

MANDATE

The Bi-Monthly Magazine of the Prayer Book Society

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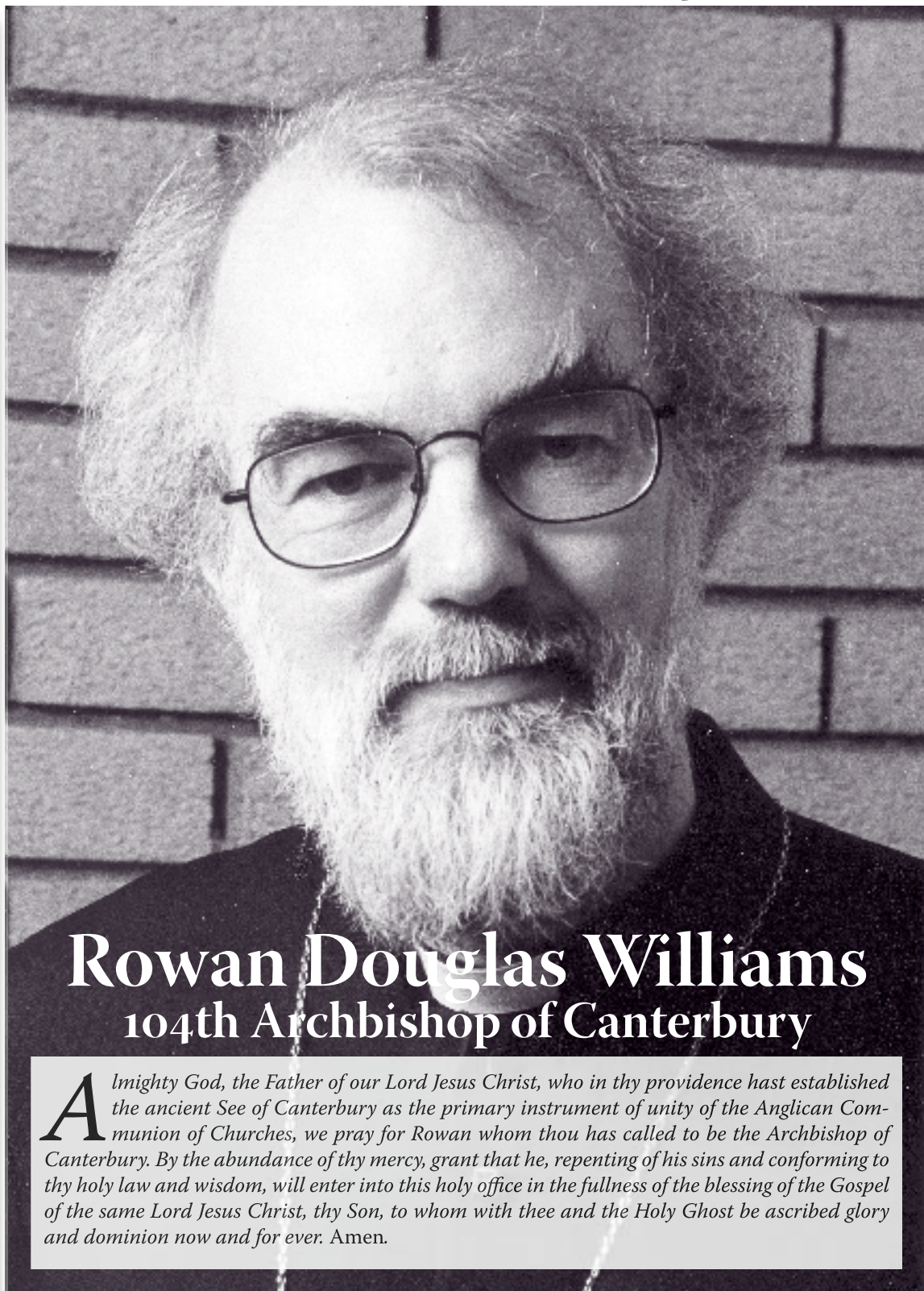
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Rowan Douglas Williams 104th Archbishop of Canterbury

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in thy providence hast established the ancient See of Canterbury as the primary instrument of unity of the Anglican Communion of Churches, we pray for Rowan whom thou has called to be the Archbishop of Canterbury. By the abundance of thy mercy, grant that he, repenting of his sins and conforming to thy holy law and wisdom, will enter into this holy office in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of the same Lord Jesus Christ, thy Son, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be ascribed glory and dominion now and for ever. Amen.

Where can I find a church that uses the 1928 Prayer Book?



• Chapel of St. Matthias

(Reformed Episcopal Church)

4142 Dayflower · Katy, TX 77449

281 463 2304

Sunday 9:00 am Morning Prayer

10:30 am Holy Communion

The Rev. Jason Grote, *Vicar*

• Church of the Holy Trinity

(Reformed Episcopal Church)

211 Byrne Avenue · Houston, TX 77009

713 862 4929/862 5657

Sunday 9:00 am Morning Prayer

10:45 am Holy Communion

The Rt. Rev. Royal U. Grote, Jr., *Rector*

The Rev. "Bud" Colvis, *Curate*

The Rev. David Marshall, *Deacon*

• Church of St. Peter

(Anglican Province of Christ the King)

1331 Augusta Drive (Post Oak YMCA Building) · Houston, TX

713 946 8458

Sunday 10:30 am Holy Communion

The Rt. Rev. S. Patrick Murphy, *SSC, Rector*

The Rev. David Sprunk, *Assistant*

The Rev. Hampton Mabry, *Hospice Chaplain*

• St. Jerome's Anglican Church

(Anglican Church, Inc.)

559 River Plantation Drive

Conroe, TX 77302-3743

We list parishes using the 1928 BCP by state or area, their ecclesiastical jurisdiction (Episcopal Church or "Continuing Church"), and all of their services, if from the 1928, or the ones that use the 1928 BCP. The Reformed Episcopal Church uses a Prayer Book which includes both the 1662 (Church of England) and much from the 1928.

An excellent reference is the *Directory of Traditional Anglican and Episcopal Parishes*, published by the Fellowship of

Texas: Houston area

936 273 2619

Sunday 11:00 am Holy Communion

The Rev. Kenneth G. Walsh, Jr., *Priest-in-Charge*

• St. John's/Old South Anglican Church

(Anglican Catholic Church)

5227 Skinner Lane

Richmond, TX

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1065

Richmond, TX 77406-1065

Sunday 9:30 am Morning Prayer & Holy Communion

The Rev. Carol G. Rosaire, Jr., *O/OSB, Rector*

• St. Paul's Anglican Church

(Independent)

5801 Reds Bluff Road

Pasadena, TX 77505

281 479 7285

Sunday 10:00 am Holy Communion

The Rev. Clay Shadeck

• St. Thomas of Canterbury

(Reformed Episcopal Church/Forward in Faith) · 14007 South Freeway (State Highway 288) · Houston, TX

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 270491

Houston, TX 77277 · 713 434 1117

Sunday 8:00 am Holy Communion

10:30 am Holy Communion or

Morning Prayer

The Rev. James T. Payne, *Rector*

Concerned Churchmen. This directory does not tell what prayer book is used. You may order from the editor, Mrs. Jane Nones, 4800 Dupont Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55409, telephone: (612)824 3933.

Please let us know of other parishes that use the 1928 BCP. We are glad to know of them, and also that folks are reading *Mandate*. Since we can only list each parish once, it might be a good idea to keep the issues of *Mandate* that have this column to use for future reference.

• St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

(The Episcopal Church/Forward in Faith) · 4900 Jackwood · Houston, TX

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 35096

Houston, TX 77235

713 666 3111

Sunday 8:00 am Holy Communion

10:30 am Holy Communion or Morning Prayer

6:15 pm Evening Prayer

The Rev. Wayland N. Coe, *Rector*

The Rev. William Heard, *Associate*

The Rev. Douglas Cadwallader, *Assistant*

Update/Change from last listing

• Trinity Church

(Reformed Episcopal Church)

331 Lake Ave. (Chapel at the Church of the Good Shepherd) · Maitland, FL 32751

407 695 3114

Sunday 9:45 am Holy Communion/
Morning Prayer

The Rev. James Reber, *Rector*

The Rev. Kevin Burks, *Deacon*

Please write the Rev. Fr. David C. Kennedy, SSC, at 1325 Cardinal Lane, Lantana, FL 33462-4205 if you know of parishes that use the 1928 BCP. Needless to say it will take along time to list them all! Praise God for that!!!

THE MANDATE

September / October 2002

Volume 21, Number 5

Editor: The Rev'd Dr. Peter Toon • Design/Layout: Boldface Graphics

The Members of the Board of Directors of the Prayer Book Society: The Rev'd Wayland Coe (Texas); The Rev'd Joseph S. Falzone (Pennsylvania); Mr. Michael W. Freeland (Pennsylvania); Dr. Herb Guerry (Georgia); The Rev'd David C Kennedy SSC (Florida);

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Reflections from the Editor's Desk

The Rev'd Dr. Peter Toon

The Archbishopric of Canterbury

It was announced on July 23 2002 that the Queen has nominated the Most Reverend Rowan Douglas Williams, MA, DPhil, DD, FBA, Archbishop of Wales and Bishop of Monmouth, for election by the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury in the place of the Most Reverend and Right Honourable George Leonard Carey, BD, MTh, PhD, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of All England and Metropolitan.

The Most Reverend Rowan Williams (born 1950) was educated at Dynevor Secondary School, Swansea, then at Christ's College, Cambridge where he read Theology. He studied for the priesthood and lectured at the College of the Resurrection at Mirfield from 1975 to 1977.

From 1977 to 1980 Rowan Williams was a tutor at Westcott House. He was a lecturer in Divinity in Cambridge University from 1980 to 1986 and Dean and Chaplain of Clare College from 1984 to 1986. From 1980 to 1983 he also worked as honorary curate in the parish of Chesterton St George, Ely. In 1986 he was made a Canon Residentiary of Christ Church, Oxford and Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity, Oxford. He was elected Bishop of Monmouth in December 1991, and Archbishop of Wales in 1999.

His many publications include *The Wound of Knowledge* (1979), *Resurrection* (1982), *The Truce of God* (1983), *Beginning Now: Peacemaking Theology* (1984), *Arius, Heresy and Tradition* (1987), *Teresa of Avila* (1991), *Open to Judgement* (1994), and *After Silent Centuries* (1994). Most recently he has published *Lost Icons* (2000) and *Writing in the Dust* (2001). He has also edited *The Making of Orthodoxy* (1989) and jointly edited *Love's Redeeming Work* (2001), an anthology of Anglican writing on Spirituality.

Rowan Williams is married to Jane who teaches at Trinity College, Bristol. They have a son and a daughter, Rhiannon and Pip. His interests include music, fiction and languages.

The 52 year old Welshman will be the youngest Archbishop for 200 years, the first since the 19th century to take young children to Lambeth Palace and the first since the reign of Bloody Mary in 1556 to be appointed from outside the bench of bishops

of the Church of England. Further, he can look forward to 18 years in the post, in which time the Church of England, and the Anglican Communion of Churches, could change dramatically.

Rowan has so many excellent qualities that even the most pessimistic of us must see optimistic possibilities for the Anglican Way with him as the senior Primate! But there are negatives.

However much he tries to be gracious to, and understanding of, other Primates he will not be accepted by a sizeable minority of them as a man

of God if he continues to embrace (howbeit in a limited way) the doctrine of same-sex partnerships as approved by God. The fact that he is against abortion will be welcomed by all but for most African bishops toleration of homosexuality is a sin, even as homosexual practice is a sin, which unforgiven sends the sinner to hell.

Livingstone Mpalanyi-Nkoyoyo, the Primate of Uganda, where the first Christian martyrs were young men who refused to engage in sodomy, commented on July 23rd: "We need to pray for Rowan because we are not sure about his

beliefs. For us in Africa homosexuality is sin. If he does not change his mind there will be a lot of problems and divisions."

As I think of Rowan, whom I have known casually for a long time since we were both doing doctoral work at Oxford in the mid-1970s, the words of the evangelical hymn come to mind:

Down in the human heart, crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore,
Touched by a loving hand, wakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more.

I believe that deep in the soul of Rowan is the full, biblical and orthodox Faith of the Catholic Church of God (has he not written splendidly of aspects of this in some of his many writings?). I hope that under the gracious pressure of the Holy Ghost, and the prayerful kindness of the people of God, the chords of this wonderful symphony of truth (that we call the reformed Catholic Faith) will vibrate in him and through him to the Church of England and to the whole Anglican Communion.



Debbie Remenyi of the Philadelphia PBS office and Dr. Peter Toon at All Saints, Wynnewood.



Louis R. Tarsitano

The Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ has become controversial again. Some congregations have removed it from their meeting places in the name of being “seeker

friendly.” Others have rejected it, along with other symbols of the faith, for fear of erecting an idol. No other symbol, however, has been as central to the historic English preaching of the Gospel or the Anglican Way.

One of the earliest Christian poems in English, “The Dream of the Rood” (or “Cross”), was first carved on an actual cross in the chancel of a church in the 8th century. It describes a holy vision: “Stained and marred, stricken with shame, I saw the glory-tree shine out gaily, sheathed in yellow decorous gold; and gemstones made for their Maker’s Tree a right mail coat” (Michael Alexander, *The Earliest English Poems*).

The Maker’s Tree, the Glory-Tree, the Cross of Christ (whether on the Holy Table or carried in procession) is a standard, in the same way that the eagle was the standard of the Roman Empire. The use of the Cross as a standard is especially clear when carried before the representative procession of the Church, just as the eagle went before a Roman (or for that matter, Napoleonic) legion. Lifting up the Cross in this way is also related to the Brazen Serpent in the wilderness (cf. Num. 21: 9; John 3:14) and to our Lord’s “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12:32).

Thus, the Cross on the Holy Table is the standard of the House of God in Christ, representing God’s ownership of that particular house and of all similar houses, just as the imperial standard marked off building belonging to the Roman Empire and as the standard of the Crown marks English buildings today that represent the Monarch. If the Lion and Unicorn, as symbols and standards, are not idols, neither then is the Cross an idol. The Cross is not worshipped, but stands for the Kingship of the One who is worshipped.

The Cross also marks the extra-territoriality of the local church, so that it is an embassy of the kingdom of heaven (much the way that the flag of, say, Iceland, flies before its American embassy). In this way, too, the Cross marks the supremacy of divine sovereignty over all others (as when the

National Flag is displayed in a central position, and flanked by the flags of other jurisdictions that are honored, but not supreme).

Some of these customs, of course, are related to Constantine’s vision of the Cross before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge: “in hoc signo, vinces” (“in this sign, you conquer”). The sense is that the Cross is the “sign” (symbol, standard, visible referent) of the invisible power behind it. When Constantine raised up the Cross as his standard for the battle, he raised it over the eagle of earthly empire. In a sense, the Church must always choose between the eagle and the Cross, as German Christians discovered during the Nazi Reich. The Nazis understood the meaning of the Cross, and so they forced compliant churches to hide it or to subordinate it to the Swastika.

Those who scruple about signs of reverence at the crossing of a church, however, should put their minds to rest. Such acts of humility did not begin as a reverencing of the cross (let alone the reserved sacrament, which was often to the side in any case). Rather, they come partially from the behavior of Roman citizens in a basilica-style public building, where the center-front was the place of honor held by the Emperor’s magistrate, who was honored as a place-holder for the Emperor. They also began in the symbolic connection of the Holy Table with the Mercy Seat, in which the Incarnate Christ, with his five wounds, took the place of the mere golden cover placed on the Ark of the Covenant. The Mercy Seat was the foot-stool of the Divine Presence, so that the reverence was rendered to the invisible, but true, abiding Presence of God in his earthly house, as one bows when passing before the throne of an earthly monarch.

Thus considered, nothing could be more reasonable than for the invisible King’s standard to be displayed in his own house as a sign of his presence and power. Nothing could be a better reminder to preach nothing save Jesus Christ, and him crucified (cf. 1 Cor. 2:2) than the sign of the Cross. The Glory-Tree belongs still in our hearts and in our churches.

The Public Language of Worship

(Claims and clarifications on behalf of those who believe that it is right and proper in the third millennium to use what is usually called “traditional language” in the addressing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost in Common Worship and Prayer)

First, the negative.

1. We do not claim that God does not hear prayers from his people that are badly composed and/or are grammatically incorrect. The LORD is gracious unto all who call upon him in humility even though he expects us to pursue excellence in our relations with him.

2. We do not claim that it is morally wrong and/or sinful to address God in “contemporary English.” The LORD hears and understands all forms of language for he is our Creator.

3. We do not claim that every Christian congregation in the English-speaking world ought to abandon the use of modern “contemporary English” forms of worship immediately. We realize, for example, that this would be impossible especially for the millions of Roman Catholics who are required to use only “contemporary English” or Latin.

4. We do not claim that there are not any plausible, attractive, reasonable and seemingly persuasive arguments offered to Christian congregations to abandon the use of “traditional language” for public prayer, a language which we recognize that some people do not wholly, readily and immediately understand.

5. We do not claim or expect that the language of evangelism used outside church services should be in “traditional English” since it needs to be in forms that the hearers understand immediately and easily. However, it is difficult to remove entirely all the traditional words from Christian communication since there is no modern equivalent for them.

6. We do not claim that the laws/rules for personal prayer/devotions are identical with those for public worship and common prayer – or vice versa. How a person prays to God in private is entirely the concern of that person, while the way a person prays in public is the concern of all.

7. We do not claim that the excellence of language is more important than the purity and humility of heart and spirit. God looks first on the heart and then hears the words as from there. Yet he looks for and prefers excellence in speech from his children.

8. We do not claim that the principles set out below apply to prayer/worship in other languages such as German, French or Spanish, Hindi, Urdu or Syriac. The idiom of prayer in public worship in English has its own unique history and principles.

Secondly, the positive.

1. We do claim that Public worship & Common Prayer ought to be and should be offered to the Holy Trinity, the LORD God, in the best available form of language to make possible the expression of right doctrine, devotion, discipline and ethos in the congregation of Christ’s flock.

2. We do claim that the best available language for worship/prayer ought to be the expression of faithful, obedient and humble minds, hearts and wills. Yet we distinguish between a service of worship for believers and a service of the Word for seekers and enquirers.

3. We do claim that in determining the best available form of language, the history and tradition of usage in the English language should be seen as very important and perhaps decisive. The Church exists through space and time and we are part of a long and wide-ranging story of grace.

4. We do claim that there is a specific language of worship and prayer within the history and experience of the English-speaking peoples and this is given classic expression in the King James Bible of 1611, The Book of Common Prayer of 1662, in the Hymns of Isaac Watts & Charles Wesley (& others), in Statements & Confessions of Faith (e.g., the Westminster Catechisms and Confession from the 1640s) and in innumerable printed books of sermons, catechisms, translations of Greek and Latin texts, and the like.

5. We do claim that this long, deep and profound tradition of language for worship and prayer should be seen as the primary idiom of prayer in the English language and be judged to have been created in and by the providence of God for this purpose. Here the addressing of God by means of “thee/thou” combines a sense of holy intimacy (via the 2nd person singular) and of awesome reverence (by long usage for this holy purpose) thereby producing a communion of Friend with friends and friends with Friend in the bond of charity.

6. We do claim that conservatism and even archaism in language of scripture and prayer are a proper balance to linguistic change, since the destabilization of such language leads to an erosion of meaning; and the disappearance of a clear and common vocabulary of prayer with an objec-

tive meaning is the disappearance of an important touchstone of unity. The “restatement” of classical ideas into “contemporary language” often is inadequate to the original meanings, and can even provide cover for deliberate changes. Further, such archaism in language is proper to the Word of God, which speaks to us from its definitive utterance in the past, with an authority not derived from the present, or from relevance to the present. Its difference from ordinary everyday speech also expresses the distinction of sacred and secular appropriate to the holiness of God and out duty to be holy as God is holy.

7. We do claim that this idiom of public prayer and worship was rudely and widely but yet

unwisely rejected in the social & cultural revolution of the 1960s (and with it certain holy books & associations of doctrine and morality). Too much changed too quickly for the good of the Church and for Christian stability.

8. We do claim that this prayer language ought to be kept in use and availability in all Churches that are biblically-based and orthodox. Such classic prayer books as The Book of Common Prayer (1662, 1928, 1962 [Canada] etc.) should be prized, widely available and used; the King James Bible (1611) should be often read in churches; and the Hymns of Wesley and Watts etc. sung.

The Rev'd Dr. Peter Toon

Prayer Book Society Board of Directors at All Saints' Wynnewood

On June 29th the PBS Board of Directors met in Philadelphia at the parish of All Saints' Wynnewood.

As was reported in the last issue of Mandate this parish, which uses the 1928 Book of Common Prayer and rejects the ultra-liberal policy of the diocesan bishop, is going through hard and testing times. The bishop has refused to give a licence to the interim priest, Fr. Eddie Rix. Thus while he does parish work and arranges for the daily and Sundays services he cannot take any of them.

On Sunday June 30 the Rev'd Dr. Peter Toon

was the officiant, celebrant and preacher at the two services. And Mr Denman Zirkle in the Notices assured the congregation of the total support of the Prayer Book Society in its struggle for orthodoxy and toleration in the Diocese of Pennsylvania.

The photo portrays and represents the support of the Board of the PBS for Fr. Eddie Rix, who is at the center, surrounded by (from left to right) Fr. David Kennedy, Fr. Wayland Coe, Fr. Joe Falzone, Fr. Peter Toon & Fr. Jonathan Ostman.



The 1960s:

Changing the Language of Prayer & Worship

Let us consider two sets of facts. First of all in 1900 in the English-speaking world all the Protestant Churches used a traditional form of English in

their worship and prayers. Their approach and address to God in formal prayer, ex tempore prayer and hymnody used the second person singular (“Thee/Thou”).

All this seemed natural to them even though it was archaic because “You” had replaced “Thee/Thou” as the normal second person singular in everyday speech. Further, though the Roman Catholic Church services were virtually totally in Latin their private books of devotion and unofficial translations of the Mass were in traditional English, the English of the King James Version of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer.

In **the second place** in 2000 all the major Protestant Churches in the English-speaking world used what is usually termed “contemporary English” to distinguish it from the “traditional English” used in worship for many previous centuries. Further, the Roman Catholic used the same type of modern English for the Mass and other forms of service. Only here and there did the tradition of the use of the inherited language persist (e.g., where the traditional Anglican Book of Common Prayer and the King James Version of the Bible were used or where there were strict Presbyterians using classic 17th century forms). However, where the “contemporary English” was used there were exceptions made for using the Lord’s Prayer in the traditional form and singing hymns that used “Thee/Thou.”

Against this background, we ask: Why did this revolution occur in the twentieth century rather than the seventeenth or eighteenth or nineteenth centuries?

This is a good question for, in those times — indeed going back into the seventeenth century — the use of “you” as the usual form of the second person singular was common. Thus it would not have been illogical or irrational to begin to use “You” when addressing God in worship. Yet this did not happen. Obviously the form of address using “Thee/Thou” was deeply embedded in religious expression and feeling by 1700 for it was maintained without dissent thereafter.

The 1960s

Further, we ask: **Why did this revolution occur in the 1960s** (using this expression to cover the late 1950s, the 1960s and the early 1970s) **and not in the 1920s or the 1980s?** In the 1920s the

Church of England prepared a revised edition of the Book of Common Prayer (1662) which was eventually not approved by Parliament because of its supposed “Romish” trends. However, in terms of the language of prayer it was wholly in the very same traditional language as the book from 1662 it was intended to replace and nobody thought this to be odd or wrong.

It is a simple matter of fact that it was in the 1960s that the new Bible translations, the new Liturgies and the new Hymnody using “contemporary language” were planned and published to be adopted — often after much trial use and heart-searching — by the leadership and then the membership of the major Churches. Amongst the latter many went along reluctantly carried by the spirit of the times which required that “one move with the times.”

But why, specifically, the 1960s? A language does not change overnight but evolves slowly, but here there was no development and adaptation, only abrupt change. This surely tells us that the answer to the question about timing must be in terms other than linguistic reasons for change. Languages do evolve naturally but this change was not a natural evolution. The rapid move from the so-called “traditional” to the so-called “contemporary” is therefore more likely to be explained in terms of religious, social and cultural factors and reasons.

Reasons for the revolution

Further, the answer will be more than the reasons given by those clergy and leaders who set the ball rolling in terms of the adoption of “contemporary” language in the 1960s. For example, the cry of evangelical Christians in America and Britain was for relevance, intelligibility, accessibility and simplicity. They wanted to have a simple message from an accessible Bible using intelligible forms of services in plain person’s speech in order to evangelise their fellow citizens. They believed that the “traditional language” with its mystery and poetic quality was not and could not be effective to this end. In short, God and Christ would only become available and accessible and intelligible to the majority if these divine Persons were addressed as “You.”

Reasons offered for totally new translations of the Bible (such as the New International Version),

and replacements for the King James Version (and its children, the Revised Version and the Revised Standard Version), were in terms of the availability of better manuscripts of the Greek New Testament, the presence of archaic words in the old versions, and that no distinction was made in the original Hebrew or Greek between the addressing of a human being and offering prayer to God, in terms of the pronouns and verb forms used.

Young Protestant Ministers were taught that they could not trust the KJV for it was not an accurate translation of the originals; they needed a modern accurate version from which to preach to a generation young people who were rejecting the old ways. Further, young Anglican/Episcopal clergy were taught that the Book of Common Prayer was not based upon the best texts of the Bible in the original languages or the best understanding of the worship and doctrine of the Early Church. They needed not only an accurate version but also a modern version for leading the people in prayer.

At the same time, thousands of Roman Catholic parishes had begun using “contemporary” English for their Masses and the Roman Church was being shaken from top to bottom as it embraced *aggiornamento* (updating) and *reaccentramento* (recentering).

What we need clearly to appreciate and grasp is that underneath the call for relevance and the claims that better scholarship was being used for Bible translation and liturgical revision were other reasons, the underground springs that supplied the streams and lakes. There were the ideas and ideologies that made the 1960s into a period of major discontent, change and revolution in the western world and in America in particular. All who lived in this period breathed into their souls some of this new air and ferment. Even those who rebelled against the innovations and changes of the time were affected by them, so powerful were they!

In short, the revolutionary decade, which most remember in terms of campus unrest, of protests against the Viet Nam war, of loud music, of communes and of rapid social changes especially in civil rights, was based on (a) relativism in morals (“All you need is love”) – thus situation ethics, (b) commitment to the New (thus ditching old ideas and ways), (c) religion as social activism (thus marches and picket lines), (d) pluralism and egalitarianism (thus variety taken as the norm and encouraged), (e) the irrelevancy of the Church as an institution (thus the emphasis on community [koinonia]), (f) theology expressed as psychology, anthropology and sociology and (g) a turn to the self (self-help, self-affirmation, self-discovery and self realization). To describe all this is not to say that it was all bad. Rather, it is to say that the stage was set for far reaching and rapid changes in reli-

gion, churches, families, institutions, education, politics and so on. And changes did occur and few escaped the full force of them.

Conclusion

So we can say with confidence that the change in the way that English-speaking people addressed God was caused primarily by the revolution of the 1960s. What occurred was that a very long standing, profound, deep tradition, wherein were the treasures of English religious devotion of many centuries, was rapidly set aside as the Old ways in favour of the New (embracing the New was of course one of the themes of the 1960s).

Much that is holy and even unique was lost to the English-speaking peoples by this tremendous change in the way in which we stand before and address God, who is both the Holy One and the Friend of sinners. And also much that belonged to the revolutionary ideas of the 1960s was within the “contemporary” language as it was adapted for the public worship of God in the Roman Catholic Church and in the Bibles and Prayer Books of Protestants.

To this day English-speaking Christianity has not settled upon what exactly is the right form of “contemporary English” to be used in Christian worship. The abundance of Bible translations and liturgical styles and types of hymns & choruses, that come and go, testify still to the pluralism and subjectivism of the 1960s.

So we conclude that those who believe that they ought to continue to use the inherited, classical English form of prayer should be treated courteously and sympathetically by the majority in the Churches. Adequate space and time should be given to them so that they can worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness and preserve for generations to come the live tradition of classical and traditional worship of the Lord in English. And, further, young people who have never experienced the traditional language and content of public worship should be encouraged and given the opportunities to do so.

**PLEASE
REMEMBER THE
PRAYER BOOK
SOCIETY IN YOUR
WILL.**

The 1960s:

The English Bible & the Language of Prayer

For many centuries, the English-speaking peoples used a Bible in whose pages all people, including the unique Jesus of Nazareth, addressed God in

the second person singular -- "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth," "hallowed be thy name" and "I thank thee, Father." And this form of address to God was also imitated and maintained for centuries in their public worship as the language of prayer, even when, from the 17th century onwards, the second person singular ("thee/thou") ceased to be used in general conversation between human beings.

The King James Version (known in Great Britain as The Authorized Version)

No translation of the Bible into English has come near to the *King James Version* (1611) in terms of influencing not only the character of the English language but also the religious belief of its readers and hearers.

With good reason the King James Version has been termed, "the noblest monument of English prose." Its revisers in 1881 expressed admiration for "its simplicity, its dignity, its power, its happy turns of expression...the music of its cadences and the felicities of its rhythm."

The translators in the 17th century, following a long English tradition, chose to use the second person singular in the way that it is used in the original Hebrew and Greek. That is, they used it when the reference was either to God himself or to a single human being. Thus Peter said to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ..." And Jesus said to Peter, "Thou art Peter and on this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:16-18). Further, when King Solomon dedicated the Temple he prayed, "Lord God of Israel, there is no God like thee in heaven above..." (1 Kings 8:23).

What became known as *The Revised Version* (1885) and *The American Standard Version* were revisions of *The Authorized Version* (1611) and they continued the use of "thee/thou" as in the 1611 version.

The Revised Standard Version

The Revised Standard Version was an authorized revision of the *American Standard Version* (1901) and was published in 1946 (N.T.) and 1952 (O.T.). In 1937 the Council of Religious Education of the Churches of the United States and Canada directed that the new version should "embody the

best results of modern scholarship as to the meaning of the Scriptures, and express that meaning in English idiom which is designed for use in public and private worship and preserves those qualities which have given the King James Version a supreme place in English literature."

The Preface explains that, apart from the advances made in Biblical Studies, a major reason for revision of the King James Version is the change since 1611 in English usage.

Many forms of expression have become archaic, while still generally intelligible -- the use of thou, thee, thy, thine and the verb endings --est and --edst, the verb endings --eth and --th, it came to pass that, whosoever, whatsoever, inasmuch that, because that, for that, unto, howbeit, peradventure, holden, aforetime, must needs, would fain, behoved, to you-ward etc. Other words are obsolete and no longer understood by the common reader.

The greatest problem, however, is presented by the English words which are still in constant use but now convey a different meaning from that which they had in 1611 and in the King James Version. These words were once accurate translations of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures; but now, having changed in meaning, they have become misleading...

Yet, though the translators dropped the use of the archaic second person singular for human beings, they did retain it when either the Lord Jesus or any person addressed Almighty God, the heavenly Father. Thus "Hallowed be thy name" (Matthew 6:9) and "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth" (Matthew 11:25). In doing this, the translators followed the practice then common in American Protestant Churches where God was addressed in the second person singular as "Thee/Thou" while human beings both alone and together were addressed as "you."

The New English Bible

In October 1946 delegates of the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, the Methodist, Baptist and Congregational Churches met and recommended "that a completely new translation should be made, rather than a revision [of the King James Version]; and that the translators should be free to employ a contemporary idiom rather than

reproduce the traditional 'biblical' English."

In 1961 *The New English Bible* was published by the University Presses. In the Introduction to the New Testament it is stated:

"In doing our work, we have constantly striven to follow our instructions and render the Greek, as we understand it, into the English of the present day, that is, into the natural vocabulary, constructions, and rhythms of contemporary speech. We have sought to avoid archaisms, jargon, and all that is stilted or slipshod."

However in direct address to God, and like the Revised Standard Version from America, the archaic "thee/thou/thy" is used because it was in this way that ministers and congregations in Britain prayed in the 1950s. Even after two world wars this idiom of addressing God was considered as the natural and normal way of prayer.

The New International Version

Many conservative Protestants in America did not welcome the Revised Standard Version for its sponsorship by the National Council of Churches was seen as giving it a liberal bias. So to help to satisfy the felt need for a modern translation amongst such conservatives, there appeared *The Amplified Bible* (1965), *The Modern Language Bible* [The New Berkeley Version] (1969). *The New American Standard Bible* (1971) and the widely popular paraphrase, *The Living Bible* (1971), all of which had limited appeal.

The story of *The New International Version* effectively begins in 1965, and significantly in the middle of the turbulent 1960s, with the proposal from committees of the Christian Reformed Church and the National Association of Evangelicals for "a new translation of the Bible in contemporary English." The New York International Bible Society provided the financial sponsorship and the work was shared by many scholars from a large variety of specifically evangelical churches.

The full Bible was published in 1978 and in the Preface it was stated:

Concern for clear and natural English – that the New International Version should be idiomatic but not idiosyncratic, contemporary not dated – motivated the translators and consultants. At the same time, they tried to reflect the differing styles of the biblical writers. In view of the international use of English, the translators sought to avoid obvious Americanisms on the one hand and obvious Anglicisms on the other...

As for the traditional pronouns, "thou," "thee" and "thine" in reference to the Deity, the translators judged that to use these archaisms (along with the old verb forms such as "doest," "wouldest," and "hadst") would violate accuracy in translation.

Neither Hebrew, Aramaic nor Greek uses special pronouns for the persons of the Godhead. A present-day translation is not enhanced by forms that in the time of the King James Version were used in everyday speech, whether referring to God or to man.

Thus it was that in the name of scholarly accuracy the long, deep and sacred tradition of addressing God as "Thee/Thou" was abandoned by this "official," commercially successful, and widely distributed version of the Bible for Evangelicals.

The Revised English Bible

The full edition of *The New English Bible* appeared in 1971 and its successor *The Revised English Bible* appeared in 1989. In the Preface there is a brief explanation of the form of English used:

Care has been taken to ensure that the style of English used is fluent and of appropriate dignity for liturgical use, while maintaining intelligibility for worshippers of a wide range of ages and backgrounds. As the 'you'-form of address to God is now commonly used, the 'thou'-form which was preserved in the language of prayer in The New English Bible has been abandoned.

Thus we see that by the year 1989 the traditional language of prayer has been abandoned because it is believed that a modern form is commonly used.

The New Revised Standard Version

In 1974 the Policies Committee of the National Council of Churches in the USA authorized the preparation of a revision of the entire RSV Bible. It was published in 1990 under the title, *The New Revised Standard Version*.

In terms of the addressing of God, the Preface declares: "It will be seen that in the Psalms and other prayers addressed to God the archaic second person singular pronouns (thee, thou, thine) and verb forms (art, hast, hadst) are no longer used. Although some readers may regret this change, it should be pointed out that in the original languages neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament makes any linguistic distinction between addressing a human being and addressing the Deity."

Thus this Version widely used in the old-line denominations has completely abandoned the traditional English Idiom of Prayer.

Conclusion

With the change from "thee" to "you" which occurred in the 1960s/1970s came further changes in language in the 1980s/1990s, most importantly inclusive language, to satisfy the demands of the feminist lobby. Thus we see that "contemporary" language is much more than ceasing to address God as "Thee/Thou."

The 1960s:

Prayer Books and the Language of Worship

A major part of any Christian act of worship is the engaging in prayers of praise, thanksgiving, confession, petition and intercession. As

these are addressed to God the Father through Jesus Christ the Lord, with the Holy Ghost (= Holy Spirit), there are occasions when pronouns must be used. And in English the choice at least from the seventeenth century has been between “thou, thee, thine, thy” or “you, your” for both sets can serve as second person singular for the Deity, who is one Lord and one God.

Classic English Prayer

Together with the English Bible came the English Prayer Book known as *The Book of the Common Prayer* of 1549. There were further editions with that of 1662 becoming the classic edition for the Church of England and the British Empire.

The primary translator and reviser of the Latin originals was the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer (1489 – 1556). In formal prose, Cranmer was a master, having an exact ear for phrases and sentences that could be repeated a thousand times over and contained no infelicity or jarring tone. He deliberately intended “the language of the Book to be sonorous and slightly archaic; he had no intention of letting his liturgy be sneered at for being modish or inferior to the old Latin. This archaic quality was highly significant for the future of English; it saved it from being hijacked by the pompous Latin and Greek vocabulary beloved by many of his scholarly contemporaries.”

What the use of *The Book of Common Prayer* (along with the use of the English Bible of 1611) quickly achieved in the seventeenth century was a distinctively English way of public prayer. This was based on the addressing of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost in the second person singular (Thou, Thee, Thy, Thine) and included various structures and forms of prayer (e.g., The Lord’s Prayer) and expressions of the Faith (e.g., the Apostles’ Creed).

In homilies, sermons and addresses, given in or after the set Liturgy in the Church of England, it became increasingly common after 1662 for clergy to use “you” in the singular and the plural. Likewise, Nonconformist and Dissenting Ministers (Congregationalists, Baptists etc.) addressed human beings in the singular and plural as “you.” Yet in the official Liturgy of the Established Church and in the *ex tempore* prayers of the Nonconformist Pastors the use of the second person singular

was most carefully preserved for the addressing of and referring to the Deity. And this state of affairs continued until after the second World War in all parts of the English-speaking world.

So it is not surprising that if we examine the editions of *The Book of Common Prayer* prepared for use in countries, which achieved independence from Great Britain, we find that all of them maintained the form of English created by Cranmer in the mid-sixteenth century, for this form had become for all intents and purposes the English idiom of prayer. For example, the revised edition of the Prayer Book produced for the Episcopal Church in 1789, after the Declaration of Independence from Great Britain, kept closely to the received Cranmerian form of language even where it included new collects and prayers to meet the needs of a new nation. And so did the revised editions of this American Prayer Book in 1892 and 1928. Even as late as 1960 the Anglican Church of Canada published a revised edition of the 1662 Prayer Book and in it maintained the traditional language of prayer and worship.

Modern English Prayer

Changes in the long-established English idiom of prayer and worship only came into the Anglican Family of Churches in the late 1960s & 1970s when various experimental liturgies were being used in preparation for the production and publishing of new prayer books. At first these liturgies, even though they had a new structure and content, used only the second person singular in addressing God; but, as the years of experimentation went by, and as the content of new Bible translations was known, the innovation of addressing God as “You” began and with it the use of what became known as “contemporary English.”

Therefore, when the new official Prayer Books began to appear they contained services in both “traditional language” and “contemporary language.” Thus if one examines the American Prayer Book of 1979 (erroneously and mischievously called *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1979 rather than *An American Episcopal Service Book* or the like), the *Alternative Service Book* (1980) of the Church of England, and the *Book of Alternative Services* (1985) of the Anglican Church of Canada, one finds that while there are both types of services, the bal-

ance is very much in favour of the innovation. And leaders in all the Churches pressed clergy and congregations to use the new rather than the old, telling them that the new were more relevant, helpful and authentic. Thus in the 1970s people changed the habits of a life-time in terms of the way they addressed and referred to God.

By the end of the twentieth century “contemporary language” in liturgy (as with Bible translation) meant much more than the language used by decent people in regular conversation or by good journalists in respectable newspapers. It meant language which deliberately rejected the old form of addressing God and which incorporated the basics of the feminist movement. In other words, it was much more than the removal of archaic words and the like, it was the creating of a religious language intended to carry within itself a certain ideology and to do so in a simple way.

Changes of a similar kind (but here from Latin to modern English) occurred in Roman Catholicism. After the Vatican II Council held in Rome in the 1960s, the momentous decision was taken to translate the Mass into the languages used by Roman Catholic people around the world. By 1969 the International Committee on English for the Liturgy, making use of English texts produced by the International Consultation on English Texts, had produced an English translation of the Order of the Mass and this was then approved by the National Hierarchies of Bishops. This translation into English did not look to the long-established English idiom of prayer and worship, but boldly attempted to use contemporary or modern English. Thus not only is the form of the second person singular used “You” but also some of the themes of the revolutionary period of the 1960s are seen in the way that the Latin original is translated.

Returning to Anglicanism in the 1970s, when liturgical experimentation was taking place, the introduction of the addressing of God as “You” is clearly seen in Books of Prayers produced for use at the end of Morning and Evening Prayer.

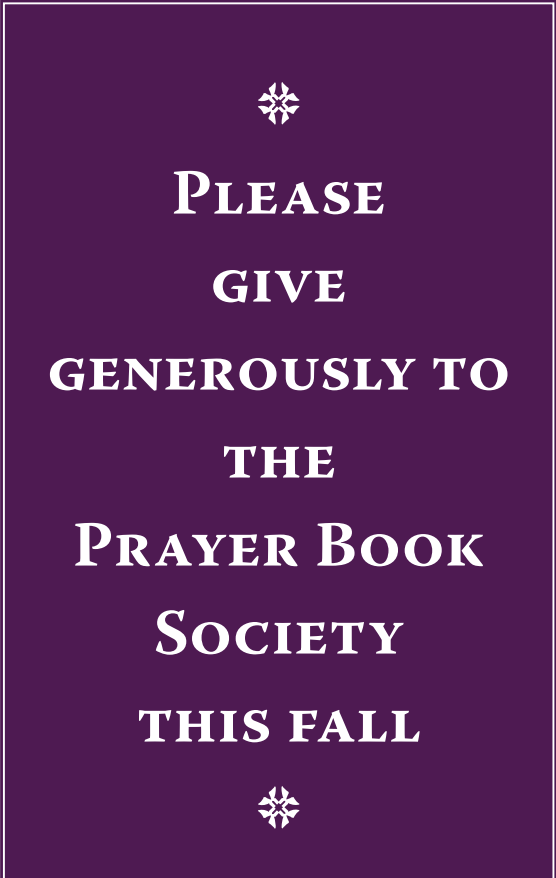
In 1971 *Prayers for Today's Church*, edited by Dick Williams, appeared. In a Foreword, the Bishop of Liverpool, D. Stuart Blanch, wrote: “*The Book of Common Prayer* is a child of its age and reflects a prodigious insularity of thought and experience. It seldom voyages beyond these [British] shores and betrays little interest in the world-wide mission of the Church. It assumes the permanence and solidity of the social order as it then existed. It betrays little conscience for the sins of an economic system which condemned so many of its citizens to penury and squalor. It belongs to a different world, a smaller world.” And he ended: “I warmly welcome this collection [of prayers]...It is a book of common prayer in that it expresses our common concern for God's world – and in that respect at least it deserves to stand alongside *the*

Book of Common Prayer.” All the prayers in the book are in the “You” form even though it was intended to be used for the period of petition and intercession after the Morning and Evening Offices from the *Book of Common Prayer*.

The editor, Dick Williams, in his Introduction writes: “Nobody has ever written better prayers in English than Cranmer. But the English language is a living thing and changes...So this book is not a reaction against the Book of Common Prayer, or anything that it stands for. But it is an act of confidence in contemporary English.” This claim is perhaps confusing. He could have written and collected a book of prayers that related to what he saw as modern needs and concerns and he could have made sure that these prayers were in the idiom of prayer found in the *Book of Common Prayer*. But like most people in that decade, whether conservative or liberal, whether evangelical or high-church, he thought that he had to be committed to “contemporary English.”

Conclusion

In 1971 many thought that “contemporary English” was simple, intelligible, relevant and accessible. We now know that it has been the vehicle for the introduction into the Church of innovations that originate in various human rights, feminist and lesbian movements. And as yet it has no settled form as the abundance of revised forms since the 1970s testify.



❁

**PLEASE
GIVE
GENEROUSLY TO
THE
PRAYER BOOK
SOCIETY
THIS FALL**

❁

Intimacy & Reverence in the Language of Prayer

The modern era values a form of familiarity but has generally lost a sense of reverence and respect in relations between people. Whoever one is and

whatever be one's age one is addressed these days on the phone and in public by one's first name by people whom one does not know or has not met. One is amazed to see small children addressing retired people by their first name as if they were long time buddies.

Respect and familiarity

Respect for those in authority – judges, magistrates, policemen, schoolteachers – is also at an all time low, because respect for their office, as reflecting and objective order of reality, is at an all time low.

And what occurs in the general culture and with the general population easily slides over into the majority of Churches. Pastors and priests, lay leaders and deacons, are all called by their first names to encourage a friendly and accepting ethos.

So the sense of equality and familiarity is absorbed into the style and language of prayer and thus into much modern worship, especially “seeker services.” God is addressed as if he were merely and only a larger “You” than human persons who are also “you.” In fact, God seems to be thought of—or at least presented—as with us primarily as the One who is in the “horizontal” relation[ship] to walk, talk, bless, affirm and fellowship with us. Though his vertical relation[ship] from heaven to earth to us is not denied it is not taken as seriously.

Or, in theological terms, God is celebrated as immanent—with, alongside and in us -- but his transcendence—over, above and beyond us - is merely acknowledged.

This primacy of the immanent in the contemporary religious experience seems to be in contrast to the plain sense of the Bible where the God who is revealed in the witness of Holy Scripture is the Transcendent One who makes himself known as the Immanent One. The vertical is there before the horizontal and the horizontal is energized by the vertical.

God as “You”

The fact that modern churches address Jesus Christ, God the Father and the Holy Spirit as “You” certainly provides a congenial context and a ready means of maintaining familiarity and intimacy in the relation[ship] to, and addressing of, the living God. And it seems to be acceptable and congenial

to many persons.

Looking back we can see that beginning in the 1960s, the decade of social and cultural revolution in the West, the Churches produced new Bible translations and new prayer books and new hymnbooks in which, for the first time in the history of public prayer and worship in the English language, God was addressed as “You.” Christians were told then that this was “contemporary language” and was needed to make the churches into relevant institutions to face a changing world. Nobody addressed his or her fellow human being as “Thee/Thou” and so why should he or she speak to God in these archaic terms now?

Yet we recall there was no historical experience in the English speaking world of addressing God as “You” to draw upon, and this meant that the “You” came into the language of prayer without a previous context of devotion and doctrine. Rather, it came with the only other context available, the context of the 1960s and its aftermath! And this meant that with the “you” came the ethos of familiarity and intimacy of a sentimental and non-reverential kind. The primacy of the horizontal/immanent and the this –worldly experientialism was simply strengthened and fortified except where discerning persons sought to change this.

Church leaders and liturgical experts told the clergy and people that the move from addressing God as “Thee/Thou” to addressing Him as “You” was simply a change in the word for the second person singular and was only bringing the churches in line with the rest of the world. And to this day they continue to tell us that in the English-speaking world we have a straight choice between “traditional language” and “contemporary language” and they claim that the latter is much preferable.

But are they right? Yes and No. In part not in whole.

Traditional and contemporary

They are right only in that they recognize that in everyday speech we no longer use the second person singular “thee/thou” but use what was once the second person plural “you” for both the singular and the plural. Thus to individual persons as well as to groups of people we now say “you” – except in the Deep South where we have “you”

and “you-all.”

What the bishops and experts omit to recognize and tell us is that with the use of the old form of the second person singular, “Thee/Thou,” there comes a style, a context and an ethos. First, there is the sense of intimacy contained in the use of the second person singular, and this harmonizes with the Christian doctrine that God as truly “our Father” because through Jesus Christ we know Him as “Abba, Father” (the Father of Jesus Christ, no less). And, secondly, there is also, because of centuries of usage in public worship, a sense of reverence, awe and holiness in the “Thee/Thou” so that He is “the holy Father.” The archaic Thee/Thou/Thy/Thine functions in a particularly religious way and for our benefit as believers so that we combine the intimate with the reverential.

So if you or I were to pray in sincerity, “I love **Thee**, O Lord”, the meaning would have its context in the style of English generated by the King James Version, the Book of Common Prayer and the Hymns of Wesley and Watts – that is, in the traditional English idiom of prayer. Thus it could not mean “love” as merely emotional feeling, or the modern being-in-love, or homosexual attraction, or liking someone. Rather it means a deep and profound sense of attachment to and wholesome trust in God as the Infinite and Eternal Deity, the Creator, Redeemer and Lord of all, who is made known in the person we know as Jesus of Nazareth. It is an enduring act of the will to do and to be unto God what He as God rightly deserves and commands.

However, if you or I were to pray “I love **You**, O Lord” the meaning would have as its context the use of love in modern English. This is because there has not yet developed a settled or coherent

idiom and language of prayer using “You” to God. There have been many experiments since the 1960s and there are many going on at the beginning of the new millennium. New translations of the Bible come and go and new liturgies appear and disappear. Thus there is potentially a whole set of possible meanings and these depend upon the context from and in which we place this statement of love. Is it love as we know it through modern psychology and therapy, or through Hollywood films, or as we try to understand it through modern translations of the Bible?

The point is that “I love **You**, O Lord” does not easily and readily provide the religious and moral meaning that is attached by context and long usage – by style - to “I love **Thee**, O Lord.”

And if this general point is conceded then the possibility emerges that before the so-called contemporary language, that is being pressed everywhere upon the Church, can truly function as a godly means and instrument to leads us to the Holy One, the Blessed Trinity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost/Spirit, it needs to have gained a context, a style that is worshipful and godly. Right now, it possesses potentially many contexts and styles and virtually of them are generated from the mindset, culture and ethos of our modern world or from what is termed post-modernity.

Therefore, it may not be so misguided after all for people—ordinary folks as well as academics, the young as well as the old—to insist that they want to continue to worship the Lord our God using the classic idiom of prayer, as found in the King James Version, the Book of Common Prayer and the hymns of Watts and Wesley. Here, at least, they may claim to be on safe ground!

Please pray for the
President and the
Board of the
Prayer Book
Society.

A Love Story about a Continuing Anglican Church

Marilyn Ruzicka

We're ten years old and have celebrated our Birthday with Prayers and a Party!!! Saint Thomas of Canterbury Church in Halfmoon,

Saratoga County, New York State, had a real battle to survive from the very beginning. That battle was fought with love, as well as devotion of purpose, which was to ensure the continuation of historic Anglicanism in the Capital region. Not many parishes begin with nothing but a dream, and meet for nearly five years in a rented facility. And yet, that very fact is what makes us what we are - a church family who knows where they are going and why.

As Episcopalians, we watched our church from the 1970s move on with a new prayer book and a revisionist agenda. We embrace progress - but we love tradition too. Family tradition, national tradition, and tradition in worship fulfills a need; it gives strength and security and it adds richness to living.

When the Missionary Diocese of America (MDA) was formed by Episcopal Bishop Donald Davies, the Albany Chapter of the Prayer Book Society was quick to respond. For six months we were an offshoot of the Episcopal Church (ECUSA), until that Church decided we were no longer members - so, we started out on our own under Bishop Davies.

Ten years ago our group of people, who were committed to the scripturally sound 1928 prayer book, banded together and formed Saint Thomas of Canterbury Anglican Church. Our first service was held on June 7th, 1992, and for nearly five years the fledgling parish worshipped in the Holiday Inn. A Building Fund was established with plans to realize our dream of a building of our own. Our first Rector was the Reverend Norman F. Strauss.

Our Building Fund grew, and in December, 1996 land and a building were purchased. The structure and land had to be amenable to rebuilding, expansion, and have space for a parking lot. These needs were met at 242 Grooms Road in Halfmoon, a good location between Exit 8A of the Northway

and Route #9. The work was begun, and took over two years with both paid and volunteer labor.

Donations of religious accoutrements came to us from many sources, and we now have a lovely, white, country church. The fellowship we enjoyed working shoulder to shoulder with fellow parishioners was satisfying beyond measure. We now have saved enough money for a Steeple, and that project is under way.



Our Rector is the Reverend William R. Andrist, who has been with the church all through the building process, and is our much-loved spiritual leader. We are part of a unity-minded 'Continuing' Church called the "United Anglican Church," with Bishop Gilbert McDowell (a former ECUSA priest) as

our leader; Bishop Norman Strauss of Gloversville, N.Y. is our Diocesan Bishop. We also have a Curate, the Rev. Dennis King, who recently joined us.

We participate in a Food Pantry, have an active women's group, the 'Anglican Church Women,' a loosely organized Men's group, Bible Study, and a fellowship time after Holy Communion services, over coffee and cake.

On Sunday, June 9th, ten years and two days after our first service, we celebrated with a Parish Picnic on the church grounds. This followed the Holy Communion Service which is at 10 a.m. Our parish is dedicated to the Glory of God and in Thanksgiving for the many blessings that have been bestowed upon us. We want to continue to offer to God, and to the Community, the majesty, beauty, richness and reverence of classic Anglican worship.

Saint Thomas of Canterbury Church has a web site, www.st-thomas-of-canterbury.org

[Marilyn K. Ruzicka is Junior Warden of St. Thomas of Canterbury Anglican Church and is on the Board of Directors of the Prayer Book Society.]

Williams Appeals to Primates: Affirms Lambeth Resolution On Sexuality

From the Most Revd Dr Rowan Williams
Archbishop of Wales and Bishop of Monmouth

Tuesday, 23rd July

My dear friends,

You will be hearing today the news that I have accepted appointment as Archbishop of Canterbury. My first reason for writing is to ask for your prayers; I am deeply thankful that we are not strangers to each other, and I hope that the friendships formed in the Primates' Meetings will continue and flourish as we work together under God. At the moment, I am chiefly conscious of bringing to the task only the fear, the confusion and the sense of inadequacy that come from my personal resources. I have to trust that God will give (not least through your fellowship and intercession) what is needed—and that I shall have the grace to receive and respond to what he gives.

I also write because I know that some disquiet has been expressed over the possibility of my appointment because of what are believed to be my views on certain questions, in particular on human sexuality. On this matter, I wish to say two things. First, an archbishop is not someone elected to fulfil a programme or manifesto of his own devising, but to serve the whole Communion. He does not have the freedom to prescribe belief for the Church at large. I have indeed in the past written briefly on the subject of theology and sexuality, and hope that what I have written has contributed to the continuing discussion; but my ideas have no authority beyond that of an individual theologian. Second, the Lambeth resolution of 1998 declares clearly what is the mind of the overwhelming majority in the Communion, and what the Communion will and will not approve or authorise. I accept that any individual diocese or even province that officially overturns or repudiates this resolution poses a substantial problem for the sacramental unity of the Communion.

In both respects, I have to distinguish plainly between personal theories and interpretations and the majority conviction of my Church, and have always tried to make such a distinction when I have been questioned on this subject. Since the Lambeth resolution also commends continuing reflection on these matters, my main hope will be to try and maintain a mutually respectful climate for such reflection, in the sort of shared prayerful listening to Scripture envisaged by Lambeth. I hope too, very earnestly, that we can hold to the urgent common priority of mission and evangelism, and avoid the temptation of becoming trapped in questions where the politics of our culture sets the agenda. I believe with all my heart that through Christ we are given a unique and immeasurable gift, and that all our work as apostles and pastors and teachers must grow from our thankfulness to God.

Once again, I ask your continuing prayers, and hope that we shall be able to work together in love and trust. I rely on all of you to 'speak the truth in love' to me and to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ to me so that I may be strengthened to speak for Christ to others. This comes with warm affection and gratitude.

In Christ,

Rowan Douglas Williams

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of the Book of Common Prayer
(The Prayer Book Society)
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