

# ANGLICAN WAY

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The Rev. Gavin G. Dunbar, President, Prayer Book Society, and Rector, St John's Episcopal Church, Savannah, Georgia

## FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY

The Reverend G. G. Dunbar, St. John's Episcopal Church, Savannah, GA

# Why Worship?

### The Priority of Worship

After the healing of ten lepers (Luke 17:11-19) from the disease that made them defiled outcasts to Israel, one of them came back to Jesus, "and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks". He is a Samaritan—an outsider to Israel, and a heretic. Jesus responds with a question: "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger"—to whom alone he says, "thy faith hath made thee whole" (or "hath saved thee").

Jesus' point is this: in refusing to render glory and thanks to God and to his Christ, the Israelites are behaving the way greedy Samaritans are supposed to act, whereas the Samaritan is acting the way true Israelites do. In making this remark, Jesus refers to the two fundamental patterns of response to the reality of God's infinite greatness that are found in man—what Scripture calls the mind of the flesh, and the mind of the Spirit (cf. Galatians 5:16-24<sup>1</sup>). The man who responds according to the 'flesh' uses all things, even God himself, for self-gratification. The man who responds according to the 'Spirit' uses all things, even himself, in gratitude to God. One seeks to glorify self to the point of contempt for God. The other is moved to glorify God to the point of contempt for self. Since the natural "default setting" of human nature is the flesh, the Christian religion must continually instruct and train the faithful in the ways of the Spirit. That is why the lesser doxology runs through the order of Morning and Evening Prayer like a refrain: "Glory be to the Father. . . ." That is why the Lord's Supper

culminates in the greater doxology, "Glory be to God on high. . . ." In worship we learn to look beyond ourselves, and to give glory to the triune God. It is in giving glory to God, and thanks to Christ, that man is made whole, and apart from this worship man is less than fully human. Man is made for worship, and the refusal to give glory to God diminishes us.

In a utilitarian age such as ours, however, the question arises, what is the use of worship? To answer one must distinguish between use and enjoyment, things used as means to another end, and things which are ends in themselves. Some play golf for love of the game (enjoyment), others for the sake of company, or exercise (use). Likewise the worship of God may be something we use or something we enjoy. Much worldly religion indeed approaches God precisely as a means to an end—like the nine lepers, we may engage in prayer for the sake of purely temporal benefits like health. Yet even when we do so, the exercise has a way of bringing us as it did the Samaritan to the point of approaching God in worship as an end in himself: for all greater goods are preferred to lesser goods: we are grateful for the light of a candle in night, but when the sun rises we blow the candle out.

It is Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, the 11th century Cistercian abbot, preacher of the first Crusade, and mystical theologian, who shows how this takes place. In his book *De diligendo deo* ("on loving God"), he says that man starts with love of himself for his own sake. This is our natural fallen state. But then we perceive that for the sake of ourselves we must love God also, for God gives great benefits to those who love him. This is the second stage. Third, we come to love God for his own sake, and this is charity. Finally, in the resurrection, we shall love even ourselves, even

1. Along with the passage from Luke, these are the propers for the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

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Cover: John's Vision of Heaven, Revelation 4:1-11, 5:1-14 Ottheinrich-Bibel

### Anglican Way

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our own bodies, for the sake of God—a complete reversal of natural perspective.

Properly speaking, the worship of God is an end itself, for God is supremely to be enjoyed, he is the highest and final end of all our striving for happiness. It is in glorifying and enjoying God that man finds true happiness as man: “man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him for ever” (Westminster Catechism). We worship God indeed for his own sake, and not merely as a means to another greater good—but in worshipping God for his own sake we attain our highest and true good. The test of true worship, therefore, is what happens when we lose all the gifts we have received from God. The psalmist testifies: “My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.” Teresa of Avila put it this way:

Let nothing disturb thee  
Nothing affright thee  
All things are passing  
God never changeth  
Patient endurance  
Attaineth to all things  
Who God possesseth  
In nothing is wanting  
Alone God sufficeth.

God alone is enough: God who is infinite in power, wisdom, and goodness, God alone quite apart from all his gifts is worthy to be praised. “We give thanks to thee for thy great glory”. That is why the purest fullest act of worship is offered upon the cross, in the cry of dereliction: “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Condemned, forsaken, deprived of all good, afflicted with all evil he may be—but God is still his God. “Though he slay me, yet will I put him trust in him”.

### Inward and Outward, Private and Public

Man was made to worship God, and that in worshipping him he becomes fully human. But is this worship individual or corporate, inward or outward? In the Christian religion it must be *both*, for when Jesus was asked which was the great commandment of the Law, he answered with *two* commandments—the first and great commandment, to “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart”; and the second, like unto it, to “love thy neighbor as thyself”. In other words, you can’t love God with all your heart unless you love your neighbor as yourself—nor can you rightly love your neighbor unless you love God with all your heart. The Christian religion has a double

axis—vertical to God, horizontal to man - and these two axes come together in the crucified Christ and his cruciform Church. Both axes, the vertical and horizontal, and their intersection in the cross, shape the worship of God also.

So worship means the inward offering of the heart to God: “my duty towards God is: To believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my heart, and with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength” (Catechism). Such inward and spiritual worship could be considered as something that exists purely in the individual, in his privacy, and among moderns it is often taken for granted that religion is what a man does with his solitude. This is however not a Biblical view: ‘faith without works is dead’: it cannot remain purely inward and spiritual; it must become outward and visible, a public and shared act. The first work of faith is to confess Jesus as Lord and to call upon him in prayer—thus making audible to our neighbor what moves in our hearts. But faith does not stop there: the greatest confession of faith in the love of God we have received is to show the same to our neighbor. It is in the love we offer our neighbor that our love for God finds its expression—and what is the highest act of love? It is to bring the neighbor to the knowledge and love of God also.

So along with the “vertical” axis of an individual’s faith, hope, and love of God, there is the “horizontal” axis—which is the believing community’s shared, corporate worship of God. If the inward faith and love of the individual is the “soul” of worship, without which the outer forms are dead formalism, so the outward corporate forms are the “body” of worship, without which the soul is incomplete. As the Lord’s Prayer teaches us, it is impossible to approach the Father of Jesus Christ alone: whether you mean to or not, you always approach him in the company of all other disciples, all other believers, all the faithful in Christ: for he is *our* Father, and we pray him to give *us*, and forgive *us*, and lead *us*, and deliver *us*. Our access to the Father is as very members incorporate of Christ.

There is a strong sense of this already in the Old Testament’s teaching of the covenant people of God. The individual Israelite has his access and commu-

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nion with God not as an isolated individual but only in and through his participation in God’s covenant with Israel, with all its obligations to his neighbour; and so worship is properly transacted by the assembly of Israel in the Temple. That is why an incurable and defiling condition like ‘leprosy’ was so dreadful:

it cuts off the leper from taking his part in God’s people in their worship of the Lord in the temple. This idea is only deepened in the New Testament. It is as a

member of Christ and of his body the Church that an individual has access to God. Our very individuality is found not in isolation but as members of the body.

In a variant of this image, St. Peter says “as lively stones”, Christians “are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ . . . Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light”. There is no true worship that does not seek outward and visible, shared and corporate expression. That is why the Eucharist—the Sacrament of the Body

of Christ—is the central act of Christian worship. By receiving the sacred sign of Christ’s body sacrificed for us we become his body and learn to offer ourselves in sacrifice through him. But it is not just the Eucharist: the same corporate sense is present in all the common prayers of the church, as when the ancient doxology *Te Deum* brings to our consciousness the company of church and saints and angels with whom we worship—and brings them to our consciousness precisely so that we can see our destiny lies not in isolated selfish individualism but precisely in and through the body of Christ. Thus we begin with repentance—we have “erred and strayed like lost sheep”, wandering away from the flock and the shepherd to our ruin. And we move toward thanksgiving and intercession, that is in acts of love directed to God and to neighbour. Between repentance and works of love there is the apprehension by faith of the work of Christ redeeming us to God in his Body, bringing us into communion and fellowship in holiness with the Father and with one another. This is logic of common prayer as well as Holy Communion.

### Developing a Taste for Heaven

There is a famous story about the conversion of the Russians to Orthodox Christianity. In the year 987, Vladimir, Grand Prince of Kiev, sent envoys to study the religions of the various neighboring nations whose representatives had been urging him to embrace their respective faiths. Of the Muslim Bulgarians of the Volga the envoys reported there is no joy among them; only sorrow and a great stench. In the gloomy churches of the Germans his emissaries saw no beauty; but at Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, the enormous church of Holy Wisdom built by the emperor Justinian in the 6th century, where they witnessed the rich ceremonial of the Eastern Orthodox imperial liturgy, they found what they had been looking for: “We no longer knew whether we were in

heaven or on earth, “they reported,” nor such beauty, and we know not how to tell of it.”

In a secular age, the word “heavenly” can be used to describe the experience of eating chocolate or lying in a warm bath; but in its primary sense it is constantly used by the Christian tradition (east and west, catholic and protestant) to describe the Church’s public worship. In public worship the Church makes

faintly (very faintly) visible and audible here on earth the liturgy of heaven; and at times, as to the envoys of Vladimir, there is a real sense of transport: “a door was opened in heaven” (Rev. 4:1). But even in its most ordinary and routine forms worship anticipates, and participates

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in, the heavenly liturgy—the unceasing glorification of God and the enjoyment of his inexhaustible goodness by the angelic hierarchies. It is a point the Prayer Book takes care to emphasize, in the doxologies *Te Deum Laudamus* and *Gloria in the excelsis*, and in the eucharistic *Preface* (which in this sense does not mean “prologue” but “praise”): “therefore, with angels and archangels, and all the company of heaven, we laud and praise thy glorious name, evermore praising thee and saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most high”. In the image of Austin Farrer, we are like spelunkers making our way through caverns under the earth, until we come to a place where some fugitive gleams of light penetrate the darkness through a crack in the cavern roof, and we are recalled from the embrace of the darkness and our own feeble lights to the splendour of the sun shining in his strength so far above; and we realize that though we may travel now through dark caverns, our true home is in the light above. Even for the angels, those supremely intellectual creatures, God’s greatness exceeds their comprehension; they are filled indeed with that holy fear which is awe: the overwhelming sense of God’s greatness.

So why do we sometimes find worship boring? Sometimes, of course, it is the quality of what is being offered—and I will pass over the numberless ways in which our witness to God’s greatness can be trivialized, paltry, or dull. At a deeper level, however, the problem is us: the reason for our boredom lies not in God but in ourselves, and in the dullness of our senses, and our incapacity to perceive and enjoy what is supremely enjoyable. As worship is the activity of heaven, in which man finds his true happiness, the Church’s public worship on earth is a training of the soul in the life of heaven. As I think C. S. Lewis says somewhere, heaven is an acquired taste: and heaven will only be heaven to those who here have acquired a taste for it here on earth.

### Mission Statement

*The Society is dedicated to the preservation, understanding, and propagation of the Anglican Doctrine as contained in the traditional editions of The Book of Common Prayer.*



# Reflections FROM THE Editor's Desk

Roberta Bayer, Ph.D., Assistant Professor,  
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In this issue the Reverend Gavin Dunbar and Canon Ashley Null both discuss, albeit from different angles, the centrality of contemplation to worship. God made men and women to worship and love Him forever. Contemplation of God is that for which men and women were created from the beginning. Fr. Dunbar reflects upon why the worship of God is an end in itself, and Canon Null writes that Cranmer compiled the *Book of Homilies* to instruct congregants on how to contemplate God's Word. The desire to contemplate and know God is innate within the soul; it springs from the very human capacity for wonder, as the Reverend David Curry remarks in this excerpt from his address to the Annual General Meeting of the Prayer Book Society in Canada. The Gospel of John, as he notes, is filled with St. John's wonder at the meaning of the Resurrection. Thus Dunbar, Null and Curry address, in different ways, the relation of faith to the created human desire to love, worship, and know God, which springs up, even if ultimately misunderstood and rejected, within the heart of each person.

Prudence Dailey reports from England on the course by which the English Synod reached its decision to go forward with the consecration of women as bishops. It was a long and difficult debate. The antagonistic atmosphere that she and John Warwick Montgomery both describe as typical within the Church of England and English society as a whole suggests that fear of appearing intolerant, or a misguided apprehension of past injustice, has become the dominant reason to change doctrine in the church today. But social and political legislation is not the central act of faithfulness, rather, it is contemplation of God's Word. The church should not be shy of defending the Gospel and renewing the faith in the manner Cranmer recommended. For to make contemplation of God through His Word the very central act of the faith will mitigate against the kind of worldly antagonism that is the result of a church too focused on political and social change, rather than the mystery of salvation and the Trinity itself.

## A PRAYER

*Peter Bayer*



O Lord My God, by whom all flesh is made;  
Of dust and ashes didst Thou make us all.  
From Thee do we have life and breath and all  
That to possess we claim. 'Tis by Thine aid  
Alone we do whate'er of good we do  
Our own invention is the ill we do.  
Despite Thy grace we sin and do our will  
Not Thine; we turn our minds to evil deeds  
And Hasten after swift destruction, till  
Thou look'st on us, and we in contrite weeds  
Do turn ourselves to Thee no more to roam.  
O guide Thou us to our eternal home.

*Peter Bayer is a student at the Catholic University of America.*

# The Renewal Message of the Edwardian Regime



Ashley Null  
Canon Theologian of  
Western Kansas

By Ashley Null

The heart of Tudor Protestantism was not right doctrine but right desire. Undoubtedly, Thomas Cranmer and his fellow English Reformers thought the two were closely connected. Truth about God would draw humanity homewards. Right desire could only be formed by right knowledge of both God and fallen human nature. Nevertheless, saving truth by itself was insufficient to move a self-centred humanity to return to their maker through repentance and amendment of life. The church's mission was to proclaim the unchanging message of the Gospel to each generation in ways that would move the hearts of the hearers to embrace it. . . .

Not until the accession of Edward VI in 1547 did Thomas Cranmer have the freedom to implement an affective Protestant program to promote national spiritual renewal. As a government-led, top-down movement, the first step was officially endorsing and promoting the true nature of the Gospel, i.e., salvation by grace alone through faith alone from Scripture alone. Hence, the regime's first new ecclesiastical formulary was *Certayne Sermons or Homelies*, published barely six months into the new reign on 31 July 1547.<sup>1</sup> Popularly known as the *Book of Homilies*, this collection of twelve sermons in English was designed to be both a manifesto of the regime's theological agenda and the means of its revolutionary implementation. The formulary established an official epitome of scriptural teaching on the way of salvation which publicly established the regime's doctrinal plumb line. As required reading in parish churches *in seriatim* every Sunday, in

1. See Ashley Null, 'Official Tudor Homilies' in *Oxford Handbook of the Early Modern Sermon*, eds Peter McCullough, Hugh Adlington and Emma Rhatigan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 348–65, at pp. 352–7.

repetition throughout the year, the sermons were also intended to harness the persuasive power of the local pulpit to convert the hearts of the English people to embrace the new religious orientation. So important was hearing these homilies to the regime's plans for societal reformation, that the Second Act of Uniformity (1552) made church attendance compulsory.<sup>2</sup>

As an affective theologian, at the heart of Cranmer's preaching program was rumination on the true Word of God in order to cultivate a right desire for God. The very first homily was on Scripture which established biblical knowledge as the foundation of every Christian's relationship with God. Scripture was God's chosen medium to tell human beings the truth about the world around them and the struggles within them: 'In these bokes we may learne to know our selves, how vile and miserable we be, and also to know God, how good he is of hymself and how

he communicateth his goodnes unto us and to al creatures.'<sup>3</sup> Equally important, however, the Bible was also the means through which God worked supernaturally to turn people's hearts to himself and the doing of his will: '[The words of Holy Scripture] have power to conuerte [our souls] through Gods promise, and thei be effectual through Gods assistance'. On the one hand, this divine working brought about inner joy. As 'a constant and a

perpetuall instrument of salvacion', the Bible 'comforteth, maketh glad, chereth and cherisheth our consciences'; 'it is a more sweter then hony or hony combe'.<sup>4</sup> On the other, those who devoted themselves to 'continual readyng and meditacion of God's

2. J. R. Tanner, *Tudor Constitutional Documents, A.D. 1485-1603* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), pp. 117–118.

3. Ronald B. Bond, *Certain Sermons or Homilies (1547) and A Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion (1570)* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987) p. 62

4. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

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As required reading in parish churches *in seriatim* every Sunday, in repetition throughout the year, the sermons were also intended to harness the persuasive power of the local pulpit to convert the hearts of the English people to embrace the new religious orientation.

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Woorde' would discover that 'the great affection to the transitory thynges of this worlde shalbe minished in hym, and the greate desire of heavenly thynges that bee therein promised of God shall increase in hym. Because of God's supernatural agency 'that thyng whiche by perpetuall use of reading of Holy Scripture and diligent searchyng of thesame is deply printed and graven in the harte at length turneth almoste into nature.'<sup>5</sup> Hence, 'the hearing and keypyng of [Scripture] maketh us blessed, sanctifieth us and maketh us holy.' Little wonder, then, the "Homily on Scripture" urged that "[t]hese bokes, therefore, ought to be much in our handes, in our eyes, in our eares, in oure mouthes, but moste of all, in our hartes."<sup>6</sup> The homily concluded with a final exhortation drawn directly from the monks:

Lette us night and daie muse, and have meditation and contemplacion in them. Lette us ruminare and, as it wer, chewe the cudde, that we maie have the swete jeuse, spirituall effecte, mary, hony, kinnell, tast, comfort and consolacion of them.<sup>7</sup>

Thus, combining elements of monasticism, humanism and Protestantism, here is Cranmer's source for growth in a church's spiritual vitality. Because of Scripture's power to draw fallen humanity toward godly desires, he believed that the promises of the Bible were the divine vehicle through which God's love drew his children to love him in return. Through their rumination on the words of Scripture the Holy Spirit supernaturally entered and transformed human hearts, whether through preaching, receiving the sacraments, public prayer or private devotion.<sup>8</sup>

## The Adaptation of the Monastic Tradition

Thomas More may have mocked this 'felyng fayth' of the English Gospellers as a German import foreign to the faith and faithfulness of the English church.<sup>9</sup> However, the cultivation of the affections had long been deeply rooted in medieval English spirituality. As Jean Leclercq has movingly described, the pursuit of God was 'the basis for the whole program of monastic life'.<sup>10</sup> The culture of the cloister sought to form

*athletae dei*. Consequently, like any highly motivated sportsperson, a monk was to find the power for a life of self-denial by focusing on his intense desire to gain the prize set before him. Of course, in the case of these spiritual athletes, the laurel-wreath was their souls' joyous union with God, proleptically in this life, fully in the age to come. At once deeply personal and highly affective, an on-going desire for the heavenly life was considered essential in the cloister. To foster it, monastic culture turned to the Scriptures.

However, they did not do so in a scholastic manner. Leclercq helpfully distinguishes between the schoolmen's use of the Bible as 'a source of knowledge, of scientific information' aimed at the whole community where as for monasticism Scripture was 'a means of salvation'. Every word was considered a saving gift directly from God to be appropriated by each individual soul. Consequently, Leclercq can speak of 'a book which the finger of God writes in the heart of each monk.' If scholastic commentaries were 'addressed to the intelligence', monastic expositions were 'addressed to the whole being', seeking 'to touch the heart rather than to instruct the mind.' Instead of the *sic et non* method of the schools, the cloister relied on biblical contemplation to move the heart.

Because of this emphasis on feeding the soul, the monastic approach to Scripture was sometimes referred to as *ruminatio*, spiritual mastication—an image used by Augustine.<sup>11</sup> The reader was encouraged to draw out as much divine nutrition as possible by dwelling on the specifics of a particular passage, chewing each sentence, bit by bit, slowly, rhythmically, repeatedly, often murmuring the words aloud as they were read. In the process, he was to assess the full weight of each individual word's contribution to the passage before him and then follow the verbal links from this passage to other places in Holy Writ so that Scripture could interpret Scripture. In the end, the reader was to ponder all the implications from both the literal meaning of the text and its spiritual associations with the rest of Christian teaching in the Bible. By such prolonged contemplation, not only would the words of Scripture be engraved on the reader's heart, but its truths would move him to long even more for union with heavenly things.

Copyright Ashley Null.

This extract will appear in "Divine Allurement: Thomas Cranmer and Tudor Church Growth", in *Towards a Theology of Church Growth*, ed. David Goodhew (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, forthcoming).

5. *Ibid.*, p. 63.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 62.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

8. J.E. Cox, *Writings and Disputations of Thomas Cranmer relative to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper* (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1844), pp. 70–71.

9. Thomas More, *The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*, ed. by Louis A. Schuster *et alia*, *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More* (New Haven: Yale University of Press, 1973), Vol. 8, Part II, p. 926.

10. For what follows, see Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*, trans. By Catharine Misrahi (London: SPCK, 1978), especially pp. 90, 100, 107, 316.

11. John A. Alford, 'Rolle's English Psalter and *Lectio Divina*', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 77 (1995), 47–60, at p. 47.

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# Religious Freedom and the State Church



John Warwick Montgomery

By John Warwick Montgomery

Reprinted from *Amicus Curiae*, Issue 96, Winter 2013

In a recently published collection of jurisprudential essays, its author devotes an entire section to “Religion and the Law”.<sup>1</sup> Mr Wilson, a New Zealander, no longer practises law—he works now for LexisNexis—and his views are by no means original. But he is quite correct that “Religion and the law has become a much more common form of dispute in the United Kingdom in the twenty-first century than it was for most of the twentieth”.<sup>2</sup> Mr Wilson believes that the solution to such disputes should lie in a more rigorous separation of church and state—and that religious factors should exercise far less impact in judicial decision-making than they frequently have done.

He is of course correct as to the unfortunate nature of a decision by Cherie Booth QC, sitting as a part-time judge, to suspend the sentence of two-years imprisonment of one Shamsu Miah on the ground of his being “a religious man” who was aware that punching another person was “not acceptable behaviour”.<sup>3</sup> But the issue of relating religious considerations to legal activity goes well beyond such illustrations. In the view of the present writer, separation of church and state requires a rethinking of the difference between what is possible and desirable in a nation having a state church as contrasted with what prevails legally in a constitutionally non-sectarian state.

We find serious difficulty in the common view, expressed by Wilson, that “just because a person is entitled to hold a belief does not mean that another person has to pay for it, or suffer unlawful discrimination because of it”.<sup>4</sup> In the context of a state with an established religion, the trouble with this formula is twofold.

First, descriptively, it is simply not an accurate statement of the case. In England—to take but an obvious example—Anglican Church edifices are repaired at public expense. This is not done for the

Kingdom Halls of the Jehovah’s Witnesses. But the Jehovah’s Witness—and the atheist, for that matter—must nonetheless pay taxes, and a part of what is paid goes to the upkeep of Anglican sanctuaries.

Secondly, from a normative standpoint, such discrimination is constitutionally justifiable. The Anglican establishment is a testimony to the value-system of the nation, and thus deserves public support in a way that other value-systems do not. As a specialist on the subject has recently written:

*The integration of Church of England and the nation, expressed in the idea of a national membership, highlights the underlying rationale or purpose of Establishment. It was an expression of the state’s assumption of an obligation to make public provision for religious services. Further, it was an expression of the church’s assumption of a duty to minister to the nation as a whole.*<sup>5</sup>

The constitutional status accorded to that “Reformed part of the Holy Catholic Church established in this Kingdom” follow from the nation’s commitment to that particular value-system and not another. As I have argued elsewhere:

*Should a nation determine that it wishes to make its Ultimate Concern explicit by establishing a particular faith or church, then it surely has the right specially to protect and encourage its value system by way of that faith or church—as long as this does not prevent other faiths and secular philosophical options from freely proclaiming their ideological wares in an open marketplace of ideas.*<sup>6</sup>

## Vital Distinction

It is therefore vital to distinguish on the one hand between the duty of a state to preserve religious freedom (the right as defined in Art 9 of the European Convention of Human Rights to believe and

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1. James Wilson, *Cases, Causes and Controversies*, (London: Wildy, Simmonds & Hill), 91–110.

2. Wilson, *Cases and Controversies*, 91.

3. Wilson, *Cases and Controversies*, 93.

4. Wilson, *Cases and Controversies*, 110.

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5. Charlotte Smith, in *Law and Religion in Theoretical and Historical Context*, ed. P. Cane, C. Evans, and Z. Robinson, (Cambridge University Press), 160, citing P. Avis, *Church, State and Establishment*, (London: SPCK).

6. John Warwick Montgomery, *Christ Our Advocate*, (Bonn, Germany: Verlag fuer Kultur und Wissenschaft), 151.



publicly practice one's religious beliefs, change one's religious position, etc.) and, on the other hand, the right of a state with an established church to give a special position and special privileges to that religious commitment. (Indeed, the European Court has never found incompatibility *per se* between Art 9 of the Convention and the existence of European state churches).

What are the consequences of not understanding this vital distinction? Consider several recent legal decisions in this area involving religious argument. A psychological counsellor and fervent evangelical believer refused to provide sex counselling to a same-sex couple; he was discharged from his position in a public facility and his firing was upheld by the European Court of Human Rights (*Gary McFarlane* case). A registrar of births, deaths and marriages refused to officiate at same-sex partnerships ceremonies; she was fired and her firing was upheld in Strasbourg (*Lillian Ladele* case). A Christian couple would not allow two homosexuals to occupy the same room in their bed & breakfast; the UK Supreme Court ruled against the bed & breakfast owners and the case has gone forward to Strasbourg (*Peter and Hazel Mary Bull* case). A nurse in a public hospital was forbidden to wear a cross at work; her discharge was upheld by the ECHR (*Shirley Chaplin* case). A stewardess on British Air was likewise told not to wear a cross on pain of discharge; here, the ECHR agreed with the stewardess (*Nadia Eweida* case).

There are, to be sure, subtle and individual factual issues in each of these cases that the courts have had to consider—such as whether, in *McFarlane* and in *Ladele*, the required activity had been specifically disclosed and mandated in the hiring contract. But, apart from such considerations, there is an overarching general principle that is often lost in the focus on detail. Homosexual practices have been historically and uniformly condemned by the Anglican Church as contrary to Holy Scripture and detrimental to the preservation and promotion of family life. The psychological counsellor, the marriage registrar, and the bed & breakfast owners were therefore expressing a position entirely consistent with the value system of the nation as expressed through the medium of its constitutionally established religion.<sup>7</sup> (Admittedly,

not all English sovereigns—heads of the church as they officially are—have been models of classic Christian morality—but no-one seriously endeavoured to defend as a proper reflection of English values Edward VII's dalliances in Paris). Cross-wearing must likewise be seen as a manifestation of the very value system to which the nation has committed itself by establishing a particular religion, and not another, as its statement of ultimate values.

Two objections may be offered to the position just articulated. First, as a result of the doctrine of Parliamentary sovereignty in English law, Parliament can in theory (and has in practice, as in the case of the legal recognition of same-sex partnerships) paid little attention to the traditions and beliefs of the established church, and (unlike the legal situation in the United States) the Supreme Court in the UK is in no position to declare such legislation unconstitutional. However, surely, English judges should try their utmost to reach decisions that do not cre-

ate a constitutional crisis between Parliamentary legislation and the nation's established belief system as represented by its national church. Legislation in defiance of the historic position of the established church would appear to be the product of a cavalier disregard of English values and everything possible legally should be done to reverse it—if only in the interests of constitutional integrity.

Secondly, an argument could be offered

that legal positions in favour of historic Christian values must necessarily discriminate against those not sharing the Christian belief system. To this, the appropriate reply is surely that allowing such practices does not in any way force others to conduct themselves as the believer conducts himself or herself. True, the believers' actions may very well cause offence, but, in a mature society, one must on occasion put up with what one does not like. Otherwise, the society becomes paternalistic and "politically correct" through the elimination of whatever bothers minorities (and there are no logical limits to such restrictions). If one chooses to live in a country with an established church, one needs to accept the legal and sociological consequences. Suppose one were to claim on the ground of discrimination that the country's flag should not be displayed—or should only be displayed in parity with the flags of all other countries—lest offence be created. If one simply cannot or will not tolerate the symbols—or the value system

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7. Cf. this author's previous article on the subject at *Amicus Curiae* 82, (2010): 12–13.

represented by them—the sole rational solution, it would seem, is to emigrate.

And now, a word about the situation in countries without established religions. As examples, take Italy and the United States. In Italy, at the end of Mussolini's régime, a new constitution for the country was created, and this constitution has explicitly separated church and state. Nonetheless, the European Court of Human Rights ultimately decided for the government in allowing the retention of crucifixes in public school classrooms (*Lautsi v Italy*).<sup>8</sup> In the United States, in spite of the First Amendment "wall of separation" between church and state, a recent Supreme Court decision has sustained the use of prayers at the opening of meetings of governmental bodies (*Town of Greece, New York v Galloway*).

In both of these countries, however, the legal vindications of the religious practice have been justified solely on secular and cultural grounds—in Italy, the place of the crucifix in Italian society across the centuries; in the US, the historical role of prayer in public life (significantly, the court refused to allow any prayer that could be considered "sectarian").

8. Cf. this author's article in *Legitimizing Human Rights*, ed Angus Menuge, (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2013).

Thus, even where a church is not established, religious activities are not totally excluded from public life—though they must be able to be justified in non-religious terms. But where there *is* establishment, the faith represented by the religious symbol or action can certainly be articulated and promoted by way of it, since it is (as we have been at pains to point out) a consistent reflection of the very value system of that nation.

Finally, a practical note. Even in England, where establishment is reality, encountered daily as one passes by the great cathedrals and churches of the land, irrational fear of "discrimination" drives many to downplay the presence of established religious belief. In one of this author's Inns of Court, there is a tendency to drop the concluding line of Grace before or after Meat: "In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord"—out of apparent deference to plural-

ism. And the ranks of Anglican clergy include some who seem ashamed of the particular gospel at the heart of that church's message.

Pusillanimity, however, is never a virtue—and particularly in the context of religious expression and action in a secular age. One can very definitely sustain the freedom of Article 9 of the ECHR for all religious and philosophical positions that are not socially obnoxious—*without* jettisoning the position, the privileges, and the values of religious establishment.

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The Board of the Prayer Book Society would like to offer thanks to all those individuals and churches which have sent in donations over the past year. We could not continue our work without you, nor publish this magazine. Thank you for helping us continue to teach the faith in the Anglican way.

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# “Through the Eyes of John”

By The Rev. David Curry

Excerpt from an Address to the Annual General Meeting of the PBSC  
Charlottetown, PEI  
May 3, 2014

Philosophy begins not in wonder, as the ancients supposed, Simon Critchley claims, but in disappointment.<sup>1</sup> The particular forms of disappointment for him belong to religion and politics and result in the culture of nihilism. Nihilism is the breakdown of the order of meaning; it declares and asserts the meaninglessness of all life.<sup>2</sup>

Philosophy begins not in wonder but in disappointment. He has in mind Plato and Aristotle both of whom, to be sure, spoke of philosophy as beginning in wonder. But is this a complete and adequate account?

Consider the oldest literary work known to humanity, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. Gilgamesh, the eponymous hero, goes on a quest for wisdom because of his despair and disappointment at the death of his friend, Enkidu. For Achilles in the *Iliad* of Homer, it is the death of his friend Patroclus that moves him to reflection and action. In the Jewish Scriptures, “*the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*,” a fear that is at once the awe and the terror of the radical otherness of God. Job stripped of everything and sitting in utter misery, is awakened to the grandeur of the justice of God in creation as the principle upon which the Law depends. He is awakened to wonder. “*Where*

*were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?*” God says to Job, echoing his own question to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, “*Where are you?*” The question highlights the Fall, our awakening to self-consciousness through separation from God, from nature, and from one another. Plato, too, was moved to philosophy out of a profound disappointment with politics. Disappointment and wonder are inextricably connected, it seems.

The doctrine of the Resurrection arises out of the dialectic between disappointment and wonder. In the classical ecumenical Eucharistic lectionary, we think of the Resurrection largely *through the eyes of John*. There is a marvellous juxtaposition, especially in John’s account, of the garden and the city, of the rural and the urban. There is the marvellous dialectical interplay between disappointment and wonder.

Joni Mitchell’s song, *Woodstock*, best known in the Crosby, Stills & Nash rendition which turns it into “*a rousing anthem for the hippie counterculture*” of the sixties,<sup>3</sup> is a ballad in the country music traditions. Her version of it, recorded after the 1969 Woodstock Music Festival which defined a generation, is really a kind of elegy and a lament for what was longed for but unachieved, even lost. It signals a profound sense of disappointment.

It tells the story of a wanderer meeting a traveller, “*a child of God walking along the road*” who tells his story in answer to the question “*where are you going?*” The question echoes God’s question to our humanity and speaks as well to the uncertainties of every age.

“*I am going on down to Yasgar’s farm/I am going to join in a rock n’ roll band/I am going to camp out on the land/and try to get my soul free*,” free from the constraints of an oppressive society that seems to destroy the environment and our humanity. It signals a kind of longing, a longing for paradise, captured in the refrain.

We are stardust  
We are golden  
And we’ve got to get ourselves  
Back to the garden

The refrain twice repeated undergoes a change the third time at the end of the song.

We are stardust  
*million-year-old carbon*  
We are golden  
*caught in the devil’s bargain*  
And we’ve got to get ourselves  
Back to the garden

3. Camille Paglia, *Break, Blow, Burn* (Vintage Books, New York, 2005), p. 227.



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1. Simon Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding: Ethics of Commitment, Politics of Resistance*, (London, Verso, New Left Books, 2007), p. 1.

2. Critchley notes two forms of nihilism, passive and active. Passive nihilism is really about a kind of gated community of the mind, closed off to what it can’t face. Active nihilism “*tries to destroy this world and bring another into being*,” passim, p. 5. In my view this doesn’t just mean terrorists and jihadis but includes the dominant authorities within the contemporary Christian Churches engaged in the task of re-imagining God, the Church and the human subject in ways that are utterly destructive of the classical theological traditions upon which the institutions themselves depend. For Anglicans one decisive moment liturgically and theologically was the jettisoning of the classical common prayer tradition as the basis for any Prayer Book revision at the Lambeth Conference of 1958. More crucially was the thoughtless embrace of so-called historical biblical scholarship which successfully undermined the idea of a theology of revelation for all forms of classical Protestantism and for the Roman Catholic Church as well. The latter has been better buttressed against the larger consequences of dismissing the creedal or doctrinal reading of Scripture by the forms of its magisterial authority but suffers from the same intellectual disconnect.

Yasgar's farm, as Camille Paglia notes, is "*the hip-pie reworking of Yahweh's garden*," paradise.<sup>4</sup> Yet the Christian message of Easter is not about a return to paradise because that would mean the loss of ourselves, of our self-awareness and our awareness of one another; in short, a loss of meaning and memory. We only know the garden in our separation from it. There can be no going back.

The mystery of Easter places us in the garden of the Resurrection. It is about redemption in which the things of the past are not denied but become the vehicles of a greater understanding, the understanding of the divine love which makes all things new despite the folly and the madness of our humanity in its disorder and disarray. Human reason need not be constrained to "*the devil's bargain*," the Faustian claim to knowledge as power for that is ultimately a betrayal of reason and of the very principle by which we are said to be made in the image of God. We cannot go back but that doesn't mean we are defined by a technocratic reason for that is a reason which destroys ourselves and nature.

We are more than million-year-old carbon; we are more, too, than the disappointments of our wayward reason. We return not to paradise but to God in the garden of the Resurrection. Through the eyes of John we go from disappointment to wonder.

The significance of seeing through the eyes of John is a fundamental feature of the classical Prayer Book Eucharistic lectionary. It is only because of the Resurrection that the Gospels and everything else that comprises the New Testament come to be written. Principal among the accounts of the Resurrection is *The Gospel of John* which shapes the doctrinal understanding of the Resurrection for the life of the Church and for the way in which the other Gospels are read. This is especially true for Gospel readings appointed for the Sundays of the Easter season right through and including Trinity Sunday.

The sense of the primacy of the Gospel of John for the theological understanding has been supplanted by the so-called historical critical approach which assumes the synoptic problem. At issue are the parallels and similarities in three of the Gospels. On the basis of this question, the reading of the Scriptures in the modern churches of the West follows a three-year pattern: the year of Matthew, Mark, or Luke. The twofold assumption is, first, that Mark is the earliest and therefore the most historical of the Gospels and that, secondly, behind these three Gospels lurks the mysterious and hypothetical text called "Q". The irony is that it is unhistorical; the tragedy is that it can't account for the Scriptures which it assumes.

The twentieth chapter of *The Gospel according to St. John* takes us from the garden tomb of Jesus to the Upper Room in Jerusalem; we go from the garden to the city. There is a transition from disappointment to wonder.

4. Paglia, *Break, Blow, Burn*, p. 229.

Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb weeping, a figure of disappointment and grief. She leaves in joy and delight. She is set into motion, *Apostle Apostolorum*, an Apostle to the Apostles, as the Fathers say. And, then, in the same chapter of John's Gospel, "*on the same day at evening*" and then "*eight days later*" in the upper room, again "*behind closed doors*," there is the transformation from disappointment to wonder in the disciples, particularly Thomas. The hopes and expectations of the disciples had been completely shattered by the events of the Crucifixion. They were huddled behind closed doors in fear and profound disappointment. There they are awakened to wonder.

The Gospels for the Third, Fourth and Fifth Sundays after Easter are taken from the sixteenth chapter of John's Gospel. They reveal the resurrection as radical new life through the interplay of sorrow and joy and in the overcoming of the world. The recurring mantra is Christ's "*because I go to the Father*."

Through the eyes of John we are opened out to the wonder of the Resurrection that leads us into the community of the Trinity. Through the eyes of John we discover the theology of Revelation—a way of thinking the Scriptures doctrinally. It gathers us into the understanding of God as Trinity.

The first article of the Thirty-nine Articles is entitled, "*Of Faith in the Holy Trinity*." "*There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker, and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible*," it begins. It captures the common theological understanding of Jewish, Christian and Islamic religion and of much of the philosophy of pagan antiquity as well. It expresses an understanding of God central to any ecumenical discourse. It counters the forms of intellectual nihilism which deny the concepts of infinity, omnipotence, omniscience; the divine attributes of classical theology. The article proceeds to locate the specifically Christian understanding of God as Trinity. "*And in the unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*." The terms belong to a rich and profound tradition of philosophical reflection which it would be foolish to ignore.

It belongs to the witness of the Christian church to proclaim this teaching. It is there for us to recover or discover. It is there for us to live. It means reclaiming a confidence in the Christian Faith as thinkable and livable in the ruins of the revolution, in the aftermath of the liturgical wars, in the disappointments that belong to the uncertainties of our world and day. Such is the wonder.

Simon Critchley seeks an ethic of commitment in the face of the nihilisms of our world and day, an ethic of commitment at once infinitely demanding and utterly unattainable, yet one which is completely devoid of any transcendent principle. But even he notes that though "*philosophy in the experience of*

*religious disappointment is godless, . . . it is an uneasy godlessness with a religious memory and within a religious archive.*<sup>25</sup> Somehow the ideas and discourse of religion are unavoidable and omnipresent in contemporary life and action. We are awakened to philosophy through disappointment and wonder.

5. Critchley, *Infinitely Demanding*, p. 2

Our challenge is about learning to think the living truth of the Gospel. We can cling to our disappointments—we are rather good at that—or we can be awakened to the wonder of God, the mystery of the Trinity. It will mean seeing *through the eyes of John*.

The Reverend David Curry is the Vice President of the Prayer Book Society of Canada.

# The Path to Women Bishops in the Church of England

By Prudence Dailey

The path to the consecration of women as bishops in the Church of England has been fraught with a great deal of discussion and debate, but compromise was eventually reached by adopting the idea of an Ombudsman who, through an independent review process, will aim to assess the fair and equitable implementation of provision for those who cannot accept the innovation.

In any consideration of the recent decision by the Church of England to begin consecrating women as bishops, there are some significant factors relating to our Synodical processes which need to be taken into account.

Our relatively compact geography means that our General Synod is able to meet much more frequently—twice or three times a year—than in North America, with members elected for five-year terms. This means that there is plenty of opportunity for members to get to know each other personally, and to establish relationships across diverse backgrounds and positions: in theory this ought to lead to greater mutual respect and, while that has certainly come under strain at times during the women bishops debates, it can be argued that it has nevertheless had some impact on the nature of our deliberations.

In addition, the frequency of meeting means that decisions are never taken on a ‘drop dead’ vote, but go through several stages of deliberation and voting, often over a number of years, before a final verdict is reached. At the last stage in the process—Final Approval—a two-thirds majority in all three Houses (bishops, clergy, and laity) is required for the legislation to pass. Up to that point, however, only simple majorities are required: and the passage of proposed legislation through these various stages can give it a certain perceived momentum.

The ‘women bishops process’ effectively began in 2000, when the General Synod requested the House of Bishops to initiate theological study into the

question of women in the episcopate. There followed a series of reports, debates and votes. At the outset, opponents of women bishops set out their theological objections to the development. Perceiving, however, that the introduction of women bishops represented the will of the majority of the Church and would almost certainly be unstoppable in the long term, they concentrated their campaigning energy on arguing for proper provision to be made for them, rather than attempting to block the legislation altogether.

The early debates tended to be characterised by a spirit of mutual goodwill. There was much talk of ‘squaring the circle’, and a number of contributors spoke of their desire to avoid becoming like The Episcopal Church, with deep divisions and warring factions, and attempts to subdue a minority through the raw exercise of power. The general mood was one of optimism: those who could not accept women bishops believed that there was a genuine desire to accommodate them, and that a way would be found (just as it had been in 1992 when the General Synod had agreed to ordain women as priests) for those with divergent convictions on the matter to live together in relative harmony.

In 2006, the Synod voted overwhelmingly to ‘take note’ of a report which included proposals for Transferred Episcopal Authority. But at the following House of Bishops meeting, ‘senior women’ made representations that they would not be prepared to be bishops under such arrangements, so they were dropped. Various alternative proposals for accommodation were put forward by traditional Anglo-Catholics and conservative evangelicals, still confident at that stage that something suitable would emerge.

During an emotional debate in July 2008, however, every one of those proposals was in turn rejected by the Synod in favour of a simple Code of Practice, as supporters of women bishops expressed fears that the proposals for greater accommodation, enshrined in legislation, would result in women becoming ‘second-class’ bishops, and assured the Synod that



Prudence Dailey

legislative provision should not be required if only everyone would ‘trust the bishops’.

The Rt. Revd. Stephen Venner, then Bishop of Dover, a supporter of women as bishops, and generally regarded as a liberal, was in tears as he said:

... for the first time in my life I feel ashamed. We have talked for hours about wanting to give an honourable place to those who disagree; we have been given opportunities for both views to flourish; we have turned down almost every realistic opportunity for the views of those who are opposed to flourish; ... and we still talk the talk of being inclusive and generous. Both archbishops were clearly dismayed; at the end of the debate, the Archbishop of Canterbury abstained on the motion to proceed to the next stage.

In July 2010, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York attempted to salvage the situation by bringing forward an amendment to introduce ‘co-ordinate jurisdiction’. Whilst an overall majority of Synod members supported the amendment, it fell in the House of Clergy by just five votes.

Various mechanisms for strengthening the proposed Code of Practice were also proposed and rejected until, in November 2012, the legislation came to the General Synod for Final Approval. The opponents of women bishops made it clear that the proposed Code of Practice, allowing for the provision of a male bishop in parishes where a female bishop was unacceptable, was woefully inadequate, and failed to take account of the nature of their theological objections. A number of Synod members who themselves supported women bishops in principle nonetheless shared the concern that the opponents were not being provided for, so it should have come as no surprise when the legislation was defeated. Nevertheless, the outcome was greeted with outrage by the advocates of women bishops. The Chairman of the House of Laity, Dr Philip Giddings, who had urged the Synod to vote against the proposals, was accused of thereby abusing his position and subjected at a special meeting of the House to a vote of no confidence (which was, however, defeated).

At this point, stalemate appeared to have been reached, with supporters of women bishops, including many of the women clergy, arguing that what had been defeated in November 2012 represented the maximum degree of concession to the opponents that they were, in conscience, able to make; while the opponents argued that the concessions were nowhere near enough. At the same time, those on both sides of the argument were wearied by the Church’s debates being dominated by the issue, and were eager to find a resolution. The opponents of women bishops well recognised that the consecration of women as bishops represented the clearly expressed view of the majority of the Church, and that the subject was never going to go away. Furthermore, noises were beginning to be

made that, if the Established Church did not agree to consecrate women as bishops soon, Parliament might force its hand.

The breakthrough came when it was decided that the Steering Committee appointed to work on a new version of the legislation should be a larger body than usual, encompassing all the major interest groups, and that its meetings should make use of independent facilitators. Out of this process emerged the suggestion that a kind of ombudsman—known as the Independent Reviewer—should be appointed by the Archbishops with the agreement of the Chairmen of the Houses of Laity and Clergy, to look into complaints that the provisions for opponents of women bishops, as enshrined in the Code of Practice, were not being operated fairly. The Independent Reviewer would produce an annual report and, while he would not be able to take direct action against bishops criticised in it, such criticism might potentially constitute justification for action under the Clergy Discipline Measure. (Ironically, the Independent Reviewer was proposed by the Chairman of the House of Laity who, having survived the vote of no confidence in him, ‘borrowed’ the idea from the university sector). In addition, it was proposed that it be enshrined in the legislation that the arrangements for those who could not accept women bishops could not be repealed except by a two-thirds majority in all three Houses.

Much to everyone’s relief, both the supporters and the opponents of women bishops agreed that these proposals were a great improvement on the legislation that had been defeated in 2012. There was tacit agreement that those who had voted against the legislation in November 2012 had, after all, been vindicated. The new legislation passed quickly through its various stages, and came to Final Approval in February 2014. During the debate, many of the opponents said that, although they were going to vote against it because their consciences would not let them do otherwise, they had no desire to see it blocked. Some of the opponents abstained; a few even voted in favour.

From the outset, the process was characterised by the desire to find a mutually acceptable compromise; and in the end, that compromise was achieved. The accommodation for those who cannot accept women as bishops is very different in nature and structure from the ‘conscience clauses’ that were so rapidly swept away in the USA and Canada, and is protected by the provision for a two-thirds majority, so it is by no means certain that it will suffer the same fate.

As the Church of England puts the women bishops debates behind it, it prepares for the even more potentially divisive battle over human sexuality. On that question, it is by no means clear that any compromise is possible.

[Prudence Dailey has been a member of the General Synod of the Church of England since 2000.](#)



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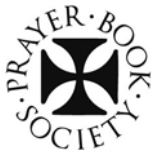
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## A PRAYER OF JOHN DONNE (1572–1631)

Bring us, O Lord God, at our last awakening into the house and gate of heaven to enter into that gate and dwell in that house, where there shall be no darkness nor dazzling, but one equal light; no noise nor silence, but one equal music; no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession; no ends nor beginnings, but one equal eternity; in the habitations of thy glory and dominion, world without end.



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