregation assembling in the Chapel of the Nine Altars. This format was certainly in place in 1980, and remained so until at least 1990.³⁵ But there were two diversions from this, in 1987 and 1990.

In 1987, a service was held on Friday 20th March at 7pm called *A Celebration of Cuthbert, Monk, Bishop, Saint*, on the 1300th anniversary of his death. The

Archbishop of York was the preacher at this service, which consisted of an entry rite, with fine texts written for the occasion, sometimes adapted from Bede, Caedmon, and other early English authors. Subsequent sections of the service were called The Vision and the Call, The Commemoration of Cuthbert, the Readings, The Sermon, and then the performance of John Tavener's *Ikon of Saint Cuthbert of Lindisfarne*, commissioned for the occasion. There then followed a Litany of Thanksgiving, The Pilgrimage to the tomb, and a Rite of Dismissal.

This was an imaginatively structured service, with a simple sense of movement. Although the only main congregational movement was to the tomb at the end of the service, the rite belies an attempt at liturgical freshness which appeals, and predates the rediscovery of the importance of the use of sacred space through the emerging liturgical scholarship of the 1990s.

In 1990, the cathedral celebrated the 900th anniversary of its foundation, and so a special St Cuthbert's Day service was held at 3pm.³⁶ The Archbishop of Canterbury was present (and preached), and a most imaginative service was held, with a number of specially written texts, fine hymnody, ecumenical participation, and even special lighting. The service included a great deal of movement, but only for the Bishop's Procession, the congregation remaining seated in the Nave. The service ended with the Renewal of Baptismal Vows, and an act of re-dedication before the archiepiscopal blessing.

³⁵ Though we should note that in 1989, the service also included the Admission of Office of the Chancellor of the Diocese of Durham, His Honour Judge Rupert Bursell QC.

³⁶ The 20th March was a Saturday in 1990.



In 1991, the celebration of St Cuthbert on St Cuthbert's Day reverted to its previous format, and the Choral Evensong and Procession continues still. But in 1994, an additional celebration was added, a Eucharist, celebrated at 11am on the Saturday before 20th March. The Bishop of Newcastle presided at this service in 1994; in 1995 the Dean presided, and the Bishop of London preached. The Post-Communion rite is fascinating: after receiving the sacrament, the people were directed to particular stations around the building, where a short simultaneous act of worship was held, before each group converged on the shrine for final prayers and a blessing. This format continued for several years, with visiting bishops as preachers.³⁷

In 2003, of course, the Dean's Installation was fixed for St Cuthbert's Day, and we have written about that service earlier in this chapter. Suffice to say, in conclusion, that there has been a fresh liturgical realisation of the potential of celebrating Cuthbert (and, indeed, Bede) in a new way. We can see that in 1987 and 1990 good acts of worship were produced to commemorate significant anniversaries, and that it was good use of language and text which characterised these services, rather than unusual use of space. One might well argue that, apart from a procession to the tomb of St Cuthbert, there is little else to do in such a service; indeed, to do more would be to detract from the primary focus of the service. But we do see in the later services, and in particular the installation service of 2003, a more dynamic sense of pilgrimage, with much greater use of space and processional.

It is important to note two other things: first, the innovation of a Sung Eucharist on the Saturday prior to St Cuthbert's day, complete with distinguished visitors to preach;

³⁷ In 1997 the Bishop of Dudley was the preacher; at this service the new Millennium window in the

and second, the imaginative stational post-communion rite, which is unprecedented, and makes fine use of the resources of the cathedral building.

DIOCESAN AND 'SPECIAL' SERVICES

There are the finest of lines to be drawn between diocesan services, special services, non-foundational services and so forth. This is harder at Durham than in many places, and it is a mistake to engage in too rigid an exercise in over-categorization. For example, is the annual Miner's Festival service a diocesan or external event? For our purposes, we shall restrict diocesan services to those which are designed to function specifically as acts of worship for the diocese as a gathered Anglican family (such as the Maundy Thursday Chrism Eucharist, Confirmation services, etc.), and group the remainder together under the nebulous, unimaginative but hopefully sufficient title of 'special' services.

Durham has, for many years, held a regular number of services for the diocese which have stood the test of time, in terms of consistency of liturgical material and attendance on the part of diocesan groups. In recent years, many of these services have been subtly or considerably changed, to give to them a more contemporary feel, and also to fit more readily with the current liturgical style which the cathedral has evolved through the influence of recent developments within the wider church, and the expertise of its own full-time liturgists.

South Choir Aisle was dedicated. In 2002, Canon Kate Tristram was the first woman and the first person not in episcopal orders to preach at the service.

The Chrism Eucharist

A principal example is the growth of the Chrism Eucharist; or more properly, *Holy Communion with the Blessing of Oils and the Renewal of Vows on Maundy Thursday*. In many cathedrals, this service has seen growth in popularity, as it has moved away from being a service belonging only to those who would subscribe to membership of the Catholic wing of the Church of England, to a wider constituency. Doubtless there are many contributory factors at play here – but among them was the publication of *Lent, Holy Week, Easter: Services and Prayers* in 1984/6³⁸, the realisation by diocesan bishops that such a service provided an ideal opportunity to give a significant annual address to their clergy, and also a broadening of attitudes to such acts of worship which span boundaries of churchmanship, coupled with fresh understandings of the use of holy oils in worship, not least as an essential component of the church's ministry of healing.

In Durham in 1980, this service was short and unsung, taking place in the Galilee chapel at 1215pm. There was no change to this pattern until 1987, when the service was moved to be a high altar celebration. In 1993, the timing of the service was moved to 11am, where it has remained ever since, though it is now a Nave celebration. The liturgy has seen considerable development, and along with many other cathedrals, has now included renewals of vows for all commissioned and authorised lay ministers as well as those who are ordained. Far removed from 1980, the service has many hymns, and a variety of music, but is not sung by the Cathedral choir, making use of congregational settings with cantors to lead the singing.

³⁸ See Chapter 2, p. 8

Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors

This service, held at the end of November (seemingly the Sunday before Advent Sunday) was unchanging for many years, and gave an opportunity for not only the cathedral foundation, but also the University and civic authorities, to offer thanksgiving for their forebears and the shared nature of the institutional roots of the Durham establishment.

The previous format of the service was both simple and traditional: after the opening hymn, the sermon was preached. Then came the Commemoration. The bidding prayer, read by the Dean, included a list which made very clear the constituency of the commemoration:

... our cathedral church, representatives of the city, university and schools of the foundation, people of the ancient county palatine of Durham ...³⁹

After opening responses, the Vice-Chancellor then read a lesson, followed by a hymn. The Bishop and Dean led the prayers of commemoration, and then came a procession to the tomb of St Cuthbert, a hymn and a blessing.

The service maintained this format until 1993⁴⁰ when a different shape was given to the service, with the Sermon being given a central position instead of being at the beginning (though the essential texts of the service remained unchanged).

³⁹ from Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors p.2

⁴⁰ Though it should be noted that in 1990, the procession at the end was to Bede's tomb in the Galilee chapel. The author assumes that this was due to temporary inaccessibility at the East end of the cathedral, though cannot find any archival record to support this assumption.

In 2001, the service went through another revision, and not only in terms of text. As we saw from the traditional bidding prayer, there was always an inclusion of ‘people from the ancient county Palatine of Durham’. In the 2001 service, we see the following rubric:

... together with representatives of the schools, charities, businesses and support services of the County, City and University of Durham

Durham Cathedral Chorister School

St Hild’s Primary School

Gilesgate Comprehensive School

The British Red Cross

The Citizens’ Advice Bureau

Durham University Charity Week (DUCK)

Prontaprint, Durham

Claypath Medical Practice

The Durham Constabulary⁴¹

While not directly liturgical, the pastoral outreach displayed by such a shift in constituency for the service should be noted, together with the fact that these groups and organisations are later invited to carry floral tributes to be laid on St Cuthbert’s tomb. Although it might be reasonably assumed that many members of these constituencies would be unfamiliar with church, there seems little compromise in terms of language in the text of the service, the structure of which is as follows:

- Acclamations (composed by Conrad Eden, former Durham cathedral organist)
- Processional Hymn
- Introduction (by the Dean), followed by the Lord’s Prayer
- Jubilate, sung by the Choir
- First lesson (Ecclesiasticus 44.1-15, read by the Vice-Chancellor)
- Hymn
- Second lesson (1Corinthians 2.6-13, read by the Mayor)

- The Sermon⁴²
- The Commemoration, taking a different format from previous years, interspersed with sung Alleluias
- Anthem, sung by the Choir
- The Prayers
- The Pilgrimage and Prayers at the Shrine
- Final Hymn
- Dismissal

This format has remained over the last three years. While still a simple structure which has unchanged (though the readings are changed each year), a shift can be seen in terms of involvement from the local community, and in the choice of, for want of a better term, ‘celebrity’ preachers. And although the service still concludes with the Pilgrimage to the Shrine of St Cuthbert, the focus seems to have shifted away from the Saint as principal founder and benefactor, as in the traditional service. Perhaps this corresponds with the greater attention that is being paid to the Saint at St Cuthbertside, as we have already noted.

Miners’ Festival Service

The Durham Miners’ Gala is famous, and has a legendary status which goes beyond the locality of the North-east of England. At the heart of the Gala is a service at the

⁴¹ from Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors 2001 p. 2

⁴² The preacher on this occasion was Sir Roy Strong, director of the Victoria and Albert Museum. In the subsequent two years the preachers have been Dr Leslie Griffiths, the Methodist minister and broadcaster, and Libby Purves, the media personality and journalist. The choice of preacher also conveys a change in style to a wider audience than merely the ecclesiastical or the academic.

Cathedral. I have included it in our study rather as a control is used in a chemical experiment, because, remarkably, this service has remained essentially unchanged, even to the extent of including the same hymns year after year. The format is as follows:

- Opening hymn (O worship the King, accompanied by the colliery bands)
- (Occasionally, new banners are dedicated at this point)
- Welcome, confession, absolution
- The General Thanksgiving
- Hymn (Jesu, lover of my soul)
- Reading
- Anthem (sung by the choir)
- The Apostles' Creed
- Prayers, Lord's Prayer
- Hymn (Fight the good fight)
- Sermon
- Voluntary (played by a band)
- Blessing
- Final hymn (Praise my soul the King of heaven)

It is striking when reading through the orders of service that it was only in 2001 that the language of the service moved from Prayer Book to contemporary English. There have been other small differences: as in the Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors, 'celebrity' preachers have appeared in recent years⁴³. And the service is

⁴³ The Bishop of Liverpool in 2002, the MP Tony Benn in 2003 – an avowed atheist.

flexible enough to have included a moving remembrance of the Easington Colliery disaster in 2000.

But why has the service remained unchanged? Here, surely, the answer is one concerned with pastoral theology. The service has a traditionally-minded constituency, for whom this may well be their only encounter with Christian worship year by year. While we might ask whether it is therefore all the more important that the service should change, lest it convey an impression of a static, even stagnant Church, the pastoral is seen to govern the liturgical. The need for sacred space to provide *stabilitas*, the essential requirement of liturgy to ‘disturb the comfortable, and comfort the disturbed’ as one recent commentator put it, is clearly underlined in this annual act of worship. There is also the need to recognize that this is as much an event as it is a service, and this is key to understanding the challenge which faces cathedral liturgists and the production of special services for groups which visit the cathedral on an annual basis, and do so over a long period of time. This year will have seen the 95th Miners’ Festival Service in Durham Cathedral, and it is not only difficult, but unwise to undo what has proved to be successful from the outset. It is never good liturgical practice simply to make changes for changes sake. Coupled with the realization that this is an event as much as it is a service (perhaps explaining the presence of an atheist in the pulpit), it becomes plain, as we will see in our concluding chapter, that ‘special’ services are beyond the reach of the liturgical purist. A degree of compromise is required on the part of the cathedral to meet the pastoral needs, as well as the liturgical needs, of a given constituency. In our first chapter we noted this developed understanding of the different model which a cathedral inhabits for a particular occasion, and asked questions about the way in which this impinges on the central and

basic function of a cathedral as the bishop's church. When we have spent some time examining the liturgical developments of Coventry Cathedral over the last two decades, we will be able to draw some clearer conclusions in our answers to these questions.

Chapter Six

Patterns of Worship (2):

Liturgy in the Cathedral Church of Saint Michael, Coventry, since 1980

INTRODUCTION

In chapter four, we discussed some of the issues surrounding the presentation of public worship in Coventry Cathedral, not least because of the nature of the building as a 'hall-church that magnificently discloses itself all at once'.¹ Our explorations in this chapter will differ somewhat from those in chapter five, for when examining Coventry from a liturgical view-point, one makes the surprising discovery that, in terms of regular Sunday Eucharistic worship, very little has changed during the period of our study. Whereas Durham saw a number of changes in terms of rite, and a substantial period of experimentation in terms of location (resulting in a significant shift from Quire to Nave as the norm)², Coventry's Eucharistic worship has, with an occasional monthly exception³, remained largely the same.

Like Durham, though, we can make use of the services of the foundation. Coventry has seen the enthronement of two bishops. There have been two installations of Provosts, and one installation of a Dean⁴. These latter three in particular have had very different liturgical treatments.

¹ Cf. Chapter Four, p. 57

² Cf. Chapter Five, pp. 79 ff.

³ In 1992, after a period of experimentation that proved highly controversial amongst the Cathedral community, it was decided that the Cathedral Eucharist on the third Sunday of every month should be an 'All-Age' Eucharist, more in accordance with the *Common Worship* provision for A Service of the Word with Holy Communion. This service includes more modern music and a simpler structure, and always uses Eucharistic Prayer H. Most contentiously, the seating is altered to form an almond shape, around a small central undressed altar.

⁴ Following the recommendations of *Heritage and Renewal* (op. cit.) the Cathedrals Measure 1999 abolished the title of Provost for the head of parish church Cathedrals, including those holding office at the time. Consequently at Coventry John Petty was both the last Provost and the first Dean.

However, the more interesting task at Coventry is to examine some of the diocesan and special services held there over the last two decades or so. We have established from our historical study of liturgy in the Church of England in the twentieth century that it was a period of unprecedented liturgical change. What makes the study of Coventry particularly pertinent is that its physical existence shares almost half of that period of time. Its newness has meant that those responsible for its worship have sought to establish, practically *ex nihilo*, a substantial liturgical tradition of its own. The first Precentor, Joseph Poole, brought an incredible energy to the task. He founded a service which has become legendary at Coventry, *The Form of A Servant*, a service for Christmas Eve that sought both to echo the more traditional carol service as exemplified at Kings College, Cambridge, and also to make bold statements in terms of drama, lighting and literature. A full and detailed history of this service would make a fascinating study in its own right, though we shall devote some considerable time in this thesis on this significant act of worship.

But let us begin by reminding ourselves of a number of features of the liturgical theatre which is Coventry Cathedral, before looking more closely at how successive generations, and their clergy, have sought to use it.

First, there is the nature of the building as a *hallenkirche*, revealing almost all of itself at once. The new cathedral lacks the transepts of a mediaeval building, and with an absence of obvious liturgical thresholds – the lack of any form of screen, for example - the liturgist is faced with particular challenges, especially with regard to establishing the right atmosphere for worship with differing sizes of congregation.

Second, and related to this, is the difficulty of establishing a liturgical rationale for processional. As we have discussed in a previous chapter, processional should not merely be a vehicle, or indeed an excuse, for doing things differently, but requires an obvious purpose in terms of liminality, that is, to take the worshipping community on a journey which leads to transformation, a pilgrimage in miniature. Coventry is a difficult building in which to achieve these goals.

Third, there are the Cathedral ruins. This dramatic setting provides a remarkable context for liturgy which, as we will see, has been exploited by Precentors and others throughout the Cathedral's history. The question remains as to how they are used: for they carry a weight of memory and resonance in their own right, and a very particular resonance at that. They cannot bear the weight too readily of liturgical artifice or contrivance. The ruins can in no way simply be understood as a cloister, narthex or simple gathering space - the memory of war, destruction and the desire for reconciliation are too strong.

Fourth, there are the architectural demands of the new building. In an article which is remarkably critical for an official publication,⁵ Furneaux Jordan suggests a number of areas where Basil Spence's vision seems to fail. The contemporary liturgist has to contend with a number of factors that are the direct consequence of Spence's design⁶. Graham Sutherland's controversial tapestry *Christ seated in Glory in the Tetramorph* dominates the church from almost every perspective, both in terms of its colour (the powerful green often serves to contradict the liturgical colours stated in the vestments

⁵ Cathedral Reborn, a souvenir publication to commemorate the reconstruction and consecration of Coventry Cathedral.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 32 ff.

at various seasons of the Christian year) and, naturally, in terms of the startling and powerful depiction of Christ. Again more detail will be given below – but one might reflect on the difficulty, for example, of making a potent statement about the Passion in during the early part of the *Triduum Sacrum* with such a striking image of glory and resurrection constantly visible to all.⁷

These are just some of the issues; others will emerge as we examine specific liturgies, beginning with the formal services of initiation and welcome to the Bishops and Deans of the last twenty years or so.

DIOCESAN AND FOUNDATION SERVICES

Enthroning Bishops

The Right Reverend Simon Barrington-Ward⁸ was enthroned as the seventh Bishop of Coventry on Saturday 4th January 1986, having been consecrated in Westminster Abbey on All Saints' Day 1985. The title of the service is styled as 'A Celebration of Ministry and the Enthronement . . .', and the printed introduction to the service notes that

At the Bishop's own request . . . it will include an opportunity for all of us to reaffirm our Christian commitment, and for representatives of the Church and the wider community to offer their gifts to God as a symbol of the service to him and to the world to which they, with the Bishop, are called in the years ahead.⁹

⁷ For some years now, a large plain cross draped in red has been suspended above the chancel step, in an attempt to provide a focus for reflection on Christ's sufferings. The first Precentor, Canon Joseph Poole, gave this as an example of his attempts to provide striking visual variety alongside the ostensibly restrictive rites of the Book of Common Prayer, in a lecture given to the Conference of American Deans in 1965, later published in the report of that conference as *Liturgical Perspectives*.

⁸ Bishop of Coventry 1985-1997; cf. p. 75

The structure of the service is straightforward. Following organ music and anthems the outline is as follows (the bold type indicates the actual section headings used in the rite):

- **In the Ruins** – the Hallowing Places¹⁰ were blessed, and the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation¹¹ was said.
- **The Entry of the Bishop** – a fanfare and introit (Howells' *Here is the little door*), followed by a hymn as the processions entered the new building
- **The Welcome** – a short and formal paragraph spoken by the Provost
- **The Offering of Gifts** - various gifts were offered at the Crib, then blessed by the Bishop, as the choir sang a carol
- **The Mandate** – read, in accordance with tradition, by the Archdeacon of Canterbury.
- **The Bishop's Oath** – of fidelity to the cathedral
- **Prayer for the Bishop** – including an anthem (Stanford's *Beati quorum via*), silence, and a blessing.
- **The Enthronement** – the Bishop was clothed in cope and mitre at the High Altar, presented with the diocesan pastoral staff by the Bishop of Warwick, and then enthroned by the Archdeacon of Canterbury. This was followed by a fanfare, an anthem (Vaughan Williams' *O clap your hands*) and a hymn.

⁹ From the service booklet, p. 2

¹⁰ The Hallowing Places, situated around the walls of the Ruins, are modern reminders of the Guild Chapels which existed in the former cathedral, and stand for the close connection between the ideal of the new building and its industrial context. They are rarely used in the Cathedral's current liturgical diet.

¹¹ The Coventry Litany of Reconciliation, using the refrain 'Father, Forgive' has been in use since the Second World War, and is now recited in the Cathedral every weekday at noon, and always in the Cathedral Ruins at noon on Fridays.

- **The Prayers** – a litany, led by the Bishop from his throne, followed by the Lord’s Prayer (in modern translation).
- **The Presentation** - the Bishop and his wife were presented with a Cross of Nails¹², after which they were formally presented to the congregation. This was followed by (another) fanfare, and the sharing of the Peace. Then came a hymn, and the Bishop’s address.
- **Renewal of Baptismal Vows and Dedication to Ministry** – in its Series 3 form, led by the Bishop from the font. The entire congregation held lit tapers for this section of the service. The procession then returned to the sanctuary during the singing of *O Come all ye faithful*.
- **The Benediction** – a ‘double blessing’: the Bishop gave a simple ASB Christmas seasonal blessing, followed by a choral benediction sung by the choir.
- **The Withdrawal** – formal processions to the west of the Cathedral.
- **The Blessing of the City and Diocese** – given from St Michael’s steps, outside the Cathedral, facing what is now Coventry University.

This was an imaginative service, and a very full service, in terms of textual and symbolic content. Without spending too much time in detailed analysis, it seems that the essential heart of the service was used almost as an excuse for all that surrounded it. That criticism is not a negative one, for it strikes this author that an Episcopal enthronement is an excellent occasion on which to celebrate the ministry of the whole people of God. But this service was so densely packed with symbol and word, that

¹² Three mediaeval nails were bound into the shape of a cross by a workman the day after the former building was destroyed. This has remained the distinctive badge of the Cathedral, the original three nails forming the centrepiece of Geoffrey Clarke’s abstract High Altar cross, which was regilded in

one must ask about the effectiveness of the whole. Texts alone cannot reveal the essential feel of a service, and the Bishop's memory is of a most memorable and happy occasion.¹³

To compare this service with the one that was to follow, twelve years later, is fascinating. The Right Reverend Colin James Bennetts¹⁴ was enthroned as Bishop of Coventry on Palm Sunday, 5th April 1998. The word 'enthronement' was not used at all in the order of service, the front cover describing the liturgy as a 'Service of Welcome and Installation'.

The shape of the service was simpler than its predecessor. As before, the bold typeface indicates the section headings as given in the actual order of service:

- **The Preparation and Entry** – before the service began, the Bishop stood in the ruins and blessed the Hallowing Places, and led the Litany of Reconciliation. He then entered the Cathedral in silence, and prayed silently; then followed a processional hymn and a welcome from the Provost.
- **The Declarations and Installation** – the Archbishop's mandate was read by the Archdeacon of Canterbury; the Bishop made the oaths and declarations in full, and was then installed in the Episcopal Seat¹⁵, followed by a blessing said by the Bishop of Warwick.
- **The Presentations** – returning to the chancel step, the Bishop was presented with a Cross of Nails, a Stole, Cope, Mitre and Diocesan Pastoral Staff. He

September 2004. Today members of the Cathedral foundation wear a silver pectoral cross. For more on the Community of the Cross of Nails, see note 18.

¹³ In conversation with the author

¹⁴ The Right Reverend Colin Bennetts was translated from the Suffragan see of Buckingham in the Diocese of Oxford.

¹⁵ The word 'throne' is also avoided in the text.

was then formally welcomed by the congregation and the usual ecumenical and civic representatives.

- **The Ministry of the Word** – this comprised three scriptural readings, separated by a responsorial psalm and a hymn. Then the Bishop gave his address.
- **The Offering of Prayer** – prayers were led by the Bishop's secretary, with a sung congregational response; then came the collection and presentation of gifts. Then a choral blessing, followed by the blessing from the Bishop himself.
- **The Withdrawal** – the processions moved to the west end, and the Bishop went outside to give the traditional blessing of city, county and diocese.

This service was clearly more compact than the service of 1986, and seems to have a clearer focus on the Bishop and the inauguration of his particular ministry, as opposed to the more general reaffirmation of ministry which characterised the enthronement of Simon Barrington-Ward.

Installing Provosts and Deans

Canon Colin Semper was installed as Provost of Coventry on Saturday 11th September 1982. Historically, the Provost (or, now, the Dean) holds office by virtue of being Vicar of the ancient parish of St Michael, Coventry. Hence, legally, the Installation as Provost or Dean always necessarily follows the act of Institution and Induction as Vicar.

Following an introit hymn, the service proceeds as follows:

- **The Institution** – exactly following the standard legal formularies for instituting the incumbent of any Anglican parish
- **The Induction** – the Archdeacon and Cathedral Churchwardens led the incumbent to the west doors, where the actual possession of the benefice was enacted.
- **The Installation** – following a hymn, the Provost-designate made the declaration of fidelity to the Cathedral, and was then installed. Then came the Lord's Prayer, and then a fanfare was sounded.
- **The Presentation** – the Provost was formally presented to the congregation, and all applauded.
- **The Welcome** – formal welcomes from civic, educational and ecumenical leaders.
- **The Office** – this was essentially full Choral Evensong, without the second set of responses, and included an address by the new Provost. The Bishop then concluded the service with a blessing.

It is interesting to note the similarities between this service and the Installation of Peter Baelz as Dean of Durham two years earlier. With the exception of the title (Provost as opposed to Dean), and the nature of Coventry as a parish church Cathedral, the rites are practically identical.

The same could not be said of the Installation of Canon John Petty as Provost on Sunday 24th January 1988. This service was completely different from any we have

examined in either place, as this was a service of Holy Communion. The introduction to the service explains the rationale behind the Eucharistic context:

...this afternoon's service focuses on the ministry all are called to share through worship, mission, and involvement with God's world. Appropriately, then, we welcome our new Provost within the context of the Communion, at which the church both celebrates the life of God in its midst, and pledges itself to fulfil the tasks he calls us to in our time.¹⁶

The service began with a ceremony that has become a tradition at Coventry: that the new priest is presented by the community from which they have come. Thus John Petty entered the building after all the other participants, surrounded by members of his previous parish and community leaders.

The service outline then proceeded in this fashion:

- **The Preparation** – a dialogue¹⁷ led by the Bishop, the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation, the Gloria in Excelsis and two collects.
- **The Ministry of the Word** (including *Zadok the Priest* as the gradual anthem), and the sermon preached prior to the installation by the Provost-designate.
- **The Inauguration** – including affirmations and declaration that the legal requirements had been fulfilled, silence and a hymn, and then the Deed of Collation and Induction, which took place at the west doors. Then followed the Installation as Provost by the Vice-Provost.
- **The Prayer of the Church**, led by the Provost.

¹⁶ From the introduction to the service booklet.

¹⁷ 'Dialogue' was the term used in Coventry for an extended acclamation used in place of a formal liturgical greeting. Some were composed for distinct occasions in the life of the cathedral, and are still in use, though many have been superseded by new compositions in use in the wider church.

- **The Welcome**, including the presentation of a cross of nails by a child, and formal welcomes by local leaders.
- **The Peace** – the introduction to which, at some length, made reference to the history of the cathedral.
- **The Offertory**
- **The Thanksgiving** (The First Eucharistic Prayer from ASB Rite A)
- **The Communion**
- **After Communion**
- **The Blessing** (given by the Bishop from the High Altar)
- **The Dismissal** (from the chancel step)
- **The Withdrawal**

The appropriateness of a Eucharist for the inauguration of a new Christian ministry seems obvious, though it is rare for such services to be held in a Eucharistic context.¹⁸ Theological appropriateness apart, the use of a Eucharistic context lends to the service a clarity of structure and sense that is so often lacking from similar occasions; which can, sadly, so frequently justify the dismissive epithet of ‘hymn sandwich’.

John Dudley Irvine was installed as the second Dean of Coventry on Saturday 8th September 2001. In a departure from the newly established tradition, this was not a Eucharist, though he was presented by members of his former congregation. The outline structure of the service is almost an Ante-Communion, with the Installation preceding the Liturgy of the Word:

¹⁸ Canons Residentiary at Coventry are still installed at a Eucharist; the most recent installation of Honorary Canons and Canon Theologian was a Eucharist for the first time.

- **Entry and Welcome** – the Litany of Reconciliation in Ruins, followed by two hymns as the Dean-designate and his congregation enter the new Cathedral building.
- **Collation and Induction** – following a similar format to previous ceremonies, but including presentations of symbols of ministry (water for Baptism, a Bible, bread and wine, oil, and a copy of *Common Worship*). The Induction took place at the chancel step, and not at the west doors.
- **Installation and Greeting** – this included a separate installation as Dean of the Community of the Cross of Nails¹⁹, after which the Dean was presented with a cross of nails, and then clothed in a cope, before being formally installed as Dean of the Cathedral.
- **Liturgy of the Word** – two scriptural readings, and a sermon preached by the new Dean.
- **The Prayers** – led by the Cathedral Reader, who is also a Lay Canon; followed by the Lord's Prayer and a Collect. This section ended with an Offertory Hymn, Episcopal blessing and dismissal by the Dean, all from the High Altar.

In many ways this was the least satisfying foundation service of recent times.

Coventry's noted tradition of intelligent and imaginative use of the Cathedral building seems to have been suddenly dented, and the action of the liturgy is all very static.

The distinctive facets of tradition and life at Coventry are also less evident.

¹⁹ The worldwide Community of the Cross of Nails was established in the post-war years, and is now a significant community of Christians of different denominations working for peace and reconciliation in almost every continent. The Dean of Coventry is *ex officio* Dean of the Community.

SPECIAL SERVICES

The Form of a Servant

The first service to have this title was held on Christmas Eve 1962, and we have already said a little about its origins. In Coventry this service has attracted a large following. For many years it has been one of the best attended Cathedral services, though attendance had waned a little in the late 1990s. The printed introduction to the 1984 service provides a succinct description of what the rite is designed to do:

The Form of a Servant is more than a carol service. It is Coventry Cathedral's liturgy for Christmas Eve, a celebration in movement, light, word and music of the God who comes among us as the Word made flesh. Incarnation means that God has entered into all that belongs to the human condition: our suffering, our pain, our failure, just as much as our joy, our achievement, our nobility. This service celebrates and reflects on Christ's coming as Servant-King to bring to all the world God's light, life and love.²⁰

The current defining liturgical assumption, within the Church of England at least, is that structured liturgy should have a basic four-fold shape, in order that each act of worship should, in some sense, be a transforming journey, an encounter with a life-changing God. At the heart of this structure is a distinct act of engagement, be that in prayer, sacrament, gesture or action, before a form of dismissal which sends the worshipper out into the world equipped for mission.

While this assumption may not be particularly radical or even truly new, it has quietly underlined our liturgy. In musical terms, we have sought, as it were, to always end on a crescendo.

²⁰ *The Form of a Servant*, 'About this Service', Coventry Cathedral 1984.

From its very outset, *The Form of a Servant* was resistant to that pattern. The shape of the service has, to make an outrageous generalisation, sought to crescendo in the middle, and diminuendo somewhat at the end. This is no mere contrivance: the purpose has been to leave the worshipper in a state of anticipation for Christmas Day itself, a liturgical cliff-hanger prior to the dénouement of the Eucharist on Christmas morning.

In recent years, this has failed, the diminuendo so carefully wrought by earlier Precentors turning into the 'Farewell' or, at its worst, the 'Unfinished' Symphony. Some examples of the history of the shape of *The Form of a Servant* will help to explain this crucial illustration of Coventry's liturgical development.

The first service, in 1962, completely lacked any word of explanation and introduction, save for a technical description about the choir and the collection on the front page.²¹ Following an extremely formal welcome to the Lord Mayor, the service was shaped as follows:

- Silent procession to the Chancel
- *This is the Month* John Milton, read by the Precentor
- Anthem: *Hodie Christus natus est* Sweelinck
- Carol: Hark! The herald-angels sing
- Reading: Luke 2.1-7, read by a Chaplain
- Choir carol: *In dulci jubilo*
- The Procession to the Crib

²¹ Viz. 'At the Procession to the Crib the choir is divided into two; the first choir remains in the chancel, the second choir, consisting of four trebles, one alto, one tenor, and one bass, goes to the Crib.'

- Carol: While Shepherds watched
- Reading: Luke 2.8-14
- The Procession to the Chancel
- Reading: Matthew 16.24-27
- Carol (during which the collection is taken) Once in royal David's city
- Dramatic reading (involving the whole congregation) Matthew 25.31-45
- Prayers of Intercession, led by the Provost
- Choir: *Agnus Dei* Thomas Morley
- The Offering of Gifts
- The collection is offered to the Bishop, who blesses it
- Further intercessions and collects, led by the Bishop
- Choristers then read verses from Philippians 2

The foundation then processed out and the lights were dimmed; then in the Lady Chapel the choir sang the Coventry Carol.

Nowadays this form of service can still surprise us, even though we are somewhat immune to liturgical innovation. One can begin to see the impact that this service, held on Christmas Eve of all times, would have had in 1962. There are so many striking features: in particular we might note the use of the building, the use of two choirs and their deployment both musically and physically, the use of secular and sacred texts. In terms of biblical text, there can be few Christmas liturgies, not least dating from forty-plus years ago, which could use the parable of the sheep and the goats²² to such startling effect. To place judgement as so central a theme during the

The offering of the people will be given to the Freedom from Hunger Campaign. As the people leave the church they are urged to make their contributions to defray the expenses of this service'.

²² Matthew 25.31ff.

celebration of the Incarnation may feel incongruous, or deeply theological, depending on one's point of view. This particular theme has come and gone over the years: what has remained central is the theme of the servanthood of Christ, and the nature of his birth as its expression.

Two other examples of this particular service will inform our understanding of liturgical development at Coventry. The 1984 service, while clearly closely linked to the Joseph Poole original, has found a new niche both in terms of structure and content. The outline of the service is as follows:

- Fanfare
- Carol: O come O come Emmanuel
- Introduction, read by the Precentor²³
- PENITENCE
- Choir Carol: The Coventry Carol (sung from the West End)
- Reading: Luke 23.32-34
- The Coventry Litany of Reconciliation²⁴
- Prayers
- Choir: *Agnus Dei* Thomas Morley
- Carol: Of the Father's heart begotten
- ADORATION
- Choir Carols: Infant Holy and *In dulci jubilo*
- Carol: O little town of Bethlehem

²³ 'This act of worship is in five parts: Penitence, as we seek God's forgiveness; Adoration, as we worship God in Christ with all our hearts; Joy, as we celebrate the birth of the Holy Child; Offering, as we express our obedience in our gifts; and Peace, as we are reminded of the God who came to visit us in the form of a servant, and to bring peace on earth.'

²⁴ See p.114, note 14

- Collect (at the crib)
- JOY
- Reading: verses from *Christmas* John Betjeman
- Choir carols: Up! Good Christen folk and The Wassail Carol
- Carol: While Shepherd's watched
- Reading: Luke 2.1-7
- OFFERING
- Carol: Once in royal David's city
- The offerings are presented to the Bishop, who blesses them
- Choir Carol: In the bleak mid-winter
- PEACE
- Carol: Hark! The herald-angels sing (during which the choir move to the Lady Chapel)
- (Lights are extinguished throughout the building)
- Choir carol: O babe divine
- Reading: Philippians 2.5-11, read by the Precentor from his stall
- Organ: *In dulci jubilo* Bach as the choir and clergy process to the Christmas tree at the West End
- Choir carol: Silent Night
- Flute: *Syrinx* Claude Debussy as the choir, bearing candles, process out through the building

The final rubric then states 'The Cathedral remains darkened until the choir is out of sight and the music has ceased. Then the floodlights, and the lights at the doors, are turned on.'

Over a twenty year period we can see that the service has almost doubled in length, and has undergone many changes. The element of judgment has been removed, and a clearer focus made on Incarnation. The use of the building is most striking, with candles, movement and imaginative lighting all playing their part.

One very interesting development in recent times has been the role of the Bishop in the service. While his principal function in both of our examples seems to have been the receiving of the collection and the giving of blessings, a new development in 1990 was for the Bishop to read the Philippians 2 passage, with cope and mitre removed, standing alone at the chancel step. This tradition was maintained for just over the following decade. A debate might be had as to the appropriateness of both the Bishop performing this reading, and the removal of distinctive Episcopal clothing. The gesture seems to suggest that the Bishop is using this moment as an expression of humility and servanthood himself, which both lends to the mitre and cope a dimension of power (which neither garment does, in fact, express), and certainly flies in the face of what Joseph Poole was trying to achieve, which was to focus clearly on the new born Servant-king.

As we noted at the outset of this thesis, all cathedrals find themselves holding more special services than ever, and we examined some of the reasons why.²⁵ At Coventry, there has been a tradition of hosting such special services throughout its forty-three year history. Here is a brief examination of two of them from the period of our study.

²⁵ Cf. Chapter One pp. 9 ff.

‘We are all victims’: A Service for the Victims of Road Accidents

This imaginative liturgy, which has been held now for some years, attracts the attendance of distinguished local political and community leaders. The service is structured in five parts, and there is a clear sense of journey, and an intelligent use of sacred space, coupled with a sensible exploitation of some of Coventry’s distinctive features. The service is shaped as follows (the bold type indicates the section heading for each part of the service:

- **Entering In**
- The Clergy stand at the bust of Christ’s head which was made from the wreckage of a motor car²⁶
- Silence; lighted candles are brought from the High Altar to the sculpture, followed by an Eric Clapton song, *Tears in Heaven*
- A formal introduction and prayer of confession; then a hymn
- **For Reflection**
- An account of bereavement from two parents of a road accident victim
- Anthem: *When David heard that Absalom was slain*²⁷ Thomas Weelkes
- Reading, Ecclesiastes 3.1-8, read by the Lord Lieutenant
- Address, given by a hospital chaplain; followed by a choir item
- **Remembering**
- An act of remembrance, including the names of victims, and the sprinkling of ‘autumn leaves’ (bearing the names) over the altar; during this the choir sings *Pie Jesu* from Lloyd-Webber’s *Requiem*
- Hymn: The Lord’s my Shepherd

²⁶ This is on permanent display at the entrance to the Chapel of Unity

- **Love beyond price**
- Reading, Romans 8.31-end, read by a senior staff member from the RAC
- Prayers of Intercession are led from the sculpture, and the candles re-lit
- Hymn: God is love: let heaven adore him
- **Life can begin again**
- Reading, verses from the Sanskrit, read from the Sanctuary by the Provost; then a short psalm of thanksgiving sung by the choir. The rubric here reads:
During the song, children carrying water, a pot of earth, and baskets of acorns lead the Cathedral procession out of the chancel and down the nave. The children with baskets remain at the doors while the procession goes outside. Everyone turns and watches the procession as it stops outside the west screen. Outside, the Bishop faces the street and says a blessing on the roads and those who use them.

Further rubrics explain how an acorn is ‘planted’ on the road; acorns are distributed to the congregation; and the leaves bearing names are buried near oak trees in Warwickshire. Counselling is made available to anyone wishing to talk after the service.

This service demonstrates liturgical creativity of a high order, plus a sensible use of distinctive elements of the cathedral interior. The marriage of modern ‘pop’ music and choral music from the late sixteenth century underlines one of the principal ‘bridging’ characteristics of contemporary liturgical planning that we discussed in chapter four²⁸; amongst many other things to be applauded is the pastoral style of the service – again,

²⁷ 2 Samuel 18

a development which has played a significant role in the development of both liturgical text and shape in recent times.²⁹

Service to Mark the Centenary of the Motor Industry in Great Britain

This very straightforward service of the word was held in January 1996³⁰. Coventry is a most appropriate setting for such a service as car manufacturing has been, for many years, the city's primary industry.

The service has a simple structure; many individual aspects of the service will, by now, be very familiar to the reader:

- The Coventry Litany of Reconciliation, led by the Provost in the Ruins, and transmitted into the new Cathedral building
- Processional hymn: All people that on earth do dwell (the procession entered behind an 1897 Coventry Daimler, driven up the central aisle)
- Welcome, Bidding Prayer and Lord's Prayer, led by the Provost
- First Reading, from a speech by Harry Lawson³¹, read by George Simpson³²
- Psalm 90, sung by the choir
- 'Auto-Oratorio', a dramatic presentation performed by a group from the Centre for Performing Arts at Coventry University

²⁸ E.g., p. 75

²⁹ See pp. 58 ff.

³⁰ Wednesday 17th January 1996 at 1130am

³¹ Lawson was a pioneer of the British motor car industry. He bought several European patents and produced the first Coventry Daimlers in 1896. His financial dealings were often sharp, and they later led to his being imprisoned.

³² President of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders

- Second Reading, verses from Proverbs 8, read by HRH Prince Michael of Kent
- Hymn: Immortal, invisible, God only wise
- Address, preached by the Bishop
- Prayers of Intercession
- Anthem: *Let the people praise thee O God* William Mathias
- Prayer of Commitment
- Hymn: All my hope on God is founded
- Blessing
- Processional hymn: Glorious things of thee are spoken (the procession left behind a contemporary Peugeot electric car)

While this is evidently a much simpler, static service than many we have considered, there is one very exciting feature: the use of two cars - one historic, one contemporary – to head the processions. This particular aspect proved to be ecologically controversial.³³

The cathedral has been the setting for other remarkable services in recent years, perhaps most notably the Home Front Thanksgiving and Dedication Service in March 2000, attended by HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, the Prime Minister, and the Archbishop of Canterbury. This service and others like it continue to exploit the sacred space of the Cathedral both in terms of its physical shape (its openness, the Ruins, the architectural style of the modern building, etc) and also its unique liturgical inheritance, such as the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation.

³³ A female protester removed her clothing and chained herself to the pulpit.

CONCLUSION

Perhaps the most important thing to be said in general terms about the liturgy of Coventry Cathedral in recent terms relates to its unique situation, certainly in this country, of being a single cathedral with two distinct consecrated spaces. The most important development of late has been a clear desire to use *Common Worship*, and other textual liturgical changes, as a springboard to exploit the two spaces as much as is both practical and appropriate. We have seen how many of the special services we have considered use the Ruins as a starting point, often for the recitation of the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation. In the Cathedral's seasonal liturgical diet, the Ruins, which imaginative Precentors have always been wise to enjoy, are now used even more. A good example of this is the liturgy for the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, when the congregation process at the gradual from the 'Old Temple' of the Ruins into the 'New Temple' of the new building, being careful to walk through the Chi-Rho which is inscribed on the floor in brass at the West End³⁴. The Palm Sunday liturgy uses the Ruins as a dramatic backdrop to the reading of the Passion; and there are plans to set the entire Vigil of the Easter Liturgy in the Ruins, the lessons read by the light of a huge bonfire from which the Paschal Candle will then be lit before the procession into the new building.

Acts of worship draw to a close in the Ruins, as well as beginning in them. On Remembrance Sunday, for example, the whole assembly process to the sanctuary of the Ruins in time to keep silence as the cathedral clock strikes 11 am. Then the Litany of Reconciliation and an Act of Commitment take place.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the Ruins also contain a remarkable statue called, simply, *Reconciliation* by the late Josefina de Vasconcellos³⁵. This proves to be a useful focus for meditation for a number of commemorative events, such as an annual commemoration of the ending of the war with Japan, when the Cathedral welcomes a suite from the Japanese embassy.

The Ruins, however potent, cannot be the answer to everything. For traditionally structured acts of worship, the new Cathedral provides a superb context for liturgy on a large scale. The strikingly bold 'Chi-Rho', the font, the Chapel of Unity, the Tablets of the Word, are all used with success in illuminating liminal liturgy, providing necessary staging posts in the rite.

However, for medium- and small-scale liturgy, Basil Spence's *hallenkirche* causes problems. Where should such acts of worship be held? The liturgical practitioner at Coventry quickly discovers the unfortunate inadequacy of the building for worship in a more intimate context.³⁶ The Lady Chapel seats around fifty at the most, with slightly smaller numbers fitting in to the other main chapels, Unity and Christ the Servant.³⁷ Even in a staged rite, with 250-300 people in the congregation, the sense of spaciousness can sometimes be overwhelming.

³⁴ The 'Chi-Rho' has become the normative location for the proclamation of the Gospel on great occasions, the reader standing in the centre of the symbol as a dramatic expression of being rooted *en Christo*.

³⁵ 1904-2005. The statue is arguably her best-known work, with replicas at, among other places, Hiroshima and Stormont. See Lewis, *Josefina de Vasconcellos, Her Life and Art* Flambard (2002).

³⁶ Some have remarked that the only possibility of any sense of intimacy is to be found in the centre of the Nave.

The cathedral has also become the weekly host to an informal (though simply structured) act of worship, Cathedral Praise. An hour long, and attracting sizeable congregations, the service takes the form of a welcome, contemporary songs and traditional hymns sung continuously for around fifteen to twenty minutes, prayers (sometimes semi-formal, penitential or credal), a scripture reading, a substantial expository address, intercessory prayer and a blessing or dismissal. An opportunity is provided for personal counsel, ministry of healing, and further gentle singing before refreshments and fellowship.

Set out in this form, the liturgically squeamish will breathe easy on recognising what is, essentially, the Jerusalem office wearing contemporary clothing. It is a popular and satisfactory service, and enjoys the paraphernalia which has become *de rigeur* for its style: an absence of clerical vesture, no books, music provided by instrumentalists and a distinctly evangelical/charismatic tone.

While this act of worship has found a rightful place in an attempt at liturgical breadth, its staging has provided problems, for all the reasons stated above. The style of the worship leads towards an expression of the intimacy of God; but the necessary physical context of the building can militate against this.

Militate is a word which fits well, as the Cathedral clergy are constantly reminded that 'the building will always win in the end', suggesting that creative liturgy involves those who devise it in a battle. Perhaps it does.

³⁷ Apart from the floor of the Nave, the Cathedral is inaccessible to wheelchair users; unlike Durham, where almost the entirety of the church is accessible.

While not wishing, particularly, to embrace a combative metaphor, there is only failure in a refusal to engage with a building which has been so designed as to lead both the human eye and the spiritual heart to the liturgical East.

At the start of this chapter, reference was made to attempts to create a familial Eucharistic style by placing the chairs in an almond shape. This has produced mixed opinions in the Cathedral community, and continues to do so.³⁸ The future for Eucharistic worship may be to avoid a static seating plan for the entirety of the liturgy, and rather follow the idea of a staged rite using two 'stations', one for the Liturgy of the Word, and one for the Liturgy of the Sacrament.³⁹ Indeed, there are plans for gentle experimentation with such a scheme in 2006. Let us not leave Coventry, though, believing that the blame for such liturgical conundrums can be laid at Basil Spence's door. Louise Campbell⁴⁰ has documented (as Spence did before her⁴¹) that his design was responding to a conservative brief which

refused to permit the competition plan to be modified in the light of modern liturgical thinking.⁴²

This chapter ends with the tantalising words with which Campbell ends hers:

By 1958, when these liturgical reforms had become more acceptable in the Church of England [i.e. a central altar and modified chancel⁴³] and a new Provost installed at Coventry who was interested in implementing them, it was of course too late to change the shape of the building.⁴⁴

³⁸ A survey conducted in 2002 revealed overwhelming opposition to both seating and service. New consultations are being held in early 2006.

³⁹ See Giles, Creating Uncommon Worship: a handbook on bringing the liturgy to life, SCM/Canterbury Press (2005)

⁴⁰ Campbell, Coventry Cathedral: Art and Architecture in Post-War Britain, Clarendon/Oxford (1996)

⁴¹ Spence, Phoenix at Coventry, London (1962)

⁴² Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 205

⁴³ Adleshaw and Etchells, The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship, Faber (1948)

⁴⁴ Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 205

Chapter Seven

Conclusion: Text, Context and Sacred Space

We began with an exploration of identity. The story of the development of liturgy in the Church of England, as charted in our second and third chapters, has been one of textual change leading to contextual change. While it is clear that the nascent Liturgical Movement of the early twentieth century was rooted in praxis as well as textual re-discovery, in terms of the Church of England, it can be argued that a concern for textual development came first, style and setting later.

However, our study demonstrates that the latter was the natural, and happy, consequence of the former. To put it more succinctly, the Church of England's journey from the *Book of Common Prayer*, through the *Alternative Service Book*, leading on to *Common Worship*, provided a springboard for English Anglicanism to embrace new possibilities in terms of the execution, performance and staging of worship.

Since 1980, English Cathedrals have been at the forefront of these new possibilities, moreover in recent times. Our particular examination of liturgical developments at Coventry and Durham, building on our historical and theological analyses, help us to recognise the following:

1. The question of Cathedral identity is rooted in worship. This primary identity finds its locus, as it must, as the Bishop's church¹; an expression of Catholic (in the broadest sense) as well as Anglican ecclesiology. However, this primary identity rarely colours the nature of worship in the Cathedral, save on occasions where the Bishop is presiding over a particular rite. Rather, it is the sense of sacred space, and the possibilities presented by the fullest use of such space, which has enabled the liturgy of Durham and Coventry, and most other cathedrals, to diversify into a richer style.

In terms of Coventry, this was evident from its beginnings.² The dynamism and imagination of the first Precentor³ exploited the possibilities of the Cathedral as a unique centre for worship from the outset.⁴ The development of liturgical text has been of less (though still important) significance here.

At Durham, it can be clearly seen that textual reform was a vital springboard to liturgical change.⁵ The increased use of contemporary language rites for the celebration of the Eucharist on a Sunday enabled fresh consideration of the setting of the service, leading to the present arrangements with the Benedict Altar⁶ functioning as a Nave Altar, happily remembering the site of the Jesus Altar of mediaeval times.

¹ Cf. p. 2

² cf. p. 111 ff.

³ Joseph Poole. Cf. p. 111 ff.

⁴ It is interesting to reflect how little the tapestry of Christ in Glory has been used explicitly as a liturgical focus. *Pace* the devotional work by Michael Sadgrove [A Picture of Faith](#), Mayhew (1995), it may be that the tapestry has been neglected as a tool for both systematician and liturgist alike. The author is grateful to Dr David Ford, Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, for a conversation that initiated these thoughts.

⁵ cf. pp. 79-86

2. The re-discovery of processional has been an essential part of the liturgical story of cathedrals. Bishop David Stancliffe has affectionately quoted a grandchild who commented on seeing a televised service from Salisbury that he knew why ‘the churches were true: the people in them enjoy singing and walk about in patterns’.⁷ Whether termed with the formal words ‘procession’, ‘processional’ or not, distinct, organised, functional movement has become a familiar part of English Cathedral liturgy. We have noted that, theologically, it is essential that such movements are journeys of purpose, and as such require thresholds⁸. As the wider church grapples with the liminal nature of liturgy in both physical and metaphorical/psychological ways⁹, cathedrals are creatively incarnating this theological principle in liturgical order. We have examined some of the dangers involved – it is all too easy to slip into an ill-thought liturgical movement simply for the sake of something different to do.¹⁰ Hopefully, the theological instincts of our cathedrals are strong enough to counter any such temptation. Indeed, the hope is that by espousing the principle of processional, cathedrals are not only rediscovering what, for some, is a mediaeval glory, but, in very truth, are providing a subliminal key to theological formation in the spirituality of Christian journeying which lies at the heart, not only of contemporary liturgical thought, but of the very essence of faith itself.

⁶ cf. p. 85

⁷ Stancliffe, *Walking in Patterns*, in .i.u, op. cit., and the frontispiece to God’s Pattern: Shaping our Worship, Ministry and Life, SPCK (2004)

⁸ Stations, fixed or created by careful positioning of cross, lights, gospel book etc, can help make practical sense of processional rite. These might also include permanent or temporary artistic installations that resonate with time or season – such as the recent use of the Miners’ Memorial in Durham Cathedral (a permanent fitting) in the post-Easter service Stations of the Resurrection, and the use of the Throne of Weapons (a temporary exhibit) in Coventry Cathedral at the Commemoration of the Destruction of the City and Cathedral.

⁹ Fascinating work in this area includes *Worship and the Christianisation of public space* in Stringer, A Sociological History of Christian Worship, Cambridge (2005). See also Canon Jeremy Haselock’s introduction in Myers, Using Common Worship: Initiation, Praxis/CHP (2000) pp. 10 ff.

3. Cathedral liturgy, foundational and non-foundational¹¹, has developed a pastoral and missionary sense. A stereotypical notion of the Cathedral as immovable and unchanging, with little or no reference to the diocese of which it is the principal church, has, thankfully, disappeared in all but hearsay and occasional folk-tale.¹² Pastoral instinct and pastoral context are part of the theological context of worship in our cathedrals (as, indeed, they should be in any Christian church). The rightful determination of cathedrals to direct ordered worship in a Godward fashion is no longer, on the whole, governed by inflexibility of liturgical shape, insensitivity in terms of language and access, or exclusivity in terms of mutual expectation and openness. In practical terms, effort is made to preserve integrity of liturgical identity while at the same time responding creatively to the needs of those who bring their multiplicitous expectations to the cathedral for services that may be spectacular or mundane.

Choral Evensong with a few added extras, once a default position of 'special services',¹³ has given way in many places to discrete liturgies which, rightly shaped, are more satisfying for all concerned. The theologian is able to recognise a missiological as well as a pastoral context to worship of this sort¹⁴, which may or may not be evident to the worshipper. The vital point for our purposes, however, is the simple recognition that cathedral worship has developed in such a way that

¹⁰ Here I differ from Richard Giles who suggests that 'any journey will do, the thing is just to get the assembly used to moving'. Giles, *Creating Uncommon Worship*, Canterbury Press (2004) p. 45

¹¹ c.f. p. 10; also pp. 77-78

¹² The author recalls pejorative statements about the liturgical, missionary and pastoral relevance of a number of Cathedrals made by diocesan Bishops and Archbishops who were in post during the 1980s; such statements stand in sharp and happy contrast to statements made in response to similar questions by Bishops who were in post in the mid- to late-1990s, and those who still hold office.

¹³ Which is not to say that there are not times where such a liturgical context is highly appropriate.

connections between faith and life are a primary, not a secondary (or even tertiary) factor in the creation, execution and performance of cathedral worship. The practical outworkings of this kind of process are underlined by a theological context that is rooted in expectation, but also in confidence of proclamation.¹⁵

4. In terms of text and language, cathedrals have played a crucial part in establishing a general contentedness in the marriage of antique and contemporary words in the liturgical context.¹⁶ Moreover, it might be asserted that the insistence on excellence which pervades the cathedral tradition has helped the church understand that, in its quest for accessibility, the language of worship, while not necessarily needing to be rooted in syntax and vocabulary of the Tudor court¹⁷, need not sacrifice the poetic on the altar of the prosaic. Exploring this topic in some detail in our fourth chapter, we noted Bishop Perham's description of the 'both...and, rather than either...or' style of vocabulary.¹⁸ In endorsing that view, we also recognise its theological credence.¹⁹

5. It is in linguistic plasticity, as well as in many other areas, that cathedrals have developed an identity as 'bridging' places²⁰. In terms of the bishop's pontifical ministry, this might be seen as a seam that bears rich theological mining. Suffice to say that the cathedral, like its principal (Episcopal) minister, is called to build bridges with words, symbols, movement and music, which enable the connectivity between

¹⁴ Stancliffe, *God's Pattern*, op. cit., pp. 24 ff.

¹⁵ Themes articulated by the Archbishop of Canterbury in a recent lecture at the National Liturgical Conference in Oxford, September 2005.

¹⁶ pp. 70 ff.

¹⁷ Cf. p. 13; also ch. 3's section on *Pastoral Experience*

¹⁸ Perham, *A New Handbook of Pastoral Liturgy*, op. cit., p. 63

¹⁹ A full treatment in Pecklers, *Dynamic Equivalence, the living language of Christian Worship*, Collegeville (2003).

²⁰ C.f. p. 72

people and God²¹ to be housed in sacred space. Whereas our study explores this tenet of theological praxis in some breadth, the question might well be posited: where should such a distinctive ministry next lead us? Should cathedrals move more boldly, as Coventry has, towards a firm embrace of informal contemporary worship idioms as part of a regular worshipping diet? Or is this to closely ape the work of many parishes? Should cathedrals move inwards to renegotiate and re-identify the liturgical traditions they have inherited from their forebears; or should there be a fresh approach to the wider church which is seen to be more reflective than didactic? These questions bring us back firmly to the issues of identity and context where we began. We may not have provided any strategic answer to these questions, but perhaps have been able to draw together strands that merit a wider exploration.

6. A sense of drawing together brings us to a final concluding statement, which is to affirm the centrality of pilgrimage in the development of cathedral liturgy in English Anglicanism. There is a sense in which this finds a particular expression in processional, as we have pointed out. But on a broader canvas, the proper understanding of pilgrimage as a special ingredient in the spirituality of cathedral worship both explains, illuminates and charts the journey which cathedrals have lately undergone. There is commonplace testimony, as well as academic writing, to support the uniqueness of the sacred space of the cathedral. The recent theological writing of Bishop John Inge in this area only serves to underline what many have written of, and experienced, over some years: that the numinous, the historical, the religious, the transcendent, are strangely mixed in our cathedrals to produce an atmosphere for

²¹ To paraphrase Bishop Simon Barrington-Ward

worship which provides unparalleled opportunities for grace to be outworked in 'ordered acts of worship which catch fire'.²²

There have been many changes to the worship of our cathedrals since 1980, and the assertion of this thesis is that they can be rightly termed 'developments'. For cathedrals have responded to the challenges presented to the church by liturgical change with ingenuity and imagination. The rediscovery of identity through worship, providing the most appropriate context for the ministry of the bishop and the mission of the diocese, continues to be creatively expressed through the Flagships of the Spirit which our cathedrals are called to be. The way in which cathedrals continue to respond, not only liturgically, but pastorally, and missiologically – and the distinction is, one hopes, an academic one – will shape their course as the flagships of our church, and their calling to be touching places, sacred spaces – the very gate of heaven.

²² Stancliffe, *passim*.

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