

Worship at St. Gregory's

by *Richard Fabian*

FOREWORD

The Book of Common Prayer at St. Gregory's

The Book of Common Prayer unites diverse Anglican churches in one worship life, which we share with Christians of all times and places. The American Episcopal Church's Prayer Book of 1979 goes further than any previous version to strengthen our continuity with worshipers of early centuries, and our common heritage with sisters and brothers outside the British historical lineage. Here our present Prayer Book fulfills the intentions of the sixteenth and seventeenth century Anglican Reformers, though it sometimes differs from their chosen practices. The 1979 Book also acknowledges local variation, and opens all usage to rational choice based on scripture, tradition and pastoral circumstance. Besides reconciling weary divisions, this innovation fosters creativity and responsible experiment within our public liturgical life. Thus the present Prayer Book sets forth an authentic Anglican approach to worship, in place of a fictitious conformity, as the tradition unifying our church's prayer.

The debates that worked out that approach uncovered an Anglican identity transcending wide differences. Dr Massey Shepherd of the Church Divinity School of the Pacific at Berkeley lectured throughout the Episcopal Church during the process, and contributed much to the identity that emerged. After one such lecture in 1962, I heard a Connecticut questioner challenge his argument for weekly eucharistic worship, asking how such Popish stuff could properly be called Anglican. Dr Shepherd's answer surprised him. Anglican liturgy has only one distinctive property, he said: if all Prayer Book editions from all Anglican provinces were stacked in order of their publication dates alone, each Prayer Book would represent a significant step eastward—not toward Rome but toward Jerusalem, Syria and Constantinople. Those eastern churches had never lost the popular weekly eucharistic tradition which our liturgical movement hoped to restore, Dr Shepherd concluded. Thanks partly to his work, the present American Prayer Book follows this traditional Anglican inclination, not only in the eucharist, but in many other services besides.^{1} It gives us a rite that expresses the living tradition uniting all Christians, east and west.

In 1978 the Bishop and Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of California organized the Church of St Gregory Nyssen at San Francisco, honoring a fourth century Greek theologian whose teaching has enriched eastern and western churches alike. Our charter charged us to continue liturgical development in the direction the new Book of Common Prayer had set out. We were to draw directly on the classical resources that inspired this Prayer Book—including Jewish and eastern Christian resources, newly emphasised in this version—for practices which would enhance congregational participation.^{2} And we were to build congregational music, dance, and other expressions beyond what settled parishes might readily attempt. Our goal was not a unique "experimental" or "eastern" liturgy, but a liturgy embodying an authentic Anglican approach, gaining from modern scholarship, open to new material, and yielding experience to serve the whole Church.

Our resulting worship style may surprise visitors from parishes that have kept their accustomed modifications of former Prayer Books unchanged under the new version, or adapted the new Prayer Book following contemporary Roman Catholic use. Those who enjoy our liturgy often ask our reasons for this or that feature,

or our sources for material new to them. Some have taken ideas from us, applied them in their home churches, and returned with questions and discussion. These have enriched our vision and worship. The response of non-Anglican friends suggests that our approach also serves ecumenical fellowship, as an authentic Anglican approach should do. For example, eastern Christian visitors tell us ours is plainly a western liturgy, only they feel at home as they rarely do when visiting western parishes. Many others urge us to add our experience to ecumenical liturgical dialogue. Meanwhile, new St Gregory's Church members press for fuller knowledge about the worship they enjoy as their own.

For these reasons, I began two years ago assembling an introduction to *Worship at St Gregory's*. Twenty church members took part in a seminar discovering what wanted explaining; and Fr Benedict Green, CR, sometime Principal of the College of the Resurrection at Mirfield, Yorkshire, reviewed an early draft, noting what wanted explaining better. To Benedict I owe much underlying this enterprise, most of all the historical critical approach he fostered as my tutor. The present pamphlet can only be called a current result: our liturgy changes yearly as we search for ways to make it richer or more effective—or shorter!— and the rationale must change likewise. Bishop Kilmer Myers (R.I.P.) and Bishop William Swing have shown loving patience as we learned from our mistakes (not just early mistakes) and have helped me keep my mind on what really counts, which is the gospel the liturgy celebrates and serves. My fellow pastor Donald Schell's influence planning, celebrating and re-shaping our worship with me over twelve years' working partnership pervades our liturgy and permanently implicates him in what follows. Fred Goff, Jacob Slichter and other St Gregory's people have also left fingerprints in prominent places. To all these I owe thanks or apologies.

Richard Fabian
All Saints' Day, 1988

Preface to the 2001 Edition

Much has changed since I first wrote. Our award-winning new church building welcomes hundreds weekly. Newcomers have grown more diverse, more demanding of corporate worship, and less predictably attached to familiar Anglican ways. Their questions, if now rarely hostile, are even more challenging, seeking explanations from the ground up. The ecumenical context for liturgical renewal is commonplace, and research into Byzantine and other eastern sources has become the next frontier for Jewish and Christian scholars alike. Their work will revise many long-held assumptions, no doubt including some I rely on here.

Donald Schell and scores of contributors have continuously re-molded our worship. Sanford Dole, Scott King, and a choirful of composers and singers have published and recorded our music; Mark Dukes, John Goldman, and a myriad builders and artists and seamsters have made St Gregory's Church a visionary mecca. Lynn Baird, Betsy De Ruff, John Golenksi, Nancy Milholland, Leslie Nipps, M.R. Ritley, Philip Wickeri and devoted lay ministers have added pastoral improvements weekly. None of us are satisfied with the results quite yet, but we are still working.

Experience has brought me only one regret: that I could not Byzantinize more deeply from the start, sacking that historic storehouse of popular worship. Twenty-two years ago the critical resources were not ready to hand; now as they emerge, I hope others will take up our lead and surpass us. This is the next frontier for renewal, as well as for research. This has been our Anglican liturgical destiny since Sarum.

Transfiguration, 2001

Worship at St. Gregory's

Saint Gregory our Patron

Our chosen patron saint, Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa (hence called Gregory Nyssen) died about the year 395. His church lay in the Roman province of Cappadocia, today's central Turkey. Born to a prominent Kurdish Christian family, he enjoyed a layman's quiet career teaching logic, until his firebrand brother Basil pressed him to join the bishops battling for Nicene orthodoxy in the councils of his time. Basil appointed him suffragan at Nyssa, a crossroads village sinecure. To the surprise of many, on Basil's early death Gregory became a conciliar leader. One of the most original thinkers in Christian history, and widely esteemed during his lifetime, Gregory was a Greek-speaking humanist, a universalist, a mystic, and a married bishop. These traits later led medieval schoolmen to overlook him, though his influence endured. (Our parish, founded in 1978, is one of few dedicated to his memory.) But today Gregory Nyssen draws fresh interest, and his work appears increasingly in English. His last book, the *Life of Moses*, ends with advice we have emblazoned on the lantern above the altar in his church:

MONON TIMION TE KAI ERASMION
TO FILON GENESQAI QEWI

THE ONE THING TRULY WORTHWILE
IS BECOMING GOD'S FRIEND

Ministers of Worship

Christian services classically feature three orders of ministers working together: laypeople, deacons and presbyters (a category that historically and functionally includes bishops).^{3} Properly speaking, "laypeople" means all Christians sharing together in the priestly ministry of Christ; since ancient times, churches have chosen some of these to lead their worship, and ordained them as deacons or presbyters. Today Anglican churches customarily clothe their ministers (ordained or not) in church vestments, most of which were common secular clothing in Roman times. We continue to wear them because they evoke our unity with Christians of past ages, and because they afford rich opportunities for beauty and artistic creativity. Of these, the most universal is a plain robe (alb), still seen today in Middle Eastern streets; there Christians do not even think it a liturgical vestment, but add vestments on top of it—as indeed we all do. Another universal garment is a colorful cloth cape (cope or chasuble), derived from a Roman soldier's cloak: in peacetime poncho form this became unisex gentry gear, worn by anyone dressing up in public. Modern Christians put this vestment on their presiding presbyters, and sometimes on other ministers as well. Its color varies to suit the occasion, and when many are worn the colors can vary richly.^{4}

Among ordained offices, the deacon's is the oldest, the only one clearly identifiable in the gospels, and the busiest—arranging, precenting, prompting and marshaling the rest. This job is so big most churches have subdivided it, at least sharing out its musical responsibilities. Anglicans since the Reformation, and increasingly since the 19th century, have returned much of it to laypeople, and are only now reviving the diaconate as a living ordained ministry. Like Jews and eastern Christians we rely on a deacon at St Gregory's to run most of the service, with trained musicians leading the singing, and ad hoc lay help. The deacon marshals the laypeople's liturgical ministry—and this is extensive, because we follow Jewish custom in giving laypeople work to do whenever possible.^{5} The deacon also marshals the Presider and other clergy, supplying them what they need and reminding them when they need it. Our deacon announces each liturgical event, and where needed music will be found, so that newcomers can take part as easily as the rest.^{6} As a mark of authority the deacon uses a strip of brightly colored cloth, originally carried in one hand and waved about to get attention at

Roman public meetings, and later extended to hang over the shoulder, leaving the deacon's hands free for beckoning, prompting, carrying and shoving.{7}

An ordained presbyter presides—opening and overseeing the service, preaching, and praying the central prayers that one voice traditionally offers on behalf of all. This Presider wears another strip of colored cloth (pallium or stole) around the neck: originally the Roman military insignia of chief command, it became a general sign of presiding authority after the peace of Constantine.{8}

Roman society loved stratification, and ranked its ministers in church as it ranked its officials at court, assigning each more or less dignified places, postures and duties. By contrast, Jewish and early Christian synagogue worship was equalitarian, and its ministers, including Jesus, were mainly lay men and women. (Recent studies suggest the role of women has been underestimated: see ADDENDUM II, below.) At St Gregory's men and women serve in all ministries without gender distinctions, and all ministers, lay or ordained, do their work among the laypeople rather than in a reserved chancel space. We elevate the preacher and readers for the congregation's convenience in hearing and seeing what they do. Otherwise all stand, sit and move together.

Jews used various postures freely for worship; Christians attached symbolic value to standing and kneeling, chose standing as their norm.{9} They knelt only for special occasions of petition or repentance; indeed, the Council of Nicea{10} forbade kneeling on Sundays and throughout Eastertide, as too penitential. At St Gregory's people are free to pray as they wish, but nearly all stand for prayer as the clergy do. During the Great Thanksgiving, most join the clergy in raising their hands aloft: this gesture, among pagans a sign of women's filial piety, became the classical Christian prayer posture. It is now regaining popularity because it feels celebratory, and so suits the renewed rites. We sit for readings, silences, and the sermon,{11} and nursing mothers and weary worshippers often sit at other times too.

Affectionate Context

A service's opening moments can set the context for all that follows, and these begin even as newcomers approach the church building. Our Members adopted a mission statement reflecting Gregory Nyssen's teaching: "St Gregory's Church invites people to see God's image in all humankind, to sing and dance to Jesus' lead, and to become God's friends." The Latin theologians Augustine and Thomas Aquinas agreed that religion begins in awe and ends in affection; and medieval Byzantines meant their church iconography to kindle affection for Christ and the saints surrounding the worshippers.{12} So we designed our building and the opening moments of our service—even before the first word is spoken—to set the context of affectionate friendship with God.

Forty minutes ahead, clergy and lay ministers meet by the lectern to coordinate their tasks. They begin with a quotation from Gregory Nyssen's friend Gregory Nazianzen, and the day's first prayer—both chosen to set the context in our leaders' minds:

"BLESSED BE GOD THE WORD,
WHO CAME TO HIS OWN AND HIS OWN RECEIVED HIM NOT,
FOR IN THIS WAY GOD GLORIFIED THE STRANGER."
O God, show us your image in all who come here today,
that we may welcome them, and you. Amen.

Afterward they spread a rich cloth over the altar table—a symbol of Christ's presence—while welcomers stand on the entry steps offering music books to new arrivals, and usher them to other tables inside where they can make nametags, sign our guestbook, and gather information about parish classes and programs. Regular attenders don permanent nametags to welcome strangers, and chat with any arriving early. Twenty minutes

before the service, our volunteer Choir gather at the altar for a final rehearsal, so that newcomers will hear from their first arrival the high quality of our music.{13}

Building Plan and Symbolism

Visitors entering St Gregory's may find the church strikingly arranged: the altar table stands in an open space before the entry doors, where people gather chatting before worship. Icons of dancing saints circle overhead. Rock sculptures rise in the garden opposite. Candles and crosses occupy a platform to the right, in the middle of the building. Beyond these, empty chairs stretch to a large raised seat at the far end, where once churches predictably stationed the altar.

In fact our arrangement reflects an ancient plan underlying most liturgical church buildings today, only more obvious here—and used here, as anciently, to enhance congregational participation.{14} The plan originates with Jewish synagogues. St Gregory's represents a very early form of it, such as Jesus probably knew,{15} and familiar to Christians in both east and west during the first four centuries.{16} This plan features seats surrounding a raised platform (bêma) with a preacher's chair ("Moses' seat," Matthew 23:2) and chairs for deacon and cantor, joined by a runway (solea) to a raised lectern (ambo) backed by a tree-of-lights (menorah) and screen. In synagogues the menorah and screen recalled the Jerusalem temple; here our screen is a screen of Ethiopian crosses with their customary cloth streamers. On the raised platform and runway we welcome new members and celebrate marriages in the midst of the congregation. Beyond the screen of crosses stands the table for celebrating Jesus' eucharistic meal, within a considerable open space where the whole congregation can process, stand and dance—and feast at parish suppers, too. Our choir sit and move with the congregation, or stand wherever they can sing best, using whatever instruments they need.

San Francisco architect John Goldman designed St Gregory's building to receive the artistic gifts of local people and the ethnic richness of the whole Christian missionary world. A large mosaic by visiting Moscow artists crowns our entry doors, which a New Zealand Maori carver in our neighborhood made; likewise our font, tower crosses, and architectural ceramics present the work of local sculptors. Iconographer Mark Duke's extensive murals dominate both chambers of the building. Smaller icons, crosses and censers come from the largest eastern Christian church, in Ethiopia; our embossed offering plates, from Christian Egypt; our hangings and vestments, mainly from west Africa—where they are in daily secular use, as all Christian vestments originally were.{17} Colorful ceremonial umbrellas from the ancient churches in south India and Ethiopia move through the church in every procession. At the building's focal point directly behind our altar table hangs a rubbing from an ancient Chinese stele honoring missionaries and monks from the Church of the East during the eighth century Tang dynasty: this rubbing is a gift from the church in China today, with whom our diocese enjoys a longterm prayer partnership. Our altar table vessels are contemporary California ceramics or pewter replicas of Byzantine treasures. Musical instruments include drums from Africa and Mexico, Ethiopian sistrum rattles, and an American harpsichord. We welcome contributions from the greater ecumenical world as well: for our aumbry, a Shinto household shrine now houses consecrated bread, wine, and sacramental oils for baptizing and healing; Buddhist bells from Tibet and Japan mark our liturgical silences; our presidential chair is a Thai elephant howdah.{18}

The symbols at our church entrance reflect Gregory Nyssen's distinctive teaching. His last book, *The Life of Moses*, presented Moses as an ideal for all to imitate, in becoming God's friend.{19} Our entry mosaic depicts Moses and Gregory praying before the burning bush: a symbol, said Gregory, of God's incarnation in Jesus, transforming human nature without destroying any human quality—and yet more deeply, of the divine fire that is in all things, only we do not see it.{20} The tall red entry doors below show a myriad creatures from every geological epoch, rising in rivers toward the center; and overhead, words from Gregory Nyssen's friend Gregory Nazianzen proclaim:

ALL THAT IS PRAYS TO YOU.

On a stand just inside the doors, an icon of Christ (or of the feast we are celebrating) awaits worshippers, who may kiss it in affectionate greeting as they arrive.{21} People bring their offerings of bread and wine for the eucharistic meal, sweets and snacks for coffee hour, and canned food and clothing for the poor—all to the pantry and side tables,{22} where they will wait until we bring each to the altar table in turn with thanks for what God has given us, and so join our offerings with Christ's offering.

Standing in a broad open space immediately beyond, the eucharistic table is Jesus' own chosen symbol of incorporation into God's Kingdom.{23} Our table is wooden, and D-shaped as dinner tables were in Jesus' time.{24} Already vested with a colorful cloth, the table represents Christ among his people: this symbol has been called the earliest Christian icon, and focusses our gathering throughout the liturgy and the coffee hour afterward. Moreover, with the doors open nearby during most of the service, the table suggests a further focus beyond the church: the world where Christ is just as truly present, and where we will serve him after our worship has ended.{25} Two gilt inscriptions below express Christ's welcome plainly. On one pedestal are Greek words from Luke 15:2—originally an insult directed at Jesus, and so our surest historical evidence about him:

OUTOS AMARTWLOUS PROSDECETAI KAI SUNESQIEI AUTOIS
[This guy welcomes sinners and dines with them!]

And on the other pedestal, a like quotation from the seventh century mystic Isaac of Nineveh:

“DID NOT OUR LORD SHARE HIS TABLE WITH TAX COLLECTORS AND HARLOTS? SO THEN—
DO NOT DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE WORTHY AND UNWORTHY.
ALL MUST BE EQUAL FOR YOU TO LOVE AND TO SERVE.”

Across the altar table from the entry doors, matching portals reveal a monumental sculptured rock emerging from a cliff. Water cascades down the rock: here we baptize those we have welcomed into our eucharistic community, equipping them for Christ's service in the world. St Paul's words carved overhead teach the ageless work of baptizing people into God's mission: “Our forebears were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink...from the Rock that accompanied them, and that Rock was Christ.”{26} (1 Cor. 10)

Circles of saints dance above our altar under another text from The Life of Moses: “The one thing truly worthwhile...is becoming God's friend.”{27} Gregory held that the image of God appears not in one human being, but in all humanity. Therefore we have chosen saints from all humanity and many faiths, who exemplify Jesus' pattern of life and Gregory's teaching. These have spanned human divisions, often at their own cost; their lives prove the creative miracle of conversion and limitless progress toward God; and if some of them bore God's image unconventionally, and unrecognized for a time, it shines there now for us to love and follow. Composers and artists whose gifts enrich our worship join the chorus; and we worshippers too will spiral beneath them, as the risen Christ, Lord of the Dance, leads us all.

Gregory's writings inspire still another icon, rising behind the presidents' chair. This is the marriage of Christ and the Soul, taken from Gregory's commentary on the Song of Songs, a work underlying much classical Christian spiritual writing. The dark-skinned bride in scripture stands for every human being. Her mother-in-law extends loving arms to bless the marriage, while below, Gregory teaches the scene's deeper meaning, and tells us that this loving mother-in-law represents God, who is not bound to either human gender. Behind these figures looms our new church building with a canopy flying overhead: a traditional sign that this spiritual wedding, and indeed all these wonders, actually happen during our liturgy in our church.{28} Like Moses, we turn aside here and see God in human flesh; ours is the soul Christ marries; we are the guests fed at his

wedding banquet; we are the dancers linking with all humanity in God's image; we are the baptizers and the people baptized for God's mission; and one with the saints circling above, we are becoming God's friends.

Structure of the Liturgy:

Gathering and Preparing Music

St Gregory's liturgy begins as popular worship began at Holy Wisdom Cathedral (Haghia Sophia) in the Roman capital of Constantinople: clergy and people gather, greet one another, sing, and enter for worship together.{29} Thus even before the formal service starts, we form the congregation that today will celebrate God's word and powerful acts. While the rite we use is the Episcopal Church's Book of Common Prayer, [see FOREWORD, above] people are not handed Prayer Books to follow, but only the musical texts they will need for singing, in a lightweight form convenient for processions and dances. Episcopal Church Hymnbooks await at people's chairs when needed.

On the hour, the tower churchbell summons the congregation from kitchen, offices, street and outdoor spaces to start the liturgy. Our Choir Director joins the other ministers in the vestry, where all together recite George Herbert's poem "Aaron," etched on the vestry mirror as a sacristy prayer.{30} The vested party then exchange an affectionate abrazo. As the Choir begin their entry song, a deacon carrying the Gospel book leads the ministers from the vestry to the altar area, accompanied by candles and colorful honorific umbrellas from the ancient churches in India and Ethiopia. Greeting the table at the centre with a kiss, the ministers pass among the people gathered round, welcoming each with a smile, a quiet word and gentle touch.{31}

The song ends with the hiss of Ethiopian sistrums and a deep Chinese gong,{32} and the ministers move to the table, where the Presider shouts "Christ is risen!" All reply, "He is risen indeed!" This bold exchange, translated into thousands of languages, has become the universal Christian expression of faith.{33} It begins our worship every Sunday throughout the year, because every Sunday celebrates Jesus' Resurrection. Now the Presider welcomes all, and our cantor introduces the TRISAGION (Greek for "thrice holy"), a refrain once sung in popular processions gathering worshippers to Haghia Sophia,{34} and here sung as a prayerful start to our service, because singing brings the congregation together as nothing else can do. Following the Trisagion, we preview some of the songs we will use during today's service.

(During Eastertide, in place of the Trisagion, we sing the EASTER TROPARION, a new Prayer Book text once danced in ancient Jerusalem,{35} now widely translated and set to the tunes and dances of many nations. This troparion, or refrain, repeats throughout every Eastertide liturgy, each time using different music, each music reminding us of the different peoples who rejoice with us in Christ's resurrection.)

Music has always been the most powerful vehicle for liturgical participation and renewal.{36} At St Gregory's we use plenty, and of good quality. Much we draw from the highwater periods of congregational hymn and chant writing; an increasing amount we write ourselves. Our choir perform rehearsed pieces for the communion and almsgathering; otherwise they lead the congregation singing in parts, unaccompanied or with rhythm instruments. A growing number of St Gregory's members are musicians, and we welcome their talents supporting the choir. Congregational participation is the heart of our music program. People who like music like making music, and most can make it better than they think.

Entry Procession and Incense

The deacon invites children to retire for Church School (they will have their own service of Bible reading, teaching, prayers, song, silence, and play, before re-joining us for the eucharistic meal) and summons the rest to join in the ENTRY PROCESSION. The ritual for this procession comes from Haghia Sophia;^{37} the musical form, from Syrian church worship^{38} and very likely from the Hebrew temple itself. A cantor introduces an ALLELUIA REFRAIN,^{39} repeating it until all learn the music by ear, and then chants PSALM verses (normally from a Psalm appointed for the day in the lectionary)^{40} while the people take up the refrain, and the whole body moves forward singing. The ministers lead the people to the chairs surrounding the lectern: the Presider goes to the large raised chair; the cantor mounts the solea, still leading the chant; laypeople light the menorah and lectern lights from the deacon's candle, which the deacon finally places in a stand by the Presider. (In Eastertide a giant, richly painted candle called the Paschal Candle stands there.) When all reach their places the cantor repeats the refrain to end the Psalm, and the deacon announces the music needed next. (Throughout the service, our deacon and cantor announce and direct each event.)

The Presider makes the Cross sign with the Gospel Book, and opens the prayers with a dialogue BLESSING: this Byzantine opening, adapted by the present Prayer Book, reflects synagogue worship in Jesus' time, when a presiding rabbi might begin the service by exchanging greetings and a blessing.^{41} Still following synagogue order, we all sing the INCENSE HYMN, or HYMN OF THE LIGHT –normally the ancient Christian morning hymn called GLORIA IN EXCELSIS^{42}—while the deacon carries the Gospel Book to the lectern and puts incense into a standard thurible (censer) before it.^{43} When the Incense Hymn finishes, the Presider sings a COLLECT (that is, PRAYER) OF THE LIGHT –normally a prayer by the Reformer Erasmus of Rotterdam, or a prayer suiting the season.^{44} All reply "AMEN" following Jewish custom, whereby the whole company affirms prayers one member has offered.

Readings and Canticles

The deacon oversees the scriptural readings, setting up books, recruiting readers, and announcing texts. The first text, invariable outside Eastertide, is a verse from Deuteronomy 6 that has begun the readings in synagogues since Jesus' time, when rabbis agreed it epitomized Old Testament teaching: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." The deacon sings this verse in Hebrew (it is called the SHEMA after its first word), and all repeat it twice in English, adding harmony the third time.^{45} (In Eastertide, the Easter Troparion replaces the Shema.)

Two READINGS normally follow the Shema: first from the Hebrew Old Testament, or a New Testament letter; then from one of the four Gospels that recall the life, death and teaching of Jesus.^{46} These readings follow an ecumenical three-year cycle which Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists and a growing number of other Christians keep together. This yearly reading series forms the Calendar—a cycle of feasts and seasons surrounding the Easter commemoration of Jesus' death and resurrection.^{47} At St Gregory's we give Easter the primary place in our Calendar, remembering Jesus' resurrection every Sunday, and holding our biggest and most joyful festival on the Saturday night following Good Friday, when we begin fifty days' extended celebration.^{48}

While all sing the Shema, the deacon invites a lay volunteer out of the congregation, leads this reader to the lectern, and stands by pointing the text. A two-minute SILENCE concludes each reading. This silence begins with the sound of Japanese, Tibetan and Siamese temple gongs, whose reverberations help everyone to fall into deep quiet; and it ends with a small Tibetan bell.^{49} After the first reading and silence, a chosen CANTICLE or HYMN follows. Our service booklets contain several scriptural canticles in both antique and modern language, chiefly drawn from the Prayer Book and related publications, and set to congregational chants from

many traditions, including mixed or alternatim chants. We welcome new settings in chant style, and for that purpose we re-issue our service booklets every few years.

Laypeople read all readings at St Gregory's, including the GOSPEL,{50} which may be sung to a chant or choral setting—old, new or improvised. The work of reading or singing the Gospel belongs to Members of St Gregory's, who rehearse it under the cantor's direction.{51} The Gospel reading opens with a popular acclamation, and afterward one deacon shoulders the gospel book and carries it to the preacher, while another leads the procession crying “The Gospel of the Lord!” and the people acclaim the Gospel again. Both Jews and Christians adopted this royal ceremony from Roman imperial ritual, to symbolize the reign of God's Word, who speaks to us in all the scriptures.{52}

Sermon and Alleluia Procession

The Presider (or another preacher) preaches seated as Jesus and other rabbis did (Luke 4:20), and as Christian preachers continued to do until liturgical preaching faded in the early middle ages. The scriptures lie open on the preacher's lap, for ready reference. After the SERMON and a third Silence, the preacher invites the congregation to share their own experiences, as the Sermon may have called these to mind: thus the people complete, rather than discuss, the Sermon. The preacher thanks each speaker and may respond to an experience recounted.{53} Some worshippers prefer to sit silently with their reflections, and we value silence and speech equally here. After ten minutes the Presider thanks everyone and calls for the Alleluias to begin.

A PROCESSION with the Scriptures follows the Sermon Conversation. This is a Jewish synagogue custom, done in Jewish style.{54} The cantor leads ALLELUIA refrains and chants Psalm verses from the lectionary—or chosen ad hoc to fit the Sermon and discussion just completed. While the deacon leads carrying a candle, the preacher shoulders the gospel book and carries it among the congregation, allowing everyone to reach out and touch or kiss it, before returning it to the lectern.{55} Colorful Indian and Ethiopian liturgical umbrellas spin above the gospel book, preacher, and presider as the procession moves joyously through the crowd, while drums and bells sometimes accompany the chanting. As the gospel book returns to its throne before the Japanese aumbry shrine, the tower bell rings out the Good News to the city.

(Students of Prayer Book rubrics will note that we do not say the so-called "NICENE" CREED at the main Sunday service—even though our patron, Gregory of Nyssa, was chief theologian at the second council of Constantinople, which actually produced it. This creed was never meant for liturgical recitation. It got put into the liturgy for blatantly schismatic purposes,{56} and modern reformers lament that it interrupts the natural flow of worship and duplicates the credal material in the Great Thanksgiving prayer—see below. The APOSTLE'S CREED at initiatory services works quite differently,{57} and we use that when baptizing.)

A few parish announcements follow, ending with a welcome to communion for all, as we are all guests at Jesus' table. The deacon explains that donations for the church's work are taken up following communion, responding to all the gifts God has given us; newcomers are welcome instead to spend the coming week noticing God's blessings, and return to make a thanksgiving gift later, because the whole church gives thanks for all the ways God blesses them.

Lord's Prayer and Prayers of the People

The deacon and lay volunteers draw everyone's attention to opportunities for outreach and service, and printed parish announcements. Each month sponsors present new Church Members to be welcomed. On baptismal Sundays and the Bishop's visits, candidates for initiation are introduced and interrogated.{58} Finally the deacon introduces the PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE. These begin with the LORD'S PRAYER, continue with a free LITANY—launched and prompted by the deacon—and finish as the Presider prays the COLLECT OF

THE DAY, to which all add the familiar Lord's Prayer doxology.{59} The gospels and other sources imply this is roughly how Jesus' first disciples used the Lord's Prayer.{60}

The Lord's Prayer itself includes a petition for forgiveness of our sins, and the deacon's Litany prays for our enemies and for forgiveness and generosity throughout the world.{61} We make no further penitential devotions on Sundays{62} or feasts; and the eucharist itself suffices for liturgical absolution—a provision that accords with Jesus' own custom at meals.{63} (On Ash Wednesday the Prayer Book begins the Lenten fast with an extended penitential service: this is our one regular corporate penitential action within a eucharist, excepting war or like emergency.)

Tripudium Procession to the Table and Transfer of Gifts

Now the Clergy lead the people to the altar area, singing a hymn and marching together in the ancient Tripudium step: three steps forward, one step back.{64} We explain the step quickly, ask all to place a hand on the shoulder of someone ahead of them, sing, and start marching once the hymn is underway. At the same time, a deacon with incense leads a procession of children bearing the gifts of bread and wine from the kitchen, and sets these on the table,{65} sometimes together with their paintings or cut-outs of the day's scripture readings. The two processions join in concentric lines, circling the table to the rhythm of sistrums, thurible bells, drums, and processional cross staves striking the floor.

Kiss of Peace

When the Procession hymn finishes, the Presider announces the KISS OF PEACE: the clergy kiss the table, and all embrace each other throughout the church, saying "Peace be with you!"{66} The deacon straightens up the altar table, veiling the Gifts against insects, while the Peace continues.

Preface

Deacons recruit laypeople to close the church's glass inner doors,{67} and end the noisy Peace by announcing the music page, and turning to the congregation, cry "Draw near!" One deacon continues with the ancient (and still timely) chant, "Parents, take your children in hand! Let us love one another that we may offer the holy sacrifice in peace."{68} The people sing back, "A blessing of peace! a sacrifice of praise!" and the Presider blesses the congregation with St Paul's Trinitarian blessing (2 Corinthians 13:14){69} making the Cross sign in all directions with the processional cross.

Next the Presider sings, "Lift up your hearts." A charge of this sort, called the PREFACE, opened most Roman civic and cultic meetings by instructing the public to present their business there, or depart.{70} The Christian liturgical Preface calls on us to abandon worldly or evil thoughts and raise our hearts and minds to God, so we can share in Christ's life-giving sacramental supper. Expressing this attitude physically, all raise their hands (and their eyes if they wish, like fourth century Christians) and hold them aloft throughout the GREAT THANKSGIVING that follows.{71} Veils covering the bread and wine to keep insects off are now lifted, and deacons stand by to shoo flies during the prayer.

Excursus: Eucharistic Sacrifice

We normally speak of SACRIFICE as an exchange, whereby we give up something we have and value, to get something we value more—as a baseball player does, for example, in a "sacrifice play."{72} That is the classical pagan sense of sacrifice, expressed in the Roman maxim *do ut des*: "I give to you [god], so that you will give to me."

The Hellenistic world which received the gospel of Jesus' sacrificial death assumed that was what it meant: Jesus gave up his life, destroying himself on the Cross, in order to get something from God; and in the eucharistic meal, which Christians call a sacrifice, they offer him to God again and again, getting more and more of what he died for. This interpretation has dominated debates about the eucharist ever since, as medieval western clergy multiplied their celebrations to fill the world with Christ's winnings, as disgusted Reformers purged all such "superstitious" behavior—and all sacrificial language too—and as modern apologists struggle to make acceptable sense of our tradition for an era that finds blood sacrifice hideous and cruel. (The same interpretation lends western literature a neurotic focus on Christian suffering and self-immolation.)

Apologies by Jungmann and others may soften some of the worst implications; but in fact they miss the mark when explaining the New Testament picture of Jesus' sacrificial death, and even the sacrificial eucharistic meal, because the Old Testament thought underlying these differs radically from pagan logic.{73} The earliest Hebrew offerings were cereal offerings, basically feasts which happy harvesters shared with the God who had blessed them.{74} Only one offering, the Sin Offering, worked otherwise. This animal sacrifice, rare in the confident Davidic kingdom, grew dominant after deportations had gutted that kingdom and left Judah a subject state.{75} Priests now added the Sin Offering to each cereal offering and to many other rites, hoping to cover the sins that had caused the exile and that still blocked a return to Davidic glory. By Jesus' time the Jerusalem temple had become a slaughterhouse, piling on Sin Offerings three times a day—a timetable which synchronized worship in many town synagogues as well, so that everyone had it in mind.{76} Here is the sacrifice and the thinking that underpin New Testament talk of Jesus' death, and especially talk of the eucharistic bread and wine as his body and blood.

In the eyes of Old Testament writers (Psalms 50, 104, 146) all life belongs forever to God, who created it and can never lose it. Humans and other animals enjoy filling up with life (or breath) for a while; then when they die it flows back to God like water (or blood) running back into a sea, leaving the once lively creature empty and weak (that is, dead). A sinner cut off from God, and so from the sea of life that filled her at birth, can only lose that life and die. —But God mercifully offers a way out: if the sinner will bring a ram to the temple, and instead of killing it to eat it, kill it prayerfully and leave it for the priests to eat, God will not take that ram's life back, but will give it to the sinner as a sort of life-transplant. (The sinner does not exactly receive the ram's life, because there is no such thing; there is only life, some of which was in the sinner, and some in the ram, until both lost what life they had.)

This transaction is the opposite of the pagan *do ut des*.{77} In this transaction God gains and loses nothing, because God already has everything (Psalm 50), and the sinner has already lost all she has, and has nothing left to give God. As for the ram, it would be killed and eaten in any case. All that happens differently, as the Psalmists see it, is that the sinner gets new life for free. Thus in Old Testament thought, "sacrificial" means "life-giving," not "self-destroying." (Only sin is self-destroying.)

Hence Jesus' words in the Last Supper story{78} say nothing about self-destruction on the Cross. Instead, they promise life. By welcoming unready sinners to his table as a prophetic sign of God's reign, Jesus had long outraged contemporary standards and courted death. Now, knowing death was near, he ate the hallowed rabbinical Feast of Friends (Chabûrah){79} with his disciples again and told them that this —his deadly dining with them—would now become life-giving, because God would make his death a sacrifice, benefitting humankind. On account of Jesus' faithfulness in teaching the truth by word and deed, God would not take Jesus' life back into the sea of life, but would give it to the world. "Take, eat: this is my body; do this in memory of me. Drink this, all of you: this is my blood, shed for all, and the result will be that the sins of all will be forgiven; do this in memory of me."

When Jesus' followers met to eat the Chabûrah in his memory, they encountered him alive (most gospel resurrection stories are mealtime scenes) and they knew God had indeed given Jesus' life to them—to sinners

whom Jesus had welcomed to his table, to companions who had abandoned him when he died. Whereas other Jews orientated their synagogues toward the Jerusalem temple, where sacrifices were offered daily, and all hoped the messiah would one day appear, these now focussed their buildings on a dinner table.{80} Jesus' table, not the temple, had turned out to be the true place of sacrifice, the place where God gave new life to the world.

Great Thanksgiving

Following rabbinical custom, the Presider secures the congregation's assent, ("Let us give thanks... It is right...") and begins the GREAT THANKSGIVING prayer, from which the entire Eucharistic Liturgy (Greek for "Thanksgiving Service") takes its name. This prayer, derived from the long blessing (kiddûsh) over the first winecup opening formal discussion at the Chabûrah,{81} thanks God for all the acts of creation and salvation that climaxed in Jesus' life-giving death and resurrection, and prays for the gift of Christ's Spirit and the fulfillment of God's Kingdom. Centuries of debate have focussed on this prayer, on God's answer to it, and on the place of these in Christian faith. Even a summary of the central points would overextend this pamphlet; a paragraph alone must suffice here.

The eucharist is a "sacrament," that is, a promise from God: our prayer will be granted, because Jesus himself is God's "yes" answer. (2 Corinthians 1:20) As we pray for Jesus' presence with us, so his Spirit is here; and the bread and wine are his body and blood shared with us, just as the Last Supper story affirms. According to that story, he followed the Chabûrah ritual, giving thanks as usual; then when handing out the bread and wine, he used words that made plain his own faith: his coming death would be a life-giving sacrifice. Instead of taking back Jesus' life, God would give his life to the world.{82} Just so, he is present now wherever two or three gather in his name (Matthew 18:20), and our worship from beginning to end is full of him. The gospel resurrection stories show that his followers recognized his presence especially when keeping his Chabûrah, and Christians ever since have honored this feast as the climax of their worship.

During later ages the table ritual changed to emphasize current notions of how Christ was present or what his presence meant;{83} and reformers in the ninth, sixteenth and twentieth centuries revamped the ritual following current historical (or historicized) ideas.{84} All these reformers meant to strengthen the continuity linking contemporary Christian worshippers with Jesus and his followers. Today the same intention leads us to simplify or omit symbols once popular, in favor of others we find more fundamental or inclusive. Perhaps one day others may do the same with our work!

At St Gregory's all present "concelebrate" at the eucharistic table, while the Presider prays aloud.{85} The Presider stands at the table's flat side, facing the icon of Christ, Lord of the Dance. The deacon and people stand all around the table, praying with their hands raised: the classic Christian posture for public prayer.{86} The Presider sings the entire Great Thanksgiving prayer in this stance without manual gestures of any kind,{87} leaving the deacon to turn pages and shoo flies. The congregation join in, droning softly in free harmony throughout the prayer, and singing Acclamations and Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving enfolds two scriptural hymns, both taken from Jewish synagogue worship, and normally sung in quick succession. (They are conventionally named for the first word of their texts in Latin.) The SANCTUS from Isaiah 6 recalls God's appearance in the Jerusalem temple as in a royal court, attended by seraphim crying "Holy! Holy! Holy!"—a Hebrew superlative, meaning God is the holiest of all.{88} The BENEDICTUS is a short refrain conflating two verses from Psalm 118, which sings of God triumphantly rescuing Israel from peril, and of victory sacrifices. The psalm recurs in New Testament preaching about Jesus' death and resurrection (See Acts, Hebrews, et al.) and Jesus' Last Supper may have included it.{89}

At St Gregory's, the Sanctus and Benedictus hymns may conclude either the opening praises or the entire Great Thanksgiving prayer, depending on the prayer chosen.{90} The Prayer Book supplies six full prayers and an outline for writing more; official sources have added experimental drafts; other Anglican provinces have added theirs; and we have written a short series based on scriptural themes for various lectionary seasons.{91}

Despite formal diversity, however, the content of modern Great Thanksgiving prayers is similar today, as revisions and new compositions are increasingly harmonized under ecumenical influence. A typical prayer begins by praising God for creation, then recalls God's revelation to Israel, climaxing in the ministry of Jesus, his death and resurrection, and his Spirit poured out on the world. The prayer then narrates the Last Supper story, repeating Jesus' sacrificial words when he shared his bread and wine,{92} and asks for his Spirit to show that Jesus lives in us as we share this bread and wine, which we offer out of all God has given us.{93} Finally the prayer asks God to bless and unify the Church, and bring God's reign to fulfillment, in accord with Jesus' faith.

Nearly all modern rites call for ACCLAMATIONS from the people during the Great Thanksgiving—an eastern custom reflecting two thousand years of popular vernacular worship, with parallels in black American church services and African folk music. These Acclamations can vary, but at St Gregory's we set one Acclamation to music and use it with all prayers, so the congregation can take full part in the Great Thanksgiving without following printed booklets.{94}

Finally, following Jewish custom, the congregation add their AMEN, confirming all the Presider has prayed on their behalf.

Fraction, Elevation and Communion

After the people's Amen{95} the Presider and deacon distribute the bread and wine into vessels for communion,{96} while the people sing the Syrian chant "Servant [or Lamb] of God"{97} or an Easter Troparion or other seasonal text. The clergy lift the gifts for all to see, turning around to the whole company and inviting them to share: "Holy gifts for holy people." The congregation reply, "One is holy, one is Lord: Jesus Christ, to the glory of God our Mothering Father! Amen."{98} Returning the gifts to the table, the clergy begin the COMMUNION .

Following eastern Christian custom, we give the eucharist to each communicant by name. The Presider receives bread and wine from the deacon,{99} then communicates the deacon, assisting ministers, and anyone newly baptized or married at this service; then the Presider and deacon carry the bread among the people. Lay ministers follow carrying chalices through the crowd, who pass the cups to each other while the ministers see that the cups reach everyone.{100} Infants and children receive with the rest, sometimes at their parents' helpful hands. Thus every Christian receives Christ's body and blood from another Christian, and so from the Church; and the whole company shares Jesus' prophetic ministry, welcoming sinners to the table and feeding them.{101}

Postcommunion

A short prayerful Silence ends the Communion. After communion the vessels return to the table and are veiled against insects once again,{102} and the Presider recites a prophecy from Baruch 5—

Arise, Jerusalem, and stand on high,
and look about toward the east,
and behold your children
gathered together from the rising to the setting sun,
at the Word of the Holy One,

rejoicing that God has remembered them.
For they went out from you on foot, led away by enemies;
but the Lord will bring them back to you
riding high in honour,
as children of the Kingdom.

—concluding with a verse from Psalm 113, used as a blessing in the Chabûrah and in the worship of nearly all churches: "Blessed be the name of the Lord, henceforth and forevermore." {103}

Alms and Food Collection

We give in response to God's gifts to us, and so take part in God's generosity. Hence this moment is the classical, and classically Anglican, moment for collecting contributions, alms and food for the poor. The deacon announces, "Seeing how freely God loves us, let us share the good things we have received, so that all the world may know God's love." The congregation fill baskets with tinned food and clothes for the homeless, and money for the Church's work, and place these gifts on the altar table with the remaining bread and wine. {104}

Polychronia

We sing POLYCHRONIA ("God grant them many years!") on a famous Russian melody to people celebrating birthdays and anniversaries, to new members, newlyweds, newborns, newly baptized, or a guest preacher. (When the Bishop visits we sing this chant during the Missa instead: see below.)

Carol

After giving quick instruction, the clergy and the cantor lead the congregation dancing around the altar table and all the gathered gifts, singing a hymn. Medieval carols originally were dances in which the dancers sang the music, as we do, and we call this event "the CAROL." Today medieval dance steps are too complex and athletic for our purpose. Instead we use one of five simple Greek steps—each suiting a different hymn rhythm—that are even more ancient (two appear in mosaics of Alexander the Great) and still live in Greek folk dance. These repeat a single figure over and over, so they are simple to learn and sing to; and they move steadily to one side, so the dancers can feel and see the whole group moving together. {105} We accompany the dance with drums and sistrums, as Ethiopian Christians do, and we normally use the same Carol hymn two or three weeks running, so people can join in with easy familiarity.

Missa

When the Bishop is present, the Polychronia chant accompanies an exuberant, affectionate and tumultuous conclusion called the MISSA. {106} Singing Polychronia, (see above) the congregation rush forward around the Bishop, who lays hands speedily on everyone's heads, praying blessings over and over. Already popular in fourth century Jerusalem, the Missa soon spread among all churches, because it allows everyone a chance to feel palpably the Bishop uniting us in prayer fellowship with Christians everywhere.

Finishing the Feast

At last the colorful altar cloths, alms and tinned food for the poor give place to coffee and cakes set out on the bare altar table; the doors re-open; and the congregation consume the remaining bread and wine along with the other food, lingering to greet each other as long as they wish—usually a good while. Thus the familiar parish coffee hour continues the eucharistic feast, still centered on Jesus' table, and the liturgical gathering

gradually returns to the place it began: the open doors through which the world enters the church and the church enters the world.

Addendum 1: The Christian Year

Working creatively with the Christian year requires grasping its fundamental spirit. Church calendars have varied over the centuries; but put simply, the Christian year is a lectionary, a plan for reading the Bible in church. It does not commemorate times when scriptural events actually happened (except for the passion these are unknown) but instead schedules readings in thematic clusters, which we call "seasons." Though this lectionary grew by fits in overlapping segments, historical research finds all center on the death and resurrection of Jesus—plainly in the passion reading cycle, and only less plainly in the festal round commemorating his birth and ministry. These readings, too, were anciently chosen for passion associations, and synchronised with other passion readings months away. By no accident, our calendar's primitive unity mirrors the gospels themselves, which constantly present Jesus' ministry and teaching in the light of his cross and his risen life with his church.

At St Gregory's we shape the year to promote this basic New Testament focus, drawing on ecumenical tradition and modern learning. Every Sunday service begins with the ancient universal greeting, "Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!" and as in eastern churches, Lent never suppresses Alleluias or other joyful Sunday chants. Above all, Holy Week (Passion Week) centers our community life. As one lay member puts it, "This is an Easter church; other churches I've known are Christmas churches." And another, "There are two seasons at St Gregory's: Easter; and Easter's Coming." Soon after Epiphany, members organize to clean the church, write and rehearse music, plan worship, publicize, send invitations, cook, and create artwork and vestments. A festive Mardi Gras supper-eucharist starts Lent with a parish talent show and children's piñata, before the traditional Ash Wednesday morning rites. Thereafter, clergy prepare candidates for baptism and—in years when the Bishop will visit us—for confirmation at the Maundy service. (See below.)

Creating a traditional and popular Holy Week today demands innovation. Ancient Holy Week services filled each day with scriptural devotions for people with leisure to follow them. Modern liturgists who crop and compress these, while keeping the familiar calendar, still find working people must skip important services. At St Gregory's we reschedule these devotions instead, so that busy people can take full part. A weekly Lenten series of scripture meditations, venerating the cross in Taizé format, concludes on the Friday evening before Holy Week with a Byzantine-style reading of all four passion stories: here traditional Good Friday devotions from east and west spread through Lent, preparing for our chief passion commemoration. Again, on Palm Sunday most western liturgies re-enact Jesus' entering Jerusalem, and then read one of the synoptic passions, doubling up from two ancient lectionaries to underscore the passion focus of the week ahead. But modern scripture criticism shows the entry story is itself a passion meditation, rather than a historical account. So without doubling up, we devote this and every Holy Week service to one passion scripture. Our Palm Sunday opens the week with a congregational procession around the block, flourishing a forest of local palm fronds and singing psalm-refrain Hosannas to the rhythm of drums, sistrum rattles, noisy thuribles and other instruments—all in Ethiopian and African liturgical use today—and gathering neighbors and bystanders to join us for the sermon and eucharist, and for more services through the week.

On Maundy Tuesday evening (not the traditional Thursday), we read John's version of the Last Supper. G. Diekmann and others argue that this timing, which suits John's passion story and earliest Christian calendar of fasts, is the likeliest actual date for the event—but in fact we adopted it for pastoral reasons. Even after we scheduled all our Holy Week services at convenient evening hours, our laypeople found it hard to devote three nights in a row to church, and Good Friday attendance particularly suffered. Since Tuesday was already our

regular night for parish eucharistic suppers and meetings, we took Diekmann's suggestion, making the Last Supper service in Holy Week the model for every Tuesday—and attendance at all Holy Week services increased. Best of all, our people now treasure Good Friday, making it the year's second largest service. Maundy Tuesday features another calendar innovation, again meeting a pastoral need in the light of research: this is our chief night of the year for baptism. Until recently we baptized at the Easter vigil, in concert with mainline liturgical renewal—dismissing the complaints of parents who found the late hour hard for children, and candidates who found the Easter congregation, thronged with strangers, a strange context for this intimate action. Increasingly our people opted for baptism at other times, when they could gather family and friends to meet St Gregory's regular community. Then research by T. Talley and P. Bradshaw discovered that baptism was not anciently part of the Easter vigil, but happened in more intimate services before Easter—suggesting we seek a similar alternative. John's story of the Last Supper and the footwashing provided the answer: this action, the one ritual action John describes Jesus taking that night, is John's closest connection of Jesus with baptism. Moreover, John's text puts baptism in the context of service. (We have also discovered that the Easter vigil flows smoother and swifter without the added baptismal rites.)

We fill our flexible worship space with dinner tables, under a tent-like array of African folk fabrics that soften the acoustics and lend an air of intimate splendor. On this night as at all Tuesday suppers, we follow the second-century *Didachê* rite, sharing the eucharistic bread and cup in the course of a meal. (Several useable versions of this supper rite are published; we call ours the "Feast of Friends," from its Jewish title, *chabûrah*.) The congregation arrive bearing pot-luck dishes and set them on sideboards. After lighting lamps, singing a passion carol, and sharing hors d'oeuvres with a glass of wine, we bless the eucharistic loaf to start the meal, and serve courses one by one. Readings from John's account of the Last Supper accompany each course, with silences and guided conversation at each table; and all take turns serving each other as John's gospel emphasizes. Hymns of the Last Supper and the passion fill the evening. Supper concludes with John's story of the footwashing. Now we baptize our candidates, and the bishop confirms them; and the whole church sings a Russian chant assuring them they have put on Christ. These take candles specially decorated with their baptismal names, and join the clergy carrying bowls of water to start the footwashing at each table, where everyone washes the feet of another in turn. (Such a mixture of baptism and footwashing occurred anciently at Milan.) At last we bless the eucharistic cup and share it to complete the meal. The service ends with the *missa*, an ancient blessing of intimate warmth and joy, rediscovered by A. Kavanagh. The congregation crowd around the bishop singing the traditional Russian chant "God grant him many years!" as the bishop lays hands on everyone in rapid succession, blessing us all.

We keep Good Friday with a triumphal vesper service celebrating Christ's universal victory on the cross, and its promise of resurrection—the authentic biblical context for the passion, particularly emphasized in eastern church worship. Our worship space and ministers are decked in black and red cloths from folk weavers in the wide ecumenical world outside the Christian Church: Indonesian Hindu burial cloths, Mayan shamans' ponchos, Muslim pilgrims' cloaks—symbolizing the universal significance of Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection. (As Gregory of Nyssa wrote, "the resurrection of one extends to all.") After lighting lamps and reading appointed lessons from the Old and New Testaments, we sing John's passion to the remarkably modern-sounding medieval chant of Sarum: the congregation take the part of Christ, while choir and soloists sing the rest. (This arrangement, invented by R. Carskadden, causes newcomers to tell us every year what an overwhelming experience they had singing Christ's part.) Following the sermon, all process to the altar table in a simple dance-step, singing of the triumph of the cross. There the clergy cense the table and the people, and all place flowers in profusion around the icon of Jesus' burial, while chants and prayers from east and west recall the burial story and Jesus' presence today with all the departed awaiting resurrection. A reader recites Ezekiel's prophecy of the Dry Bones.^{107} After prostrating ourselves three times in loving adoration, we leave the church quietly to the *Nunc dimittis* chant from Luke's gospel, and hand out hot-cross buns on the church

steps to end the Good Friday fast. It is a hushed and intimate conclusion to what many of our people find the most moving service of the year.

Like the Jewish Passover, early Christians kept Easter at night; starting with a special form of the homely evening lamplighting, they read, sang, prayed and feasted until dawn. Modern Christians keeping vigil on a smaller scale normally celebrate one of these moments of light and sleep through the other: we choose the lamplighting and begin Easter at nightfall, when all ages can attend—for this is our one Easter service, bringing the whole congregation together. It is also our most ecumenical service, as clergy from other churches and parish alumni return year after year to celebrate with us, and newcomers swell our attendance to over two hundred worshippers. We deck the church with special artwork, vest all clergy and lay ministers in bright Indian and African folk fabrics, and load side tables with food for the feast. As darkness falls in the unlighted church, the choir chant and lead arriving worshippers in simple folk carols until the clergy enter to welcome the people and explain the service for first-timers, rehearsing the universal Easter response ("He is risen indeed!") and enrolling their full participation.

As the choir begin a Bulgarian-Russian chant depicting angels hymning the resurrection, the clergy leave to fetch the Paschal Candle. (This is not the cryptic vestigial symbol church suppliers sell, but a tall, stout, plain candle our people have gorgeously painted all over in colored waxes.) We light no "new fire," but carry in the Paschal Candle already lighted—the earlier and homelier custom—to the traditional western Exsultet chant, while the candle light spreads to people's hand-candles throughout the church, and a vigil of readings, silences and hymns begins. In fiery semidarkness we read four Old Testament passages of promise and salvation, ending with the creation story in Genesis 1—one of the latest passages written in Hebrew scripture, and richly eschatological—a Pauline letter, and a sermon. Now for the first of many times tonight, we sing the Easter troparion from ancient Jerusalem: "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life." This first time we sing it in the original Greek, to a Greek tune; soon we will sing it in English to the tunes of many nations, while "trampling death" with dances, as Christians anciently did. Singing, the congregation process to the baptistry doors, and gather there to hear the original conclusion to Mark's gospel, the story of the empty tomb.

After another troparion, the congregation process out to the courtyard, singing a litany that calls departed saints and heroes of every age to "Come rejoice with us!" (Throughout Lent church members have nominated this list, and many names now draw delighted laughter from the crowd.) There a team of mighty voices deliver a joyous ancient Easter sermon, attributed both to Hippolytus of Rome and John Chrysostom, inviting everyone to feast at the Easter banquet whether they have fasted or not. Then all re-enter the church—now brightly lit—singing the troparion and moving in step around the altar table, where deacons have set out bread and wine. For the next half hour the whole congregation of four hundred sing and dance classic western Easter carols to the rhythm of drums and sistrums, and chant the Easter troparion, now to Slavic, now to Arabic or early American melodies. Between hymns clergy of all denominations present cense and greet the people—"Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!"—and blessing them, renew the dance. The kiss of peace completes these dances, and the eucharistic thanksgiving and communion follow. A final dance carol ends with the clergy blessing the people in quick turn. Then tables of food and drink are carried in, and we feast past midnight. At last the worshippers team up to straighten the church, go home to sleep, and return for our Easter picnic at noon.

Easter continues in a festive spirit until Pentecost. Easter is the season for our annual stewardship pledge drive, a season we chose because the resurrection inspires all Christian community living and planning and service. (Moving the drive to this season even strengthened our pledges.) At Pentecost we fill the church with tongues, first singing the Acts story in the original Greek, then in a rush of church members reading at once in all the languages they know—a surprising variety!—and finally in English before the sermon. All these celebrations, newly combining music and customs from many ages and churches, revive the popular spirit that

once characterized traditional forms. (After one Easter service, a Jesuit seminary professor told his students, "You have just had the closest possible experience to worship in the fourth century.")

In western churches the Advent/Christmas/Epiphany seasonal cycle has entered long-needed revision. Christmas and Epiphany, originally two dates for the same feast, later acquired distinctive readings from the nativity cycle, rather accidentally following a season of eschatological readings labelled "Advent," the name for the Roman imperial judgment review. Rationalizing this arrangement is difficult—and superfluous now, because the medieval western four-week-Advent-twelve-day-Christmas has vanished in all but name. Popular custom and scholarly reform now extend both seasons months earlier into the year. Unlike Easter, Christmas has become a folk festival, which popular culture celebrates during the weeks before, not after, December 25th. Christian evangelistic priorities press official worship to follow suit, and the actual history of our Church year gives no grounds to resist such a popular choice. Indeed, official reform has already set the new course. Virtually all revised lectionaries start the traditional Advent readings on justice and eschatological hope in October; and because the lectionary creates our "seasons," Advent now begins there. (Some eastern lectionaries already provide an earlier Advent; in the west, Church of England reformers have led this work with innovative reading schemes, such as the modular Lectionary 2.) Although colorful printed church calendars may still suggest the bygone seasonal schedule, parish worship planners now have every reason to embrace liturgical and evangelistic reality creatively.

At St Gregory's we have tried out various revised lectionaries during this season—for example, the English Lectionary 2, which offers innovations beyond calendar reform. Now and throughout the year our children follow the plan in a simpler way, with a simpler service, before joining the adults for communion: thus parents and children can share the Bible readings together. We choose hymns and prayers to match the scripture, and sing and dance Christmas carols through most of December along with popular culture. On Christmas eve we present the nativity reading in the form of a folk play composed from several English medieval mystery plays, enrolling both adults and children, and lively with congregational carol-singing. Our last gathering of the year is an intimate eucharist early on New Year's Eve.

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Addendum 2: a short history of liturgical ministry

This pamphlet uses familiar Episcopalian language for liturgical ministers. Many newcomers to St Gregory's find this language new; others ask how Episcopalian ministers differ from those in their home denominations. Such questions have special importance in today's ecumenical context, where grassroots relations, including sharing church members across old boundaries, can build a practical local basis for reunion. In fact the Church's ministry has sparked debate, redefinition, reform and schism throughout history, and language confusion has played an important role. A word-study can help untangle this, and uncover the longtime unity of ministry which almost all churches share today. The following summary may serve Episcopalians and non-Episcopalians who must sometimes wonder whether we are talking about the same things.

Much past conflict has arisen from confused analogies to Old Testament ministers, and chiefly to the COHEN. This hereditary Hebrew clergyman originally cast lots to determine God's judgment decrees (tôrah), and so came to oversee temple sacrifices by seeing to it that people offered these as God had commanded.^{108} It is important to recognize that the biblical cohen only consulted, while others sacrificed; even after the exile he offered no sacrifices except on the Day of Atonement, when he scattered sacrificial blood in the sanctuary. Active religious leadership, as we would recognize it, belonged instead to the king, who was anointed (messiach in Hebrew, christos in Greek, hence MESSIAH or CHRIST in English) with divine power, and bore the title "Son of God."^{109} During the Jewish monarchy the cohen obeyed the king in all religious

matters, even when the king commanded idolatry! After the Maccabean restoration, and only then, the chief cohen took on part of the missing king's religious authority, while people waited for real royalty to return.

Rabbis of Jesus' time debated how that might happen. Some awaited a single warrior king, like David; others, a renewed kingly nation (laos in Greek, hence the English "laypeople") pure as the cohen is pure. Both groups called this deliverer "royally anointed" (Messiah/Christ). The gospels indicate Jesus dismissed any suggestion he was a king; nevertheless New Testament writers naturally use the language of popular messianic hope to describe Jesus' victorious death and resurrection. Paul's usage proved influential in New Testament times, and long afterward. He probably never met Jesus in the flesh (2 Corinthians 5:16) and never discusses Jesus' teaching; instead, Paul treats familiar rabbinical questions in the light of his own new faith. Paul reckons that God declared Jesus king ("Son of God") at the resurrection (Romans 1), and that Christians share Jesus' kingly work and identity as members of the messianic body (Galatians 6; Colossians 1; 1 Corinthians 10 & 12). In other words, Paul argues that through Jesus, God has fulfilled both rabbinical notions of the hoped-for Messiah.

Other New Testament writers combine the images of king and cohen to similar effect. The Letter to the Hebrews says Jesus the royally anointed (Christ) has taken over the cohen's one active sacrificial job by offering his own blood in God's true sanctuary (Hebrews 10). In other words, Jesus' death has restored the ancient kingship with all its true religious authority, of which the post-Maccabean high-priesthood had consciously preserved a living shadow. Later letters underscore Christians' share in Jesus' messiahship, as a royal cohen-ish people (Ephesians 4; 1 Peter 2).{110} In sum, first century Christians saw the ministries of anointed king, purified laos, and sacrificial cohen as the united work of Jesus and his Church.

Christian institutions developed independently of these scriptural images, however, and reshaped them. At first Jesus' followers at Jerusalem made his brother James their leader, much as Muslims would one day vest authority in a succession of Mohammed's blood relatives, called caliphs.{111} There James presided over "the Twelve," a body Jesus had chosen to symbolize a restored laos of twelve tribes: together these decided institutional questions for the growing churches. And from there the gospel spread among Jewish synagogues throughout the Roman empire, carried by countless APOSTLES. (Unlike later ages, the New Testament period did not reserve this name for "the Twelve," but simply continued here the familiar Greek Old Testament translation for the Hebrew shaliach, meaning anyone on an authorized errand.) At the same time the apostle Paul and his fellow-apostle helpers added new gentile synagogues to their number. Suddenly, however, the Christian caliphate with its council of the Twelve vanished, after James' murder and the Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 a.d., leaving Christian synagogues elsewhere to work in conventional synagogue ways. Hence the Christian liturgical ministers we know spring from Jewish synagogues, and not from any distinctive creation by Jesus or the early Church.

Recent research shows that Jewish synagogue organization varied more than was recently believed; yet some widespread features shaped the classic Christian pattern. Luke's gospel describes Jesus' sermon at Nazareth in the course of a typical synagogue service: the rabbi Jesus—a layman—found the text he wished to preach on, read it aloud, closed the book, handed it to the minister (leitourgos), and sat down to preach. (Luke 4) This minister, called sheliach tsibbûr ("apostle of the people") in Hebrew, tended scrolls and paraphernalia, marshalled readers, chanted and led congregational singing.{112} The book of Acts, by the same author, mentions another ministry (diakonia, hence DEACONS in English) of those who served food at Christian eucharistic banquets and cared for the poor. (Acts 6) It seems Christian synagogues soon joined these two ministries, as virtually all other early sources depict the deacons doing both jobs. And like at least some Jewish communities, early Christians put women as well as men to deacons' work, a usage which many protestants—including Anglicans—and Greek and Armenian orthodox have now revived. If Jesus attended a church service today, the deacon is the one minister he would surely recognize.

New Testament language suggests a local council somehow presided at many synagogues, and were called interchangeably elders (presbyteroi, hence the English PRESBYTER) or supervisors (episkopoi, hence the English BISHOP). These often taught, preached, led prayers, and officiated as hosts at the eucharistic banquet. Archaeological evidence implies women may sometimes have filled this role; but that possibility did not long survive, and women eventually disappeared even from the diaconate. Significantly, in the Roman province of Syria, where Jerusalem and its Christian caliphate had stood, one male presbyter/bishop dominated the council; and this Syrian monarchical arrangement spread through the Church during the late first century. Rome, ever conservative, resisted this novelty until a personal visit from the condemned Syrian martyr Ignatius of Antioch won that church over in 107 a.d., and the Roman papacy began.{113}

Since coastal cities housed 80% of the Roman Empire's population{114}—a proportion Europe would see again only after World War II—urban Christianity naturally drove institutional development for the first five centuries. Urban churches grew fast: by the second century many cities' Christians could not hope to gather where their sovereign presbyter/bishop and his council presided, so a “metropolitan” system evolved. The sovereign presided at the main church, while his delegates, called “field supervisors” (chôrepiskopoi) presided at simultaneous liturgies in outlying neighborhoods, their worship linked by couriers (acolytes) carrying bread from the sovereign's table to mix in every chalice before communion, and so visibly unite all these feasts. It is not clear whether the chôrepiskopoi were members of the old presbyteral council, or a new group chosen by the sovereign to represent him; but they are the ancestors of today's parish clergy, presiding at local liturgies while—among Episcopalians and many others—a monarchical bishop upholds the unity of all local congregations with each other and with churches elsewhere.

Recurrent threats to church unity dictated further changes. For a time each presbyteral council ordained one member as chief under the new arrangement, or imported a presbyter from another church and ordained him themselves. That is how the presbyters of Gaul ordained Irenaeus of Lyons their bishop, as Irenaeus tells us. But persecutions (which always produced schism) and doctrinal strife (which usually did) stressed the sovereign's role as unifier. To resolve doctrinal quarrels, the same Irenaeus offered a new tool: consult the churches that go back to the time of the first apostles (see above) and have been teaching the faith uninterruptedly ever since. These will have maintained an "APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION," which is to say, a succession of teachers since apostolic times. By Irenaeus' time this meant a succession of sovereign bishops, each ordained by his fellow presbyters to replace their late chief. Irenaeus reasoned that the incumbents in these teaching jobs could therefore shine some apostolic light on contemporary doctrinal turmoil.

Such thinking effectively made the monarchical bishop titleholder for a local church's institutional identity, and so essential for ordinations as well as inter-church councils. Gradually, therefore, the pattern reversed: instead of presbyter/bishops choosing and ordaining a sovereign from among themselves, the sovereign took the title bishop (supervisor) and ordained the presbyters (elders) and other clergy. As a final step, the fourth century council of Nicaea sent sovereigns to ordain each other, even requiring three bishops from neighboring churches to help ordain each new local apostolic successor—all to cement unity among churches that differed, as churches had always differed. Nineteenth century polemic much misinterpreted that Nicene pattern; therefore it is important to note that "apostolic succession" was not, and could never be, handed on from one bishop to the next, because the former titleholder had to die before a new bishop could be chosen. A new bishop derived his place in apostolic succession from his late local predecessor, not from his ordainers—as in fact medieval succession charts continued to show. (Charts written otherwise to serve nineteenth century arguments are just written wrong.)

Therefore modern ecumenical hopes need not run aground on apostolic succession. In New Testament terms, apostolic succession was created by the messianic laos, and belongs to all church structures that perpetuate continuity with the founding apostles' preaching, whether monarchical bishops flower there or not. That is one reason ecumenists now speak of "historic episcopacy," without empty claims to a primitive monarchical

order somehow connected to Jesus. The fact that so many churches with different forms of apostolic succession are groping for agreement and unity today shows that Irenaeus' idea halfway works!

Structural changes usually evoke new theories to explain them afterward. Inevitably, theories for the new sovereign episcopate reshaped the church's use of scriptural language. Ignatius and other early apologists drew picturesque similes for liturgical functions: the deacon bustling around reminds us of the Servant Christ in Isaiah's prophecy (diakonos means "servant"); the bishop presiding reminds us of God the Father—by keeping silent! Clement of Rome likened all clergy in general to the Hebrew cohen who shared Moses' workload, including sacrificial work. (Clement apparently assumed the cohen himself offered the Old Testament sacrifices, like a pagan shrine cleric.) For a time such similes co-existed with New Testament talk about one united kingly and cohen-ish work of Christ and his whole church.

But in a portentous third century shift, Cyprian of Carthage re-applied the cohen (Latin sacerdos) imagery of the Letter to the Hebrews—now not to Christ's messianic body, the church, but to the sovereign bishop exclusively. When presiding at the eucharistic meal, bishop Cyprian himself represented Christ, offering Christ's blood in the true sanctuary; hence any who repudiated bishop Cyprian's presidency cut themselves off from the work of Christ altogether. Ironically enough, Cyprian here reversed Clement's argument for the same policy, against breaking ties with a duly ordained eucharistic presider. Clement had warned it would be embarrassing to fire cohen who disgraced the church, even if their ministering at the liturgy sullied the church's identity with Christ. By contrast, Cyprian reasoned that Christians who deposed their cohen were effectively firing themselves, since Christ's identity rested with him, and not with them! Cyprian's heroic struggle against persecution and schism, and his own famous martyrdom, helped promote his argument for centuries.

The lapse of lay communion after the fourth century, and later canons forbidding laypeople to carry or even handle the consecrated bread for fear of witchcraft, only reinforced this Cyprianic notion that the eucharist was something the presiding clergy did, and laypeople watched them do. In place of the New Testament view that the whole cohen-ish Christian laos community share in Jesus' sacrificial death, from which God gives the world new life, medieval worshippers pictured their bishop and presbyters as the church's cohen, sacrificing Christ on behalf of passive laypeople—hardly the Hebrew cohen's authentic role! This medieval misunderstanding triumphed in Germanic languages like English, which translate the Hebrew title cohen by a contraction of the very different Greek title presbyter—namely, “PRIEST”—thus mixing up two separate scriptural functionaries. That is why high-church Anglicans reading their bibles naturally identify their clergy with Old Testament shrine personnel (false!) and with Jesus (hyperbolic!). The fact that English has no other word whatever for the Hebrew cohen causes undying confusion between ministries that are historically unrelated, and groundless prejudice between denominations that actually share the same presbyteral order.

Roman politics changed church structure as well, particularly in the west. Like Roman emperors, sovereign bishops were anciently elected, although many elections (Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom) showed heavy influence by church leaders, including the Christian emperor himself. Until the sixth century, moreover, candidates could be chosen freely from the laity or any other ministry, just like emperors elected from the military ranks. Good deacons were popular candidates for the episcopate, for example. But senatorial Rome liked aristocracy,^[115] and as the turbulent life-current of empire shifted eastward, leaving Rome a provincial backwater, the Roman church began ranking ministers on a rigid scale of dignities like hereditary landholders, reserving candidacy for each job to those who had attained the level just below. Thereafter Roman clergy progressed from layman to doorkeeper to reader to exorcist to acolyte to subdeacon to deacon to presbyter to bishop—or stopped their careers en route. Roman popes elected out of sequence were rushed through all these ordinations in a matter of days.

Meanwhile, the collapse of westward imperial power meant that indigenous churches in Britain and northern Europe declined; and Roman missions to rebuild them inevitably spread the new Roman church order – despite the wishes of broadminded popes like Gregory the Great, who charged Augustine of Canterbury to preserve whatever local Christian customs he found. (Augustine ignored him, and stamped out British usage relentlessly: we may assume Augustine was a typical Roman missionary.) Hence within two hundred years the entire west had adopted the aristocratic Roman system, and kept it till the Reformation; and papally or royally appointed local bishops served as *chôrepiskopoi* for Roman popes, who ran medieval Europe and the worldwide Roman Catholic denomination as a single metropolitan diocese until Vatican II.

Renaissance reformers set out to refurbish the New Testament notion of a whole messianic covenanted laos, which Luther called "the Priesthood of All Believers." In practice, however, they largely kept or reshuffled the aristocratic Roman categories, moving laypeople into former clergy roles as governors and sometime liturgical leaders. Nevertheless, full lay participation in the eucharist was restored and encouraged, and the consecrated bread was once again entrusted to laypeople's hands.^[116] A few reformed churches (Anglicans, Swedish Lutherans) kept the monarchical episcopate and the aristocratic Roman ministry chain, though now on a local level, and much simplified. Some churches (including the American Episcopal Church) even began electing their bishops and presbyters locally once again. In these bodies, however, the ordained diaconate remained a mere step toward the presbyterate, and ordained ministries still excluded women. Other reformed churches revised the traditional pattern more radically: deacons and presbyters became temporary rather than lifetime officers, and the monarchical episcopate vanished. Yet amid so many changes, the reformed denominations – including the Roman Catholic denomination, which reformed more conservatively the following century– still kept Cyprian's view of the bishop's role. They kept, too, the medieval misunderstanding that bishops contract apostolic succession from each other's hands, like a benign virus, instead of inheriting it through the church they served, like a new graft on the local Christian vine. Even those denominations that dropped monarchical bishops reckoned they had dropped apostolic succession at the same time: a misapprehension that has bedeviled ecumenical discussion ever since.

Twentieth century ecumenists and liturgical reformers have taken a more functional approach, honoring the common work of ancient institutions, rather than championing their disparate forms. Modern study of Old Testament thought, and the New Testament thought based on it, has opened all churches' theories of ministry to review. Meanwhile, historical scholarship suggests that diversity, rather than uniformity, is our authentic inheritance from the early Church, and flexibility may be our most faithful response to tradition. We may rejoice, therefore, that even churches that boast of preserving "the ancient threefold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons" in fact continue to develop novel variations. In the American Episcopal Church, for example, where the diaconate was until recently only a vestige, it has revived in two thriving forms: one a lay ministry and one an ordained vocation.^[117] Gender and denominational walls surrounding both lay and ordained liturgical ministries have widely leaked and crumbled. Within many protestant churches, including at least five Anglican provinces, women now serve in all liturgical ministries including the episcopate. A growing number of ecumenical covenants –with Mar Thoma, Lutheran, and Philippine Independent churches, for example– have produced formally shared eucharistic ministries; while informal sharing ranges wider still, often including Roman Catholics.

To skeptics such ecumenism may look like rationalizing bureaucracies only, through a shallow kiss-and-make-up after long entrenched religious warfare. In practice, however, it is likely to change the internal workings of every church, because modern ecumenical co-operation has set us on a different course from previous reforms. Far from shuffling lay and clergy prerogatives in renaissance fashion, the present ecumenical reform movement aims to empower every ministry and church authority within the diverse apostolic tradition–the tradition this whole messianic body inherits as a gift of Jesus Christ's royal and priestly Spirit, which brings new life to the world.

Footnotes

- {1} Our eastward drift did not begin with the Book of Common Prayer, but was underway in medieval times, when pilgrims who wanted to see the liturgy well celebrated were advised to avoid Rome and visit England or Constantinople. Indeed, Sarum ritual ingeniously adapted Byzantine use. [See Note 59, below.]
- {2} Some of those practices, though once popular, are less prominent in Jewish and eastern Christian worship today.
- {3} See ADDENDUM II: A SHORT HISTORY OF LITURGICAL MINISTRY, below.
- {4} Although nineteenth-century vestment manufacturers made happy profits promoting seasonal color schemes for vestments and hangings, traditionally color has mattered less than richness: festal days call for the richest and brightest cloth. At St Gregory's, officiating ministers choose their vestments by the ancient scheme of hunting in the closet and putting on what they like. Only in Holy Week do specifically symbolic colors appear.
- {5} Hence some tasks that many liturgists restrict to deacons—reading the Gospel, offering Litany petitions, setting the altar table, administering the cup, and gathering alms—are here performed by laypeople under the deacon's guidance. Yet the deacon's authority is more prominent at St Gregory's than in many liturgies where the deacon alone does those tasks.
- Of course no Byzantine ritual used laypeople that way; it is a Reformation approach, and typically Anglican. In the 19th century, for example, the American Episcopal Church created a lay order of deacons: inaccurately called "lay readers," these do deacons' work. They now assist in nearly all Episcopal parishes—the Byzantine pattern—and far outnumber ordained deacons. A growing group of British parishes call such ministers "lay deacons." Following this same approach, St Gregory's trained laypeople do the deacon's work when no ordained deacon is available, and assist when one is; and we name all these ministers "deacons" simply by function rather than clerical status. We have given the deacon so much to do, it is practically impossible to celebrate the liturgy without one. (The Presider is busy imitating God, as Ignatius of Antioch said, by keeping silence.) [See ADDENDUM II, below.]
- {6} This usage is both more ancient and more welcoming than giving people books to follow. Therefore we do not place Prayer Books in the seats at all; photocopied extracts suffice for baptisms, marriages, and special services.
- {7} Laypeople carrying out deacon's work wear this cloth in its earlier form, fixed to the sleeve, and labeled maniple, while ordained deacons doing the job wear it in its later style, over the shoulder, and labeled orarion. This duplication has the virtue of adding color, if not rational clarity, to the liturgy. The deacon at St Gregory's usually wears a dramatic west African stripeweave, wound round the torso and hanging straight down from the shoulder, as a Byzantine deacon does during the synaxis.
- {8} Evolving medieval custom preserved this cloth strip in three forms, depending on the shape of the garment worn with it: it might be applied to the front borders of a cape; applied round the neck of a poncho; or hanging loose. The border form appears on copes today much as in Roman military days. The round-the-neck form eventually gave us the "Canterbury cross" orphreys sewn on medieval chasubles. The loose-hanging form became a mark of presbyterial ordination, worn with all vestments: hence many churches now display a host of clergy wearing stoles, with the Presider alone donning a chasuble. But the ancient proportion was the reverse, and is the more colorful: chasubles all round, and a pallium/stole on top for the Presider.
- {9} The usual argument ran: other peoples grovel before their false gods like slaves or hired servants, whereas Christians are the true God's (adopted!) children and stand erect like members of God's family. It is hardly an ecumenistic simile.
- {10} The first ecumenical council, summoned in 325 by the emperor Constantine, and one of the four councils recognized by nearly all churches. Canon 20 bans kneeling at these times.

{11} Anciently all stood while the preacher preached sitting—no matter how long. Augustine decided the people might sit along with him: history's one wholly popular liturgical reform!

{12} Thomas Matthews, *Byzantium from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (1998), quotes the Second Council of Nicaea, which restored icons to Christian worship in 787: “in the churches of God, on holy vessels and vestments, in panels or on walls, at home or on the streets...the more often [Christ and the saints] are seen in their pictorial representations, the more the beholder is excited to the recollection and desire of the ones represented, and to offer them greeting and reverent worship.” Matthews comments: “It is most interesting that at this point the council expressly employed the language of love. Epipostasis (“desire”) is the word used for the lover’s yearning and longing; while aspasmus (“greeting”) is the word used for embracing and kissing, and in fact icons are commonly touched and kissed. The churchmen expected the faithful to fall in love with saints through their icons.” [p.56] Matthews argues that icons show the influence of women on public worship, where their formal role was severely curtailed; and “women were to play a decisive role in maintaining the tradition of icon veneration during periods of persecution.” [p.45f]

{13} Recent church growth studies show that most newcomers decide within three minutes of arriving whether they will join a church, and music is a chief consideration.

{14} Our floor plan derives from L. Bouyer's analysis of Syrian Christian synagogues and Roman basilicas [*Liturgy and Architecture*, 1967], adapted with an eye to early Byzantine practice as described by T. Mathews [*The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy*, 1971] and R. Taft [*The Great Entrance: a History of the Transfer of Gifts and other Pre-anaphoral Rites of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, 1975, et al.], and early Roman and Reformation practices as described by C. Buchanan [*The End of the Offertory ~ an Anglican Study*, 1978]. Mathews refutes Bouyer's conjectures about Byzantine building usage, but does not contradict his basic thesis about historical church orientation. At St Gregory’s, instead of following Bouyer's proposals for modern compromise, we adapt his early formats themselves: the resulting plan accommodates popular processions, dances and other congregational participation better than any compromise we have seen.

{15} Christians continued the worship scheme of many Jewish synagogues, which complemented worship at the Jerusalem temple, and climaxed with a procession after the prayers of the people, synchronized with the temple sacrifice that day: the entire service of readings and sermons thus focussed on sacrifice. Although this sacrificial focus disappeared from Jewish buildings after the temple's destruction, it endured in Christian churches. But whereas Jews had processed to the synagogue doors, facing the Jerusalem temple where many hoped the Messiah would come, Christians climaxed their liturgy by processing to the table where they knew the Messiah's presence whenever they remembered his sacrificial death. [See C. Dugmore, *The Influence of the Synagogue upon the Divine Office*, 1964; and EXCURSUS: EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE, below.]

Thus despite the separate origins of synagogue and table prayers, the Christian liturgy is one unified service in two parts, on an single Jewish plan, and not a pastiche of two unrelated services, as some historians infer. St Gregory's building plan focusses each part by gathering people around the lectern and table in turn. Yet the table, vested throughout the service, focusses and unifies the entire liturgy, which is full of Christ's presence at all times—no less in the gathering, readings, sermons and prayers than in the eucharistic meal.

{16} Both Jews and Christians adopted the plan of imperial Roman town government halls (called basilicas after the Greek title for the emperor, basileus). These featured a throne in the apse for the military governor or magistrate, with icons of the emperors posted in front of him, and a space before this where petitioners knelt and shouted, "Kyrie eleison!" (Sir, show mercy!), hoping to attract his attention. Christians seated their bishops on this throne, thereby creating logistical and symbolic problems for all later centuries. St Gregory's seating plan sets a presidential chair in the apse, but with the people's chairs close surrounding it. Monastic choirs throughout east and west evolved similar arrangements, which are therefore called "choir" seating.

{17} These west African bubus, of inexpensive stuff richly tie-dyed and free of symbolic ornament, were made to serve as human clothing. By contrast, many modern vestments look like donned curtains or upholstery because that is what the fabric was designed for.

{18} Elephants are not used outside Eastertide. See Cyprian of Carthage, *De Profanis Donati Sacrificiis* [Migne, PL, 150.B.15].

{19} Life of Moses, II. 319f. See Exodus 33.

{20} The Life of Moses, II.20f This comment inspired a traditional icon in which Mary stands praying with Jesus in her womb, and which is called “the Burning Bush” or “Our Lady of the Sign,” although the bush itself may no longer appear.

{21} See Note 12, above.

{22} This provision follows Jewish and Byzantine custom, and probably Roman custom as well. [C. Buchanan, *The End of the Offertory ~ an Anglican Study*, 1978.]

{23} Some modern designers place the baptismal font at the entrance for this purpose, indicating that baptism serves as a gateway to the eucharist. But Biblical critics argue Jesus abandoned baptismal washing, and instead chose table fellowship as his prophetic sign for incorporation into the Kingdom. (Unfortunately, most liturgical reformers have yet to embrace the revolution which New Testament critics have accomplished in our understanding of Jesus, and its implications for Christian worship: a consequence of the general fragmentation of modern scholarship. [See Notes 55 and 84, below.])

Both the New Testament and later tradition provide arguments for baptism by Jesus' followers; nevertheless, traditional church buildings have always given Jesus' chosen symbol pre-eminence—usually exclusive pre-eminence—both visually and functionally. Baptistries were built outside church buildings, or in adjoining rooms; by contrast, baptismal furniture within the liturgical space itself, and indeed baptismal ritual within the eucharistic celebration, are twentieth century innovations. (The antiquity of baptism within the Easter Vigil has also been challenged: see P. Bradshaw, *North American Academy of Liturgy working paper and discussion*, 1987.)

{24} The D-shaped altar table derives from ancient dinner tables, round with one flat side, and we have chosen it for practical reasons. Instead of using the flat side for serving, as the ancients did, we stand the Presider there: this arrangement allows vessels to sit naturally in the center of the table, yet within easy reach (something that never works with round altars), and makes people feel comfortable gathering around the table (something that never works with rectangular altars).

{25} The table's flat side is the liturgical “west” side: thus the Presider faces the same way throughout the service, at bēma and table alike, effectively orientating the whole gathering in the same direction as the service progresses from “west to east.”

L. Bouyer, *Liturgy and Architecture* (1967) argues that Jews and early Christians orientated their worship spaces toward a focus beyond the building—facing the temple sacrifices or the rising sun, just as mosques, which derive from Jewish and Christian buildings, face Mecca—and that orientation is crucial for liturgical action and design. Bouyer opposes the current fashion for standing the Presider beyond the table, facing the people (versus *populum* or “westward” celebration) as a misinformed historical fancy that wrecks the orientation of ancient worship.

Since adopting our present “eastward” arrangement, I notice that “westward” arrangements elsewhere do not kill orientation, but rather focus it disconcertingly on the president's person—as indeed apsidal thrones were meant to do, when the military governor or magistrate sat there. By contrast, our plan puts the clergy among the people, to lead rather than confront them, and orientates the whole assembly toward the chief symbols in the building.

{26} Our innovative baptistry architecture draws on scriptural symbols to solve a practical problem. Current liturgical fashion, inspired by some Pauline language, conceives of baptism as a dying and rising experience for the candidates, who share Christ's death in the font: hence some recent churches boast grand fonts fit for drowning. But drownable tanks

cross with California accessibility law; indeed, a few tragic negligence lawsuits will make them intolerably expensive elsewhere.

Probably contrary to their builders' intentions, they cross with tradition, too. Early Christian baptismal sermons ignore Paul's talk of dying with Christ, and argue instead that the candidates share Jesus' own baptism and lively mission. Moreover, early Christian fonts were small and shallow, evoking the practical symbolism of washing—the explicit context of Jewish ritual baths. (Anyone who has watched populations bathing in rivers, as in India today, knows that the motions of washing and drowning differ utterly!)

Avoiding the liabilities of drowning fonts, we have chosen a different Pauline symbol, one that evokes the candidates' sharing Christ's mission—and indeed the mission of God's people from the Exodus onward. Gregory of Nyssa's last book, *The Life of Moses*, presented Moses as the ideal for every human to imitate, in becoming God's friend. No symbol could be more appropriate, therefore, for the baptistry at St Gregory's Church.

{27} Life of Moses II. 320. These murals are a three-year project, underway at this writing.

{28} Icons representing the liturgy underway became common after the fall of iconoclasm in the east, as prayers addressed to Christ filled the services, and icons likewise depicted the saints praying to Christ. [P. Galadza, *Studia Liturgica*, 1991] Western worship retained the older style of prayers, typically addressed to the Father through the Son in the unity of the Spirit: a style we keep at St Gregory's. Therefore we represent the spiritual truth of our worship by other images drawn chiefly from Gregory's writings.

{29} Elsewhere people filled the church and waited for the clergy to march grandly past them: a usage likely taken from military and magisterial courts, and designed to emphasize the power and status difference between governor and governed. That is the entry procession as most western Christians now know it; but the use of Hagia Sophia serves congregational worship better. Everyone shares in the entry procession, with the clergy leading their people.

We avoid thus the bizarre compromise common in modest parish buildings, of sneaking the clergy down the side-aisle while layfolk pretend not to see, hiding the clergy outside a short while, and then marching them in as if they had been somewhere else all morning. Such backstage shuffling creates an air of make-believe at the start, from which a church service emerges with difficulty.

[For the people's part in early Christian entrance rites, see J. Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: the Origins, Development, and Meaning of Stational Liturgy*, 1987, and T. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy*, 1971.]

{30} AARON

Holinesse on the head,
Light and perfections on the breast,
Harmonious bells below, raising the dead
To leade them unto life and rest:
Thus are true Aarons drest.

Profanenesse in my head,
Defects and darknesse in my breast,
A noise of passions ringing me for dead
Unto a place where is no rest:
Poore priest, thus am I drest.

Onely another head
I have, another heart and breast,
Another musick, making live, not dead,

Without whom I could have no rest.
In Him I am well drest.

Christ is my onely head,
My alone onely heart and breast,
My onely musick, striking me ev'n dead;
That to the old wo/man I may rest
And be in Him new drest.

So holy in my head,
Perfect and light in my deare breast,
My doctrine, tun'd by Christ, (who is not dead,
But lives in me while I do rest)
Come people; Aaron's drest.

—George Herbert, 1593-1633

{31} The touch is purposely made with the left hand, avoiding an automatic social handshake, as we intend the opposite: a respectful but warm informal welcome.

{32} Sistrums were Egyptian rattles mentioned in the Psalms, and are still used by Ethiopian Christians, who made ours. Our Bishop selected the gong in Shanghai, brought it to St Gregory's, and blessed it with many other Asian bells for our worship.

{33} The Prayer Book provides a longer version of this greeting, extended with Alleluias that resemble vestigial Psalm refrains: an oddly decadent innovation. Because the text is short, such lengthening may facilitate musical settings; but for spoken use it cannot replace the terse original, which is the same shout of joy all over the world. We shout the original all year round, and in Eastertide shout it oftener, adding various musical settings of the Easter Troparion. [See below.]

{34} J. Baldwin, "Kyrie Eleison and the Entrance Rite of the Roman Eucharist," *Worship*, 1986; and *The Urban Character of Christian Worship*, 1987.

{35} "Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and on those in the tombs bestowing life." [See Book of Common Prayer, page 500.]

{36} Early Christian liturgies apparently featured little music. Augustine and other fifth century bishops introduced congregational singing—despite deep misgivings about its sensuousness—to give noisy crowds something to do that might hold their attention and stop their disrupting the services.

{37} J. Baldwin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: the Origins, Development, and Meaning of Stational Liturgy*, 1987; T. Mathews, *The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy*, 1971.

{38} R. Taft, *The Great Entrance: a History of the Transfer of Gifts and other Pre-anaphoral Rites of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*, 1975.

{39} We sing Alleluia refrains year round. [See Note 54 on the Alleluias following the Sermon, below.]

{40} See Note 46, below.

{41} The Prayer Book revives the Jewish dialogue format, which the Byzantine blessing has lost, and supplies variant blessings for Lent and Easter. At St Gregory's we use one blessing year round, as Jews and Byzantines do, and add the Easter Troparion in Eastertide. [See above.]

{42} Similarly, at evening liturgies we follow the Prayer Book's Order of Worship for the Evening and sing here the Christian evening hymn called PHOS HILARON, or another suitable Lamplighting Hymn. (On these occasions we also celebrate the eucharist in an early form, including a full meal. See ADDENDUM I: FEAST OF FRIENDS AND HOLY WEEK, below.) The Gloria and Phos Hilaron both antedate the Christian seasonal calendar, and we sing them at all seasons, like Alleluias. [See Note 54, below.]

{43} Incense recalls the Jerusalem temple—as the whole synagogue ritual was meant to do—and has been promoted and suppressed at various periods in Jewish and Christian history by symbolic arguments. Symbolism is beside the point: people use incense because it looks and smells good, and evokes a strong sensuous response enhancing worship. Churches use flowers for the same reason.

{44} Note that this collect is not the Prayer Book's Collect of the Day, as that will be used to complete the Prayers of the People—a practice more in keeping with the Prayer Book rubrics at that point [pg. 394], and promoted by Dr Boone Porter [See Note 51, below]. Here we pray a Collect appropriate for daybreak: two examples follow.

Erasmus' beautiful prayer is: "O God of love, you are the true Sun of the world, evermore risen and never going down. We pray you to shine in our hearts, that the darkness of sin and the mist of error being driven away, we may this day, and all our life long, walk without stumbling in the way you have prepared for us, which is Jesus Christ our Lord..."

For a seasonal example: during the seven weeks before Christmas we use one of the so-called O Antiphons—actually prayers derived from the old Advent scriptural readings, and familiar from the Hymn "O come, O come, Emmanuel..." [Hymn 56]. These old Advent readings now extend over several Sundays, and we sing the O Antiphon matching the readings for the day. Thus we keep a seven-week Advent, as the Prayer Book lectionary in fact provides, rather than the late medieval four-week season still listed vestigially at the front of the Book. [See Note 47, below.]

During Christmas/Epiphany, Eastertide and special occasions we use appropriate collects from the Prayer Book.

{45} We normally sing the melody most popular in synagogues today: this was written by a Jewish friend of Brahms, and sounds like Brahms' famous lullaby for good reason.

{46} The Revised Common Lectionary, an ecumenical project, sets forth three readings each Sunday: one from the Gospels, with two choices for an Old Testament reading related to it, and a third reading from other New Testament documents—called the Epistle, as it usually comes from a New Testament letter. We now follow the RCL under a national Episcopal Church plan for trial use. Because the gospels originated as sermons commenting on the two older readings, and were written down later, the Gospel reading traditionally comes last.

Today many churches read all three lections, often running them together to save time. But according to Massey Shepherd, who helped plan the first Roman Catholic and Episcopal versions, the lectionary framers intended churches to use two readings, choosing either the Old Testament or the Epistle to accompany the Gospel. At St Gregory's the Old Testament is usually read at our main service, and the Epistle at other services. A preacher may alter the scheme, however.

The lectionary also appoints psalm passages, which we use for the Entry Procession [see above] and the Alleluias following the Sermon [see below].

{47} Recent scholarship shows the passion events govern even the Christmas cycle and other solar-calendar phases of the Christian year. [T. Talley, *The Origins of the Liturgical Year*, 1985.] Apart from the passion, the Christian calendar does not commemorate dates when scriptural events occurred—those are not known—but rather sets times for reading various scriptural selections. Liturgical "seasons" like Advent, Lent, Eastertide have no intrinsic reality, as summer and winter have, but are created by the way we choose to read the New Testament. Put simply, the Church Year is a lectionary. The new Prayer Book lectionary changes our readings far beyond the old seasonal pattern—extending Advent readings from four weeks to seven, for example—and our liturgical "seasons" must now change to match.

{48} Like Passover, Easter is classically a nighttime feast. Our celebration begins Saturday at dusk and continues with a feast lasting well into Sunday morning: this is our one Easter service. (At midday that Sunday we offer a church picnic.) Moreover, we use resurrection material each Sunday throughout the year, suppressing nothing in Lent, and shifting into high gear for Eastertide with the Easter Troparion and other texts salted through the service. As one member puts it, "There are two seasons at St Gregory's: 'Easter,' and 'Easter's Coming.'" Other feasts we celebrate with equal joy but less intensity; as another member puts it, "this is an Easter church; most churches are Christmas churches."

{49} Visitors often ask where they can get such bells for their own churches. Oriental antique shops sell them at exotic prices, usually for looks rather than musical tone, so test them before buying. Good bells make the Silence work so well it has become the most popular single element of our service.

{50} Some modern champions for the diaconate claim this reading as the deacon's prerogative, and the current Prayer Book directs a deacon should read it. Historically, however, this duty was the last assigned to deacons, when elderly bishops in huge post-Constantinian church buildings grew tired of declaiming the Gospel as part of their preaching. The deacon was an obvious substitute, because his job required a powerful singing voice: this indeed became the chief criterion for recruiting deacons in eastern churches. (After the Russian Revolution it was said that the priests went into the labor camps, and the deacons into the opera!) But if the preacher does not wish to read the Gospel at the eucharist, there is no reason laypeople should not do so—as indeed they already do at other worship services—and a growing number of congregations in every denomination now expect it. At St Gregory's the deacon has a prominent enough role throughout the liturgy, and does not need this vestigial perquisite.

{51} The deacon assists all readers by announcing the text, pointing the place throughout the reading, and advising the pronunciation of foreign words. [For the roles of laypeople and deacon, see the section on MINISTERS OF WORSHIP and Note 5, above; and ADDENDUM II, below.]

{52} Roman emperors were military commanders, and were not throned or crowned or anointed. Instead, army officers elected them and hoisted them on their shoulders or their shields, carrying them out to the troops, who acknowledged their new commander by crying "Hail Caesar!" In the same way the deacon shoulders the gospel book, proclaims "The Gospel of the Lord!" and walks among the people who cry "Praise to you, Lord Christ!" Greek and Russian churches still carry out these gestures in imperial style. Jews carry the scrolls surmounted by royal crowns and vestments; but instead of crying out, the synagogue congregation sing and even dance around the scrolls, and all reach forward to touch them reverently and affectionately—a custom we employ after the Sermon. Ethiopian Christians use a similar ceremony. [See Note 55, below.]

{53} This Sermon Conversation took trial and error to refine. We found that when men spoke up first they shared their opinions, and the conversation remained intellectual and didactic; whereas when women spoke up first they shared their experience, and the conversation stayed personal, rarely straying into counter-sermons or disputes. So at first we called on women to start off; but by now a simple reminder of our intentions keeps the conversation on track—provided the preacher has put personal experience into the Sermon in the first place. A time limit also helps newcomers relax and join in, instead of anxiously wondering if they are captives for the day.

{54} After the readings and sermons, synagogue festival services added a festal procession carrying the scrolls back to the ark: this was the Jewish position for the royal ceremonies described above. To accompany the scrolls' royal progress, the congregation sang from the Hallel section of the Psalter, that is, Psalms recounting God's saving victories and featuring "Alleluia" refrains.

Christian synagogues abandoned this custom for unexplained reasons (dislike for imperial ritual during persecutions?) but after Constantine Christians in the eastern heartland recovered it, using it for all services including Lent, Good Friday, funerals, and rogations against perils. And unlike Jewish synagogues, fourth century churches sang from the whole Psalter. G. Winkler proposes that this expanded use of Psalms arose during doctrinal controversies, when popular Christian hymn compositions became fighting words, and liturgists needed safe replacements for them. [A paper presented to the North American Academy of Liturgy, 1983]

The revived Alleluia procession spread slowly to the outlying west, and like other early practices restored in the east—the Gloria in excelsis, for example—this never quite made it into Lent, the season westerners kept most conservatively. Hence the widespread but mistaken notion that western liturgies "suppress" these chants in Lent—whereas their omission in Lent is merely an anachronism. At St Gregory's we sing both Gloria and Alleluias year round.

Meanwhile, as church buildings grew larger it became harder for the preacher (often an elderly bishop) to proclaim the Gospel from his throne and preach on it as he read; so a deacon with a powerful voice carried the gospel book up to the ambo and sang from it there, returning it to the preacher for his comments afterward. The same Alleluia chant was borrowed for this little journey as well. Still later the liturgical homily vanished, and the impressive (and original) festal procession after the homily vanished with it—leaving the deacon's little march up to the ambo as the only movement with chant accompaniment. Hence the queer habit of singing Alleluias only before the Gospel reading: that is today's Byzantine and western standard; and many modern Jewish synagogues follow the same form. Nestorians, Ethiopians and other far-flung easterners who lost touch with the shifts in Byzantine fashion have continued a double Alleluia procession, before and after the Gospel. At St Gregory's we return to the older and simpler Jewish order. This has the great advantage of unifying readings and sermon as one unbroken liturgy of the Word, and celebrating God's Word in all we have heard.

{55} This ceremony shows the Jewish genius for adaptation. Unlike the military ceremony of presenting the emperor to an acclaiming crowd, which inspired western and Byzantine gestures with the gospel book, the Jewish version suggests intimacy as well as reverence, more like receiving the emperor's precious baby heir than the emperor's warlike self. In 1986, I visited the Ethiopian monastery atop the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem and was delighted to see they do the very same thing, even making sure that each person in the church gets a chance to kiss the book.

{56} Peter the Fuller was patriarch of Antioch and leader of the monophysite party that had been defeated at the council of Chalcedon in 451. In 473, as a defiant challenge to the (orthodox) majority, he inserted this creed to start the liturgical Preface in his cathedral, implying that he was faithful to the earlier council of Nicaea (325) and the majority were not, and might not share his communion unless they recanted. (See the comments on the PREFACE, below.) The majority quickly deposed him, but dared not remove the "Nicene" Creed for fear of lending his charges substance. [G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 1945.] It has remained there like a massive monument to doctrinal quarrels ever since. Its use was long resisted in the west, especially in England (a country renowned for good liturgy in the middle ages) and only squeaked into Anglican Sunday worship in the 15th century, just in time for Cranmer to preserve it. Donald Schell reckons that it gained popularity among Episcopalians—especially Californians—because under former Prayer Books the "Nicene" Creed was the only place laypeople could affirm something aloud, rather than accusing themselves. By contrast, St Gregory's liturgy keeps the people busy with affirmations, so that no one complains that the "Nicene" Creed is missing, and only rarely does a newcomer ask why. A growing number of congregations omit it as we do.

Modern parish experience using the "Nicene" Creed suggests that its sectarian sense is intrinsic, and for most people quite conscious. I advise ordinands that if they must use the "Nicene" Creed in their parishes, they might march about waving American and Episcopal Church flags, while their church wardens tear up photographs of the Mormon Tabernacle: these gestures would express the custom's fundamental spirit, and employ beloved Episcopalian paraphernalia lately fallen into disuse.

{57} The American and New Zealand Prayer Books ingeniously incorporate the "Apostle's" Creed into the Baptismal service, where indeed it may have originated, and where it allows the whole congregation to join the candidates in affirming their faith. This usage is unitive, whereas the customary "Nicene" Creed usage always implies division from other Christians.

{58} We baptize at the principal service on three Sundays each year, when the appointed readings treat baptism directly: the Baptism of Jesus on the first Sunday after Epiphany; the first Sunday after Pentecost; and the Sunday nearest All Saints' Day. But most baptisms occur at our Saturday evening service, a more intimate gathering, when the liturgy is designed for adults and children to worship together. In Holy Week we baptize on Maundy Tuesday, not at the Easter Vigil. Whenever the Bishop visits, we present candidates for Confirmation as well. This revisionist initiatory schedule, based on recent research into ancient practice, has proved pastorally more useful than others we have tried. (See

ADDENDUM I: THE CHRISTIAN YEAR, below.) Our initiatory rites come from the Prayer Book for New Zealand (1989), often used in our diocese.

{59} The full order of prayers is as follows:

- (1) All sing the Lord's Prayer, without its doxology ("for the Kingdom...")
- (2) The deacon offers the first Litany petition, for peace, and the people supply further petitions and thanksgivings freely, ending each one, "let us pray to [or bless] the Lord."
- (3) The people respond each time, "Lord have mercy" or "Thanks be to God."
- (4) The deacon prompts fresh petitions occasionally to ensure that we pray for all appropriate concerns the Prayer Book directs [p. 383].
- (5) The Presider ends the free petitions with a petition for the dead.
- (6) The deacon says fixed concluding petitions for reconciliation and God's Kingdom, and the litany commendation.
- (7) The Presider sings Collect of the Day ~ but in place of its doxology:
- (8) All sing the Lord's Prayer doxology and Amen.

This use of the Collect of the Day best suits the Prayer Book rubric [p. 394], which recommends a collect appropriate to the season or occasion celebrated, as the first choice for concluding the prayers. Dr Boone Porter also recommends this use. Ending the whole prayer series with the Lord's Prayer doxology unifies the petitions, thanksgivings and collect as extensions of Jesus' own prayer—which St Paul tells us they are. (Romans 8:26)

{60} A rabbi typically ended his sermon with a prayer embodying his teaching. By the second century a.d. these teaching prayers jelled into a standard form, now named among Jews by its first word Kaddish, or "Hallowed [be your name]." Luke's setting for the Lord's Prayer ("Lord, teach us to pray..." Luke 11:1) reflects this pattern. Some scholars hold the Lord's Prayer is the rabbi Jesus' characteristic Kaddish, emphasizing the distinctive features of his teaching, especially its Jubilee imagery. [J. Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus*, 1970.] Other gospel scholars attribute the Lord's Prayer and Jubilee imagery in general to Christian community tradition, and not to Jesus himself.

After the rabbi finished, the deacon and congregation continued with a series of prayers (tefillah), at first freely composed around an emerging outline. [C. Dugmore, *The Influence of the Synagogue upon the Divine Office*, 1944.] Among Jews this series developed into eighteen stylized collects; among Christians, somewhat later, into a litany of petitions with one collect at the end. For Good Friday the Prayer Book provides an older, intermediate form of this development, offering petitions in thematic groups, each group begun with an invitation and ended with a collect. At St Gregory's we adapt that form to our familiar litany use by supplying, "...let us pray to the Lord / Lord have mercy," after each petition. In this way our congregation can pray by heart, without books, whatever the season.

Historians debate why the Lord's teaching Prayer was eventually torn from its natural place following the sermon, and removed to the communion, where it now stands in most rites, while the accompanying prayers stayed behind with the sermon. Some argue the petition for feeding inspired this change; R. Taft and others favor the petition for forgiveness. By contrast, outside the eucharist the original Jewish format endured hardily. Despite a commonplace misconception, based on decadent devotional elaborations, that the Lord's Prayer should conclude and "sum up" congregational petitions, Anglican Prayer Books actually follow the Jewish pattern, both during non-eucharistic services and whenever the daily office precedes the eucharistic meal: the Lord's Prayer (without doxology) introduces other petitions—often quoted from the psalms—and these conclude in a collect (with doxology). This is the format we have restored and adapted for participatory eucharistic use.

{61} Jesus exhorted people to forgive freely, and proclaimed forgiveness even to those who had not expressly asked for it. When the gospels express his teaching narratively, for example in the Zacchaeus story, the invariable narrative pattern is: first forgiven and accepted by God, then repentant and forgiving—a pattern all Christian reconciliation rites reverse!

The Jesuit writer George McCauley observes that sacramental theorists have blundered for centuries by focussing on what the faithful receive, instead of on what the Church does in obedience to Christ's command—forgiving sins, baptizing the world, etc. By contrast, the gospels' pattern repeats not only the verbal content, but the visible actions of Jesus' teaching, healing, and passion, as a pattern of the way God works. This pattern belongs in the liturgy. So instead of asking for absolution in the litany, we pray for grace to forgive our enemies and for forgiveness throughout the world—switching our focus from receiving forgiveness to giving it, which is what both Jesus and the gospel writers urged. (Two or three texts direct us to seek forgiveness, while a hundred implore us to give it.) Then in the Great Thanksgiving we thank God for the forgiveness that Christ has brought us and all humankind.

{62} Corporate penitential devotions had no place in the eucharist at first, and the Council of Nicaea forbade their introduction on Sundays and throughout Eastertide (Canon 20). They became popular during the turmoil of Roman civilization's decline (the sixth century "rogation period"), and the later middle ages provided them for the few worshippers making their communion—something most people did rarely—until these devotions became a regular addition to the Sunday liturgy. But they do not fit in, and modern liturgists despair of finding a workable moment for them in the service. The Prayer Book provides them for optional use; and we opt not to use them. St Gregory's clergy have an active ministry of spiritual direction, and hear confessions from all who wish sacramental absolution.

{63} Rigorists have promoted penitential devotions as preparation and qualification for communion. But Jesus welcomed the undeserving to his table: N. Perrin and other leading gospel scholars argue this was the chief offence for which his outraged contemporaries betrayed him and saw him crucified. [N. Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, 1965.] Dining with the undeserving was Jesus' chosen prophetic sign, the embodiment of all he taught about God's Kingdom already come, and our challenge to respond. It was a radical gesture, and led him to abandon baptism as a preparatory rite because incorporating the unprepared was the essential symbol. Although his followers resumed baptizing, they maintained his fundamental concept of God's banquet shared with the impure—thanks partly to Paul's arguments. The Church traditionally holds that no preparation can make us worthy of it; instead, the eucharist itself makes us worthy.

As for baptism, its true purpose is not to admit people to further sacraments, but to empower them for life and mission in the new humanity of Christ. Far from requiring Baptism before communion, then, the Church might more logically reverse the conventional order, and baptize for Christ's mission those whom Christ has already welcomed to his table, and fed with his body and blood. The Book of Acts evidences this order of events as well as the other [D. Stevick, *Baptismal Moments; Baptismal Meanings*, 1987] and gospel scholarship suggests this order embodies more faithfully Jesus' own teaching and practice. [See Notes 23 & 94.]

{64} This dance survives in Luxembourg today, where it is still used for the offertory procession at Pentecost, and the Benedictine scholar Godfrey Diekmann taught it to St Gregory's congregation in 1980. It serves a great many hymns in the Episcopal Hymnbook, including most of those in duple or quadruple meters, and even other meters that provide four downbeats per line.

{65} The TRANSFER OF GIFTS from sideboard to altar table was originally a homely part of a rabbi's dinner with his close disciples—a formal but intimate routine called Chabûrah, or Feast of Friends. [See notes on the GREAT THANKSGIVING, below.] The students brought gifts of food and placed them on the sideboard; when all had assembled the doors were closed, and one after another the dishes were carried to the table, blessed, and served while the company discussed the scriptures. Christians continued this simple usage for centuries: as their congregations grew, the deacons chose bread and wine from the people's many offerings on sideboards, and carried these to the table while the people exchanged the Peace. [R. Taft, *The Great Entrance*, 1975.]

With the appearance of crowded public church buildings, this simple Transfer of Gifts became a procession with chants and prayers extolling God's awesome presence and creative bounty toward us, from which we offer gifts of bread and wine. In the east this ritual swelled to a juggernaut dwarfing and finally eclipsing the Entry Procession. On medieval Sundays at Hagia Sophia, 600 clergy marched in the Transfer of Gifts! No weekly liturgy could bear two such extravaganzas, so the more participatory Byzantine Entry Procession atrophied. In Byzantine churches today a mere vestige of the Entry Procession crops up amid the opening hymns and readings, and is called "Little Entrance;" while the title "Great Entrance" now belongs to the Transfer of Gifts that supplanted it.

These two Byzantine processions influenced Anglican worship during the same medieval period, but with a different result. In 1970, I took part in a full re-enactment of the English "Sarum Rite" on which Cranmer largely depended for his Prayer Book. This enactment at the New York Metropolitan Museum Cloisters, under the historical direction of Robert Wright and Boone Porter of the General Theological Seminary, climaxed an international scholarly symposium on The Year 1300. Borrowings from contemporary worship at Hagia Sophia, implied in the Sarum texts, became dramatically prominent when enacted and compared with T. Mathews' reconstruction of Constantinopolitan worship, published the following year. [The Early Churches of Constantinople: Architecture and Liturgy, 1971] The enactment also resolved famous puzzles in the Sarum service books, such as the apparent solecism of misusing Byzantine offertory ritual for the Sarum entrance rite.

In fact, medieval English Sarum use adapted contemporary Byzantine ritual ingeniously. At the midpoint of monastic Sunday morning worship, after reciting prime in the chapter house, the abbot and clergy led the monks through the cloister into the church for the eucharist, with deacons carrying the bread and wine sumptuously veiled. Here the Sarum use creatively joined both Byzantine processions for the entry and the transfer of gifts, rather than setting them in competition.

This successful adaptation emerges plainly in a performance following the rubrics [see Note 1, above] but less plainly from the printed mass texts, which begin with this entry chant as western mass books conventionally do. Hence historians have wondered why the English eccentrically put a Byzantine bread-and-wine procession at the start of their service—when in fact Sarum use puts the procession at midpoint, where it parallels the Byzantine order, and from the viewpoint of liturgical economy, surpasses it. Perhaps that is why the Sarum entry chant is not called introit but officium—referring to the office of prime which it concludes—and why it is sung three times, like contemporary Syro-Byzantine refrains for the Transfer of Gifts and other processions [R. Taft, *The Great Entrance*] rather than twice, like a Latin entry refrain. However ingenious, of course, this arrangement could not survive the 16th century suppression of monastic worship. It remains for modern Anglicans to follow Sarum's lead by joining east and west in our own innovative way.

Following the speculations of G. Dix, [The Shape of the Liturgy, 1945] twentieth century reformers have generally assumed that western tradition highlights the laypeople's work in supplying the gifts, over the deacons' work in transferring them: Dix attributes the liturgical east-west split to this single distinction. As a result, up-to-date western liturgies, including most Anglican liturgies, now feature a juggernaut of laypeople (instead of clergy) carrying bread and wine, and prayers acknowledging the people's labor (instead of God's bounty) in producing those gifts for the Church's use. Alas, far from restoring primitive worship, this practice only completes its decadence, as the laypeople chosen to take part are carefully "representative"—one man, one woman, one old, one young, one from each ethnic group—and so effectively clericalized. (What are clergy but representative laypeople?) Moreover, the practice springs from a false historical assumption. C. Buchanan shows, pace Dix, that early western ritual for the gifts matched the early Byzantine, and that both rites' prayers portrayed our gifts of bread, wine and alms as a small return on God's gifts to us. [The End of the Offertory ~ an Anglican Study, 1978] Buchanan proposes that the natural place, and the historic Anglican place, for money offerings follows communion: there we give alms in response to all God has already given us in creating and redeeming the world. That is the very argument of the Great Thanksgiving prayer, and of the gospels as well. [See Note 53 on the gospel view of forgiveness and repentance, above, and Note 104 on the Collection, below.]

{66} In this ritual, anciently included in every service, Christians give Christ to one another: "Peace be with you" and "the Lord be with you" have the same meaning, because "He is our Peace." (Ephesians 2:14) Hence the Byzantine rite's distinctive greeting at this point, "Christ is among us...He is and he will be."

Public kissing was a Christian innovation, originally baptismal: the bishop kissed the newly baptized to symbolize the gift of the Holy Spirit, just as God breathed life into Adam's mouth (Genesis 2) and the risen Christ breathed on the disciples (John 20). [E.L. Phillips, North American Academy of Liturgy working paper, 1990, and doctoral dissertation.]

Anciently, therefore, Christians exchanged the Peace by kissing on the mouth, and men and women exchanged this kiss only with members of their own sex, to avoid scandal. (How times have changed!) Later it became a kiss on the cheek, or on both cheeks, or three kisses on two cheeks: in these forms eastern Christians have continued the practice inside and outside the liturgy. Western clergy continued it vestigially; but their laypeople did not, and have been slow to resume kissing in church, preferring a handshake or a hug. What matters is expressing the gesture's intention: to give one another the peace of Christ himself. It is fun, but superfluous, to exchange the Peace with everyone in sight; those nearby will serve. On the other hand, following Matthew 5:23, the Kiss of Peace provides an urgent opportunity to bridge grudges and mend fences where we know these want doing, even if we must cross the room for the job.

Californians are a huggy bunch, and the Peace goes on awhile--there is time for the deacon to join in and lay out the table too.

{67} The signal for the rabbinical Feast of Friends to begin. [See foregoing Note.] Students arriving after the doors had closed returned home without joining their rabbi's supper discussion. Closing the doors creates an intimate atmosphere, encouraging everyone to leave worldly thoughts behind and share single-mindedly in what follows--as the Preface immediately orders. [See below.] We re-open our doors at Coffee Hour.

{68} The Prayer Book [p. 404] provides the Syrian Preface dialogue from the fourth century Apostolic Constitutions and later Byzantine use, as a variant form-- an excellent dialogue, too little used. [See following Note.] We include here the Syrian instruction to parents, which we have edited slightly to fit our order of events, together with its response from the people. "Sacrifice of Praise" is the Levitical name for the Thank Offering (*tôdah*), the oldest Israelite communion offering. See EXCURSUS: EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE, below.

{69} At the Chabûrah a dialogue between host and diners introduced the climactic blessing of the final cup: during this dialogue the diners recited a blessing from Psalm 113: "Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth forever more." The Christian dialogue before the Great Thanksgiving prayer echoes this pattern. [C. Kucharek, *The Byzantine-Slav Liturgy of St John Chrysostom*, 1971.]

Acts 6 implies that the deacons originally took food blessed but not eaten at the common eucharistic meal, and distributed it to the poor. Sometime after the common meal had separated from the eucharist, the bread brought by the people but not chosen for the Great Thanksgiving was still blessed and distributed, only now to those who attended without receiving the eucharistic gifts. From the 5th to the 16th centuries, most laypeople attended the liturgy in this way, except on special occasions; only clergy received the eucharistic bread and wine regularly. Hence the climax of a medieval congregation's worship was not the Communion, but the Missa or dismissal, when they "came to the bishop's hand" for a blessing--the conclusion to all public services when he was present--and received the substitute blessed bread. (Byzantine churches still follow that custom, and call the bread *antidôron*, "substitute gift.") As this effectively became the people's communion rite, the blessing dialogue adapted from the Chabûrah appeared at this point, so that the president's blessing closed the service. [See Note 106, below.]

Now that practically everyone in church shares the eucharistic bread and wine, the president's blessing can return to its original place, as the Prayer Book variant provides [p. 404]. This is by far the best place for it: here it augments rather than competes with the Great Thanksgiving, which follows as the climax of all the blessings and prayers.

{70} R. Taft presented this explanation at a North American Academy of Liturgy seminar in 1984. In the same way a bailiff opens American court sessions crying, "Hear ye! Hear ye! Court is now in session; let all those with business to bring before this court draw near!" Taft concluded that the liturgical Preface is: "Lift up your hearts," and that this instruction prompted all to raise their hands as well as their hearts, in the classic Christian prayer posture.

Taft's discovery corrects a hoary misunderstanding about the relation between the Preface and the Great Thanksgiving that immediately follows. Western Great Thanksgiving prayers typically begin with a short variable part before the Sanctus & Benedictus, then follow with a longer fixed part. [See Note 90, below.] Medieval ceremonial finesse favored diffuse variations, and one English missal boasted 281 alternatives for that opening paragraph! [F. Proctor and W. Frere, *The Book of Common Prayer with a Rationale of its Offices*, 1855.] By contrast, the prayer's long fixed part contains the dramatic Last Supper story and hard-fought sacramental talk: hence reformers since the middle ages—including Cranmer—came to treat it as the essential stuff. These commonsensically misread the label "Preface" as a name for the prayer's earlier variable part, as though that introduced the more essential fixed part the way an author's preface introduces a book. Today most textbooks, and all Book of Common Prayer editions, call the Great Thanksgiving's varying openings "Proper Prefaces." Whereas conservative Latin liturgical printers, resisting common sense, have kept the "Preface" label's proper historical place on the page: preceding rather than following the command, "Lift up your hearts," to which it belongs.

{71} By returning to the earliest and simplest Transfer of Gifts at St Gregory's, we enable the congregation to move smoothly and directly from the emotional warmth of the Kiss of Peace to the Preface ("Lift up your hearts!") and the Great Thanksgiving.

In 1970, A. Schmemmann told me he was convinced this was the best liturgical order, whether or not historical evidence supported it; from R. Taft's reconstruction I infer this was the effective Byzantine order until the middle ages. [R. Taft, *The Great Entrance*, 1975.] So long as the Transfer of Gifts was carried out during the Peace, all but the deacons could ignore it; and even when it developed into a distinct ceremony, its texts at first extended the Preface rite. Thus the earliest accompanying chant, Psalm 24, welcomes the Lord's majestic arrival; and the Byzantine refrains later composed for the psalm—namely, the Cherubic hymn, the Powers of Heaven hymn, and the Jerusalem refrain familiar around the world today as "Let all mortal flesh keep silence" [Hymn 324]—each imbue that procession with the sense of the Preface: abandon all lowly thoughts, and attend to the divine business at hand! This same sense suffuses the two Byzantine "offertory" refrains added shortly afterward. Only the last mentions the eucharistic gifts, and it depicts these, too, as gifts we receive, just as we might receive an arriving king.

As the Transfer of Gifts ritual grew, however, it acquired hymns and prayers anticipating the sacrificial content of the Great Thanksgiving prayer, and so acquired the sense of an "offertory." In the current Roman rite these prayers virtually duplicate the Great Thanksgiving: a redundancy our Prayer Book authors rejected, but many Episcopal clergy have introduced on their own.

Even without that redundancy, however, the current Prayer Book order—Prayers of the People, Peace, Transfer of Gifts, Preface, Great Thanksgiving—sets these two (underlined) emotional climaxes in competition with each other, separated by ceremonial turmoil. In formal parishes the Great Thanksgiving may win this competition; in folksy parishes the Peace wins hands down; and the liturgy loses in both. Restoring the earliest and simplest Transfer of Gifts joins both climaxing moments so that one leads to the next, and the liturgy wins after all.

{72} In such a play, a batter aims the ball to the nearest waiting opponent, ensuring that the batter will be put "out," while his better-placed teammates have extra time to score runs. The batter forfeits his own chance to score, and his career record suffers; but his team wins. Our diocese sponsors annual excursions to professional baseball games where worshippers can reflect on this noble pagan spectacle, and aid the Episcopal Charities Drive with part of their ticket money.

{73} I am indebted here to R. Dentan, *Lectures in Old Testament Theology*, 1970.

Research progresses everywhere, multiplying exponentially, so that no scholar can keep abreast of it all. Modern liturgical revision began in close concert with modern scriptural criticism, but must struggle to stay in touch with recent developments in Old Testament and even New Testament research. Some of these developments now undermine assumptions by mainline liturgical reformers [see Notes 16, 55, & 84]. At the scholarly conferences for liturgists which have contributed much to this pamphlet, discussion of these challenges is long overdue.

{74} L. Bouyer, *Rite and Man*, 1963.

{75} Because its ritual imitates the ancient Thank Offering or "Sacrifice of Praise (tôdah)," differing only in the disposition of the sacrificial remains, some infer that the Sin Offering (chattath) may even have originated after the exile. In any case this standardized ritual helped standardize sacrificial thinking, with the Sin Offering as the new model.

{76} C. Dugmore, *The Influence of the Synagogue upon the Divine Office*, 1964. P. Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer in the Early Church*, 1981, establishes that not all synagogues operated the same way. Nevertheless, caricatures of pharisees in Matthew's gospel show that synchronicity with the sacrificial schedule was a widely recognized standard of piety, and possibly the dominant standard.

{77} Post-exilic Thank Offering texts indeed promise a reward: do this and you will dwell long in the land your God is giving you, and prosper there. (Deuteronomy 28, etc.) Like the ascendant chattath Sin Offering, these texts reflect the pain of exile, and the desire not to repeat it. But remarkably enough, the thank offerers are not told to give up something of their own; instead, they are to feast on the food they have brought to the temple, and bless God who has so blessed their fields, their flocks and their table. (Deuteronomy 26, etc.) This is hardly *do ut des!*

That the Sin Offering is nowhere explained as a payment in kind for restoring God's favor, is even more remarkable. By comparison, ancient Greek and Indian religion abounded in such transactions.

{78} The Last Supper story appears first in 1 Corinthians 11, and is later repeated in the synoptic passions. New Testament critics point out that Paul describes the story as hearsay, and that it may represent the Antiochene Christians' own meal customs, and their sacrificial understanding of these, rather than a historical quotation from Jesus himself. For our purpose here, however, the scriptural writers' thought is precisely the issue.

The contemporary Jewish meaning of the language, "this is my body....this is my blood....shed for many," has lately been debated; but scholars agree that Jews who heard it would have understood it as sacrificial talk.

{79} Recent Jewish scholarship has resolved a half century's debate over the ritual context of this meal. Because the Gospels fix Jesus' death at Passover time, many have assumed that his Last Supper was a Passover meal, or Seder. Yet the Christian eucharist shows no trace of Seder ritual before the ninth century, when Alcuin and others "restored" (in fact, introduced) such Passover elements as unleavened bread, which they assumed had got lost.

G. Dix [*The Shape of the Liturgy*, 1945] argued that the Last Supper could not have been a Seder, since Jesus died before Passover; instead, the eucharist derived from the Chabûrah, or Feast of Friends, which rabbis kept regularly with their close disciples. C. Kucharek [*The Byzantine-Slav Liturgy of St John Chrysostom*, 1971] and L. Mitchell [*The Meaning of Ritual*, 1977] match Chabûrah procedure with the early Christian liturgy described in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, or Didachê.

Yet Dix's argument drew opposition, notably from J. Jeremias [*The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, 1966] who conjectured a different Palestinian calendar for Passover; and indeed Jewish scholars have established that Passover calendars varied then. Moreover, our sources for Jewish Chabûrah ritual date from Christian times, and likely reflect Christian influence.

Now Jewish research shows that these models are not alternatives, but only chronological stages in the history of the same meal. This was no Jewish ritual at all, but rather the Hellenistic Symposium: originally a banquet eaten without alcohol, followed by a drinking bout with philosophical discussion. Among Jews and Christians it evolved as the formal discussion gradually invaded the dinner, and focussed on the symbolic meaning of the foods eaten. The Last Supper story portrays an early stage in this evolution; the Didachê and Chabûrah, intermediate stages; and the modern Seder, the final term. [J. Tabory, "Towards a history of the paschal meal," NAAL paper 1998, cites many publications from 1907 to the present. A companion paper "The Last Supper and the anti-chavurah meal" by A. Rosenberg shows early Chabûrah rules required exclusive purity—but of the diners, not of the ceremony or the food, where rabbinical legislation focussed later.]

The same research resolves another debate about the chief blessing prayer used, from which our Great Thanksgiving prayer descends. Though Paul refers to "the cup after supper," and the prayer appears at the end of the meal in Jewish documents, this was not a final cup of blessing, but rather the first blessing of wine for the discussion, which originally

followed a meal where no wine had yet been drunk. When the discussion entered the meal itself, the cup and cup blessing moved too.

Such a continuum makes it all the harder to say precisely what happened at Jesus' Last Supper itself. The gospel accounts depend on Paul's earlier account in 1 Corinthians 11, of what Christians told him at Antioch; yet Paul's informants there presumably described the evolved ritual by which they themselves remembered Jesus. The relation of their rite to Jesus' own is tantalizing but indefinable.

{80} See Note 15, above, and the following section.

{81} Following standard Symposium ritual. See Note 79, above.

{82} See EXCURSUS: EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE, above.

{83} The fight against Arianism provided the first occasion. In an effort to buttress Christ's divinity, John Chrysostom and other orthodox preachers proclaimed that the eucharistic bread was God's own body. As Chrysostom himself complained, the faithful responded by giving that divine stuff a wide berth, increasingly shunning communion as dangerously sacred. For a long time most laypeople reserved communion, and even baptism, until their deathbeds.

{84} Alcuin, Calvin and Dix are good examples: each found their contemporary liturgies different from the gospel Last Supper narratives, and set about "restoring" what he thought had got lost. Their historical views were partly conjectural, however, and they "restored" customs (like unleavened bread) that the meal had not had before.

{85} Byzantine bishops and presbyters concelebrate on occasion. After Vatican II, Roman Catholic reformers seized on this practice for a compromise that might enable priests trained for daily private masses to share in a single community eucharist; Anglicans welcomed it as a vehicle for collegiality; and ecumenists made it a sign of mutual denominational respect. By contrast, the classical pattern calls for one Presider at the table, taking the unifying role of the Chabûrah host, and yielding this place to a visiting presbyter when ecumenical circumstances warrant it. [P. Bradshaw, "Yielding to Polycarp," *Worship*, 1986.] At St Gregory's the whole congregation stand around the Presider, praying together; and the collegial value of clergy concelebration vanishes into the crowd.

{86} This posture included raising eyes heavenward as well. See sections on MINISTERS OF WORSHIP and the PREFACE, above.

{87} Following Hellenistic Symposium custom, rabbis at the Chabûrah, and early Christians following the Didachê, blessed the bread and wine separately at either end of a full meal, with scriptural discussion afterward. [Later the eating, drinking and discussing overlapped: see Note 79, above.] A Chabûrah host began this meal holding a loaf while giving thanks over it in normal family style, then broke off pieces, popping one in his mouth and giving each guest a morsel. Likewise after supper, he held the winecup while giving thanks, then shared it, first sipping himself, and then delivering it to each guest in turn. The Last Supper story says that during these distributions—not during the prayer—Jesus told his disciples, "Take, eat, this is my body..." and "...this is my blood..."

Such a ritual worked well enough for small groups. But the growth of church membership called for adjustments. (Among northern European Jews today the host exchanges sips of wine with each guest: a gesture few hosts could complete with a large crowd!) Christians soon separated the supper from the blessings of bread and wine, and joined these blessings into a single prayer; in the fourth century this prayer acquired an explanatory narrative of Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples. As the amount of bread and wine increased, the deacons began piling these gifts on the table, or holding them in baskets when even the table became too small. Thus the host quit handling them, and instead stood praying with his hands raised throughout. After the fourth century, the decline of popular communion reduced the quantities needed, but presidents continued to celebrate without handling the gifts until the ninth century in the west, and until today in the east. (It astonishes Anglo-catholic seminarians to learn that Eastern Orthodox clergy never touch the bread and wine during the Great Thanksgiving, and have not for eighteen hundred years!)

In the west, the era of Charlemagne and Cluny saw revived Christian interest in Judaism, year-long conferences between monks and rabbis, and a well-intentioned but mistaken "restoration" of seemingly "lost" Jewish ritual. Because the gospel accounts fixed Jesus' death near Passover time, westerners now began eating unleavened Passover bread at their eucharist; and their presiders began mimicking Jesus' actions as the Roman Great Thanksgiving prayer narrated them—lifting the bread, the cup, and their eyes on cue, and making hand signs at every verb.

The resulting prestidigitation resembled neither Chabûrah nor Seder ritual; but it can still be seen in some form at most western altars today. Anglican Prayer Books still urge it. Nevertheless some western presiders follow a simpler, earlier style, either holding the bread and wine aloft throughout the prayer, or standing with empty hands raised as eastern Christian presidents have done since the third century. When the gifts exceed one paten and chaliceful, the latter method is still the only practical one, and so is our unvarying use at St Gregory's.

{88} To evoke the Jerusalem temple surroundings at their hometown services, many synagogues synchronized their worship with temple ritual, stood temple furniture around their buildings, and opened with this hymn. Christian synagogue architecture focussed on Christ's table, instead of the temple, as the place where we know God's presence, and therefore moved the Sanctus to the table liturgy, attaching it to the Great Thanksgiving either as a climax to the whole prayer, or to the prayer's opening praises.

{89} The Benedictus refrain ends the eucharistic meal in the second-century Didachê text, our earliest surviving Great Thanksgiving prayer, and Chabûrah texts likewise have the company sing the same psalm before leaving, possibly using refrains like this one. Thus Psalm 118 is likely the "hymn" mentioned at this point in the Last Supper story. (Mark 14:26)

{90} It appears that the Sanctus was moved from the opening of the synagogue reading service to the close of the Great Thanksgiving prayer, adjoining the Benedictus refrain; and later elaborations were tacked on after these hymns, so that the Sanctus and Benedictus fell somewhere near the middle of the resulting chain of prayers.

E.C. Ratcliff ["The Sanctus and the Pattern of the Early Anaphora," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 1950] points to the fourth century Apostolic Constitutions as a late survival of a more primitive pattern, by which these hymns concluded the prayer. G. Cuming (to whose memory this pamphlet is dedicated) found Ratcliff's theory too wide-sweeping: some ancient prayers may have developed according to Ratcliff's theory; others demonstrably did not.

When the Sanctus and Benedictus hymns fall in the middle of Great Thanksgiving prayers, as they do in most western prayers written since the fourth century, they divide two very different sections. The former section states a scriptural theme for the day's celebration, and may change following the lectionary; the section after the hymns is fixed, and focusses on Jesus' death and the table meal. [See Note 63, above.] Ratcliff's theory suggests a possible explanation for this format: the first section may reflect a primitive stage when the Presider or preacher improvised the prayer "prophetically" suiting the occasion (the Didachê expressly approves this practice), and the hymns followed. The second section may then have emerged as a form for non-prophetic presidents to recite: with time this form grew more extensive and detailed. Then as prophecy disappeared, both forms may have been repeated together, conserving tradition. The Benedictus' conflation with the Sanctus and separation from the Communion and post-communion implies that something like this happened somewhere, with widely copied results.

At St Gregory's we use Great Thanksgiving prayers in both formats: those supplied in the Prayer Book and subsequent official publications, which locate the hymns in the middle of the prayer; and a small series of our own authorship, based on the form (not the length!) of the Apostolic Constitutions, recalling creation and salvation history from the lectionary readings, and climaxing with the Sanctus and Benedictus. It is a felicitous form for prayer writing, as the paragraphs move naturally from past to present to realized eschatological hope, climaxing in Isaiah's majestic hymn.

{91} The early Church was rich with many such prayers, originally freely composed from Bible imagery, as synagogue and Chabûrah prayers were. Centuries of Roman pressure for uniformity, followed by Reformation wrangling over eucharistic dogma, produced a legacy of western prayers in fierce denominational isolation from each other. By contrast, many eastern churches borrowed each other's prayers, assigning them to diverse calendar occasions. Here as elsewhere, Anglican practice is shifting in an eastward direction; Roman reforms may be too.

{92} This moving story was first told to Paul at Antioch, and copied from his letter (1 Corinthians 11) into the gospels and many eucharistic prayers. Alas, since medieval times it has provided occasion for false magic and groundless sectarian polemic.

Western schoolmen, misreading ancient prayers' references to the saving actions of God's Word (that is, to Jesus' incarnation and death) reasoned that Jesus' words in this paragraph of the Great Thanksgiving prayer must perform the sacrificial action at each eucharist. With bizarre precision, they settled on a single central letter in the Roman prayer version as the "moment of consecration:" the "e" in "enim," a word missing from the scripture story even in Latin bibles! Western presiders began repeating Jesus' words bent over in a whisper—a dramatic technique here twisted from its use in Syrian worship—and quickly lifting the bread or the cup for the faithful to adore, before completing the prayer. Vulgar witchcraft recognized the magical implications, corrupting the Latin text "hoc est corpus meum /this is my body" into hocus pocus, and the consecrated bread into amulets for white magic against bad luck and vampires, or for black magic at supposed devil's masses.

Though appalled at these consequences, the Reformers accepted the schoolmen's premise, and rooted out sacrificial references to purge superstition. For four hundred years polemicists made Jesus' words an essential test of sacramental validity, as western denominations condemned each other's worship. The few ancient prayers surviving without this paragraph were treated as unusable anomalies, or even as non-eucharistic prayers suitable for lay presiders at church suppers! To their credit, Eastern Christians resisted identifying any one "moment of consecration," insisting that the Epiclesis asking for the Holy Spirit was as important to the prayer as the Last Supper story. [See following Note.] But western fashion influenced the ceremonial of some eastern churches too, only shifting this to the epiclesis instead. Our American Prayer Book requires the Last Supper story in freely composed prayers and prayers consecrating additional bread and wine, as though this were the minimal condition for validity.

However, modern textual criticism (M. Johnson et al.) shows this story was introduced into Great Thanksgiving prayers in the fourth century, when explanations instructing the crowds of new converts pervaded public worship. Most older prayers were edited then to receive it. Today insistence upon this paragraph as essential for sacramental validity would excommunicate the first three centuries of Christians, who are our sole source for scriptural and ritual tradition—an absurd position. As research uncovers more diverse usage at every historical level, ecumenists rely ever more on the classic doctrine of intention: a local church's (or denomination's) rites are valid if that church intends what the worldwide Church intends. Writing the Last Supper story into modern prayers shows that valid intention, but cannot be not the essential test.

{93} Much ink and blood have been spilt over this part of the prayer, called the Epiclesis, that is "calling down [the Holy Spirit]." Rather than rehearse the controversies that still cleave Christians here, I note Ratcliff's theory that the prayer originally asked for the Spirit's gifts on the Church, and only later consigned them to the bread and wine, thereby opening up insoluble disputes about what happened to these objects as a result. In this pamphlet I have tried to honor the main arguments: the unity of our offering with Christ's perfect offering; the meaning of Christ's actions in the context of the Hebrew scriptures he knew; the Church's faithful intentions in remembering him; the fruits of his life and death realized in the lives of his followers, individually and corporately; and God's creative and free generosity towards us, from which we have all the gifts we fight over.

{94} The Byzantine Acclamations from the Prayer Book's Eucharistic Prayer D—a prayer largely written by Gregory of Nyssa's brother Basil—are the best; and we adapt other prayers to use them. These Acclamations lack the futurist eschatology which other officially authorized Acclamations emphasize, and which contradicts Jesus' emphasis on the Kingdom come now. [N. Perrin, *Rediscovering the Teaching of Jesus*, 1965, among many other writers.]

This contradiction shows starkly how far the ascendant liturgical renewal lags behind New Testament scholarship. Perrin's analysis of gospel tradition has dominated scholarly criticism for thirty years. Yet not one of the officially published new Great Thanksgiving prayers expresses Jesus' distinctive teaching on the coming of God's Kingdom; most unwittingly betray it for futurist expectation, in concert with early Christian apologetic. We need a new generation of prayers to bring Jesus' message into Christian worship. [See Note 73, above.]

{95} We have already sung the Lord's Prayer to begin the Prayers of the People, and do not repeat it here. R. Taft has argued [at a North American Academy of Liturgy seminar in 1989] that the Lord's Prayer migrated here, not on account of its reference to feeding, but on account of its petition for forgiveness. Just as those excommunicated for major sins (the Penitents) were anciently restored to communion by the Bishop's pardon, so regular communicants could ask pardon for their minor offences by repeating the Lord's Prayer, and then share worthily in the bread and wine. Unfortunately, by undermining the principle that nothing can make us worthy of Christ's banquet, this innovation begins a long history of devotional confusion. [See Note 63, above.] It also overturns the gospels' order of events, which derives from Jesus' own teaching and example: in God's kingdom we are first welcomed, forgiven, and fed; and then we repent and reform our lives—as the Zacchaeus story exemplifies (Luke 19).

{96} Following G. Dix's theory of *The Shape of the Liturgy* [1945], many modern celebrants highlight this action, called the FRACTION, as a gesture fraught with meaning. Some lift the bread and break it dramatically, suggesting the Fraction completes the sacrifice of Jesus, broken on the Cross. (One cathedral I visited punctuated this gesture with a banshee shriek from the organ's Spanish Trumpet stop—I was so startled I sat on my new felt hat!) But a gesture implying that something happens to Christ in the liturgy is just what the sixteenth century Reformers called a "superstition." The original Fraction was a functional matter of distributing the bread and wine for the Communion—it was the Communion that truly completed the eucharistic sacrifice. So we perform the Fraction plainly. The Presider and assisting presbyters divide up the bread; the deacon divides up the wine, a somewhat more complex job.

Function determines the number of vessels on the Table. Throughout history as the number of communicants grew, so did the number of communion vessels: in the east, giant patens held the bread (still Ethiopian custom); western medieval churches with tiny sanctuaries piled excess loaves on panniers held by subdeacons squeezed in behind the presider; renaissance reformers replaced their goblet chalices with imposing silver pitchers, to supply the wine communion newly restored to the laity. But the shrinkage of late medieval communions, and the introduction of unleavened bread in the ninth century west, allowed both eastern and western churches to return to a single chalice and paten on the Altar Table—and in the east even a single loaf—accidentally restoring the rabbinical scale likely seen at Jesus' Last Supper, and clearly assumed by Paul, who makes this one loaf a symbol of the Church's unity. (1 Corinthians 10:17) Therefore some modern liturgists try to keep this visual symbol by an artifice, confining the extra vessels required offstage until the fraction. But Massey Shepherd protested that Vatican II reformers (of whom he was one) deliberately demoted this symbol, instead honoring practical function as fundamental to ritual. And we abandoned it at St Gregory's when the congregation crowding around the Altar made it impossibly clumsy. Now all the vessels needed stand on the Table throughout the prayer, covered beforehand and afterward with veils embroidered by the Indian Christians of Kerala; and at Easter and other very crowded services we use a giant Ethiopian wooden paten piled high with many homemade loaves.

At crowded services, as chalices empty we extend the wine by co-mixture, pouring the flagon of consecrated wine into other cups brought half-filled to the table. This ancient practice serves both symbolic unity and speedy distribution for Communion. Should the bread or wine run out, we do not repeat the Great Thanksgiving prayer's Last Supper narrative, as the American Prayer Book newly directs: the Anglican reformers would have seen magical superstition in such "hocus pocus;" moreover, it contradicts renewal by singling out one paragraph of the prayer as the consecrating moment. Instead, like eastern Christians we drop a fragment of consecrated bread into a fresh chalice, by extension making this wine the Blood of Christ. (And should the consecrated bread run out, we intinct fresh bread to the same end.) The same method serves for delivering communion to the sick. Hagia Sophia made this simple practice standard by the eleventh century for communion from the presanctified gifts, reckoning that sacramental theology allows no distinction between Christ's Body and Blood. [N. Uspensky, *Evening Worship in the Orthodox Church*, 1985, p. 145ff] Such elegant thinking solves problems still vexing western reform. As easterners have enjoyed two uninterrupted millennia of lay communion in both species, westerners may learn from them when we can.

{97} The familiar western text of this Syrian hymn is corrupt. According to C.H. Dodd, 2 Isaiah's image of the Suffering Servant was mistranslated in John's gospel from Aramaic, a language that spells "Servant" and "Lamb" alike. Moreover the hymn's last repetition has been changed peculiarly to fit worship at Rome, where the Peace follows before Communion. We sing the hymn in a more primitive form ("Servant of God, you take away the sins of the world"), invoking 2 Isaiah's original prophecy, and not altering the last repetition. [For wider use, a setting of our music to the more familiar text appears in *Church Hymnal Studies V: Congregational Music for Eucharist* (1980).]

{98} Many eastern sources begin communion with this dialogue, which I have Englished in expanded gender terms. (An explanation follows here.) Recent American Prayer Book reform introduced the presider's original line alone in early drafts, whereupon some readers objected—contradicting St Paul—that sinners could not be called holy. So the authors compromised: “The Gifts of God for the People of God.” Yet that objection would hardly have arisen had drafts included the people's original response, which quotes the Gloria in excelsis, making plain the orthodox sense.

It is tempting to think that eastern usage inspired Cranmer's queer decision to set the Gloria in excelsis at the end of his eucharistic rite, where it remained in Anglican Prayer Books until the twentieth century. The communion chants Lamb of God and One is Holy, both Syrian in origin, branch off from the Gloria in excelsis, another Syrian hymn which functions as a concluding doxology at Lauds—not the eucharist—in eastern worship. The Sarum rite shows Byzantine liturgy was understood in medieval England [See Note 59, above], but Cranmer's knowledge is less clear to us.

My translation here, and other translations used by St Gregory's composers, reflect our policy to pluralize gender language in every service, rather than restrict it to any one standard. Commenting on the Song of Songs, Gregory Nyssen says the groom's mother in the biblical poem symbolizes God, since God has no gender, so that a woman represents God as well as a man. Gregory's exegesis inspired the icon behind our presider's chair, and the people's communion response seems an excellent place to speak it aloud. “Mothering Father” echoes clearly the Gloria in excelsis, while giving the feminine image the verb: this has four advantages. Gregory and his fellow Cappadocians insist that God's actions are all we can know about God. Secondly, despite some other theologians' faith in nouns and copulas, poets and storytellers know that verbs dominate what people hear. Again, Scripture uses nouns and verbs alike with male images, but verbs more often with female images for God—such as a hen brooding over chicks, or a nurse coaxing an unwilling child to her breast.

Finally, “Mothering Father,” while poetically terse, is also what Paul Tillich called a “broken image:” thanks to cognitive dissonance its limits are self-evident, proof against idolatry [Dynamics of Faith, 1962]. Tillich would likely have seen brokenness, rather than inclusiveness, as the chief virtue in feminist God language today. He called his the “Protestant Principle,” while claiming rightly it was older than Protestantism. Among Gregory Nyssen's intellectual heirs, Julian of Norwich and Teresa of Ávila composed feminist terms of lasting usefulness with it: “Jesus our Mother,” for one pertinent example. Purer, less dissonant female images bear the virtue of brokenness only temporarily. Once we grow accustomed to them, they will prove as dangerous as patriarchal terms are, and as matriarchal terms have been for other faiths.

{99} A modified Byzantinism: they would have preferred a cleric of the same order. See R. Taft, “Receiving Communion ~ A Forgotten Symbol?” *Worship*, 1983.

{100} The Chabûrah usually involved small groups, who fit around one dinner table. The host shared one loaf and one cup with his guests, delivering each with his own hands. Paul found this symbol a powerful reminder of church unity (1 Corinthians 10:17); yet even in his lifetime churches must have become too crowded to make it practical. Eastern churches can still employ one communion minister, since today few of their laypeople ordinarily communicate; but western Christians can preserve only a vestigial gesture, for example by ordering the Presider to communicate the deacons or lay assistants, who then split up and communicate the rest. And once this unity symbol is broken, there seems little point in restricting the distributorship to some laypeople—thus clericalized—and not others. Especially if other methods are speedier; alas, the Communion is often the slowest part of an understaffed western liturgy. By contrast, our system works swiftly, with the chalices moving in a leap-frog pattern. And our people like this mixture of communion methods—both receiving from a vested “host” and serving one another.

{101} See Note 63, above, on Jesus' choice of table fellowship as a prophetic sign.

{102} Current fashion favors sending the remaining bread and wine for consumption offstage; but we are not done with them yet! We will shortly set the people's offerings of money and food for the poor alongside them on the table. Later the people will finish the bread and wine there along with cakes, cookies, coffee and juices—and champagne on occasion—as an extension of the eucharistic feast. [See following Notes.]

{103} This psalm verse once introduced the blessing of the cup following the Chabûrah, and probably migrated here to accompany the distribution of the antidôron when that became the laypeople's effective communion in most eastern

liturgies. [See Note 69, above.] Since our worship moves on to dancing and further feasting on coffee and cakes, this blessing serves to end the formal communion and begin a more informal phase—a parallel to its use in eastern rites today.

{104} Here is the reason we do not remove the eucharistic remains to the sacristy, as is the current fashion. By joining the people's gifts with God's gifts at this point, we make plain that all our gifts come from God—not that we receive the eucharistic gifts in return for our offerings, as a laypeople's "offertory" procession unhappily implies. Recently some reformers have recanted their earlier sponsorship for the laypeople's "offertory" procession, and argued for almsgiving after communion as the classic and best arrangement. [See C. Buchanan, *The End of the Offertory: an Anglican Study*, 1978; and Note 65, above.] After an initial experiment with almsgathering at the very end of the service (newcomers were confused and did not contribute) we moved this action to the postcommunion, with more fruitful results.

{105} Dancing has drawn even more enthusiasm than we hoped. Before founding St Gregory's, we experimented with caroling at the Episcopal Church at Yale, where it became a popular Easter event. And after St Gregory's first Easter our people insisted they wanted to dance at every liturgy. So we do, even on Good Friday. Indeed, counting the Tripudium procession to the altar, our congregation dance twice. Very occasionally a newcomer opts out, but by this point most have abandoned all hope for a normal church service, and will give another novelty a try. Those who do almost always say they enjoyed it.

{106} The Christian eucharist has known a huge variety of endings, from a simple exchange of the Peace to a long chain of hymns, prayers, and washing up. These endings have included prayers of thanksgiving after communion and farewell benedictions. Most popular was the Missa, in which the Bishop went to the center of the nave ("behind the Ambo"), extended his hands over the people in a final prayer, and the whole congregation came for him to lay hands on them in quick succession. This ritual was also called "coming to the bishop's hand," and in fourth century Jerusalem it concluded all services, eucharistic or not, even if the bishop had to be hauled into church at the final moment to perform it. [A. Kavanaugh, *North American Academy of Liturgy seminar paper*, 1985.] Mother Teresa of Calcutta—the Roman Catholic Church's first woman bishop since Teresa of Ávila—did this same heartwarming ceremony every time she entered a house of her nuns. The Missa has given us the word "Mass" (from the Roman deacon's final plea: "Ite, missa est,—That was the Missa; now go home!") and the western sacramental ritual of Confirmation, originally a bishop's Missa after baptism.

Our restored Missa has proved overwhelmingly popular—indeed, our Bishop loved it at once. In 1993 he led the Diocesan Convention in celebrating the liturgy as we do at St Gregory's, and specifically asked for the Missa. After only a brief hesitation, three hundred delegates pressed forward eagerly for a blessing and touch from his hand, while all sang the Polychronion. The entire ceremony lasted less than three minutes.

{107} The Byzantine use for this prophecy, which the Prayer Book assigns to the Easter Vigil. This Good Friday rite runs seamlessly toward Easter.

{108} R. Dentan, *Lectures in Old Testament Theology*, 1970; and G. Vermès, *Jesus the Jew*, 1973.

{109} G. Vermès, *op.cit.* See 2 Samuel 7:14, and Psalms 2:7 & 89:26f.

{110} The New Testament never gives the name *cohen* (hierieus in Greek) to any individual Christian minister, but only to Christ ~ that is, to Jesus and to his body, the Church. [F. Cross, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 1966.]

{111} H. von Campenhausen, "The Authority of Jesus' Relatives in the Early Church," *Jerusalem and Rome*, 1966.

{112} E. Foley, "The Cantor in Historical Perspective," *Worship*, 1984.

{113} W. Telfer, *The Office of a Bishop*, 1962.

{114} P. Brown, *The Making of Late Antiquity*, 1978.

{115} P. Brown, *op. cit.*

{116} Episcopalians wrangle needlessly over licensing lay Christians to carry the eucharist to the sick, as laypeople (including acolytes) anciently did. Our laypeople have had the right to handle and carry the eucharist for four hundred years, since the Anglican reformers deliberately expunged every canon and rubric restricting these functions to clergy. The reformation left English bishops no discretion over this matter, nor does the Constitution of any Anglican province restore it to them. Notwithstanding ultramontane arguments to the contrary, the Anglican reformers' intentions were abundantly clear, and it would now take a Constitutional change, or another new Prayer Book, to undo their work. Training laypeople for the pastoral opportunities attached is an excellent, even an urgent idea; but this training supports them in an authority they already have, and want to exercise responsibly.

Licensing laypeople for ministries within the liturgy (carrying the chalice or paten) may fall within an Anglican bishop's charge to see that all is done decently and in order there; but demanding that the bishop license laypeople carrying eucharistic vessels and not other liturgical ministries (reading, leading prayers) is superstitious. Ecumenical discussions will force us toward consistency in these matters. Ironically, the Roman Catholic denomination, which still has canons forbidding laypeople to handle the sacred species, has proved more flexible than us in sending lay communion acolytes to the sick. It does no ecumenical good when modern Anglicans treat the reformation the way modern American voters treat the Bill of Rights, as an embarrassment to be ignored.

{117} The American Episcopal Church created a lay order of deacons in the 19th century: inaccurately called "lay readers," as they were expected to "read" the Prayer Book offices when no priest was available, in fact they now do deacons' work in nearly all Episcopal parishes—the Byzantine diaconal pattern—far outnumbering ordained deacons.