

A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century?

STEPHEN BURNS* AND BRYAN CONES**

In the more than thirty years that have passed since the authorization of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, scholars and practitioners of its liturgical vision have mined the riches of its “baptismal ecclesiology,” its variety of texts, and its permissive rubrics; they have also raised new questions about its inconsistencies and shortcomings. Anglican and ecumenical partner churches have adapted and improved upon material found in the BCP in their own new liturgical resources, suggesting directions for further liturgical renewal, and the Episcopal Church itself has authorized supplemental texts in its Enriching Our Worship series, which began publication in 1998. Questions concerning expansive language, the relationship between baptismal ministry and its expression in holy orders, and the contextualization of liturgy in a multicultural church have come to the fore as primary concerns of the church in the twenty-first century, with important implications for the celebration of liturgy. The authors contend that attention to these questions, particularly regarding the language of prayer and the relationships among the ministers within the assembly, requires a more comprehensive discussion of liturgical renewal in the church, including the revision of the Book of Common Prayer itself.

“. . . may be altered, abridged, enlarged, amended,
or otherwise disposed of . . .”¹

* Stephen Burns is a presbyter in the Church of England and Associate Professor of Liturgical Theology and the Study of Anglicanism at Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts. His recent publications include *Liturgical Spirituality* (editor; Church Publishing, 2013) and *Public Theology and the Challenge of Feminism* (co-editor with Anita Monroe; Routledge, 2014).

**Bryan Cones is a deacon in the Diocese of Chicago and a recent graduate of Episcopal Divinity School, Cambridge, Massachusetts. A former editor at Liturgy Training Publications, a publisher of liturgical resources in the Roman Catholic tradition, he is the author of numerous resources on liturgical prayer and spirituality, most recently *Daily Mass Intercessions 2014* (World Library Publications), a collection of prayers of the people for use in daily celebrations of the eucharist.

¹ Preface, *The Book of Common Prayer* (New York: Church Hymnal, 1979), 9.

In 1996, Ruth Meyers edited *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*,² a collection of essays for the Episcopal Church's "Liturgical Studies" series, published by Church Publishing. *Leaps and Boundaries: The Prayer Book in the Twenty-first Century*, edited by Paul Marshall and Lesley Northup,³ followed a year later. The contributions to these books suggest many reasons why a new prayer book might have been desired. For example, Marion Hatchett outlines a broad range of "unfinished business in prayer book revision,"⁴ and Neil Alexander considers "prayer book revision in light of yesterday's principles, today's questions, and tomorrow's possibilities."⁵ Alexander also writes on "ritual patterns and the future shape of revision" in Christian initiation,⁶ while Paul Marshall juxtaposes his study of Christian initiation with the barb "trite rite,"⁷ Linda Moeller asks whether baptism is a "rite of inclusion or exclusion,"⁸ and Leonel Mitchell addresses the question "what shall we do about confirmation?"⁹—together amounting to four examinations of liturgical expressions that relate to what has often been called *The Book of Common Prayer's* "baptismal ecclesiology." Later writers, such as James Turrell, for example, emphasizes the significance of the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer's* approach to initiation when he suggests no less than that the prayer book makes "a stunning reversal of traditional Anglican thought"¹⁰ because it displaces the traditional role of confirmation in its affirmation that "Holy

² Ruth A. Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century* (New York: Church Publishing, 1996).

³ Paul V. Marshall and Lesley Northup, eds., *Leaps and Boundaries: The Prayer Book in the Twenty-first Century* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Morehouse Publishing, 1997).

⁴ Marion J. Hatchett, "Unfinished Business in Prayer Book Revision," in Marshall and Northup, eds., *Leaps and Boundaries*, 30–42.

⁵ J. Neil Alexander, "Embrace the Happy Occasion: Prayer Book Revision in Light of Yesterday's Principles, Today's Questions, and Tomorrow's Possibilities," in Marshall and Northup, eds., *Leaps and Boundaries*, 177–190.

⁶ J. Neil Alexander, "Christian Initiation: Ritual Patterns and the Future Shape of Revision," in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 18–33.

⁷ Paul V. Marshall, "Trite Rite: Field Notes on the Trivialization of Christian Initiation," in Marshall and Northup, eds., *Leaps and Boundaries*, 71–80.

⁸ Linda Moeller, "Baptism: Rite of Inclusion or Exclusion?" in Marshall and Northup, eds., *Leaps and Boundaries*, 81–92.

⁹ Leonel L. Mitchell, "What Shall We Do About Confirmation?" in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 104–109.

¹⁰ James F. Turrell, *Celebrating the Rites of Initiation: A Practical Ceremonial Guide for Clergy and Other Liturgical Ministers* (New York: Church Publishing, 2012), 7. See also Ruth A. Meyers, *Continuing the Reformation: Re-visioning Baptism in the Episcopal Church* (New York: Church Publishing, 1997), 226.

Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church."¹¹ Louis Weil, who "has been a primary voice among Anglicans, particularly Episcopalians in the United States, in articulating the interface between the rites of initiation and the theology of the church,"¹² expounds baptismal ecclesiology not only in terms of seeing "baptism as the defining sacrament of incorporation" into the church, but also as "an understanding of the church that defines Christian community in terms of the common ground that all the baptized members share," and, notably, as affirming "that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to all members so that *ministry can be understood as shared by all of the people*, whether lay or ordained."¹³

Yet baptismal ecclesiology is not the only area scrutinized in the two anthologies dating from the end of the last millennium: Louis Weil himself offers his contribution on "scope and focus in eucharistic celebration,"¹⁴ William Seth Adams considers expansive language as "a matter of justice,"¹⁵ Clayton Morris contemplates "the future of liturgical text,"¹⁶ and perhaps most compellingly of all, Juan Oliver searches for "just praise" in his exploration of "prayer book revision and Hispanic/Latino Anglicanism."¹⁷

Ruth Meyers's book on prayer book revision also very helpfully indicates "some recent prayer books in the Anglican Communion,"¹⁸

¹¹ BCP 1979, 298.

¹² Lizette Larson-Miller, "Introduction," in Lizette Larson-Miller and Walter Knowles, eds., *Drenched in Grace: Essays in Baptismal Ecclesiology Inspired by the Work and Ministry of Louis Weil* (Eugene, Ore.: Pickwick Publications, 2013), xi.

¹³ Louis Weil, *A Theology of Worship*, vol. 12 of The New Church's Teaching Series (Cambridge, Mass.: Cowley Publications, 2002), 13–14. See also advocacy of a practical outworking of baptismal ecclesiology in, for example, Sheryl Kujawa-Holbrook and Fredrica Harris Thompsett, *Born of Water, Born of Spirit: Supporting the Ministry of the Baptized in Small Congregations* (Herndon, Va.: Alban Institute, 2010). For a more critical assessment, see Paul Avis, "Baptism and the Journey of Christian Initiation," in Larson-Miller and Knowles, eds., *Drenched in Grace*, 50–60.

¹⁴ Louis Weil, "Scope and Focus in Eucharistic Celebration," in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 34–55.

¹⁵ William Seth Adams, "Expansive Language: A Matter of Justice," in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 231–240.

¹⁶ Clayton L. Morris, "Prayer Book Revision or Liturgical Renewal? The Future of Liturgical Text," in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 241–256.

¹⁷ Juan M. C. Oliver, "Just Praise: Prayer Book Revision and Hispanic/Latino Anglicanism," in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 256–287.

¹⁸ "Appendix: Some Recent Prayer Books in the Anglican Communion," in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 287.

so setting the Episcopal Church's 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* within a wider context in the Anglican family of churches, while Marion Hatchett's essay widens optics on the BCP by also noting many significant ecumenical developments within North America.¹⁹ Within and beyond the period between 1979 and 1997, notable liturgical revisions in the Anglican Communion include the Anglican Church of Canada's *Book of Alternative Services* (1985), the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand, and Polynesia's *A New Zealand Prayer Book* (1989), the Anglican Church of the Province of Kenya's *Our Modern Services* (2002), and the whole series of books which now constitute the multivolume *Common Worship* series (1997 on) of the Church of England. Notable prayer books or liturgical directories emerging from North American churches include the United Methodist Church (U.S.A.)'s *Book of Worship* (1992), the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s *Book of Common Order* (1993), the United Church of Canada's *Celebrate God's Presence* (2000), and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (2006). Each constitutes a significant and creative liturgical resource, sometimes drawing deeply from the BCP itself, as is squarely acknowledged in the latter example: "*The Book of Common Prayer*, and in particular *The Book of Common Prayer 1979* according to the use of The Episcopal Church U.S.A., is a primary source and foundation for prayers and other liturgical texts that have been used or adapted, and for the version of the psalms that has been prepared for *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*."²⁰

Better Left Alone?

Over a decade into the twenty-first century, however, no new prayer book has emerged in the Episcopal Church itself, though some "supplemental liturgical materials" have been produced, such as the series *Enriching Our Worship* (1998 on). The preface to the first of the *Enriching Our Worship* resources states that it is "not intended to supplant the Book of Common Prayer," but is rather able to be used in conjunction with the Rite Two liturgies of 1979 or used "to develop an entire liturgy using the supplemental texts."²¹ The use

¹⁹ Hatchett, "Unfinished Business in Prayer Book Revision," in Marshall and Northup, eds., *Leaps and Boundaries*, 3–5.

²⁰ *Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Leader's Desk Edition* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Fortress Press, 2006), 892.

²¹ *Enriching Our Worship 1* (New York: Church Publishing, 1998), 5, 14.

of the word “develop” is important in its context, as it signals that the supplemental materials are themselves incomplete and need to be expanded into a full rite.²² In fact, only once since 1979 has the prospect of a new complete resource been raised within the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, that being in 2000, when the prospect of a new prayer book was averted, perhaps in part because those desirous of revision had recently been placated by the provision of *Enriching Our Worship* materials for both daily prayer and eucharist just two years previously.

While work on a new prayer book has not gathered pace, the Episcopal Church’s Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music has not been idle. Chaired by Ruth Meyers, in recent years it has produced materials for an expanded *sanctorale* (published as *Holy Women, Holy Men* in 2010), has embarked on a project to address anti-Semitic residue in Christian rituals, and has begun work on a revision of the church’s *Book of Occasional Services*. Perhaps most significantly—not least with respect to its Anglican Communion partners—has been intensive work on rites for the blessing of same-sex couples.²³ It seems that the commission has generally preferred to commend the retention of the current BCP rather than to embark upon its revision, albeit with a clear conviction that what is most needed is not so much new texts as a deepened appreciation of what the church already has; that is, that liturgical *formation* remains a greater priority than liturgical *revision*. This at least has been the position advocated by key members of the commission, notably Louis Weil.²⁴

In that respect, the commission’s argument may map onto the feeling articulated by Paul Bradshaw about the liturgical situation in the Church of England latterly, in which he appeals for greater resemblance so as to enable “Christians of different theological persuasions” to “recognize one another as members of the same Church.”²⁵ Yet

²² See *Enriching Our Worship* 1, 7.

²³ This work was in contravention of the proposals of the Windsor Report, and a bone of contention at the 2007 meeting in Palermo, Italy, of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation. For more detail on the latter, see David R. Holeton and Colin Buchanan, *A History of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultations 1983–2007* (London: SCM Press, 2007).

²⁴ Weil has stated clearly “it is very important for the Episcopal Church *not* to move toward complete Prayer Book revision at this time”; http://www.episcopalcafe.com/lead/bishops/cdsp_professor_of_liturgics_on_1.html.

²⁵ Paul F. Bradshaw, “Liturgical Development: From Common Prayer to Uncommon Worship,” in Stephen Platten and Christopher Woods, eds., *Comfortable Words: Polity, Piety and the Book of Common Prayer* (London: SCM Press, 2012), 130.

it should be noted that Bradshaw's argument does not contend with work on formation by the Church of England's Liturgical Commission (of which Bradshaw has himself been a long-term member) to identify a "common core" around which diversity would be disciplined and tempered, consisting of these "marks" of Anglican common prayer:

- a recognizable structure for worship;
- an emphasis on reading the word and on using psalms;
- liturgical words repeated by the congregation, some of which, like the creed, would be known by heart;
- using a collect, the Lord's Prayer, and some responsive forms in prayer;
- a recognition of the centrality of the Eucharist;
- a concern for form, dignity, and economy of words; . . .
- a willingness to use forms and prayers which can be used across a broad spectrum of Christian belief.²⁶

Still-buried Treasures

Louis Weil's reasons for advocating liturgical formation as a priority over liturgical revision evidently involve a deep appreciation of the baptismal ecclesiology embedded in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*. Such conviction about baptism is meant to mark the whole book and finds particular expression in what Jeffrey Lee calls the "'so-what' questions"²⁷ of the Baptismal Covenant at the center of its rites of Christian initiation and certain pastoral services:

²⁶ *Patterns for Worship: A Report by the Liturgical Commission of the General Synod of the Church of England* (London: Church House Publishing, 1989), 6. See also Stephen Burns, *Worship in Context: Liturgical Theology, Children and the City* (Peterborough: Epworth Press, 2006), chapter 2, "Patterns for Worship in the Church of England," 25–53. It might also be that twenty-first-century developments toward greater diversity in the Church of England have at least in part been spurred by the encouragement in Bradshaw's own work as a liturgical historian "to recognize the pluriformity of early Christian liturgical practice and so to be open to the possibility of a greater diversity of contemporary practice." See Ruth A. Meyers, "Introduction: Learning the Lessons of History: The Contributions of Paul F. Bradshaw to the Study and Practice of Liturgy," in Maxwell E. Johnson and L. Edward Phillips, eds., *Studia Liturgica Diversa: Essays in Honor of Paul F. Bradshaw* (Portland, Ore.: Pastoral Press, 2004), xvi.

²⁷ Jeffrey Lee, *Opening the Prayer Book*, vol. 7 of The New Church's Teaching Series (Cambridge, Mass.: Cowley Publications, 1999), 97.

- Celebrant* Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
- People* I will, with God's help.
- Celebrant* Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and re-turn to the Lord?
- People* I will, with God's help.
- Celebrant* Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?
- People* I will, with God's help.
- Celebrant* Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
- People* I will, with God's help.
- Celebrant* Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
- People* I will, with God's help.²⁸

The implications of this liturgical text are manifest too in the BCP's catechetical portions, so that, for instance, it is affirmed that "the Church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its members," with "the ministers of the Church" being "lay persons, bishops, priests, and deacons,"²⁹ so that notable priority is given to the *laos*, from whom persons in holy orders are called and to whom they are ordered as servants.

It can gratefully be acknowledged that the liturgical texts used in the Baptismal Covenant have gained remarkable resonance as an "ecumenical treasure,"³⁰ having migrated to other churches and traditions, sometimes wholesale (as in the Anglican Church of Canada's *Book of Alternative Services* of 1985³¹), sometimes traveling across

²⁸ Holy Baptism, BCP 1979, 304–305, and Confirmation, BCP 1979, 416–417.

²⁹ An Outline of the Faith, or Catechism, BCP 1979, 855.

³⁰ Gordon W. Lathrop, "Strong Center, Open Door: A Vision of Continuing Liturgical Renewal," *Worship* 75, no. 1 (January 2001): 36.

³¹ *The Book of Alternative Services* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1985), 159. The 2013 General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada authorized the inclusion of an additional question regarding the integrity of creation: "Will you strive to safe-

traditions (as in the Uniting Church in Australia's reception of the liturgical form as the "Commitment to Mission" used in its initiation rites of 2005³²), and sometimes appropriated in more piecemeal ways (as a "Commitment to Christian Service" in *A New Zealand Prayer Book*, which elaborates parts of the text and ditches the original's language of repentance in favor of an alternative "will you forgive others as you are forgiven?" as well as adding a question about "the cost of following Jesus Christ in your daily life and work"³³).

It should be pointed out that sometimes as the original text is absorbed into other traditions the sense of the original is changed—the most notable shift being in the adaptations made to it in the Church of England's *Common Worship* range, where the revised text is called an "Affirmation of Commitment"³⁴ and the original's final question about striving for justice and peace among all peoples and respecting the dignity of every human being transmutes into: "Will you acknowledge Christ's authority over human society, by prayer for the world and its leaders, by defending the weak, and by seeking peace and justice?" The subtle but significant shifts in emphasis go unacknowledged in the *Companion to Common Worship*, in which the affirmation is any case attributed to the Canadian *Book of Alternative Services* rather than its prior inclusion in the BCP.³⁵

Not Far Enough?

While the full implications of the Baptismal Covenant no doubt remain to be grasped, it might still be contended that the BCP is not beyond the need for revision. Indeed, the rationale for *Enriching Our Worship* itself implies as much: the supplemental materials foster expansive language in the liturgy, with special reference to the significance of gender,³⁶ and they also intend to encourage "multicultural,

guard the integrity of God's creation, and respect, sustain and renew the life of the Earth?"

³² *Uniting in Worship 2* (Sydney: Uniting Church Press, 2005), 82.

³³ *A New Zealand Prayer Book* (Auckland: Collins, 1989), 390.

³⁴ A Form for the Corporate Renewal of Baptismal Vows, in *Rites of Affirmation: Appropriating Baptism, Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England* (London: Church House Publishing, 1997), 192.

³⁵ Anne Dawtry and Carolyn Headley, "A Service of the Word," in Paul Bradshaw, ed., *A Companion to Common Worship*, vol. 1 (London: SPCK, 2001), 83.

³⁶ *Enriching Our Worship 1*, 5, 7.

multiethnic, multilingual and multigenerational” sensitivities.³⁷ The texts of *Enriching Our Worship* themselves wish to resist the notion of God as *Paterfamilias*, while also avoiding abstract, depersonalizing, and modalist theology. Instead, they seek a liturgical style that is contemporary and diverse as well as evocative and intimate, while at the same time “biblical in a characteristically Anglican way” and consistent with Trinitarian and christological formulations that are presumed “normative” in Anglican doctrine.³⁸

Its Anglican credentials notwithstanding, *Enriching Our Worship* also inevitably draws on a wide ecumenical heritage,³⁹ one mark of its commitment to that being its unswerving use of ecumenical “prayers we have in common.” Nevertheless, the attentiveness of *Enriching Our Worship* to expansive language as “a matter of justice” (to recall William Seth Adams in *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*) clearly implies an emerging consciousness about the 1979 BCP’s patriarchal proclivities—though the resources themselves remain marginalized as “supplements” published apart from the BCP.⁴⁰

It must be said that while *Enriching Our Worship* at least names “multicultural, multiethnic, multilingual” realities in the Episcopal Church, it does much less to address them than it does in tackling exclusive gendered language. As Juan Oliver insists, neither multicultural communities nor the liturgies they celebrate can be “otherwise Anglo scenarios spiced up with a smattering of exotic pizzazz.”⁴¹ Oliver’s contention that “true multiculturalism is not about including (or ‘nesting’) others in otherwise Anglo realities and structures”⁴² remains a vision that is still waiting to find adequate expression in the Episcopal Church’s official resources. Nesting, Oliver avers, “may be

³⁷ *Enriching Our Worship* 1, 17.

³⁸ *Enriching Our Worship* 1, 8, 11.

³⁹ See *Enriching Our Worship* 1, 9–10, 12.

⁴⁰ Further work on expansive language in Episcopal Church liturgies includes Phoebe Pettingell and Ruth A. Meyers, eds., *Cleanings: Essays on Expansive Language with Prayers for Various Occasions* (New York: Church Publishing, 1999). Arguably, the Episcopal Church has engaged in more revision of exclusive language than any other church of the Anglican Communion, though the general level has been extremely low, as lamented by Gail Ramshaw, “A Look at New Anglican Eucharistic Prayers,” *Worship* 86, no. 1 (March 2012): 161–167.

⁴¹ Oliver, “Just Praise,” in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 267.

⁴² Oliver, “Just Praise,” in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 267.

fun and interesting, and at times a necessary if desperate attempt to prevent a church closure due to attrition of Anglo members, but it is not multiculturalism.”⁴³ Unfortunately, on a wider level it might reasonably be suggested that the kind of global nesting, as it were, inferred in the BCP’s Collect for Mission—“bring the nations into your fold”⁴⁴—is neither “fun” nor a promising indicator that the 1979 book has the wherewithal to move the Episcopal Church “beyond colonial Anglicanism.”⁴⁵

Indeed, following Oliver, review of the 1979 BCP’s language of prayer may well demand a more robust examination of its preference for some of the historic texts of Anglicanism (for example, the translations and compositions of Thomas Cranmer in the collects and other prayers of the liturgy), which was a significant dimension of the effort that led to the 1979 BCP.⁴⁶ While these may well echo the original English Anglican foundation of the Episcopal Church in the United States, it continues to reify one historical moment in the life of the church and forgets that Cranmer’s work itself was a contextualization of Christian liturgy, one worked out in a particular time of both theological and political upheaval.⁴⁷ The collects for Lent, for example, with their embrace of notions of “wretchedness” (Ash Wednesday) and “the unruly wills and affections of sinners” (Fifth Sunday of Lent),⁴⁸ clearly reflect the concerns of the sixteenth century rather more than is commonplace in contemporary approaches to theological anthropology or implied by the Baptismal Covenant, with its presumption of the graced participation of the baptized in God’s saving work. Notably absent in the inherited collects are the themes of peace and justice sounded by the Baptismal Covenant and echoed in the church’s renewed focus on these themes in relation to the wider world.

⁴³ Oliver, “Just Praise,” in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 267.

⁴⁴ BCP 1979, 100.

⁴⁵ See Ian T. Douglas and Kwok Pui-Lan, eds, *Beyond Colonial Anglicanism: The Anglican Communion in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Church Publishing, 2001).

⁴⁶ See, for example, Leonel Mitchell, “Collects of the Proposed Book of Common Prayer,” *Worship* 52, no. 2 (1978): 138–145.

⁴⁷ For a summary of Reformed influences on Cranmer’s collects, see James A. Devereux, S.J., “Reformed Doctrine in the Collects of the First Book of Common Prayer,” *Harvard Theological Review* 58, no. 1 (January 1965): 49–68.

⁴⁸ BCP 1979, 217, 219.

In addition to the Reformation themes embedded in his compositions, Cranmer's reliance on images of God as monarch no doubt reflected the shift to a national understanding of the church, with the sovereign as head or governor—images which contribute to the continuing liturgical imperialism lamented by Oliver.⁴⁹ A thorough examination of the ways in which this Anglo/American imperial vision of the world—with God as partner in the colonial project—is embedded in the BCP is long overdue. Such a review would likely yield other examples of unexamined Anglocentrism and problematic patterns of thought and action, theological and otherwise, that signify, in Oliver's provocative words, "the power of the colonizers over the colonized . . . [which submits] willing bodies to a foreign behavior acted out in a theater of foreign design, informed by a foreign sense of time and a foreign aesthetic."⁵⁰

These lingering liturgical echoes of the marriage of Western imperialist expansion and Christian missiology demand intentional review and reform,⁵¹ especially in a church that now understands itself to be an international body, embracing a variety of nations, cultures, languages, and ethnicities, and which is also grappling with its own role in the history of colonialism. Jettisoning some of Cranmer's compositions in the collects and supplementing them with more expansive alternatives would be a major step toward dismantling Oliver's Anglo-ophile "nest" to make room for expressions that would both reflect and foster the Episcopal Church's vision for an ever-more multicultural church. Indeed, as William Seth Adams argues, "by retaining Thomas Cranmer's convictions about vernacular liturgy, we may find a warrant for letting go [of] some (at least) of Cranmer's language."⁵² Such a move would also allow the BCP to join the ecumenical movement toward opening prayers that anticipate the day's biblical readings, such as those found in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, the ICEL collects

⁴⁹ Oliver, "Just Praise," in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 257.

⁵⁰ Oliver, "Just Praise," in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 262.

⁵¹ For a wide-ranging critique of liturgical imperialism, see Michael N. Jagessar and Stephen Burns, *Christian Worship: Postcolonial Perspectives* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2011).

⁵² Adams, "Expansive Language," in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 236.

prepared for the 1998 English-language *Roman Sacramentary*,⁵³ and resources prepared for use with the *Revised Common Lectionary*,⁵⁴ a practice commended by Richard Giles in his own guide to celebrating liturgy in the Episcopal tradition.⁵⁵

The Problem with Priesthood

Important with respect to the search for a language of prayer more reflective of the church's contemporary theological self-understanding is the acknowledgment made in *Enriching Our Worship* that "non-verbal language—the language of gesture, movement, sign—will always override the text of the prayer,"⁵⁶ as this calls for careful attention to ritual pattern or structure,⁵⁷ rubrics, environment and art, and a range of considerations beyond the texts of any rite. The commendable attempt of the Associated Parishes for Liturgy and Mission—a body within the Episcopal Church committed to advocacy of liturgical renewal⁵⁸—intentionally to attend to matters concerning space, vessels, furniture, and so on recognizes the reality *Enriching Our Worship* here names. Notably, APLM consciously links such matters to its vibrant advocacy of the Baptismal Covenant. What APLM's marks of "baptismal charter" parishes—those also committed to the BCP's baptismal ecclesiology—may need to attend to more robustly, however, is the fact that for over three decades the BCP has often (even if not in Associated Parishes) been accommodated to static spaces and unexamined ceremonial scenes which inhibit the BCP's vision of baptized people. Awkwardly, such ceremonial scenes have themselves been constructed, in part at least, from the rubrics of the

⁵³ International Commission on English in the Liturgy, *Opening Prayers: The ICEL Collects* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1999).

⁵⁴ See Consultation on Common Texts, *Revised Common Lectionary Prayers* (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress Press, 2002) and *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 2013).

⁵⁵ Richard Giles, *Creating Uncommon Worship: Transforming the Liturgy of the Eucharist* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2004), 223–224.

⁵⁶ *Enriching Our Worship 1*, 16.

⁵⁷ See Alexander, "Christian Initiation," in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 21.

⁵⁸ See www.associatedparishes.org. Compare the marks of "liturgical and eucharistic renewal" identified in the Dublin Statement on the Eucharist: David R. Holeton, ed., *Our Thanks and Praise: The Eucharist in Anglicanism Today, Papers from the Fifth International Anglican Liturgical Consultation* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1998), 304–309.

BCP itself, which are at times remarkably clericalist. So the question of whether the BCP's rubrics are sometimes at odds with the implications of the Baptismal Covenant needs to be more vigorously addressed. We agree with William Seth Adams's diagnosis that there are "two ideas at work" in the BCP's conflicting yet "entangled" theologies of ministry: "The entanglement is due to the fact that at the time of publication, the church's thinking on ministry was undergoing reformation, moving from a view which would understand 'ministry' to mean 'ordained ministry' to a view which would treat 'ministry' as a much broader idea, one inclusive of the whole church." Adams is clear that the two theologies of ministry in the BCP are not always "compatible," and that it is "impossible" to describe the BCP's theology of ministry "as if it were a unified theology."⁵⁹

For example, at least one major point that has to be conceded is that the BCP's rubrics are unnecessarily clericalist when they propose:

When the celebrant is assisted by a deacon or another priest, it is customary for the celebrant to administer the consecrated Bread and the assistant the Chalice. When several deacons or priests are present, some may administer the Bread and others the Wine. In the absence of sufficient deacons and priests, lay persons licensed by the bishop according to the canon may administer the Chalice.⁶⁰

A later canon (III.4.6) has revoked the restrictive clericalism of this directive, to replace it with an understanding that "a Eucharistic Minister is a lay person authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist." While the later canon remains clear that such eucharistic ministers "normally" serve under the direction of an accompanying clergy person, "it is important to note that the canon does not distinguish between the eucharistic Bread and the eucharistic Wine. These ministers are not chalice bearers but are ministers of both forms of the Eucharist"⁶¹ and so this significantly alters the BCP's reservation of the role of distributing bread to clergy.

⁵⁹ See William Seth Adams, *Moving the Furniture: Liturgical Theory, Practice, and Environment* (New York: Church Publishing, 1999), 35.

⁶⁰ BCP 1979, 408.

⁶¹ Patrick Malloy, *Celebrating the Eucharist: A Practical Ceremonial Guide for Clergy and Other Liturgical Ministers* (New York: Church Publishing, 2007), 92.

Making this point in his “ceremonial guide” to the eucharist in the Episcopal tradition, Patrick Malloy goes nowhere near as far as some advocates of ceremonial scenes which might, arguably, even more readily—at least more boldly—manifest a baptismal ecclesiology, such as Richard Giles’s proposals for the vesting of all members of the assembly who take on focal and vocal roles in a liturgy. According to Giles’s ritual proposals, each in turn might “wear the stole of the assembly’s shared priesthood.”⁶² While such ideas have been anything but uncontested,⁶³ the fact remains that the 1979 BCP uses the term “celebrant” for the one who is only the *presiding* celebrant among *other* celebrants of the eucharist—only *one* minister among *all* the ministers of the church, as identified in the BCP’s catechism. The BCP’s use of the term “celebrant” might well in itself be regarded as a problem deep enough to require revision if the Baptismal Covenant is to be more fully realized. The term “celebrant” applied to the presider hardly clarifies or proclaims the sound suggestion of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation that “the assembly is the celebrant of the eucharist.”⁶⁴ Indeed, as long ago as 1985 and reflecting such concerns, the Anglican Church of Canada’s *Book of Alternative Services* applied the term “presiding celebrant” to the ordained minister in its rubrics, although not universally.⁶⁵

Especially problematic with respect to the role at the eucharist of the so-called “celebrant” is the BCP’s cluster of rubrics relating to manual acts in the eucharistic prayer. As Marion Hatchett was already pointing out in 1997: “All of the more recent Anglican revisions, except Ire[land] and [Wales], have dropped the requirement of Manual Acts during the reading of the Institution Narrative. Even the restrained

⁶² Giles, *Creating Uncommon Worship*, 111. For a different but also powerful suggestion as to how shared liturgical ministry might be gestured, see William Seth Adams, *Shaped by Images: One Who Presides* (New York: Church Publishing, 1995), 115, which recounts how at an ordination the entire assembly was invited to wear red as opposed to only the clergy vesting in the festival color.

⁶³ See Rosalind Brown, “Liturgy in a Cathedral: Reflections from Durham,” in Stephen Burns, ed., *The Art of Tentmaking: Making Space for Worship, Essays in Honour of Richard Giles* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2012), 6–72.

⁶⁴ Dublin Statement, in Holeton, ed., *Our Thanks and Praise*, 261. See also Weil, *A Theology of Worship*, 30–31: “Limiting the term ‘celebrant’ and ‘concelebrant’ to bishops and priests sends the message that only the priests are celebrating the eucharist, and it fails to recognize that *all* the people gathered are celebrants.”

⁶⁵ See, for example, Holy Baptism, where “presiding celebrant” appears at the beginning of the liturgy (151), while the rubric switches to “celebrant” at the Presentation and Examination of the Candidates (153).

use of Manual acts [sic] that is required by the Eucharistic Prayers of BCP 79 tends to signify that the Institution Narrative is a moment of consecration.”⁶⁶ Further developments around the Anglican Communion have maintained distance from Episcopal practice, presumably in part because International Anglican Liturgical Consultations have both stressed the need to “strengthen the laity in the dignity and fullness of their baptismal priesthood”⁶⁷ and have “distinguished” the role of those in orders as deacons, presbyters, and bishops in terms of their “primary role” being “pastoral responsibility for the life and mission of the church . . . out of [which] their liturgical functions arise.”⁶⁸ International Anglican Liturgical Consultations have also asserted that “manual acts which draw attention to the institution narrative or other portions of the [eucharistic] prayer serve to locate consecration within a narrow portion of the text and may contradict a more contemporary understanding of eucharistic consecration.”⁶⁹

The difficulty with the Episcopal Church’s increasingly isolated practice is intensified by Louis Weil through his contrast of *in persona Christi* and *in persona ecclesiae* interpretations of the presider’s role: a “strong identification of the presider with Jesus must be questioned given our gradual recovery of a sense of the entire community being the ‘celebrants’ of the Eucharist.” On the contrary, Weil suggests, “a priest at the altar is not imitating Jesus at the last supper, but is presiding at an action in which the gathered people of God are full participants.”⁷⁰ Since in Weil’s view “the primary role of the presider [i]s being the voice of the Church,”⁷¹ he advocates for “the extraordinary theological integrity of eucharistic praise with no manual acts”⁷²—that is, “once the bread and wine have been placed upon the altar,

⁶⁶ Hatchett, “Unfinished Business in Prayer Book Revision,” in Marshall and Northup, eds., *Leaps and Boundaries*, 28. Colin Buchanan, in his *Anglican Eucharistic Liturgies 1985–2010* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2011), confirms that this has remained the trend.

⁶⁷ Dublin Statement, II.3, in Holeton, ed., *Our Thanks and Praise*, 280.

⁶⁸ Dublin Statement, II.5, in Holeton, ed., *Our Thanks and Praise*, 281.

⁶⁹ It follows, then, that “gestures by the presider during the eucharistic prayer should underscore the unity of the prayer.” See the Dublin Statement, II.3 and IV.E.2 in Holeton, ed., *Our Thanks and Praise*, 300.

⁷⁰ Louis Weil, *Liturgical Sense: The Logic of Rite* (New York: Seabury Books, 2013), 88–89.

⁷¹ Weil, *Liturgical Sense*, 89.

⁷² Weil, *Liturgical Sense*, 100. See also Giles’s strong advocacy in *Creating Uncommon Worship*, 160–166.

the posture of the presider is simply that of arms extended in prayer, the posture known as *orans*.⁷³ Notably, Weil also reminds his readers that the *orans* position of prayer is appropriate to all celebrants, presiding or otherwise.⁷⁴ Yet as long as Episcopal presbyters are encouraged to “play Jesus” at Holy Communion, a baptismal ecclesiology may be undermined, though of course much more needs to be done to recover such an ecclesiology than jettisoning the clerical posturing of the BCP,⁷⁵ however troubling that may be. It will also need to be remembered that the abandonment of this particular practice will need to contend with the extent to which people have been ecclesially *malformed* by any residual affection for it they may yet shelter.⁷⁶

An Assembly Missing in Action

The particular clericalizing rubrics identified here—to which might be added others, such as the explicit directions regarding the order in which those admitted to “orders” receive communion⁷⁷ and the encouragement that “other priests present stand with the celebrant at the Altar, and join in the consecration of the gifts, in breaking the Bread, and in distributing Communion”⁷⁸—point to a general lack of acknowledgment of the assembly’s presence, much less direction

⁷³ Weil, *Liturgical Sense*, 97; see also Weil’s acknowledgment of the practical problem of obedience on page 99. Weil seems to suggest (page 100) that the practice he encountered in a community of Benedictine nuns near Canterbury is unusual, though it was in fact the standard of the Church of England’s *Alternative Service Book 1980*. See also R. C. D. Jasper and Paul Bradshaw, *A Companion to the Alternative Service Book* (London: SPCK, 1986), 211–213. Note Hatchett on American, Irish, and Welsh practice in a wider Anglican framework, observed earlier.

⁷⁴ For example, Weil, *Liturgical Sense*, 24, 61.

⁷⁵ Weil is surely correct to emphasize formation, as he does repeatedly in *Liturgical Sense* (for example, xii, 56, 105). This is consistent with Weil’s long-term commitments, as seen in Weil, *A Theology of Worship*, 51: “Formation in the fullest sense is the real issue,” and Louis Weil, *Sacraments and Liturgy: The Outward Signs* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1983), 93: “The authentic liturgical act . . . is decisive, critical and formative,” among many possible examples. From another angle, for critique of the *in persona Christi* tradition from a feminist perspective, see Stephen Burns, “Four in a Vestment? Feminist Gesture for Christian Assembly,” in Nicola Slee and Stephen Burns, eds., *Presiding Like a Woman* (London: SPCK, 2010), 9–19.

⁷⁶ For wider reflections on liturgy and malformation, see Juan M. C. Oliver, “Liturgy, Forming and Deforming,” in Ruth A. Meyers and Paul Gibson, eds., *Worship-Shaped Life: Liturgical Formation and the People of God* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2010), 1–25.

⁷⁷ BCP 1979, 407.

⁷⁸ BCP 1979, 322.

toward full, conscious, and active participation that is the hallmark of contemporary liturgical reform. With few exceptions, the BCP's rubrics, like those of ritual books in many churches, by and large address the liturgical actions of the ordained, with occasional reference to "lay persons appointed by the celebrant"⁷⁹ and others who may "assist" the presider at the liturgy. It seems that if lay persons show up and read their lines, they have sufficiently "assisted." We are a long way indeed from Weil's suggestion that all "celebrants" join the presider in the *orans* posture during the eucharistic prayer, much less Giles's more dramatic transfer of the priestly stole during the liturgy.

Indeed the relative absence of the "congregation" from the rubrics of the 1979 BCP leaves almost no check on the elaboration of the clericalizing rubrics. While Weil and others might argue for an economy of action on the part of the presider during the institution narrative, there is nothing in the BCP that would prevent the complete ritual takeover of the eucharistic prayer by the presider—multiple elevations and genuflections, changes of tone or cadence during the words of institution, the use of bells at the "consecration," and the like. While these actions are neither commended nor discouraged by the BCP, they are indisputably at odds with both the baptismal theology of the BCP and the consensus among liturgical scholars, notable Episcopalians among them, that the assembly is the primary liturgical celebrant and the ordained presider its voice and servant. The relative lack of congregational response in the eucharistic prayer itself—sometimes limited to the *Sanctus* and a single "Amen"—further reinforces the impression that the assembly's eucharistic thanks and praise is finally work done by the priest on behalf of the assembly, an impression Weil laments as the "dominant presider" model of the *anaphora* in the prayer book tradition.⁸⁰ This contributes to the "malformation" of the liturgical assembly every bit as much as the manual acts of the presider.

The dramatic imbalance between liturgical directives for the people and those for the clergy is perhaps not surprising, given the time in which the BCP was compiled, more or less in the middle of the liturgical reform efforts that have since produced the library of resources detailed above. Indeed, as Weil notes of the process that

⁷⁹ BCP 1979, 354.

⁸⁰ Weil, "Scope and Focus in Eucharistic Celebration," in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 42.

led to the 1979 revision, the lack of attention to the place of the assembly in the BCP may reflect the overrepresentation of the ordained among those who prepared it and the relative lack of contemporary theological reflection about the primacy of baptism as the foundational sacrament of Christian ministry.⁸¹ Thus, while we may applaud the BCP's pioneering and truly prophetic baptismal ecclesiology, it is largely restricted to the Baptismal Covenant itself and only barely informs much of the rest of the BCP, which still lacks a ritual imagination that might embody the theological contention that all the baptized are ministers, both within the liturgy and outside it. Given the transformation of both the church and the theological and liturgical academy in the intervening years, however, there is reason to hope that future revision might have a less clerical focus.⁸²

Remedying the lingering clericalism embedded in the liturgy, however, may require the Episcopal Church to do something Anglicanism in general seems to want to avoid for fear of the inevitable conflict among proponents of various liturgical "styles," reflected in the multiple and diverse expansions on the spare rubrics of the BCP⁸³: that is, take a normative position on the question of liturgical performance and environment rather than be content to merely authorize texts.⁸⁴ To repeat what the introduction to *Enriching Our Worship* says about the limits of liturgical language, "Non-verbal language—the language of gesture, movement, sign—will always override the text of the prayer"; indeed, in many cases and many places, the ritual action that bears the text of the BCP does just that by rendering the

⁸¹ See Weil, "Scope and Focus in Eucharistic Celebration," in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 35 and 43.

⁸² For feminist reflection on this point, see Stephen Burns, "From Women Priests to Feminist Ecclesiology?" in Fredrica Harris Thompsett, ed., *Looking Forward, Looking Backward: Forty Years of Women's Ordination* (New York: Church Publishing, 2014), 99–110.

⁸³ In addition to Giles's *Creating Uncommon Worship* and Malloy's *Celebrating the Eucharist*, see Howard E. Galley, *The Ceremonies of the Eucharist: A Guide to Celebration* (Cambridge, Mass.: Cowley Publications, 1989); Daniel B. Stevick, *The Crafting of Liturgy: A Guide for Preparers* (New York: Church Hymnal, 1990); Byron Stuhlman, *Prayer Book Rubrics Expanded* (New York: Church Hymnal, 1987); and Dennis Michno, *A Priest's Handbook*, third edition (Harrisburg, Pa.: Morehouse Publishing, 1998).

⁸⁴ See Mark Earey, *Beyond Common Worship? Anglican Identity and Liturgical Diversity* (London: SCM Press, 2013), esp. "What Makes Worship 'Anglican'?", 78–118.

members of the assembly passive onlookers of a ceremonial event done by clergy, choir, and a few other “assistants.”

To put it plainly, there are simply some ceremonial scenes, including those proposed by the clericalizing rubrics described above, which do not shape the assembly in liturgical patterns imagined by the Baptismal Covenant. A liturgy in which the Great Thanksgiving over bread and wine is proclaimed at a great distance from the body of the assembly and set apart from them by physical barriers does not create a ritual picture of an assembly gathered around God’s table, led in a common action by one of its members. A baptism in which the priest takes on every possible ritual action—pouring the water, proclaiming the blessing, lighting the candle, and so forth—hardly embodies initiation into a church of ministers.

What the BCP lacks finally are the tools to promote the kind of liturgical formation Weil is calling for and which the current BCP has arguably failed to produce—liturgical values that appear, for example, in the *praenotanda* or “general instructions” of the Roman ritual books.⁸⁵ The BCP, however, because it is first and foremost a collection of ritual texts with the sparsest of concrete directives for their ritual embodiment, is capable of producing any number of enacted ecclesiologies, many of which are at odds with the fundamental values of the Baptismal Covenant. More often than not, the rubrical “blank” left by the BCP may be filled in by the practical liturgical experience of the person who prepares the liturgy, usually the parish priest, which will inevitably reflect personal preferences or preferred style of a particular seminary or liturgy professor. Given that an increasing number of Episcopal clergy are being formed in non-Episcopal seminary environments, the task of ensuring good liturgical formation becomes increasingly challenging.

Proposing the kinds of norms and rubrics that would embody in the church’s eucharistic celebration the theological values embodied in its baptismal rite, however, need not—and should not—lead to a flat uniformity. Unlike some of the more recent Roman Catholic

⁸⁵ See, for example, *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/general-instruction-of-the-roman-missal, and *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Study Edition* (Chicago, Ill.: Liturgy Training Publications, 1998), notably “Christian Initiation, General Introduction,” xiv–xviii, and “Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: Introduction,” 2–12, along with separate introductions to particular rites. See also Gerard Moore, *Understanding the General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2007).

efforts, which also show a clericalizing tendency,⁸⁶ a “general instruction” to the BCP and richer directions for the celebrations of its liturgies need not impose a one-size-fits-all approach to Episcopal liturgy. Any norms proposed by a revised BCP must make expansive space for the linguistic, cultural, architectural, and other diversities that make up the Episcopal Church; they should further be cognizant of the danger of the kind of false multiculturalism Oliver roundly critiques.⁸⁷ Yet more fulsome and evocative guidance “concerning the celebration” and more imaginative “additional directions” patterned on the model of *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship*⁸⁸—with its breathtaking contention that the liturgical assembly itself is the primary symbol of the liturgy, to which we might add Weil’s assertion of the whole baptized assembly as its primary minister⁸⁹—would be a welcome addition to any liturgical revision the church might undertake. Such guidance would distill the best insights and wisdom of the liturgical developments of the past decades to promote enduring liturgical formation while also inspiring the continued, creative development of the liturgical tradition. Oliver himself proposes some good starting points in his own list of Anglican essentials, love of the vernacular and aesthetic excellence notably among them;⁹⁰ more recently Sylvia Sweeney has proposed the creation of a “liturgical parallel” to the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral that would provide “fundamental structural elements that . . . we might all embrace together as the

⁸⁶ For example, “Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds in the Dioceses of the United States of America,” revised in 2002, specifically stipulates that only priests, deacons, and “instituted acolytes”—a role almost universally limited to graduate seminarians in the United States—may purify the eucharistic vessels. This rule ended the relatively common practice of lay “extraordinary ministers of holy communion,” women and men, assisting in the purification of vessels used in the eucharistic celebration. See para. 53, www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/norms-for-holy-communion-under-both-kinds/index.cfm.

⁸⁷ Oliver, “Just Praise,” in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 265–273.

⁸⁸ Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy, *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1977).

⁸⁹ Weil, “Scope and Focus in Eucharistic Celebration,” in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 38.

⁹⁰ Oliver, “Just Praise,” in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 278–279.

guiding principles for liturgical development.”⁹¹ Rather than a new rulebook, a revised BCP—whether published as one book or as a library of resources following the *Common Worship* model—would propose a new center of gravity to draw the church more deeply into the transforming power of Christian liturgy in its diverse expressions.

That said, it is likely time to acknowledge that some ritual patterns, ceremonial scenes, fashions in liturgical art and objects, and even furniture placement schemes have long outlived their usefulness. Among these are anything in the liturgy that reduces the baptized to mere spectators in the actions Christians over long centuries have undertaken to make present in ritual the saving memory of Christ. Like the Baptismal Covenant of the 1979 BCP, a liturgical revision thoroughly informed by the primacy of baptism would mark a new moment in the broader liturgical reform, one that might continue to move further forward the recognition of the fundamental equality of the baptized, both within the liturgy and outside it, and full realization of the diversity of the gifts that enliven the liturgical assembly.

For various reasons—from the revision of the Episcopal Church’s canons to the voices of its leading liturgists such as Louis Weil—the 1979 BCP invites questions. While seconding Weil’s and others’ contention of the need for liturgical formation, the question of whether the BCP in its current form is capable of forming the church in the patterns imagined by the Baptismal Covenant is an open one. The possibility of a prayer book for the twenty-first century needs to be revived if matters of justice are to be championed by the church and a baptismal ecclesiology—one Weil characterizes as “the identification of all [the church’s] members with the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ and through that with the common life of the body of Christ”⁹²—is to shape more deeply “the voice of prayer in the heart, spirit and mind of the people praying.”⁹³ Such an effort need in no way abandon the Anglican heritage of the Episcopal Church; indeed, the “Anglican” contribution may be magnified in consultation with partner churches, including the Church of England. If anything, the search for a worthy

⁹¹ Sylvia Sweeney, “Future Directions in Liturgical Development,” *Anglican Theological Review* 95, no. 3 (Summer 2013): 524. Note also above discussion of (*New Patterns for Worship* in the Church of England.

⁹² Weil, “Scope and Focus in Eucharistic Celebration,” in Meyers, ed., *A Prayer Book for the Twenty-first Century*, 37.

⁹³ *Enriching Our Worship* 1, 17.

vernacular—or, more properly, plural vernaculars—in which to offer praise and thanks to God through Christ in the Holy Spirit beats at the heart of Anglicanism, beginning with Thomas Cranmer and his sixteenth-century colleagues and continuing as churches the world over find voices of their own. For the Episcopal Church, the time has long since arrived for the diversity of voices within it to sound.