

LITURGICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REPORT 2001

MEMBERSHIP

Most Rev RL Clarke, Bishop of Meath and Kildare	Rev Canon D Williams
Rt Rev EF Darling	Rev N Jardine
Very Rev JTF Paterson	Rev MJ Elliott
Rev Canon JAB Mayne	Lady Sheil
Rev Canon BT Blacoe	Dr AF Carver
Rev Canon C West	Mr DB O'Callaghan
Rev Canon MC Kennedy	Miss S Pragnell

Co-opted members

Rt Rev HC Miller, Bishop of Down and Dromore (Chairman)	
Rev Canon MAJ Burrows (Vice-Chairman)	Rev MMS Gray-Stack
Rev Canon RB Rountree (Honorary Secretary)	Mr J Myles
Rev EJ Coulter	

Consultants

Very Rev G Mayes	Rev Canon S Smart
Rev Canon RE Turner	Rev Canon WJ Marshall

2000-2001 saw the retirement of the chairman, the Right Reverend EF Darling, after years of careful and gentle leadership of the committee. Well-deserved tributes were paid at General Synod in May 2000. The Committee was glad still to have his advice as he remains a member until the elections of 2001, but this was restricted in that, because of illness, he was unable to be at meetings until January 2001. The Committee elected the Bishop of Down and Dromore as chairman and, recognizing the pressures that are on him as bishop of one of the larger dioceses, elected Canon MAJ Burrows as vice-chairman.

In September Canon Rountree, Honorary Secretary and Canon Mayne, editor of the new edition of the Book of Common Prayer, were representatives at the National Liturgical Conference of the Church of England where many of the new services in the *Common Worship* series were explained and experienced. Both felt that the services in the Wholeness and Healing series were most powerful and were already a little envious of the rich provision our sister church now has to use.

At last year's General Synod the opportunity to suggest amendments to the resolutions which passed by substantial majorities was extended to thirty days. A number of members of synod took the opportunity to send in amendments. Each of these was carefully considered by the Committee, some were accepted, some only require dealing with at the editorials stage and some the Committee was unable to accept as they went contrary to general principles on which changes in services had been proposed. The

Committee has sought to communicate with all those proposers of amendments in the hope that they will appreciate the thinking of the Committee. Some amendments will be debated and voted upon.

Bills to be proposed at Synod in 2001 will deal with (a) the Holy Communion services, (b) the Calendar with collects and post-communion prayers (including the 1926 collects and bible references to the epistles and gospels in that edition of the Prayer Book) and (c) the Canticles.

Resolutions for 2001 represent a great deal of work and cover almost all the pastoral services in traditional and contemporary language. As before, changes proposed to the texts of traditional language services are confined to the replacement of 'Holy Ghost' by 'Holy Spirit', the modified traditional version of the Lord's Prayer, one or two anachronisms and shortening of prayers. An attempt has been made to bring the rubrics up to date although the rubrics are so much the 'stage directions' in the traditional service for Holy Matrimony that these have hardly been touched! The Committee has reflected on almost twenty years of experience with modern language pastoral services and in the light of this proposes some small changes to the marriage rite and fuller provision for funerals. Following the trial use of the services set out in Holy Baptism 1998 and criticisms made, the Committee re-visited its former version and proposes a set of services, all of which derive from a common structure. The Committee believes that just as the twentieth century saw the 'recovery' of the centrality of Holy Communion in the life of the Church so the twenty-first century has the potential for recovering the pivotal place of the sacrament of Holy Baptism. The celebration of Holy Baptism needs to become an 'event'. In large parishes this could mean setting aside the main service once a quarter for Holy Baptism, and no longer seeing baptism as a somewhat tiresome interruption to Morning Prayer or Holy Communion once or twice a month! The modern language services that stand alongside Baptism, Confirmation and the Renewal of Baptismal Vows have a similar shape. It will be noted that the service for the Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child is being retained unchanged from the Book of Alternative Occasional Services.

One small item - the Sentences of Scripture - was held over from 1999: it completes the texts which are for use in the normal Sunday service.

As hinted at in our previous reports, the Committee has exercised itself over the choice of an alternative modern language version of the Psalter. The Liturgical Psalter in Alternative Prayer Book to which Harper-Collins holds the copyright was not an option. The Psalter in *Common Worship 2000* was felt to be too like the 1926 Prayer Book Psalter. A Psalter, prepared by a group of Roman Catholic scholars in the United States for the International Consultation on English in Liturgy, was given careful consideration. Its 'freshness' initially commended it but extended trial use and real perceived difficulties with singing led the Committee to look elsewhere. The final recommendation is the translation prepared for the 1979 Prayer Book of the Episcopal Church of the United States and subsequently adopted by the Anglican Church of Canada and the Scottish Episcopal Church. It is familiar to some as the version in *Celebrating Common Prayer*. The Legal Advisory Committee ruled in 1978 that it is not necessary to provide the full text for every member of General Synod, copies will be available for consultation in

diocesan offices between this Synod and the final vote in 2002. This psalter has one attraction in addition to its inherent merits: the American Church placed it in the public domain, and therefore no royalty payments are required.

This large tranche of material brings the publication of the new edition of the Book of Common Prayer much nearer. Next year the remaining material will be presented and then in 2003 the final tidying-up legislation. The Committee appreciates the patience of General Synod in what is more than a once-in-a-lifetime undertaking. It hopes that our work together will give the Church a book of services which will meet most of its needs for decades to come.

At the time when the services in APB were being tested the versions used of the Nicene and Apostles' Creeds, Gloria in Excelsis and canticles like Benedictus, Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis and Te Deum were from a set of texts, agreed to be the same for all churches which use English in liturgy. These had been produced in 1970 by the International Commission for English Texts (ICET). Only in one phrase of the modern language Lord's Prayer did the APB depart from the ICET wording in line with the Church of England's ASB.

In 1988 revised translations of some of these texts were recommended to the churches by an expanded international consultation, now known as ELLC (the English Language Liturgical Consultation), published in 1990 as "Prayers we have in common". These texts differ somewhat mainly in an attempt to wrestle with issues of inclusive language.

Almost all churches that have revised modern language services since 1988 have adopted what are called the "ELLC texts". LAC has already proposed adopting some of the ELLC recommendations.

However, LAC has become aware that in August 2001 ELLC will be considering representations on some of the recommendations that may lead to changes. With the Liturgy Commissions of the Church in Wales, the Scottish Episcopal Church and the Church of England LAC will be involved in making representations. It will offer to General Synod in 2002 its considered recommendations in the light of the outcome of the August meeting. This may involve amending services already in train for the 2004 Prayer Book. We just about have time to do this and LAC hopes that Synod will not this year pre-empt decisions to be made in 2002/3 on any recommendations. It would be the aim of LAC that the new Prayer Book will contain, as far as possible, modern language texts that are the same wherever in the world worship is in the English language.