

# PRAYER BOOK SOCIETY FORUM

## SHAPING A PRAYER BOOK FOR AUSTRALIA

7 August 2010 – 12.30pm  
St. Paul's Church, Burwood Road Burwood

### INTRODUCTION

This brief paper will assess the General Synod Liturgical Commission's contribution to Prayer Book revision from 1986 to the production of *A Prayer Book for Australia (APBA)* in 1995. Both prior to and during this period the Anglican Diocese of Sydney argued a theological case for revision controlled by its understanding of Reformation principles. At the General Synod of 1995 Sydney's attitude determined how the wider Church would receive this Prayer Book. A long history of internal liturgical debate and a longer history of involvement in the world-wide Evangelical movement lie behind this response.

The paper intersperses some slice history from the 1950s to the early 1990s to underscore Sydney's commitment to a Prayer Book that protects its Evangelical and ecclesial viewpoint.<sup>1</sup> This time frame provides a long-term assessment of theological issues that underlie pressure from the Sydney Anglican Diocese for liturgical change. The period encompasses the brief conflict over *A Modern Liturgy* of the mid-1960s to the production of *An Australian Prayer Book (AAPB)* in the late 1970s. From the 1950s to the present the Anglican Diocese of Sydney has insisted that Prayer Book revision should affirm a clearly-stated doctrine of penal substitutionary atonement<sup>2</sup> and the

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<sup>1</sup> William Lawton, *The Better Time to Be: Utopian Attitudes to Society among Sydney Anglicans 1885 to 1914*, Sydney: UNSW Press, 1990.

<sup>2</sup> 2007 Session of the Synod of the Diocese of Sydney: 36/07; motion requesting Report from the Diocesan Doctrine Commission 'which explores the importance of penal substitution in understanding the Bible's teaching on the atonement'; Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: an Introduction to Biblical Theology*, Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1994, pp. 568-608; [http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/main.php?pg=blogs&story\\_id=10709](http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/main.php?pg=blogs&story_id=10709):

guiding role of Scripture in congregational life. This, in large part, placed it in tension with the Liturgical Commission report to General Synod in 1995 and resulted in the Book being received as 'a liturgical resource' and not as a revised Prayer Book.<sup>3</sup>

## REVIEWING THE LITURGICAL COMMISSION YEARS FROM 1986-1997

*A Prayer Book for Australia* is now in its fifteenth year – probably close to its allotted time span.<sup>4</sup> It reflects the urgencies and interests of another generation. We need reports from Anglican-Uniting congregations that have used the book to see if deepening connection has been achieved<sup>5</sup>: we need to pause and ask how close we are to the hoped for cross-denominational use of prayers, creeds and Orders of Service such as Marriage. How as a Church have we explored its hints of ministry with and from Indigenous people; what now must a Prayer Book offer to multi-cultural Australia?<sup>6</sup> And what about marriage as an institution in the face of inevitable legislative change?

For me there is an even more pressing question that touches at the very centre of what it means to be Christian. At no point in this paper have I used the word 'worship'. I regard it as an over-used and under-valued term. Yes, I understand that its origin is in the idea of 'giving worth'. Driven by that sense I have always hoped that this Prayer Book and its successors will acknowledge the 'worth-ship' of multi-faced Australia, and that it will strain to accommodate its language to embrace difference.<sup>7</sup> I need the successors of this book to be part of many resources that will help me see God in the

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<http://churchofaustralia.blogspot.com/2010/05/substitutionary-atonement-evangelical.html>

<sup>3</sup> 'essays in compromise and mutual accommodation'

<http://prayerbook.ca/old/library/machray/issue7/machray7g.htm>

<sup>4</sup> Preface, Anglican Church of Australia *A Prayer Book for Australia*, Sydney: Broughton Books, 1995, p.vii.

<sup>5</sup> <http://assembly.uca.org.au/unity/images/stories/PDF/WCJ/wc denominationanglican.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Brian H. Fletcher, 'Anglicanism and National Identity in Australia Since 1962', *Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 25, Issue 3, 2001, pages 336-342.

<sup>7</sup> That was one of the intentions behind the inclusion of the 'Holy Communion Outline Order', *APBA*, p.813.

everyday events of life. In that sense Prayer Book revision will always be radical.

I joined the Commission in 1986 and remained a member till 1997.<sup>8</sup> Br Gilbert Sinden had recently resigned membership and died in 1990. Much of what he had recommended was still on the table - along with an agenda concerning adapting *Uniting in Worship*, common texts with the Roman Catholics and attempts to provide services for Indigenous and multi-cultural Australia. The Commission had depended heavily on Sinden and constantly referred to his contribution. Evan Burge very adequately filled his role. But there was uncertainty about direction and a sense that the time for revision was not favourable. What however was evident was that this would have to be a composite Book with a variety of Orders to suit the complex churchmanship and theological differences in the Anglican Church in Australia.<sup>9</sup>

*The Book of Common Prayer* had influenced the vocational formation of all the Commission members though like most clergy of our generation we had also been exposed to alternate diocesan rites, the 1928 Book and the Anglican Missal. In a short address like this it is probably sufficient to say that we represented a membership spectrum from Catholic liberal to Evangelical. In that sense the Commission was ambivalent about incorporating an Anglo-Catholic tradition in Prayer Book revision. Though it tried to be attentive to Sydney Anglican Diocese expectations, responses to the Book suggest that it did not adequately engage Sydney's Reformation sensitivities to *The Book of Common Prayer*. I will return to that theme at the end of the paper.

## EVANGELICAL ANXIETY AND PRAYER BOOK REVISION

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<sup>8</sup> Members were Charles Sherlock of Ridley College, Margaret Collison a Sydney layperson, Archbishop Ian George of Adelaide, Bishop Owen Dowling of Canberra-Goulburn, Laurie Bartlett, Rector of Vaucluse in Sydney, Bishop George Hearn of Rockhampton, Gillian Varcoe, a priest of Canberra-Goulburn, Evan Burge, Warden of Trinity College, Ron Dowling, then of Perth Diocese and David Richardson, then Dean of Adelaide.

<sup>9</sup> Brian Fletcher, *The Kenneth Cable Inaugural Lecture: Australian Anglicanism and Australian History: the Need for Synthesis*, Occasional Paper no. 3, 2004, p.4, 'Anglicanism is a by-word for religious diversity'.

Sydney Anglican Diocese was a key player in Prayer Book revision. This has an extensive history and I begin these comments in the 1950s for no better reason than some personal studies have focussed here. This was a period when interest in Prayer Book revision stood shoulder to shoulder with a deeper concern about moral lapse and world crisis. We needed Sunday words to challenge growing secularism.

The Church press of the time spoke of loss of community prestige and a spiritual malaise among church attenders. The world too seemed in turmoil and on the edge of war. Editorials and letters to the editor of *The Australian Church Record* for 1950 make constant reference to these political and social crises. They note a failure of nerve among Evangelicals as 'humanity seems helplessly to be stumbling onwards into a third, and perhaps final catastrophe'.<sup>10</sup> The Church needed to undergo transformation and its Liturgy required revising to meet the demands.<sup>11</sup>

These years through to the 1970s saw dramatic challenges to Australian faith patterns. Again, the time here is too short to recite them in any detail; for the purpose of this paper I need to emphasise that Sydney Anglican Evangelicals saw the spiritual transformation of the Church coming from revival – as in the East African Revival Movement of the 1940s and early 50s<sup>12</sup> – from a fresh emphasis on evangelism – as in the Billy Graham Crusades<sup>13</sup> and in visitation and hospitality evangelism<sup>14</sup> – and in a recovery of Reformation principles<sup>15</sup>. I was closely involved in all of those movements through those years and was an intimate part of Moore College's transition to Reformed theology.

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<sup>10</sup> *Australian Church Record*, 23/02/50, p.11.

<sup>11</sup> *Australian Church Record*, 1/06/50, p.5.

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.pastornet.net.au/renewal/journal7/taylor.html>

<sup>13</sup> *Decision*, May 1961, p.4.

<sup>14</sup> *Australian Church Record*, 24/8/50, p.11.

<sup>15</sup> *Australian Church Record* 16/11/50, p.3: Reformation evenings were a 1950s feature of Moore College student-run programs.

All of that is another conversation. The liturgical implications of this sensed need for spiritual transformation of the Church came to a head in the 1966 revised services draft report to General Synod. The report recognised the need for a conservative and a radical revision – a pattern retained ever since. Though a modified 1662 service has continued to be available it has increasingly slipped to the edge of national Church life. But *A Modern Liturgy* recommended in this report was an attempt by its chief author Donald Robinson,<sup>16</sup> and in the background Broughton Knox, to anchor the Church to its Reformation ideals.

Its critics countered that it was ‘Zwinglian’. This was one of the ecclesiastical ‘swear-words’ of the time. Opponents invoked the name of the Swiss Reformer<sup>17</sup> as if to say, this *Modern Liturgy* is about no more than a word made visible – a sermon in signs. How little they understood Donald Robinson and how brashly they disregarded the impact of Peter Martyr’s<sup>18</sup> interchanges with the theology of Zwingli over the ‘metaphorical conception of presence’ on Cranmer’s liturgical texts.<sup>19</sup> These texts remained the basis of classical Anglicanism for 110 years till the formation of the 1662 Book. But the smear stuck and *A Modern Liturgy* was quickly dismissed as an aberration.

In a longer view of Prayer Book revision, not all was lost. With the trial use of *A Modern Liturgy* a new form of Thanksgiving Prayer and the beginnings of revision of the Lord’s Prayer became available. We all began to march to the drum-beat of change.

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<sup>16</sup> [http://web.mac.com/brian.douglas/Anglican\\_Eucharistic\\_Theology/Blog/Entries/2006/1/4\\_Donald\\_Robinson\\_Born\\_1922Former\\_Archbishop\\_of\\_Sydney,\\_Australia.html](http://web.mac.com/brian.douglas/Anglican_Eucharistic_Theology/Blog/Entries/2006/1/4_Donald_Robinson_Born_1922Former_Archbishop_of_Sydney,_Australia.html) - offers a useful commentary on Donald Robinson’s contribution throughout this period of revision.

<sup>17</sup> Huldrych Zwingli, Swiss Reformer, 1484 -1531: for an interesting academic debate contrasting Zwingli and Calvin see <http://heidelblog.wordpress.com/2010/01/11/reformation-history-resource-zwingli-online/>

<sup>18</sup> Judith H. Anderson, ‘Language and History in the Reformation: Cranmer, Gardiner, and the Words of Institution’ in *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 54, No. 1, Spring 2001, p. 31; Peter Martyr 1499-1562; Anderson, Marvin, ‘Rhetoric and Reality: Peter Martyr and the English Reformation’, *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 3, Autumn 1988.

<sup>19</sup> Anderson, J., *article cited*, p. 20, quoting from Dairmaid MacCallum, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996, p. 379; see further Anderson, J., *article cited*, pp. 27-28; 40-41; see further p. 31, citing Thomas Cranmer, *Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrine of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ*

## THE LITURGICAL COMMISSION AS INHERITOR OF THIS PROCESS

Conversations on the Commission polarized over churchmanship. The people I recall as being the most significant in shifting this emphasis were Evan Burge, Owen Dowling and Laurie Bartlett. Forgive me if I ignore others - this is merely my recollection. But time was never on our side. Evan set about translating the Psalms from the Hebrew. Like the rest of the Book they were to be gender sensitive - how we struggled together over the phrase 'what is man' in Psalm 8. At almost the last moment the translation task was undermined by church politics and the need to pacify egos. The version now printed in *A Prayer Book for Australia* was imposed on the Commission.<sup>20</sup> We were also sometimes at odds with the Doctrine Commission and that left us uncertain about our role.

Evan drew on his vast knowledge of Greek and Latin texts to offer versions of the Eucharist Thanksgiving Prayers and the Creeds. Laurie Bartlett and Owen Dowling offered the poetry of hymnody they were well known for. When Owen resigned from the Commission, responsibility for devising poetic cadences fell primarily to Laurie, but I recall Margaret Collison contributing from her extensive study of English language and literature.<sup>21</sup>

As a Commission we were too slow getting moving: our own theological and liturgical preferences at times got in the way of coherent revision. That was evident in the way we stopped and restarted the Funeral Service. It was initially undertaken by Ian George and then, after he left the Commission, by Charles Sherlock.

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<sup>20</sup> Fletcher, 'Anglicanism and National Identity', p. 342.

<sup>21</sup> Margaret has remained a significant contributor to liturgical revision in the Diocese of Sydney - see for example: <http://www.sundayservices.anglican.asn.au/introduction.html>

Charles drew this service into a coherent whole though at a quick reading it seems to slide too easily into a memorial of the deceased rather than being a celebration of a Christian view of life and death. *The Book of Common Prayer* leaves you in no doubt as to its intention: the readings of Psalm 90 and 1 Corinthians 15 set out God's control over life's limitations and triumphs. The death and resurrection of Jesus is centrepiece and the service is his memorial rather than ours. All that is still available in *A Prayer Book for Australia* Funeral Service but it is swamped by other reading alternatives. A softer option is ready at hand.

Originally Charles had included the prayer 'Go forth Christian soul' at the end of the service but the Doctrine Commission sniffed out commendation of the departed. The prayer slid across into the 'Commendations' in the Ministry to the Dying Service (page 703). It had been a grand conclusion to Charles' concept of death as a journey and Charles never saw it as anything other than that. Even with its loss this is a remarkable service and worthy of inclusion in contemporary liturgy.

Insofar as the Service never quite decides whether its object is to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus or the life of the deceased there is always a note of ambiguity. This has serious implications since clergy often find themselves as celebrants at civic ceremonies. Inevitably eulogies stress the virtues and strengths of the deceased and just as inevitably prayers and readings fall in line. Recent media headlines remind us of the dreadful anomaly of criminals and abusers accorded the official rites of Churches. This cries out for official response.<sup>22</sup> The funeral service needs adjusting to changed community values but clergy also need increased assistance in their pastoral care of relatives and in their community presence.

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<sup>22</sup> For a commentary on this theme, see Andrew Hamilton, 'Funerals for criminals and abusers', *Eureka Street*, 27 May 2010, <http://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article.aspx?aeid=21530>

My response to Ron Dowling's and David Richardson's revision of Baptism and Confirmation is less enthusiastic. Without reservation I acknowledge the hard work they put into shaping these services. I see the value of amalgamating the services and ceremonies of *The Book of Common Prayer*. I approve – what else could I say as an active participant – of their softening classic statements about original sin and predestination. My mind and spirit engage with their theology of creation and their sensitive use of ancient liturgical phrases and themes. But the language and style are too compressed, too repetitive and unengaging.

The theologian in me wants to know how they would construe the central teaching of *The Book of Common Prayer*, that in the act of baptism 'this child is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church'.<sup>23</sup> I understand the complexity of the debate but I also understand the centrality of this issue to 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century challenges between Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics (Tractarians). The classic term 'sacramental regeneration'<sup>24</sup> has a long and often acrimonious place in Anglican traditions stretching from Cranmer to 19<sup>th</sup> century Court of Arches and Privy Council decisions.<sup>25</sup> Dowling and Richardson can be forgiven for fudging on the context but its meaning 'regenerate as by a sign or sacrament' deserved clearer and simpler exposition. If Cranmer's Lord's Supper was a 'metaphorical conception of

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<sup>23</sup> Thomas Bayly Howell, Thomas Jones Howell, William Cobbett, David Jardine, *Cobbett's Complete Collection of State Trials and Proceedings for High Treason and other Crimes and Misdemeanors from the Earliest Period to the Present Time*, vol. 5 'Comprising the Period from the Second Year of the Reign of King Charles the Second, AD1650, to the Thirteenth Year of the said Reign, AD1661', T C Hansard: London, 1810, columns 654-655 – extracted from *State Trials* 1656: [http://books.google.com.au/books?id=hgYKAAAIAAJ&pg=PT343&lpg=PT343&dq='this+child+is+regenerate'&source=bl&ots=pXW0iqWA2P&sig=rFLc5R3H47t2dvkj6RUVsSADfSY&hl=en&ei=diNJTbfBJHcvQOztIXHDg&sa=X&oi=book\\_result&ct=result&resnum=7&ved=0CDQQ6AEwBjgK#v=onepage&q='this%20child%20is%20regenerate'&f=false](http://books.google.com.au/books?id=hgYKAAAIAAJ&pg=PT343&lpg=PT343&dq='this+child+is+regenerate'&source=bl&ots=pXW0iqWA2P&sig=rFLc5R3H47t2dvkj6RUVsSADfSY&hl=en&ei=diNJTbfBJHcvQOztIXHDg&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=7&ved=0CDQQ6AEwBjgK#v=onepage&q='this%20child%20is%20regenerate'&f=false)

<sup>24</sup> Here are useful summaries of the term in classic Anglican use: <http://covenantgrace.blogspot.com/2007/10/sacramental-regeneration-vs-spiritual.html>; Nathaniel Dimock, *The Doctrine of the Sacraments in Relation to the Doctrines of Grace as contained in the Scriptures, taught in our formularies, and upheld by our Reformers*, 1908 edn. republished BiblioLife, 2009 - see pages 103-104; see further: [http://web.mac.com/brian.douglas/Anglican\\_Eucharistic\\_Theology/Blog/Entries/2006/2/13\\_Nathaniel\\_Dimock1825-1909Evangelical\\_Writer.html](http://web.mac.com/brian.douglas/Anglican_Eucharistic_Theology/Blog/Entries/2006/2/13_Nathaniel_Dimock1825-1909Evangelical_Writer.html)

<sup>25</sup> William J Irons et al., *The Judgement on Baptismal Regeneration*, [Short title], London: Joseph Master, 1850.

presence', then its sacramental cohort Baptism was a 'metaphorical conception of grace'.<sup>26</sup>

## THE PLACE OF SYDNEY DIOCESE IN PRAYER BOOK REVISION

I must punctuate this with an important piece of history that has had long-term consequence for the acceptance of *A Prayer Book for Australia* as a liturgical resource rather than as an authorised book. In 1993, three years before the Commission submitted its Report, the Synod of the Diocese of Sydney received a Report from its own Diocesan Liturgical Committee. David Peterson, one of today's forum speakers, was a member of this committee as I had been though from a much earlier period.<sup>27</sup> The Synod Report sets out some principles that directly addressed areas of tension impacting the Liturgical Commission.

The 1993 Diocesan Report noted that: 'there has been a major and unprecedented shift away from confidence in and the use of existing liturgical forms of public worship in the Diocese in the last decade'. The Report went on to say that 'the value of liturgy in the Diocese ... has been dealt with mostly in terms of legal obligations. This approach has by and large failed. The legal emphasis has not halted change, but only driven open discussion of new liturgical forms underground'.

This is a critical observation and, though there was certainly no personal comment implied, could have been a commentary on the way I had

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<sup>26</sup> *Articles of Religion*, Article 25; compare Anderson, J., *article cited*, pp. 37-39; see further this paper on page 13.

<sup>27</sup> 1966-67 Member, Sydney Diocesan Liturgical Committee  
1972-73 Member, Synod Committee 37/72 re Marriage and Divorce  
1977-78 Member, Synod Committee 22/77 re Confirmation and Holy Communion  
1978-81 Member, Anglican General Synod Working Party on Mission, Evangelism, Ministry and Training: *Advance Australia Mission*, Sydney: Standing Committee of General Synod, 1981  
1983-85 Member, Anglican General Synod Commission on Ministry and Training  
1986-97 Member, Anglican General Synod Liturgical Commission  
1986-87 Member, Synod Committee 25/86 re Meaning and Importance of 'Worship'  
1989 Member, Synod Committee 36/88 re Role of the Sermon

approached my own new role on the Commission. As a staff member at Moore Theological College I had taught (among other subjects) *The Book of Common Prayer* against its Reformed and Mediaeval Catholic background and the sacramental controversies that had emerged through the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>28</sup> I also taught the 1603 Canons and Constitutions<sup>29</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> century Privy Council decisions over Baptism and Eucharist.

This meant that I initially saw my contribution to the Liturgical Commission against a background of legal constraints. This changed in time, especially after consolidating my other role as Rector of East Sydney. However I feel that initially I, and those from the liberal Catholic position who argued similarly, unhelpfully held the Commission to rubrical and legal concerns. Because we came from different ends of the theological spectrum we interpreted Anglican history through the lens of churchmanship. We made heavy weather through the first couple of years when the time frame for fresh liturgical change was critical.

The 1993 Sydney Committee Report had recommended that 'a new approach to an Anglican prayer book is needed. Instead of a collection of set services to be used and none other, a "field" of authorised liturgical use for the guidance of churches must be agreed upon [and] a wide range of liturgical suggestions and resources for use in that "field" be provided.'

This is the clear setting for objections leveled at *A Prayer Book for Australia* when it eventually came to General Synod. At this distance I wish the Liturgical Commission had heeded this advice. Instead we attempted to produce a fresh Prayer Book. With each new Order of Service there was outside pressure to either retain the essence of *An Australian Prayer Book* (AAPB - 1978) Order 1 or else to write a further moderate revision of *The Book*

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<sup>28</sup> For context see: <http://www.freechurchseminary.org/Medieval%20Controversies.html>

<sup>29</sup> <http://orthodoxanglican.net/downloads/1604Canons.pdf>

of *Common Prayer* service.

## SOME PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

I had composed a new style of Marriage Service as an 'attempt to reflect the human role in life and liturgy'.<sup>30</sup> Its language and intent followed the Commission's commitment to gender inclusiveness and it based its theology of marriage on themes from Genesis chapters 1 and 2 rather than on the role of men and women as specified in the *Book of Common Prayer*. The contrasts proved to be provocative and led to Sydney expressing doubts about the new Order.

David Peterson took issue over the introductory statements in the Order 2 Marriage Service and it underwent change. Though it has had wide acceptance across Australia it polarized many Evangelicals. At this distance I accept as valid part of that critique. Public church services need sensitivity to social change but they also need to be adequately anchored in our traditional understanding of the qualities and value of human life. As a current marriage celebrant that balance remains essential to find.

I also cautiously agree with those who argued that *A Prayer Book for Australia* attempted too much change too quickly. Yes, cautiously; liturgy is about tradition; it celebrates where we have come from. I recall earlier days traversing my extensive Bush Church Aid Society parish and being sustained by the Coverdale Psalter: it was memorable and singable. In quiet moments I still recite rote learnt phrases from *The Book of Common Prayer*: they are my heritage and I regret that my children and their children will not share them as I have.

But more is at stake than a celebration of the past. My last twenty years have

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<sup>30</sup> Preface to *APBA*, p.viii.

known the profound joy of sharing with people who live on the margins of church and society. Many of my closest friends have abandoned church – some have never experienced one. We share and discuss the deep spiritual urgency that shapes our values. Those conversations accompany me whenever I lead a church service or preach a sermon and I hear their echoes in the comments of congregations as we mill around after the service. We need liturgies that celebrate life in the world of our every-day. They can never be trite or banal: they require poetry and verbal imagery. *A Prayer Book for Australia* was a beginning in a discovery that now needs revision.

As an historian and liturgist I see, but do not now lament, the re-framing and muting of Reformation principles perceived in *A Prayer Book for Australia*. Cranmer's Communion Service was based on the doctrine of Justification by Faith and it carried the worshipper clearly from Law to Grace. As a long-time worker with people who experience life values and spirituality outside a formal religious frame that emphasis needs more fullness from teaching about justice and love for those unable to love themselves. The historian in me values the 1662 Communion liturgy; the pastor in me can no longer use it with integrity.

But a deeper issue than personal preference was at stake. The 1990s saw a reassessment of Australian society. Sociologist Gary Bouma described those years as the Anglican-Catholic ascendancy.<sup>31</sup> He meant by this, the statistical preponderance of people aligning themselves through census with these two denominations. By contrast other denominations and other religions were a small percentage of the Australian population, several representing 'near and significantly less' than 1%.<sup>32</sup> Bouma comments that this was a time when Anglicans and Roman Catholics had the capacity to act generously since they feared no serious inroads from minority groups. In such an environment, the

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<sup>31</sup> Gary D. Bouma, 'The Emergence of Religious Plurality in Australia: A Multicultural Society', *Sociology of Religion*, vol. 56, Issue 3, 1995, p.288

<sup>32</sup> Bouma, *article cited*, p.291.

General Synod Liturgical Commission had the opportunity to incorporate a broader understanding of the nature of God and of human interaction. This was time for co-operation and inclusion

The Commission worked with this sense of challenge, but the liturgical changes that reflected this had repercussions among conservative religious groups. I recall the charge in the Sydney Synod that *A Prayer Book for Australia* was light on atonement theology. I imagine your response to that accusation must rest with how you approach the current Evangelical doctrine of penal substitutionary atonement. Every time we worked on the various Eucharistic liturgies, Sydney Diocese's reply to that issue was before the Commission – and every time a majority of the Commission rejected that view of atonement. The years since General Synod have lumbered us with the Silk-Goodhew Third Thanksgiving Prayer hastily made up during session breaks at General Synod. Its strong undertone of a Catholic doctrine of Eucharistic sacrifice was a prime cause of Sydney's rejection of *A Prayer Book for Australia*.<sup>33</sup>

I have learnt to value the structure of this Book's Order 2 Eucharist Service. It has begun to sow its own rhythms in my faith life but it is still only a transition. When I attend services in the Roman Catholic Church I notice their experiments with Thanksgiving Prayers and with the Kyrie as a form of confession. I long for the day when we can share that discovery with them.

Anglicanism in Australia is simply one option among many. Those options will increase as the Australian population becomes more diverse. *The Book of Common Prayer* may remain in our experience as a valued expression of Elizabethan poetry and piety but it will not serve as a medium for evangelism and contemporary apologetics. Liturgy revision must celebrate the past but

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<sup>33</sup> Charles C. Hefling, Cynthia L. Shattuck, ed., *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: a Worldwide Survey*, Oxford Uni Press, 2006, p.328; compare 'Catholics and Common Worship': The New Liturgy, says David Silk, leaves Catholic Anglicans in a dilemma, <http://www.trushare.com/64SEP00/SE00SILK.htm> - see also <http://www.lectionarystudies.com/pbrevision.htm>

it must also engage the current yearning for spiritual depth that is the mark of all great religious traditions.

With increasing popular interaction with electronic media what will this mean for book culture? With increasing general interest in spirituality and meditation practices what will this mean for liturgical expression? How will increasing marginalisation of the Churches affect Anglican self-estimate?<sup>34</sup>

In this environment we need to be more in tune with the spiritual urgency of other Australians. Who knows what fresh treasures and insights will awaken our spirits?

*Bill Lawton – 3 August 2010*

### **Footnote 26 – suggested ‘regeneration’ prayer at Baptism**

Based on the post-Baptismal prayers in *The Book of Common Prayer*.

*Parents and Priest each in turn sign N with the sign of the cross.*

*NN, we sign you with the cross, the sign of Christ.*

*The Priest adds*

In baptism, we claim Jesus’ gift of new birth for N;  
we celebrate her/his belonging and participation  
in the Christian community;  
we give thanks for the gracious promise of regeneration  
that will lead N inwardly to holiness  
and outwardly to justice.

As a member of Christ’s universal body  
we ask that N will find life fulfilled by  
facing his/her own failings and opening to fresh possibilities.

Bill Lawton - 16 October 2009 and used experimentally on the *Feast of the Baptism of Jesus* 10 January 2010.

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<sup>34</sup> Gary Bouma, *Australian Soul: Religion and Spirituality in the Twenty-first Century*, Melbourne: Cambridge UP, 2006, p.94; Fletcher, *The Kenneth Cable Inaugural Lecture*, p.11.

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