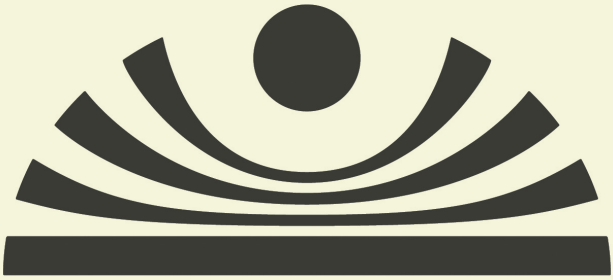

Proceedings

North American Academy of Liturgy Annual Meeting

Toronto, Ontario
2-5 January 2023

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of the

North American Academy of Liturgy

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The North American Academy of Liturgy (NAAL) (http://www.naal-liturgy.org) is an ecumenical and interreligious association of liturgical scholars who collaborate in research concerning public worship. The Academy's purpose is to promote liturgical scholarship among its members through opportunities for exchange of ideas and to extend the benefits of this scholarship to the worshiping communities to which its members belong.

The *Proceedings* of the North American Academy of Liturgy is published annually by the Academy for its membership and for scholars, libraries, and religious communities and organizations that would benefit from the research and collaboration of the Academy.

Articles published in Part Three-Select Seminar Papers have been peer-reviewed. Only papers presented at the annual meeting are eligible for review. Authors are responsible for the content of their submissions.

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PART 3—SELECT SEMINAR PAPERS

Foreword

The North American Academy of Liturgy returned to Canada for its Annual Meeting held in Toronto, Ontario at the downtown Sheraton Hotel from 2-5 January 2023. The city, glorious at any time, was lighted and festive following the celebration of the New Year. Though attendance was a bit lower than usual, a substantial number of the Academy along with many visitors gathered for what was a productive meeting, less weighed down but still weighed down nonetheless by the threat of COVID-19. All but one seminar gathered. Most seminars had a healthy number of members present for face-to-face discussion, and many more joined virtually. The list of papers presented in Part 2 (Seminar Reports) demonstrates the variety and vigor that underlies the Academy's work.

The Vice-Presidential Address was ably and entertainingly delivered by Glen CJ Beyer. In "Shall We Gather," Glen began with talk of the Lord of the Rings, physics, vivid stories, shoes and sweaters, all to lead us to his challenge "to each seminar or other sub-group within our Academy . . . find ways to build the HOW and the WHO of our gathering, and to me everything is on the table. Expect a phone call. When, where, in person, out-of-body, I really don't care, so long as gathering is the goal. Even in our most rigidly regulated liturgical gatherings, could not some form of self-build allow the community to come together and so enter the ritual? I think it could."

Melva Wilson Costen—a luminary among us—was honored this year with the Godfrey Diekmann Award. Anamnesis can jostle us into transcendence, as she implied in much of her work. Her teaching, scholarship, and most of all her music are truly deserving of this infrequently-granted tribute.

Karen Westerfield-Tucker received the *Berakah* award, which notes her "scholarship encompassed . . . an expansive ecumenical and global reach." Indeed this is true; it would be difficult not to include her work in a footnote now and then! Her address was "autobiographical," but in so being it was also a biography of sorts of our field of liturgical studies over the last few decades, and a reminder of the impact one scholar can have on the world.

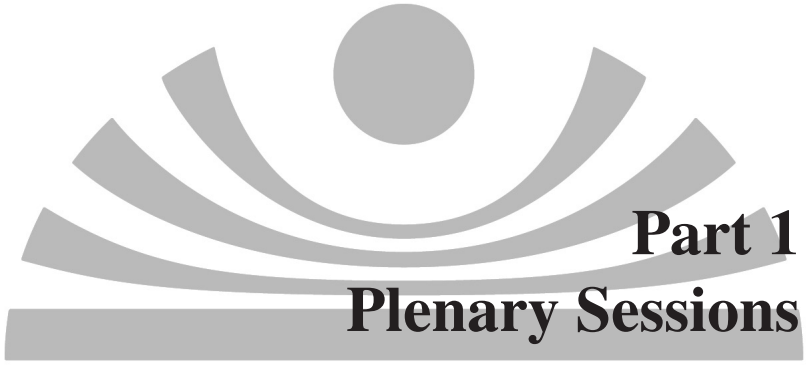
Part 3 (Select Seminar Papers) includes just one paper this year for lack of submissions. As a matter of urgency if not policy, I urge each seminar to submit at least one paper for publication in next year's issue. Even so, the Feminist Studies in Liturgy seminar has engaged the contemporary moment with a collaborative

feminist and womanist liturgical offering "A Ritual of Thistles" along with substantial commentary. We are pleased to publish it here!

The annual business meeting (followed by our banquet) included voting on various options for the pattern of meetings into the future. Much was discussed, and a few things were decided, but one thing is clear—we will gather again as an Academy in Seattle, Washington, from 2-5 January in 2024.

Jason J. McFarland
Editor of *Proceedings*

Jason is a member of the Faculty of Theology & Philosophy at the Australian Catholic University teaching liturgy and sacramental theology; he is the Executive Secretary for Liturgy at the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference



Part 1
Plenary Sessions

Introduction to the Vice-Presidential Address

Todd E. Johnson, President

It is my privilege to introduce to you our Vice-President, Dr. Glenn Byer. A native Canadian, Glenn was raised in the plains of Alberta and its agricultural and farming culture, raised in a family with both French Canadian and German roots, but with common roots of faith. It this foundation of faith together with Glenn's musical talents that led him to be a church organist at age sixteen.

Interest in faith, music, and liturgy would lead Glenn to purse an MA from the University of Notre Dame, and then a Doctorate from the Pontifical Athenaeum of Sant' Anselmo in Rome, where he wrote on Carolingian Baptismal Letters.

Glenn has spent his career evenly between academics and publishing, currently serving at Oregon Catholic Press and the faculty of the University of Portland. Glenn's books and articles are at the same time pastoral and scholarly, representing the breadth of our academy, the theological and theoretical, and the practical and pastoral.

As a member of our academy, Glenn contributes to the Problems in the Early History of Liturgy seminar. Glenn also contributes and has contributed to our academy as a willing volunteer, Academy Committee Member, and though his genuine hospitality. Glenn will now contribute his paper, "Shall We Gather" as his Vice-Presidential Address.

Please welcome our Vice-President, Glenn Byer.

Vice-Presidential Address

Shall We Gather

Glenn CJ Byer

Glenn CJ Beyer is the Manager of Worship Publications at Oregon Catholic Press.

Before I begin, I do want to draw attention to a Canadian parliamentary tradition. The minister of Finance by a 70-year-old tradition wears new shoes when delivering the annual budget. Stealing that custom, these shoes are bought for me by my mom are Moretti's from Moores—a fine purveyor of suits in Canada. The first woman finance minister recently gave her first budget and wore shoes from Zvelle—a fine Canadian shoe and handbag seller based here in Toronto and available only on-line.

I amar prestar aen.
The world is changed.

Han matho ne nen.
I feel it in the water.

Han mathon ned cae.
I feel it in the earth.

A han noston ned gwilith.
I smell it in the air.

Much that once was is lost, for none now live who remember it.
("Galadriel's Prologue," *The Lord of the Rings*, 1.01)

I start with this quote from the movie version of Lord of the Rings to assert the tense—present perfect—of the assertion that applies to us much as it does to Middle Earth. The world is already changed, it has been changed for several years. It is to our peril that we wait any longer to respond to this change either as an academy or as those responsible for forming future liturgists or liturgies. The world is already changed.

What is more, as a failed geologist I want to add a concept from physics—the increasing rate of acceleration—a natural phenomenon. On earth, 9.8 m/s squared is the gravitational constant of acceleration—the constant rate at which all things will speed up as they fall to earth.

What it means is that while change is constant, the increased speed is not linear. It is exponential—the speeding up speeds up till it reaches an equilibrium—a terminal velocity. I want to posit that over the last century, the rate of change in people's expectation of spectacle at public events of any kind, including worship, has been increasing in this exponential manner. At times it can feel like a tornado.

Our study as an academy and by those beyond our membership has also shown that this tornado-like acceleration of change is not an original occurrence.

Imagine the sudden acceleration in the rate of change in the worship of Israel around the time of the exile or the destruction of either temple. Change was forced upon the people, and the rate of change accelerated until a new stability was achieved. In Christianity there is a myth of origins, that overnight we went from an illegal sect to the darling of the empire. So, at the start, let there be comfortable words. The rate of change then must have been increasing at a crazy pace for a time. Where we are now, we have been before. We can survive.

The increased rate of change of culture in this century requires of us an uncomfortable agility and openness to other fields of study. The tradition shows that when worship has not kept up with the rate of change or has become isolated from the rest of the culture, entire swaths of the faithful can be lost. This has again become a serious issue in our time. A failure to use the resources that the tradition offers to keep up with this accelerated rate of change leaves liturgy without its full effect in the lives of people who are starving for something more.

As much as we might feel unmoored in this strange world, we can still bring our multivalent visions to help our institutions give worship new relevant expressions, and so keep pace with the other aspects of our cultures that have overtaken us.

Let these examples suffice in reading the challenge:

Many years ago, my cousin Randy, now dead, organized a trip to Las Vegas with my mom, five of my mom's six sisters, a couple of uncles and me. That in itself was an accomplishment, but while we were there, we saw the *Cirque du Soleil* show simply called O! From the way the curtain was suddenly pulled away we saw into a changed world of public spectacle that none of our ancestors would have believed even if seen. Gone were the boundaries of proscenium, and even the limits of art and human ingenuity were challenged.

As I experienced that event, it dawned on me that the worship I helped to create week by week could in no way compete with this world. Either I had to pretend that this was irrelevant and not something we as a community had to compete with or . . . while I didn't accept that premise, what is our alternative? Should the designers of these spectacles not be part of our organization?

That realization came in a similar way in the world of CGI and the movies, or with the rapidly increasing personal control of spectacle that one has in video games. People live in these worlds. In Spokane for the world's fair of 1974, there was a theatre where we could vote and so determine which way the movie should go . . . like digital watches we thought that was pretty cool. Worship in most settings hasn't, by and large, even gotten that far.

A third example are the various exhibits that are crisscrossing the globe these days. I have been to the Van Gogh Experience and to the Sistine Chapel exhibit. Van Gogh was particularly troubling for me as a liturgist. The event included a time of informal gathering, more formal hospitality, followed by a liminal experience that prepared you—whether you knew everything or nothing about Van Gogh, one might say this aspect formed you to get the fullest experience of what was to come. But once you entered into the main event which you could join at any point and stay for as many iterations as you liked—it was not enough to just look at how the images were displayed and brought to life. At least for me, I had to walk—no, to tell the truth I walked to the rhythm of the music that played, what the generous among us might call dancing—thank goodness no one saw—as the images of these static works of art entered and left, and assaulted my vision—30 foot tall sunflower blossoms, vines growing across the walls, and at times the ceiling and the floor—there was no stage, no sanctuary, and no nave, no lead actors and in a way no audience. We were, as promised, immersed in the experience both visually and by sound. Should the team that designed this not here with us today—we have much to discuss.

Finally, I have been publishing my book on travel to Italy on Twitter and have been challenged by the maximum length of a tweet, which is 280 characters; TikTok advises that the optimal recommended video should be twenty-one to thirty-four seconds. No wonder we feel a bit at sea, but have we even asked what a meaningful 280-character liturgy or a service of thirty-four seconds might be? What can we learn from a world where complete events are found in these dimensions? Should not content creators be here—Sister Vasa, we need you here for more than coffee!

I believe, based on all these experiences, that claiming our worship experiences as encounters with the divine no longer measures up. Either it makes us look out to lunch or it makes God look very small and remote. The sight and sounds of these experiences simply overwhelm anything our traditions have done in the visual

and aural realms. Even to attend, or to *assister* as the French have it, at what we used to call "the show" in Rome—Christmas Eve Mass at St. Peter's, once the definition of excess and grandeur, bathed in the television lights, with the Pope—even such a spectacle comes in second place when compared to the other public spectacles in our lives. I have to indulge a memory of my first year in Rome as a somewhat miserable student. I called my parents (collect) after the celebration and told them they could actually see me if they watched the broadcast!!! I was the guy in the red sweater.

Evidently red is a common sweater color at midnight Mass at St. Peter's.

The rate at which other experiences such as those I describe have grown and improved, all of this means that at this point, liturgical catching up is not an option: we need to make an evolutionary-sized leapfrog past what people see as spectacle to offer an experience of the divine that will be both awesome and beyond expectation. I can only thank goodness the other senses—taste, touch, smell—have not had the same kinds of media development. We still have avenues unexplored by social media.

At the same time, I need to counsel against the over-producing of our worship, of taking it completely out of the hands of the worshiper. I think of the singing of the national anthem at sporting events. Incidentally, and stealing my own thunder, there is a great YouTube video of Edmonton Oiler fans being given the opportunity to take that back.

There is something here that is not changing, and it has a voice too.

As much as the rate of acceleration can increase over time, science likewise tells us that the faster we go, the stronger the forces against change become. Part of the resistance comes from the environment in which we live, the resistance to change.

For me this is affirmed by a concept from the field of historiography that may already have had its day—it is known officially as history from below—every-day history—*Alletagsgeschichte* of Alf Lüdtke and Hans Medick. This form of study was born out of an attempt to understand what was really going on in the hearts of Germans in the upheaval of the 1960's, and it should have great importance for us, even if the obstacles it raises, especially for the study of problems in the early history of liturgy, are especially acute. The notion is that history is best done from below—and for us involved in worship, it should be obvious, that it matters tons less what the official books say or what an Emperor asks in a circular letter on Baptism in 811/812.

Beyond the official books and often in spite of official pronouncements, what do the people pray, how do they celebrate, really? Part of my work in music publish-

ing is to determine what are people singing, really. And not just taking their word for it—whether in circular letters on Baptism or in parish music programs people continue to vote for songs they don't use—or they deceive themselves.

So let us look at the liturgical ether in which we move, the air we breathe. Let us consider the danger of making the liturgy so new and over-produced that the ordinary people of God are frozen out. Speaking of frozen, we are in Canada, a place that has been very much associated with a do-it-yourself approach to tradition, to cultural events and, ultimately, to worship.

I have burned into my memory the annual New Year's Day gatherings of my mother's family—grandparents, eleven children and assorted spouses, me, one of twenty-seven grandchildren and assorted friends, and basically half the town of Morinville, Alberta, where they lived, all of us crammed into a postage stamp of a house. All were welcome to be part of a ritual that could last twelve or more hours—longer if there was a blizzard. There were many mini-rituals: the annual stealing of a piece of ham from my plate by Uncle George, the sight of seven sisters plus the in-laws sitting together for supper and all talking at the same time at what seemed like lightning speed—in French, and the annual chase at midnight, where my Uncle Ralph, born on January 2nd, would try in vain to avoid being given the birthday bumps. On the way home, I remember my late father asking what was all the news from all that talking, and Mom would say, "Oh nothing much!"

At that event there were ritual performances of all kinds—from a concert with contributions from each of the twenty-seven grand kids, to square dancing, to comedy, to instrumental music, but especially singing—a series of songs sung every year by the same people, a set list that included my grandmother singing a song ("*La Madelon*") whose English title "I'll be true to the whole regiment" was not an exact translation.

It is important, I suppose, to note that these formative experiences began and were fully imbued with food and drink. The senses of taste and smell. And as for touch, well there was a greeting—*la bis*—the double it is called. It was kind of a secret handshake, and we'd warn any friends who came with us to look out for the aunties—because there would be much kissing. I have to say that when we 'got too big' and moved to a local hall—when it was 'professionalized,' the event lost some of its power as a spectacle and as a ritual. What that means for liturgical formation and for the future of our communities is that there may be an ideal size. If you go too big or give people too much room, then the link—the gathering itself—can lose some of its power.

As an aside, eventually the event shifted down a generation, and where it still occurs it has returned to being several home events. Similar, if smaller gatherings were held by the Byers, although a couple of years ago we did go bigger and had

a couple hundred of the immediate family come together at my cousin's farm near Busby, Alberta.

My nephew, just this year, began the process of handing these traditions down a generation, taking the baton, and hosting our version of this event. I am richly blessed with family. In the standard history of Canada as a country, this small history from below that I have just described means nothing. In liturgical history? Nothing. And we were not alone.

It took a media earthquake for the history only now being acknowledged and mourned of the first nations and the residential schools to be even told. Much can be swept under the rug. More than mourning needs to happen. We need experts in the ritual life of the first nations to be with us, even if they don't fit our categories of degreed professionals.

And while Cree translations of English hymns together with the Huron Carol is a good start, more is needed—more than affirming that we are currently on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. It is more than the tradition in the West to have the first nations as the first group in the Canada Day parade. Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands. The celebration of multiculturalism, another Canadian point of pride, needs to be more fully part of this do-it-yourself approach, to liturgy from below.

But you do see this kind of do-it-yourselfism competing and sometimes winning the competition with the largest sporting or cultural events. Now I do have to raise the specter of the liturgy that is Grey Cup Week and Super Bowl Sunday, really any Sunday in the football season.

I must likewise confess that I have participated in all of the ritual aspects of the liturgy that unfolds on selected fall Saturdays in South Bend. I often go to lunch on Sunday morning at a local sports bar, and there you see everyone 'going to worship' one might say—where the spectacle and the do-it-yourself aspects meet—the spectacle on the field merging with the do-it-yourself efforts at the bar, complete with vestments, liturgical blessings for their team and curses heaped upon the opposition and the refs, all accompanied by food and drink. I wonder if at some level the patrons of the local sports bar believe that their presence changes the game. Is that not the nature of prayer? I know that my presence was not enough, when at the stadium in South Bend, the hated Georgia Bulldog fans outnumbered in volume the home team partisans, and the game was lost. I refer again to the national anthem at Oilers' games.

But beyond this, as historians of ritual, as liturgical scholars, we need to be better aware of history and yes, of liturgy from below. You experience the power of the do-it-yourself nature of ritual along the highways, wherever people die in accidents or in places where people are gunned down. The main road from the east into this city, the 401, is also officially known as the highway of heroes, as Canadians of all walks of life would show up, unbidden, to silently honor the war dead as they are brought home. A similar tribute was given to 28-year-old Constable Grzegorz Pierzchala on his last journey from this city north to Barrie. But I tell you Solomon in all his finery—should military and civilian protocol officers be among our number?

Name a city of under a million people anywhere that can boast a list of over fifty annual festivals, from fringe theatre to beer, from blues, street performers and jazz to a three-day festival of multicultural heritage where eighty-five different cultural groups representing all the world have at its height welcomed upwards of 450,000 people over three days. Even when countries of origin are at war with each other, the groups representing these nations pledge—for this event—to work together in peace.

And for those of us who study ritual from below, the official rites associated with this event shape but are not coterminous with people's experience nor are they even the central rites. It is the ability to spend time with friends, many of whom work for the event or are the performers at the event that make it a success. It is also the cultural performances, and it is the food that brings in the crowds. The *alletagsgeschichte* of these days is amazing: One basically meets up with friends, and then together eat and dance their way from one end of the festival to the other. And it is this same event that is the largest annual donation event for the local food bank. If you are going to eat, you must help others who need food. It is, in many ways, the perfect liturgy. Are the planners of public events such as this welcome here?

It has gotten to the point that the park where this happens has to be redesigned to help accommodate it. I have yet to mention that this event is in my home city of Edmonton, but I likewise want to call out Cape Breton, Nova Scotia where its music festival known as Celtic Colors inhabits the autumn of the calendar, and Toronto, where we find ourselves, which does this type of thing on an even grander scale. The Portuguese parish of St. Mary on the lower end of Bathurst Street still has a brass band and an annual procession. The Sikh community has over 100,000 people parade down Lakeshore Boulevard—right behind my old apartment complex to the square right outside this hotel—for the *Khalsa* Day Celebration.

I also want to call out the place I was raised, on a farm near Busby, Alberta. There, a town of 135 souls on a good day, with Judy-Garland-like "let's-put-on-a-showism" organized the Blue Suede Shoes festival of Elvis tribute acts. The festival was such a success with 3,500 attendees, that it became too big for the town infrastructure, otherwise known as the ball field, and it is, sadly, moving to Westlock. But I hope they never forget from whence they came.

So even with all this information, with the twin voices of accelerating spectacle and the ongoing terminal velocity ensconced in the need for a stable do-it-yourselfism, I am not ready to propose an entire new set of liturgical principles or a new vision for the Academy based on these experiences. I am comforted by Virgil Funk, who told me that my task here today was more to ask questions than to give answers. Still, I believe that these competing visions of ever-increasing spectacle beyond our finances to emulate, and stable do-it-yourself rituals that are often lost in a transient world, these are something worth thinking about, both as an academy, and as liturgical and worshipping communities since we are both trying to figure out how to meet, and who should be meeting—it seems that liturgists are not just us.

So, what are we to do? We know we have to start somewhere, so perhaps we can look at how we come together, at the first things we do. My instinct that this is the right place is that at least in my Catholic dispensation, if you add up the gathering before the opening hymn and what are called the "Introductory Rites" you're looking at a good third of the celebration. In my dog and pony show workshops, I explain that if we start right, the rest pretty much plays out on its own. In my family, that first greeting, *comment on fait la bis* was crucial to our gatherings. In the liturgy and as an academy, both virtually and in person, what might bring us the start of an answer? Perhaps we need to look beyond our study of the rites.

The traditional initial greeting between clergy and people in the Christian tradition, with roots that reach back to the book of Ruth, and I am sure beyond, is "The Lord our God be with you." Of course, I want to blame the current poverty of our liturgical greeting on Josef Jungmann, SJ. It is a wonder that the meaning of this greeting and its response was so poorly understood, in what seemed to me like an off-hand remark. In explaining *et cum spiritu tuo* we read: "We render its full meaning by saying simply, 'And with you too.'"[1] And didn't we all listen to him—And also with you. I wondered if this was a translation thing, so thanks to Harald I have the German: "*Wir können seinen ursprünglichen Sinn im Deutschen also einfach wiedergeben: Und auch mit dir.*" Oh well.

A cursory glance at anthropological research, specifically that of Alessandro Duranti shows that there are many forms of greetings, but there is agreement that—and listen carefully here—"greetings are an important part of the communicative competence necessary for being a member of any speech community."[2] The study of Samoan culture by Duranti goes on to discern many kinds of greetings. In the narrower study of religious greetings—and here the greeting for worship is a subset—Duranti asserts that these greetings have embedded in them the whole of the celebration that is to follow. My family would agree. The way we gather and greet each other is a liturgical Tweet and a complete celebration in and of itself.

At the same time, we need to ask whether a single enforced ritual greeting is a barrier to membership in the speech community? Think on that for a moment . . .

is a ritual greeting an avenue for some but a barrier for many more to full, conscious, and active—or indeed any participation? If I lack the knowledge of how to participate in the greeting, why would I show up at all? Do we need a do-it-yourself approach?

So how should we greet each other, both in liturgy and in our academy? For this purpose, I want to dig a little deeper into the research that categorizes greetings into three groups. Eibel-Eibelsfeldt posited that greetings were part of our phylogenetically encoded condition of potential aggression—makes anamnesis look pretty wimpy as a term—and so greetings where the greeting and response are equal diffused that concern. They make peace. How we gather and greet each other can set aside our differences, or if we use the example of boxers talking smack at the weigh in, they can intensify them. Heritage Festival in Edmonton knows this. If the one greeted and the greeter are on a par—each must bring something and be able to receive in the initial greeting. One of the reasons I felt at home in Italy was the way people greet each other—the same way we would greet each other at New Year's with a kiss on each cheek. But in Italy it was, and hopefully is, still an integral part of daily life, even among the young. I don't know if it is an oddity at the University of Portland, but the cool young men on campus have revived the handshake as a greeting of friendship.

The first category of greeting has a verbal parity: the greeting and response are identical.

Examples of this are found in the various scenes of A Christmas Carol—we get a peek into Dickensian London, as Mr. Scrooge greets first his equals—"Your servant, Mr. Marley"—with an egalitarian response, "Your servant, Mr. Scrooge." Again, the greeting and response are the same. But elsewhere he 'greets,' if one can call it that, the poor debtor Samuel Wilkens on the steps of the London exchange with, "Who are you?!" Enough said. Obviously, that is a different form of greeting—one with aggression unveiled, humanity denied.

A second type of greeting, also real and in literature, is where the response and greeting are not the same words, but the wish is equal. Perhaps the goal is acknowledgment that those in the encounter are different but equal. An anthropologist by the name of John Searle, whose family name caught my eye, was among those who see this as a central element. Anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski coined the term 'phatic communion' to express the link that greetings establish. Our ears should perk up at the mention of communion, and it seems to me this second type of greeting is especially powerful in this area—it is more than mutual recognition, it is communion.

Leonard Nimoy tells us that the hand gesture for the Vulcan greeting came from his experience as a youth. He spoke at length at how the gesture and even the

words of the greeting came from what he considered a mysterious Jewish sect in his community, who made the gesture that emulated the letter shin: "I learned later that it is believed that during this prayer, the 'Shekhina,' the feminine aspect of God comes into the temple to bless the congregation. The light from this Deity could be very damaging. So, we are told to protect ourselves by closing our eyes."

Less known is the response to the Vulcan greeting that goes with the salute, "Live long and prosper!" is "Peace and long life!" None of this is particularly logical, but it is very, very human, fascinating one might say. In this case, the greeting and response are verbally different, but one could argue are the same wish. Longevity in peace vs in prosperity . . . a debate for another day. Knowing the response immediately reveals oneself to be a Trekkie—a kind of Star Trek *shibboleth*. For those even deeper in the sci-fi realm, Robert Heinlein has the greeting, "Open Sky," with the response, "Safe grounding!" for his characters traveling in *Between Planets* and I suspect elsewhere. Both wish an uneventful trip. Should we be looking for anthropologists and creative people from a wide variety of arts to be with us?

In Italy this form of establishing communion goes a bit extreme, as do many things in Italian language. The greeting "*In bocca al lupo!*" (Into the wolf's mouth!), is, oddly, the wish for good luck, to which you could respond on either side of the debate—either "*Crepi!*" (May the wolf die!)—or "*Viva il lupo!*" Both greeting and response are outlandish, but they are making the same wish. In English we say stupid greetings too: "Break a leg!" or at the opera "*Toi toi toi*." *Shibboleths* of culture or country. Wikipedia tells me that there is an alternate to the new year greeting in German—and by the way *Frohes Neues Jahr* to you all. Evidently, in some places the wish is "Good slide!" (*Guten Rutsch*!)—a nonsense greeting that owes its origins to the Yiddish for "A good start" (*Git Rosch*). So that, too. The Academy has long been enriched by our international members. We need more of them.

With Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book* we move to a third form of greeting, where the response tries to outdo the greeting. Bagheera and Baloo greet each other—"Good hunting!" with the response—"Good hunting to us all." This is like the Irish "Top of the morning!"—to which the response is "The rest of the day to yourself!" The response outdoes the greeting. One of my employees greets me with an abbreviated form—perhaps because he is Polish, not Irish—so in Teams chat each morning I read, "Top of it!" to which I response "Rest of it!" A complete ritual in miniature that expresses mutual respect and a blessing on the coming day of work.

For Islam, the movies did me and I suspect many of us a disservice. I thought that the equal greeting from the Book of Greetings in the *Asii Muslim*, the *as-salam-alaikum*, with the response *wa-alaikum-as-salam* was it. This greeting is listed as

the first right of Muslims toward each other. But through the prophet, peace be upon him, in the fourth chapter of the *Qur'an*, the *Surah An-Nisa*, God urges Muslims who greet each other not only to match, but also to outdo one another in their wishes. In response to the greeting peace be upon you, the faithful wish peace, but also the blessings and the mercy of Allah. It should come as cold comfort to liturgists of all traditions to know that there exists a YouTube video by Shaykh Hasan Ali in which he berates the people for the rote way in which they greet each other with these words: "Most of us don't have a clue how significant they are, and what they actually mean. Don't you realize what you are doing? This is part of your language," he urges them.[3] Why has Islam not flocked to our organization. They clearly have something to offer.

So, what is and what should be going on with the initial gathering of the faithful at worship or in an academy in a world of accelerating spectacle and the increased need for communion? I argue that at a minimum we need to be outdoing each other in our greetings. I hold that in our time an initial greeting needs a response that is an attempt to outdo the greeting. Something is going on in the act of greeting that we need to get a handle on if we are to have any hope to survive and preferably grow as an academy, and ultimately as communities of faith.

Should we welcome people to worship where they are and abandon a single semi-secret rote exchange? Could the greeting be personalized—if you have been to South Bend the greeting is: "We are." and the response, "ND." Should we greet the nerds with the Vulcan salute? A crazy greeting might be fun, but it could be an example where the expectation of active participation in the liturgy might be a barrier to hospitality rather than a cause of it. So, I would say no to a meal greeting like, "Tomatoes and Mozzarella to you!" with a response like "The whole Caprese at your table!" even if the response tops the greeting, it makes a demand of non-vegan lactose tolerance and the enjoyment of Italian food.

We need a greeting and a gathering process that brings all in and builds on the gifts as they come to us. Ultimately, I suppose, I want to suggest that the payoff of much of current liturgy—be it communion or blessings or preaching—comes too late. A lavish, inclusive, and generous greeting experience—to give the payoff at the start, or even before we begin—is that the future of liturgy, and perhaps even of our gatherings? In my own tradition, apart from Palm Sunday, the payoff—be it Communion, or the fellowship, all too often comes at the end. Incidentally, people do come in large numbers on the Sunday before Easter when that payoff is at the start . . . even if the liturgy lasts longer than fifty-five minutes.

How we shape the greeting in this ever-increasingly-rapidly-changing world needs to take cognizance of the fact that the reason people don't make it even to the greeting is that they do not want to be part of all the baggage and all the expectations of belief and conformity that comes with it. Is there a way of greet-

ing that can splice off all the stuff we are in denial about in our communities and denominations?

I would argue that there must be a sense of a genuine, spontaneous welcome, but also in a way that doesn't have the sense of exclusion or fencing of tables. I think that a menu of personal expressions of faith—of witness—what we might call social-devotional items—might be part of the answer both for the Academy and for our communities. I wish I could claim originality, but many of you have been doing this all your lives. All you need do is see Mother Teresa or the Salvation Army at work—think Nicely Nicely Johnson (played by the incomparable Stubby Kaye—in turn born Solomon (or Sholom) Kotzin) in *Guys and Dolls*.

Feed people when they are hungry—worry about the rest later. Let people speak in their own words and worry about the rest later. In that way we can grow the sense of communion over the course of the celebration. Communion comes first. A party at which the fun is kept to the last ten minutes is a party to which no one feels invited: it is no party at all. As much as we intellectually would like to oppose this concept, we are in a world where watching TikTok videos is considered entertainment.

Here's a thought to encourage us to rethink all of this in a world of accelerating speed of change. Having a special greeting, a secret handshake, having an expectation of active participation—does this in fact raise a barrier to participation at all. While preserving the purpose of the Academy to share our research, and while preserving the purposes of our liturgical assemblies, is there a way to invite and welcome those in without telling people, "Just watch the person in front of you—do what that person does." Liturgy must be more than peering in the second-floor windows while taking the vaporetto on the Grand Canal in Venice.

Dr. Kandise Salerno, in her seminal work in education at the University of Alberta (affectionately called the U of Eh—as in how's it going, eh?) posits in her work on video games and education that having the learners build the structure upon which the content for which they gather on a given day will be organized is among the most effective of educational approaches. The learners build the game or other structure and then gather the content to hang upon it.[4] Dr. Salerno's least impressive credential is that she is my niece, but this insight that people who own the structure own and learn the content of the structure—that should be a revelation to us all. Should learning experts be part of our academy?

So could we not build our gathering as an academy and at weekly worship as a modern-day *alletagsgeschite* and build the how of gathering as much as the ritual greeting from below? Could we follow the example of sampling culture—A 2019 study by Tracklib (a great source of songs that can be bought and legally sampled) found that 15% of all of the songs on Billboard contained samples that

year. What if we posed the theme of a given celebration and invited those who come to offer some related video from our vast online culture—be it classical, contemporary, religious, or beyond? Many in this room participate in a weekly tradition of going on eight years duration—Singalong Monday. Each Monday a theme is proposed on Facebook, and all-day long people come up with songs on the theme, often in response to others who have gotten there first. It is in many ways a cacophonous mess, but friends and family continue to build a new wall of sound, week in week out. It is at once highly produced, do-it-yourself and almost wholly self-constructed, but it creates communion. And it could be that each person's greeting at worship would be their attempt to equal or top everyone else's greeting too. It's worth a shot.

So, my challenge to each seminar or other sub-group within our Academy is to find ways to build the HOW and the WHO of our gathering, and to me everything is on the table. Expect a phone call. When, where, in person, out-of-body, I really don't care, so long as gathering is the goal. Even in our most rigidly regulated liturgical gatherings, could not some form of self-build allow the community to come together and so enter the ritual? I think it could.

Giuseppe Mazzotta in his YouTube Yale course on Dante—I have really enjoyed these Yale courses—he sees the voyage of Dante from *Vita Nuova*—on his love for Beatrice—to the *Comedia* as a transition from a private to a public mythology of love. This voyage is from the dichotomy between rationalism and voluntarism—to the notion that both intellect and the will are primary. They are the two philosophical feet upon which we walk—love and knowledge. For us as liturgiologists, for those involved in religious politics, we must keep this journey of each of the faithful in mind. Remember, too, that Dante, like most of us at some level, is a poet in exile—we should draw out that which makes everyone poets on pilgrimage with no shrine, no paradise at the end—or at last none that we could name. So, in the words of the musical Rent—525,600 minutes: How do we measure the year in a life or in an Academy or a worshipping community? The answer is yours to create.

Recently I was asked if it was all worth it, and more importantly, if I would recommend to a bright young Canadian scholar to keep faith with this vision of the liturgy—a vision steeped in tradition but always keenly aware of what is happening here and now. I concluded that change was still desperately needed; that the faith communities we love need to find better, concrete ways to love us back.

The world has changed, and we need to continue to be the prophets of change. But we can only be prophets of wise change if we are both steeped in tradition and willing to take risks. For this reason alone, but even more for the wonderful personalities of the Problems in the Early History of Liturgy group, I am grateful that you have let me hear your wisdom and offer my poor words over the decades.

It is because of you that I can offer this challenge to our Academy: How and who we gather, how we greet, how we teach, how we shape our communities and this gathering—all of this has changed.

One last image: Consider the Catholic cathedral church of St. Michael just up the road. Millions were spent to put down a new foundation without taking the building down—a new foundation is now there. We need to put new footings under this *qahal*, this *ekklesia*—and under the research that will fill the rest of our days. I believe it will be the most rewarding thing there is, even if for so much of the time you hear and feel nothing in return. Be assured that either in your lifetime or beyond, there will be surprising fruit from the orchard you plant in these amazing days. It will be said that the world has changed, but I believe it will *not* be said that much of what we had is lost, for we have lived and remember it.

Notes

1. Josef Jungmann, *Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development,* volume 1, trans. Francis Brunner C.SS.R., 363.
2. Alessandro Duranti, *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 7:1, 63.
3. "How to do the *Salam* Properly," YouTube, uploaded by Al-Falaah.
4. Kandise M. Salerno, "Leveling Up Teaching and Learning Through Video Game Construction," doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta.

Introduction of the *Diekmann* Recipient

Rev. Dr. Joseph A. Donnella II

Joseph Donnella is Chaplain (emeritus) and Adjunct Professor at Gettysburg College

Melva Wilson Costen, PhD was born in 1933. Now retired, she was Professor of Worship and Music, Choral Director, and Chair of the Church Music Program at ITC—the Interdenominational Center in Atlanta, GA. She has also served as Visiting Professor of Liturgical Studies at Yale Divinity School, New Haven, CT.

Melva's arrangements—recognized by the Hymn Society of America—include:

Balm in Gilead
Go Down Moses
Go Tell It on the Mountain
Let Us Break Bread Together
Upon the Mountains When My Lord Spoke
Chariot Rode on the Mountain Top
Were You There?
You'll Hear the Trumpet Sound

Melva—wise, gracious, welcoming—curious, seeking to make connections—lover of the cultures of African Americans, Africans, and other world cultures.

On my first visit to the North American Academy of Liturgy in the late 1990's, Dr. Melva Costen shared her ponderings, her research, but most of all her heart and mind. She welcomed me as she has welcomed so many others. Her smile and that winsome voice declaring: I'm so glad you're here. I have heard also from peers whilst serving at another historic HBCU that Melva welcomes all her students with gracious expressions of gladness mixed with curiosity and delight.

As she focused on remembering—*anamnesis*—reminding those of us within the African American Seminar on Liturgy and Culture that there is much work to do, much work that still needs to be done, as we share how the history and culture of a people whose understanding of their solidarity "in Jesus the Christ is uniquely expressed in suffering and struggle." Melva shows us transcendence—how "suffering and struggle" allowed free expression can eventually give sway to joy. Melva

testifies that the light and radiant depths of African American gospel witness must be shared with all the world.

Her work *African American Christian Worship,* first published in 1993, continues to be a primary source for understanding how African religious taproots continue, despite centuries of colonization and enslavement, despite practices legal and religious that designated human beings as property, even though baptism and holy communion were understood to be deep symbols of freedom and belonging. Melva documents what at the time of her writing was available to be documented—all the while seeking to recover kinship—more recently expressed as "*Ubuntu*" (I am, because we are.).

For contemporary liturgical theologians, pastors, musicians, and the baptized people of God who gather in the name of Jesus the Messiah, we are glad to say, *"We are, because she is."*

And, she has been giving, remembering, tracing connections, all the while reminding us that worship practices encompass far more than simply the 'words on a page" or the arrangements of a musical composition or score. Where worship is real, God's spirit is evidenced.

Time cannot bind us when we remember the past and the future to which God calls us. So, Melva Wilson Costen, we thank you, for sharing your gifts, your heart and mind and soul, your love and curiosity—but most of all your kinship.

And we would be remiss if we did not also thank your family: your beloved husband James Hutten Costen, who has joined the communion of saints, whom when you spoke of him, you reminded us that his was a Black liturgical tradition that also desired faithful expression of confessional roots; we also thank your children: James Jr., Craig Lamont, and Cheryl Leatrice; and your grandchildren: Josef, Erica, Jordan, Zetter IV, Takara, and Maranda; and finally, we thank all your students, fellows, and friends—for sharing you with us.

We would also be remiss if we did not acknowledge Dr. Ouida Harding, who oversees the Interdenominational Center in Atlanta that now promotes Dr. Costen's work. Ouida accompanied Melva's daughter Cheryl providing assistance and support as they made their sojourn from Atlanta to Toronto. Thank you both for making it possible for members of the academy to once again be together in person.

The North American Academy of Liturgy

Presents the

2023 Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B. Award

to

Melva W. Costen

for your groundbreaking work as a pioneer
in the study of African American Christian Worship
Enriching The Whole Of Liturgical Scholarship.

You put worship in the praise house on a par with medieval cathedrals.
You bridged the cultural chasm in Christian life and worship.

With respect and gratitude, we celebrate your collegial collaborations,
teaching, and music program development,
that enlivened and strengthened worship everywhere.

Bless you.

Diekmann Award Response

Cheryl Costen-Hibbler (for Melva Wilson Costen)

Happy New Year! My name is Cheryl Costen-Hibbler, Melva's daughter and her proxy voice this morning.

To Todd, the Academy, and the Academy Committee, on behalf of my mother, I am honored to accept and thank you for bestowing the Diekmann award on my mother this year for contributions she made to the liturgical life of the world.

It is a special feeling to be able to receive flowers while one is still among us, and for that we are genuinely grateful for this kind consideration.

Mom's passion for the worship, music, and liturgy of African American Christian worship invited all those who studied worship to consider the influence and impact of Black Christians on worship and culture in America and around the world.

Truly, the Spirit of God blows where it will and it is that same Spirit regardless of the size of the worship space, the colors of the worshipers' skin, or the language or music they sing and play. Justice is the life source of all Christian worship.

Additionally, I would be remiss if I did not also share with you that, while she was "liturgizing" the world, there is no comparison to what she gave her family as a wife, mother, grandmother, and great grandmother. With GRACE and JOY, Mom never missed a beat providing us love and attention, discipline, and support throughout OUR Christian journey. The balance of a true gifted woman of God.

So again, THANK YOU very much for this honor and may God continue to bless the works of the North American Academy of Liturgy.

Introduction of the *Berakah* Recipient

Todd E. Johnson, President

It is my honor to introduce to you tonight, the Reverend Doctor Karen B. Westerfield Tucker.

An ordained presbyter (elder) in the United Methodist Church for forty-one years, two years as pastor of an urban church in Rock Island, Illinois, and four years in Urbana, Illinois, as campus minister for the Wesley Foundation at the University of Illinois.

Karen left campus ministry to attend the PhD program in Liturgical Studies at the University of Notre Dame, graduating in 1992. Before graduating she began teaching at Duke University Divinity School, from 1989-2004, and from 2004-present, teaching at Boston University School of Theology as Professor of Worship.

Karen has taught literally around the world, and has been editor, publisher, and author of numerous collections, periodicals, and books. All the while serving the United Methodist Church in any number of capacities.

To this I will add two particular items. First, is the comment made to me by a former post-doc student in preaching at Duke. When I asked this person what they learned while there, they were quick to say, I learned how to be a better preacher and teacher from Karen Westerfield Tucker.

Second, I had a number of my international students over the years at Fuller Theological Seminary comment that the first time they felt like the tradition of their homeland was represented, and made them feel welcome in Liturgical Studies, was when they encountered the *Oxford History of Christian Worship*, which Karen edited and contributed to with Geoffrey Wainwright.

Karen is married to Stuart, a United Methodist pastor, for 45 years now. They are parents of Benjamin, born in Karen's first year of doctoral study at Notre Dame. Ben and his Canadian wife have two daughters and a son on the way due in March.

With acclaim for Karen's productivity of all kinds, I welcome her to offer her Berakah address.

The North American Academy of Liturgy

Awards to

Karen Westerfield Tucker

The 2023 Berakah

celebrating your accomplisyments as a scholar, teacher, ecumenist, mentor, and trusted editor of Studia Liturgica.

Your scholarship encompassed details of the Wesleyan Methodist tradition plus an expansive ecumenical and global reach, historical and theological writings, the pastoral dimensions of liturgy, sacramental theology, and noteworthy analysis of hymnody.
Your students fondly remember your patient and loyal support, insistence on smiting split infinitives, focus on "liturgy in the gaps," honor toward your Methodist colleagues, your delight in puns, and your dogged love of corgis.

With deep respect and gratitude:

We bless you!

Berakah Response

Karen B. Westerfield Tucker

Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, a United Methodist Church elder (presbyter), is Professor of Worship at the Boston University School of Theology.

President Johnson, Vice-President (and incoming President) Byer, members of the Academy Committee, colleagues, friends, guests—I am grateful, honored and quite surprised to be standing before you this evening. When Todd Johnson called me early last April, I was under the assumption from a previous email that he wanted to discuss the Ph.D. program in liturgical studies at Boston University. Instead, Todd told me of the AC's decision that has brought me to this podium tonight. I remember holding the phone in dumbfounded silence—it *was* a few days after April Fools' Day—and it took me a few minutes to take in the reality of Todd's words regarding this award. I am still taking in the reality of those words. As others before me have said on such occasions, recognition by one's peers and colleagues is among the greatest of gifts, and for me this award is truly a gift. A very special gift. Thank you.

It is also a gift to be back in person for this annual gathering where, for me and for many of you, our personal and professional pasts comingle in the present with the futures of our field. I am grateful for the wisdom and kind gestures of teachers and mentors, for the opportunity to reconnect with classmates and friends made over the years, and for the occasion yet again to witness the insights and energy of the next generations of scholars. To my own students, thank you for teaching me, as you have brought new eyes to your studies of Ephraim the Syrian, Hildegard of Bingen, Marian hymns, the liturgical revision agendas of James White, and the worship of Christians from Hong Kong now residing in Canada, along with other topics.

While my musings will be autobiographical, I also want to use this occasion to reflect upon and celebrate the expansive and expanding changes made to our field of liturgical studies and to the work of this Academy. I will also pay tribute and give thanks to a few personal heroes whose influence shaped my vocational path. My standing here this evening is the result of a serendipitous journey marked by changing circumstances and new opportunities.

Formation

The Wheaton, Maryland, neighborhood in which I grew up was principally Roman Catholic and Jewish; my family was one of the few Protestant households. I partici-

pated with my Roman Catholic playmates in doing their CCD homework and upon invitation attended Mass (prior to Vatican II), which certainly did not look or sound like the Methodist Sunday services I knew. A few of my Roman Catholic friends and I annually joined a Jewish friend's family for Passover and a Hanukkah meal, as well as for other celebrations including, later as we grew older, bar and bat mitzvahs. My part in this informal interfaith exchange was to sing and teach hymns—which were a regular part of my piano or organ practice repertoire in order to avoid the assigned lesson homework. I learned hymn texts from our Methodist Sunday worship; and they were a particularly interesting distraction as I flipped through the denominational hymnal during the minister's lengthy sermons. By the age of thirteen, I was playing the organ for Sunday worship in my home congregation during the summer and substituting on occasion as organist for local Lutheran and Roman Catholic congregations. These experiences as substitute organist reinforced the question I had raised earlier with parents (mine and those of my friends) and with Sunday School teachers regarding my neighborhood's diversity: "Why and how are Methodists different from or similar to these others"? All these years later, I am still trying to find fully the answer to that question.

In retrospect, I treasure these opportunities of my childhood, something that seemed unremarkable at the time. I wonder how often innocent or intentional exposures at a young age to religious or spiritual "others" occur today, particularly at a time when such conversations likely are limited in or restricted from public and private school classrooms. On this side of the ecumenical and liturgical movements, how intentional should we be as liturgical scholars in encouraging the direct or indirect formation of youngsters (and seminarians and adults too, for that matter), in the faith and liturgical diversities that coexist in our neighborhoods? Institutional mandates for diversity, equity, and inclusion may overlook theological and liturgical diversities in preference to other differences; that is certainly the case in my own institution. For that reason, in addition to those emphasized diversities, I have also chosen to name and explore diversities of faith and worship practices in my courses because they speak existentially to the students who are there and in community: Protestant, Anglican/Episcopal, Roman Catholic, Unitarian Universalist, Evangelical, Pentecostal, Christian Scientist and, occasionally, Orthodox, Jewish, Buddhist, and even Nones. How do your seminaries and graduate schools of a single or dominant religious flavor address this issue in the classroom or perhaps at community worship? Of course, an examination of the longstanding crossover in song repertoires could be a starting point for theological and practical discussion.[1] Is there a place for conversation regarding ecumenical and interfaith liturgical formations at the Academy—especially as the religious diversity of our membership continues to expand?

The Arts

As an undergraduate, in addition to deepening my academic and practical skills in music, I also discovered a love of biblical studies, particularly wisdom literature.

My choice of Duke University's Divinity School for seminary was principally from the desire to study with the Carmelite biblical scholar Father Roland E. Murphy (1917-2002), who became my advisor. Father Murphy was an excellent teacher and mentor, and his work with me on psalmody has had a lasting influence. But his suggestion during my first year that at Christmas break—when he was back at his mother house in Washington, D.C., and I was in Maryland—we should meet at the National Gallery of Art to explore the exhibitions, was to open my artistic world in a dramatically new way. Roland, the expert exegete of biblical texts, was also a master interpreter of religious art from the classic depictions of saints earning their titles to more current expressions. His generosity on that day was critical to expanding my consideration of hermeneutical possibilities for witnesses without words—including keyboard and other music. By the time I graduated from Duke, I had already determined not to do doctoral work in biblical studies and instead go a different direction, and so Roland and I parted ways. Remarkably, when I started doctoral studies at Notre Dame in the fall of 1985, who was there in a visiting professorial role? Father Murphy. When we first crossed paths on campus, he (who was quite tall) looked down at me and said in his deep, resonant voice, "Well, if you're not going to do biblical studies, at least liturgical studies is a good second best."

Another faculty member at Duke who significantly shaped my vocational direction was the Christian social ethicist W. Waldo Beach (1916-2001). Professor Beach, I quickly discovered in my first semester, had served as organist for services when he was a student at Yale in a way similar to my once-a-week seminary chapel organ duties at Duke. It was through Waldo's example and encouragement that my interest in hymnological study flourished. Each year Waldo composed a new setting to an Advent/Christmas text and occasionally produced an original carol or hymn text and tune, which would figure at his yearly two-hour Advent "carol-athon" in his home. In my final semester at Duke, I took a directed study with him that became a book-length collaboration on hymnody and the liturgical year, which remains as a typescript in a folder in my filing cabinet. Because of this nurturing from Waldo, I left Duke planning to pursue advanced study in hymnology and church music under the tutelage of Eric Routley, but Routley's unexpected death sent me down a new road.

I give thanks for these two men not only because of their direct influence in my personal and professional life. They also modeled for me a teacher out-of-the-classroom engagement with curious students that allowed for a deepening of the academic and spiritual life. Perhaps more importantly, their ability to integrate an appreciation of arts with the principal focus of their academic careers signaled to me that the arts were not an "extra-curricular," but for the biblical scholar, theologian, social ethicist, historian, and others, part of the fabric of their academic study. Certainly, the visual, architectural, and musical arts are academic fields in their own right, and the Academy acknowledges such with seminars in those

areas. How often do the arts appear in other seminars, integrated in other subject areas? The church's music has found a place in the Modern History and the Contemporary and Alternative Worship groups. What about others? Beyond this Academy, how do the arts figure broadly in the curriculum of your educational institution? Thanks to the influence of Roland Murphy and Waldo Beach, artistic forms from different periods of time and confessions regularly find a place in the majority of my courses. My hope is that students come to recognize these different arts as essential communicators and shapers of a community's faith and practice, and so will make wiser decisions for the communities they serve.

Expanding Definitions of Liturgy and Research Methodologies

After Eric Routley's death, I could find no graduate school with a program specifically in hymnology or church music. A colleague suggested to me that liturgical studies might accommodate my interests, which is how I came in the back door of the liturgical studies program at the University of Notre Dame. My research intention was a critical edition of the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, a collection of 166 hymns by John and Charles Wesley first published in 1745 by Felix Farley of Bristol. At least that was my plan until (a person who shall remain nameless) told me that hymns were not a suitable topic in the field of liturgical studies. (I note that I am now working on that critical edition as part of a volume on the Wesleys' worship-related contributions.[2]) When I responded to this person that in Methodist/Wesleyan worship hymns and songs were and are an essential part of the Sunday ordo, the reply was that "Methodists do not do liturgy." As a result, upon the advice of my dissertation advisor James F. White (1932-2004), my research focused instead upon Methodist authorized marriage and burial rites (historically Anglican-related), and I produced what my friends jokingly referred to as a "match and dispatch" and "hitch and ditch" dissertation.[3]

I say these things not to point fingers or assign blame, but to speak the truth about my experience for a time as a Methodist in this field. To be honest, these startling words when I was a graduate student are, in retrospect, a blessing, for they inspired two research agendas that continue even now. First, to expand the definition of liturgy and the methods used for its investigation. Second, to substantiate that Methodists and Wesleyans do have liturgies, which required a return to my childhood question, "Why and how are Methodists different from and similar to these others."

As we know, in antiquity a *leitourgía* was a public office or service performed for the benefit of citizenry, city, or state. Over time, ecclesiastics and scholars have narrowed the meaning of "liturgy" to reference the authorized texts, standardized ordo, and ceremonial employed by a community to do its work—its public service—of worship. Accompanying this narrowed definition is the descriptive phrase "liturgical church," intended as a contrast with those churches whose practices of worship are not required to adhere to ecclesiastically specified (or man-

dated) structures or content, and may be characterized more by flexibility and improvisation. In my opinion, continued use of this contrast "ignores the broader meanings built into the ancient Greek (and biblical) definitions of *leitourgía* that give priority to action over a particular or prescribed form. Such a limitation flies in the face of the recovery and application of the biblical (and patristic) definitions relative to Christian worship that were an integral part of the constructive engagements of the liturgical and ecumenical movements in the twentieth century."[4] In the course of my professional lifetime, I have been glad to see in some places a decline in the liturgical/non-liturgical labelling, in recognition that what we call liturgy may take different forms—including the reality that for many Christians weekly eucharist is not normative. Even Christian communities that formerly shuddered at the word "liturgy" have come to use the term, and persons from those communities—Baptists, Evangelicals, Pentecostals, and others—have become liturgical scholars and members of this Academy, much to the enrichment of all of us.

Such a transition—and welcome—came about in part by the accepted expansion of methodologies to study the worship of our communities. As a graduate student, many of my instructors formed me using the then-current methodologies derived from decades of Catholic liturgical scholarship. While these methodologies were valuable, they did not fully speak to the realities of Methodist worship praxis and that of many other Protestant churches. James White, my advisor, even claimed those classic methodologies to be "irrelevant" for Protestant scholarship.[5] I am not inclined to go as far as my teacher on this matter. Fortunately, already by the mid-1980s methodological expansions were already underway, including the adaptation of approaches drawn from the social sciences. Particularly influential on my research then and now was Lawrence A. Hoffman's book *Beyond the Text*,[6] which gave me pathways for a more accurate reading of what Methodists do. Methodists have most always *had* authorized texts and outlines for Sunday, sacramental, and occasional services, beginning with John Wesley's 1784 abridgement of the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* under the title *The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America, with Other Occasional Services*. Methodists have most always *never had* these services mandated by their judicatories: clergy or lay leaders could use these liturgies in full, edit them, or ignore them in favor of more locally developed practices. The tension between liturgical forms and freedom from those forms has characterized Methodism from its beginning. For my research into Methodist marriage and burial rites, I had authorized texts—but could not rely on those texts as an accurate reading of what Methodists actually did or said at weddings and funerals, particularly as socio-cultural and theological views of marriage, gender roles, and dying and death shifted over time (another necessary area of research). Perhaps the most challenging research was to find eyewitness accounts of weddings and funerals in congregational records, clergy memoirs, and the diaries of laity—a full day of library work could yield nothing of substance. Several years later, I brought together these methods and others for an assessment

of American Methodist worship in which I strove to paint "as complete a picture as possible of its various forms, styles, settings, expressions, understandings, and dynamics."[7] Even so, it remains for a new generation of scholars, using new research tools, to fill in and improve the picture that I began. Such is the nature of research "beyond the text."

The complexities of Methodist worship in the United States are one piece of a much larger puzzle since currently Methodism or Wesleyanism exists in more than eighty denominational forms in at least one hundred and thirty-eight countries.[8] In some countries, such as Canada and Australia, Methodism is one denominational ancestor along with others in what is now a united or uniting church. A particularly interesting combination formed the Equmeniakyrkan (Uniting Church in Sweden) in 2011—the United Methodist Church, the Baptist Union of Sweden, and the Mission Covenant Church of Sweden—and I am grateful that leaders of that young church have been willing to include me in some of their internal conversations around liturgical and sacramental issues. The question of what makes Methodist worship Methodist is especially challenging with this broader, global view since some denominations also have roots in Pentecostalism, among them some of the so-called holiness churches, which may only practice credobaptism. For the thirteen years that I related to the World Methodist Council's Committee on Worship and Liturgy (ten of those as chairperson, 1996-2006), the question of what makes Methodist worship Methodist was one that shaped the work of the committee. My edited volume entitled *The Sunday Service of the Methodists* (1996) collected essays from representative global specialists, some also members of the World Methodist Council, to address this question from their own contexts. In my concluding chapter of the book, I wrote:

> At the risk of overgeneralizing, it can be said that worldwide Methodist worship, at its best, is characterized by a series of polarities or tensions that may be expressed in different combinations and accommodated by various means. Methodist worship may be identified as ordered and flexible, particular and catholic, traditional and contemporary, spiritual and worldly, local and global, pragmatic and perfectionist. Each of these poles, and indeed each pair of them, is valuable. The tensions they represent may in actuality all be embraced. . . . Diverse styles and forms of worship, resulting from different ways of keeping these values and tensions, may be found among the churches within a particular Methodist denomination, and even within the worship life of a single congregation.[9]

The inspiration for using the language of polarities, tensions, and values as a means for analyzing global Methodist worship came from my participation as the Methodist ecumenical observer at two sessions of the Lutheran World Federation's study series on worship and culture. Thanks to the invitation from S. Anita Stauffer (1947-2007), then the study secretary for Worship and Congregational Life of the LWF's Division for Theology and Studies, I joined the consultations in Hong Kong (1994) and Nairobi (1996) for the presentation of papers and for conversation guided by Anita, Gordon Lathrop, and Anscar Chupungco (1939-2013). These two sessions focused on "contemporary questions" would give birth

to the "Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture,"[10] a document that has figured in my own teaching and writing, and more than twenty-five years later is still a rich resource for all the churches.[11] Attendance at the consultation helped to give me additional language for considering the worship of my own confessional family and reinforced my commitment in a formal way to ongoing ecumenical and interfaith engagement. I give thanks to Anita for this gift, and, like many of you, regret that she left us far too soon.

Liturgy and Ecumenism

My involvements with the World Methodist Council from 1993 to the present reinforced my interests in researching global Methodism's liturgical character and, as chair of the Committee on Worship and Liturgy, its practical application in the design of worship for Council meetings and for the World Methodist Conference held every five years. All the complexities of liturgical planning for an international, multilingual ecumenical event were present in these intra-Methodist gatherings. One significant concern was the tunes to accompany the favorite texts by the Wesleys. Methodists globally share the texts (even in translation) but often do not share tunes and have strong feelings about which ones are used. Another question was should worship services be scripted or kept free and spontaneous; the former approach was taken out of respect for the multiple languages present, but care was also taken to include improvisational components. The design of worship for the 2006 Conference in Seoul, South Korea stands out in my memory: one of the liturgies was a celebration of the World Methodist Council's Statement of Association with the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification and the signing of the Common Affirmation by the three partners of the agreement.[12] Perhaps that event—and the liturgy—stand out in my memory because in 2019 I represented the World Methodist Council when the five world communions with signed agreements on the Joint Declaration met at South Bend, Indiana, to consider next steps for deepening those relationships,[13] including making "more visible [a] common witness," particularly "in worship and service."[14] Might there be a place at this Academy for persons from these five world communions—Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Anglican, and Reformed—and others to think constructively (and unofficially) about making more visible a common witness through worship?

Geoffrey Wainwright (1939-2020), my colleague for many years at the Duke University Divinity School, was instrumental in orchestrating my involvement in international bilaterals in his role as head of the World Methodist Council's Ecumenics and Dialogues Committee, and I give thanks to him for opening opportunities to me. First, my participation in a series of unofficial conversations (symposia) between Methodists and Orthodox around topics connected with spirituality.[15] Second, beginning in 2006 and concluding last year, my work as one of sixteen members of the commission for dialogue between the World Methodist Council and the Catholic Church, a dialogue that officially began in 1967.[16] For twelve of those years, I served as co-secretary, and with the other co-secretary

from the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, was responsible for bringing the official reports of the dialogue into print. I also had responsibilities as a drafter, and in this role needed to clarify a Methodist position all the while knowing I represented a multiplicity of Methodisms—a real challenge. It is often said that in dialogues you learn as much about your own tradition as you do your partner's, and in my experience that is certainly true.

In the first of the three rounds of dialogue with which I was involved, the overarching topic was church and sacraments. My drafting partner was Bishop Michael C. Evans (1951-2011) of East Anglia,[17] and our assignment was writing the statement on eucharistic presence and sacrifice, topics about which many Methodists (and other Protestants) have sensitivities. Early on in our in-person and email deliberations, Bishop Michael and I decided a constructive approach might be to see if there was an historic or more recent Methodist/Wesleyan near equivalent to what Catholics speak of as "offering Christ's sacrifice." There was: "*pleading* Christ's sacrifice." The phrase appears in multiple places in the Wesleys' *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* already mentioned (e.g., Hymn 148). The current British Methodist Church's official statement on the eucharist includes it as well: "Methodists plead the completed and eternal sacrifice of Christ, and we offer ourselves anew in and through the eternal sacrifice, but we do not in any way offer the sacrifice again."[18] The entire commission engaged in lively conversation on this proposal, in the end declaring a movement toward "a convergence of understanding about the sacrificial nature of the eucharist" even as additional issues remain.[19] Sometimes one measures progress by little steps, and it was the consensus of the dialogue team that we had moved the discussion forward on this issue. I am grateful for my dialogue partners during these fifteen years who showed wisdom, spoke the truth in love, embraced a deep commitment to unity, respected the people called Methodist, and offered friendship.

My ecumenical conversations have also taken up the subject of baptism and Christian initiation. Thanks to Thomas F. Best, Executive Secretary (1984-2004) and later Director (2004-2007) of the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches, I became a participant in two international and ecumenical consultations on sacraments and sacramentality. This work led to involvement with drafting and editorial groups to produce a document that, after further redaction, appeared in 2011 as the WCC study paper *One Baptism: Towards Mutual Recognition*. *One Baptism* clarifies, expands, and advances the "B" section of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*[20] and proposes a threefold content for the process of initiation that does not require a specific ordering: formation in faith, water baptism, and lifelong growth in the community.[21] This scheme treats pedobaptist and credobaptist differences as complementary and not exclusionary, which invites a different conversation. If you do not know the document, I commend it to your study and ecumenical use.

I also commend the work recently done by the bilateral dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the United Methodist Church in the United States, which produced in 2020 two documents under the general heading "Catholics and United Methodists Together" intended for scholars, local communities, and persons in interchurch families. The first document "We Believe, We Pray, We Act" begins with a statement about our common baptism, with joint commentaries on the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Law of Love (the Great Commandment) following. The second document supplies shared prayers and liturgical resources, with both collections "intended to strengthen the bonds of Christian faith, hope, and charity between us."[22] The emphasis in this round was on reception of the fruits of more than fifty years of dialogue, hence the desire to put documents in the hands of local clergy, leaders, and people in the pews. PDFs of both texts appear on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' website. Now I have done my due diligence for the cause of reception!

Conclusion

For someone who is both an accidental liturgical scholar and an accidental ecumenist, your words of affirmation for the contributions I have made to the professional work of liturgy greatly warm this Methodist heart. In the years I have left in me, I plan to continue to explore the worship of the people called Methodist, reflect theologically and ecumenically on the church's song, and, as opportunity arises, contribute to both ecumenical and interfaith engagements. I hope you, colleagues and friends, will continue to cheer me on just as I will be cheering you. Thank you.

Notes

1. On the ecumenical capacity of song, see my essays "Song as a Sign and Means of Christian Unity," in *Exploring Christian Song*, eds. M. Jennifer Bloxam and Andrew Shenton (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017), 3-25, and "'Through the Church the Song Goes On': Ecumenical Implications of Singing Together," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 53.2 (Spring 2018): 245-61.
2. The critical edition will appear in *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 8: Prayers Public and Private (Nashville: Abingdon Press).
3. "'Till Death Us Do Part': The Rites of Marriage and Burial prepared by John Wesley and their Development in the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1784-1939" (Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 1992).
4. Cited from my essay "Liturgy," in *The Oxford Handbook of Ecumenical Studies*, ed. Geoffrey Wainwright and Paul McPartlan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 291-92.
5. James F. White, *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1989), 13.
6. *Beyond the Text: A Holistic Approach to Liturgy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987).
7. See my *American Methodist Worship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), xiii.
8. The numbers reflect the current denominational memberships in the World Methodist Council, but there are Methodist/Wesleyan self-defined denominations that are not members. See https://worldmethodistcouncil.org/about-us/ (accessed 6 January 2023).
9. See "Sunday Worship in the World Parish: Observations" in my edited book *The Sunday Service of the Methodists: Twentieth-Century Worship in Worldwide Methodism. Studies in Honor of James F. White* (Nashville: Abingdon/Kingswood, 1996), 324.

10. See, for example, S. Anita Stauffer, "Christian Worship: Toward Localization and Globalization," in *Worship and Culture in Dialogue*, ed. S. Anita Stauffer (Geneva: Department for Theology and Studies, The Lutheran World Federation, 1994), 7-15; and Gordon W. Lathrop, "Worship: Local Yet Universal," in *Christian Worship: Unity in Cultural Diversity*, ed. S. Anita Stauffer (Geneva: Department for Theology and Studies, The Lutheran World Federation, 1996), 47-66.
11. Reprinting of some of the essays in the earlier study publications and assessments of the overall LWF worship and culture study are found in Gláucia Vasconcelos Wilkey, *Worship and Culture: Foreign Country or Homeland?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2014).
12. Signers of the document were for the Catholics, Cardinal Walter Kasper and Cardinal Soo-hwan Kim; for the Lutherans, Dr. Ishmael Noko and the Rev. Sven Oppegaard; and for the Methodists, Prelate Sunday Mbang and Dr. George Freeman.
13. The Anglican Consultative Council (Resolution 16.17) committed to affiliation in 2016, the World Communion of Reformed Churches associated in 2017. The text of the original agreement, the statements of affiliation, and the Notre Dame Consultation Statement are included in The Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church, *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 20th anniversary ed. (Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation, 2019), at https://www.lutheranworld.org/sites/default/files/2019/documents/190603-joint_declaration_on_the_doctrine_of_justification_20_anniversary_edition-en.pdf.pdf (accessed 6 January 2023).
14. "Notre Dame Consultation Statement," in *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, 20th anniversary ed., 57.
15. Collected papers appeared in three volumes, including my essay "The Liturgical Functioning of Orthodox Troparia and Wesleyan Hymns," in *Orthodox and Wesleyan Scriptural Understanding and Practice*, ed. S T Kimbrough, Jr. (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2005), 293-304. The other volumes, both edited by S T Kimbrough, are entitled *Orthodox and Wesleyan Spirituality* (2002) and *Orthodox and Wesleyan Ecclesiology* (2007).
16. A helpful history of the early years of the dialogue is David M. Chapman, *In Search of the Catholic Spirit: Methodists and Roman Catholics in Dialogue* (Peterborough: Epworth, 2004).
17. Bishop Michael Evans was a principal writer of "One Bread One Body" authorized by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England & Wales, Ireland and Scotland (1998) as "a teaching document on the Eucharist in the life of the Church." While intended for Catholics, it is a useful and clear text for non-Catholics. https://cbcew.org.uk/plain/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2018/11/one-bread-one-body-1998.pdf (accessed 6 January 2023).
18. "Encountering Christ the Saviour: Church and Sacraments," Report of the International Commission for Dialogue between The Roman Catholic Church and The World Methodist Council, 2011, ¶124, http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-occidentale/consiglio-metodista-mondiale/dialogo/documenti-di-dialogo/en14.html (accessed 6 January 2023).
19. "Encountering Christ the Saviour: Church and Sacraments," ¶195.
20. *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Faith and Order Paper No. 111 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982), 1-7, https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/baptism-eucharist-and-ministry-faith-and-order-paper-no-111-the-lima-text (accessed 6 January 2023).
21. *One Baptism: Towards Mutual Recognition. A Study Text*, Faith and Order Paper No. 210 (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2011), ¶¶ 10, 42-55, https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/publications/one-baptism-towards-mutual-recognition-a-study-text (accessed 6 January 2023).
22. "Introductory Statement," *Catholics and United Methodists Together: We Believe, We Pray, We Act* (Washington, D.C.: The Council of Bishops, The United Methodist Church, and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2020), 1, https://www.usccb.org/resources/catholics-and-united-methodists-together (accessed 6 January 2023).

President's Report

Todd E. Johnson

It is now time for me to offer my Presidential report. In some ways my report has been written in real time throughout the year. You can find it in the number of communiques sent about the challenges faced at this meeting, and the steps we took in preparing for this meeting, including the survey made of our membership, the dissemination of the results of that survey, and the town hall meetings we had that led to the proposal that is soon to be before us. I suppose the discussions and decisions that are about to transpire will conclude my report.

Before that time comes, however, I offer my thanks to the members of our current Academy Committee for the hard work, support, and encouragement throughout the months of the Johnson Administration, and its year of "The Great Academy." A special thanks to my Vice-President and now President-Elect, Glenn Byer, for the extra work he took on this year. And thanks as well to Bruce Morrill, Past-Past-President and of course Past-President Gennifer Brooks for their invaluable insight, advice and encouragement during this year.

Finally, though this year has been much more than I ever thought it would be when I was asked to stand for election for Vice-President at the 2019 Meeting in Denver, I consider the opportunity to serve this academy and to serve you all to be one of the great privileges of my life. I thank you for this honor.

Part 2
Seminar Reports

The Advent Project

Convener: Suzanne W. Duchesne (dr.suzanne.w.duchesne@gmail.com) is Visiting Assistant Professor of Preaching & Worship and Director of the Chapel, New Brunswick Theological Seminary, New Brunswick, NJ, and an Elder of the United Methodist Church.

Members in Attendance: Deborah Appler, Jill B. Comings, Suzanne Duchesne, Elise A. Feyterherm, W. Richard Hamlin, Laura E. Moore, Priscilla E. Petersen (guest), William H. Petersen

Description of Work: Two papers were presented (see below) and other members presented material as part of a continuing seminar project for posting on our www.theadventproject.org website.

Papers and Presentations:

- Suzanne W. Duchesne, "Expanded Advent as De-Colonializing Liturgy."
- Sill B Comings & Laura E. Moore, "Praying 'in, with, and for' the Reign of God/Kingdom of Christ/Commonwealth of the Holy Spirit: An Intercessor Prayer Resource for an Expanded Advent."
- Elise A. Feyerher, "Lectionary Notes & Sermon Helps, Yr A, Advent 1 (Sapientia Sunday)."
- William H. Petersen, Lectionary Notes & Sermon Helps, Yr A, Advent 3 (Rex Gentium Sunday)."
- Deborah Appler, "Lectionary Notes & Sermon Helps, Yr A, Advent 6 (Oriens Sunday)."

Other Work and Plans for the Future:

- Finishing Lectionary Notes & Sermon Helps for Yr A, Advent Sundays 2, 3, 7.
- Presenting Lectionary Notes & Sermon Helps for Y C, Advent Sundays 1-7.
- Paper(s) on Liturgical-Theological Implications of an Expanded Advent for Other Seasons of the Church Year.
- 2025 Lectionary Notes & Sermon Helps for Advent Sunday 1-7 in Year B.

Christian Initiation

Convener: Christina Ronzio (*pro tem*) is the Director of the National Liturgy Office of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Members in Attendance: Dennis Chriszt, Christina Condyles, John Hill, Jay Koyle, Paul Turner, Stephen Wilbricht

Visitors: Chris O'Brien

Description of Work: The Christian Initiation Seminar addresses questions that stand at the intersection of sacraments of initiation, the classic *Ordo* for Christian initiation, and ongoing discipleship in the church.

Papers and Presentations:

- John Hill, "Becoming the Story We Tell: Renewing Our Engagement with Christ Crucified and Risen" (Primate's Task Force, Anglican Church of Canada, 2023).
- Jay Koyle, draft text *Preparation of Candidates (Catechumens) and Community for the Celebration of Holy Baptism: Texts for Trial Use and Evaluation—Rites and Prayers Supplemental to The Book of Alternative Services Of The Anglican Church of Canada* (2021).
- Christina Ronzio, "Draft Guidelines for Instituted Lector, Acolyte and Catechist"
- Paul Turner, "The Rites of Handing On and of Immediate Preparation: A Preview of a January 2023 FDLC Workshop."
- Stephen Wilbricht, csc, *Anointed for Mission: Exercising Your Baptismal Call* (LTP, 2022).

Other Work and Plans for the Future:

- OCIA—in anticipation of the release of *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults* in 2024, the following seminar topics were identified for possible consideration:
    - Helpful research topics for resource development by members of the seminar
    - Exploration of changes in terminology
    - The ecclesiology of the new ritual text
    - What's new in the new national statutes?
    - Initiation of children of catechetical age, not just "catching them up with their classmates"

- Denis Chriszt, cpps, *Creating an Effective Mystagogy: A Handbook for Catechumenate Leaders Second Edition* (LTP, 2021).
- Consideration of the *Order of Penance*—what's different, how will we implement it differently, what are the challenges it presents us at this time in history? The seminar members explored the possibility of considering one of two forthcoming books by Paul Turner on this topic.
- The members of the seminar requested an update on *Preparation of Candidates (Catechumens) and Community for the Celebration of Holy Baptism and Becoming the Story We Tell*.

The members discussed the Academy Committee's Proposal for the next three years and reflected on the membership of the seminar, noting that while the members are almost exclusively Catholic there is an interest to reach out to non-Catholics. Consideration was given to which seminars it might be helpful to collaborate with for exploration of topics of mutual interest.

Critical Theories and Liturgical Studies

Convener: Gerald Liu, PhD (geraldcliu@gmail.com) is Director of Collegiate Ministries, Initiatives, and Belonging for the Global Board of Higher Education and Ministry of the United Methodist Church. He is an ordained United Methodist Elder of the Mississippi Annual Conference.

Members in Attendance: Tony Alonso, Kim Belcher, Steph Budwey, Cládio Carvalhaes, Ben Durheim, Hansol Goo, Sarah Johnson, Layla Karst, Gerald Liu, Kristine Suna-Koro, Ricky Manalo, kat Olson, Gabriel Pivarnik, Diana Sanchez-Bushong, Audrey Seah, Rebecca Spurrier, Lis Valle, Andrew Wymer

Visitors: Ken Amadi, Lisa Hancock, Tom McLean, C.J. Jones, J.J. Wright, John, Joshua Zentner-Barret

Description of Work: On day 1, we discussed liturgical inculturation in varied contexts such as the African continent and masses for the deaf and hearing impaired. We also attended to a dissertation chapter considering aspects of co-relation in homiletics building upon the work of George Herber Mead, another work discussing the role of Christian ritual in rural social ethics and identity formation, and an article considering the role of liturgy in an increasingly religiously disinterested 21st century. On day 2, we discussed readings from Mary Douglas to think about liturgy and crisis and an article discussing the ecumenical weight and attention to crisis of the Lund liturgy. We also dialogued about freedom within the Book of Common Prayer, transformations of material culture within the Roman Catholic Church, and a book about liturgical eco-theology.

Papers and Presentations:

- Audrey Seah, "Liturgical Inculturation: Then and Now."
  Layla Karst, respondent
- Kat Olson, Vanderbilt dissertation selection.
  Ben Durheim, respondent
- Ben Durheim, "Rural Shibboleth: Social Ethics and Symbolic Depth in Rural America."
  Sarah Johnson, respondent
- Kristina Suna-Koro, "Is it a Tenebrae Moment Again?: On Crisis in Liturgical Theology as an Opportunity for Renewal."
  Ken Amadi, respondent

- Kim Belcher, "Readings from Mary Douglas (moderator); Ritual Techniques in Affliction Rites and the Lutheran-Catholic Ecumenical Liturgy of Lund, 2016."
- Steph Budwey, "Performance of the Liturgy" in *Oxford Handbook of the Book of Common Prayer.*
  Kristine Suna-Koro, respondent
- Tony Alonso [remotely], "On the Host in the Modern World."
  Gabriel Pivarnik, respondent
- Cláudio Carvalhaes, "Inventory, Metamorphoses and Emergenc(i)es: How Do We Become Green People and Earth Communities?"
  Rebecca Spurrier, moderator

Other Work and Plans for the Future: Tentative plans for next year are to discuss rites of healing, affliction, rupture, and schism.

Ecology and Liturgy

Convener: Lisa Dahill (ldahill@hartfordinternational.edu) is Miriam Therese Winter Chair for Transformative Leadership and Spirituality and Director of the Center for Transformative Spirituality at Hartford International University for Religion & Peace.

Members in Attendance: Timothy Brunk, Cláudio Carvalhaes, Lisa Dahill, Kristen Daley-Mosier, Paul Galbreath, Lawrence Mick, Martin Marklin, Mary McGann, Ellen Oak, Ron Rienstra, Susan Marie Smith, Samuel Torvend, Richard Vosko

Description of Work: We engaged two papers, two chapters of forthcoming books, a piece written for a general audience, a pedagogical outline for a doctoral seminar, a book proposal, a newly published book, and a set of musical podcasts. This diversity of forms of work reflects our seminar's ongoing commitment to experiencing and discussing emerging eco-liturgical pieces (in this case, the musical podcast); our desire to reflect on ways to reach more people with the creative and timely work we are producing (here, the piece for a popular audience and the reflections on pedagogy); and our strong, indeed primary, center in one another's scholarly work.

Papers and Presentations:

- Kristen Daley-Mosier, "Divided Waters: How a Via Aquatica Encourages Ecological Conversion." This paper explores how a focus on watershed makes possible a glimpse of the Christian life as via aquatica: contextual, justice-oriented, and ecological.
- Samuel Torvend, "An Environmental Rule?", chapter in forthcoming book, *Monastic Ecological Wisdom* (Liturgical Press, 2023). This chapter traces key aspects of the Rule of Benedict having to do with sustainability, especially stability and care of the land.
- Paul Galbreath, "Reforming Reformed Worship: Towards a Biblical Hermeneutic for the Earth and the Poor." This chapter in a forthcoming volume examines the role/s of Scripture in Reformed worship, focused on texts highlighting Earth and the poor.
- Mary McGann, "Food Systems in Crisis: A Trio of Responses." McGann presented three means by which she is engaging people with global eco-food crises: a popular article in *America*; a doctoral seminar pedagogy; and a new book proposal.

- Cláudio Carvalhaes, *Inventory, Metamorphoses and Emergenc(i)es: How Do We Become Green People and Earth Communities*. This book, based on lectures at Princeton Seminary, calls for liturgies that perceive and tell the truth, and enact real change.
- Ellen Oak, "Singing the Dawn." This set of podcasts recorded a series of 90 daily videos at daybreak, over the period from the spring equinox to the summer solstice 2021, inviting viewers into the practice of chanting Lauds from the Rule of Benedict.

Other Work and Plans for the Future: In addition to our usual set of fantastic scholarly work and liturgical creativity from Seminar members, we hope next year to engage leaders of Creation Justice, an eco-justice ministry located in Seattle. Our new convener, Dr. Samuel Torvend, will bring new ideas and initiatives—beginning with his home bioregion of the Seattle/Tacoma area and Puget Sound Watershed for our 2024 meeting.

Environment and Art

Convener: Martin V. Rambusch (martinr@rambusch.com) is Chairman of Rambusch Decorating Company.

Description of Work: There was no formal gathering of the seminar this year, as many members did not attend. Informally, a number of seminar members who were present started to create a robust agenda for the 2024 Seattle gathering.

Plans for the Future: Seattle plans include a number of presentations that will take advantage of the Cathedral of St. James as well as a tour of a number of sites, including the Curtis Collection at the Rainer Club and perhaps another worship environment.

Eucharistic Prayer and Theology

Convener: Carl P. Rabbe (carl.rabbe@garrett.edu) is an ELCA Minister of Word and Sacrament, Lower Susquehanna Synod.

Members in Attendance: Fred Anderson, Carl Rabbe, John Rempel

Description of Work:

- Review of an Anabaptist Lord's Supper liturgy and prayer texts supplied by John Rempel. Extensive discussion followed on the topics of eucharistic fellowship and discipline. At the seminar's suggestion, the convener will schedule a series of ZOOM meetings on these topics later in 2023, with the goal of incorporating more traditions than could be represented this year.
- Discussion and comments upon the eucharistic motifs in Fred Anderson's new book, which the group highly recommends for all members' perusal.
- Presentation by Carl Rabbe of several contemporary Lutheran eucharistic prayers, exploring questions of address to God vs. the assembly, and exploring how to further unpack the concept of God's creative action in eucharistic prayer.
- Completion of discussions begun over ZOOM the previous two years regarding issues of virtual eucharistic celebration. The seminar group noted how the published materials on this topic faded from the public eye quite quickly as the pandemic shifted, and we considered what role this might play in the mission of the Church in an increasingly online world.

Other Work and Plans for the Future:

- ZOOM meetings will be held over the course of 2023 to both further the discussions begun in Toronto and to gauge participation plans for Seattle.
- The group was reminded that succession planning should begin for a transition of conveners in 2026, as well as recruitment among our visitors to the Academy.

Exploring Contemporary and Alternative Worship

Convener: Nelson Cowan (ncowan@bu.edu) is the Director of the Center for Worship and the Arts at Samford University. An ordained elder in the United Methodist Church, he also holds teaching appointments at Emory University, Drew University, and Wesley Theological Seminary.

Members in Attendance: Taylor Burton-Edwards, Dawn Chesser, Nelson Cowan, Sarah Mount Elewononi, Billy Kangas, Swee Hong Lim, John Ottaway, Timothy Ralston, Ron Rienstra, Lester Ruth, Diana Sanchez-Bushong, Matt Sigler, Noel Snyder, Glenn Stallsmith, J. Terry Todd, Nicholas Zork

Visitors: María Cornou, Michael Lee, Shannon Sigler, Anneli Loep Theissen, Mykayla Turner, Aaron Wong

Description of Work: The Exploring Contemporary and Alternative Worship Seminar had another year of robust papers, book presentations, and facilitated conversations on topics related to Pentecostal, Evangelical, and Charismatic movements (histories, theologies, analyses of practice). We also took an embodied turn in practicing baptismal tai chi as a group, facilitated by Sarah Mount Elewononi. This year, we collaborated with the Liturgical Theology Seminar for a joint session on the topic of Melanie Ross' book *Evangelical Worship*.

Papers and Presentations:

- Billy Kangas, "The Virtual Office: Praying Liturgical Hours in the Digital World."
- Anneli Loepp Theissen, "'For that reason, all our worship leaders are men': Gender and Liturgical Authority in Contemporary Worship.'
- Afternoon Liturgy, developed by Alydia Smith from the resource, *Then Let Us Sing!*
- Lester Ruth, "Silver Haired Liturgical Revolutionary: Judson Cornwall's Critical Role in Disseminating Pentecostal Praise & Worship."
- Jonathan Ottaway, "Engaging the Lived Reality of Pentecostal Worship: Acknowledging the Liturgical History of Historically Anomalous Liturgy."
- Joint Session between Exploring Contemporary and Alternative Worship & Liturgical Theology: Discussion of Melanie Ross, *Evangelical Worship: An American Mosaic* (Oxford University Press, 2021).
- Sarah Mount Elewononi, "Baptism Tai Chi."

- Nelson Cowan, Facilitated Conversation, "Engaging 'Worship Leaders' Across the Arts: Strategizing at Samford University."
- Taylor Burton Edwards, "Awe in Contemporary Praise and Worship Services: Importance, Generators, and Potential Barriers."
- Swee Hong Lim, "Planning Ecumenical Worship at the World Council of Churches."

Other Work and Plans for the Future: For the 2024 Seattle meeting, Matt Sigler proposed a paper on Fr. Dennis Bennet. Nicholas Zork and Nelson Cowan each also offered to prepare a paper. A site visit to St. Luke's Episcopal Church is also planned.

Feminist Studies in Liturgy

Convener: Chelsea Yarborough (Chelsea.yarborough@ptstulsa.edu) is Assistant Professor of African American Preaching, Sacred Rhetoric and Black Practical Theology at Phillips Theological Seminary, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Members in Attendance: Kathy Black, HyeRan Kim Cragg, Jill Crainshaw, Heather Murray Elkins, Elizabeth Freese, Marcia McFee, Susan Roll, Janet Walton, Khalia Williams, Chelsea Yarborough

Visitors: Renee Smithback, Anneli Loepp Thiessen, Becca Whitla

Description of Work: The Feminist Studies in Liturgy seminar spent significant time exploring the state of our seminar. We began with and opening liturgy led by Heather Murray Elkins, which became the central focus of the written submission from our group, as well as a time of reconnection and checking in. Then much of our first day was focused on reflecting on the history of the seminar, led by Janet Walton; examining our present; and imagining our future. In this discussion explored the what changes might need to be made in our seminar given the evolution of our membership and focus of studies, with an agreement that we should move toward a new name—Feminist and Womanist Studies in Liturgy. Our second day together included several presentations and concluded with a rich discussion on the Academy Committee's proposal.

Papers and Presentations:

- Elizabeth Freese, "The Liturgical Impact of Covid."
- Group discussion, "Reflecting on our Opening Liturgy."
- Jill Crainshaw, "Liturgical Voices in the Public Square."
- Chelsea Yarborough, "Lessons from Fannie Lou Hamer's Proclamation."

Other Work and Plans for the Future: We will look to have at least 3 papers presented next year that extend the conversations and presentations from this year, with additional topics suggested during the year.

Formation in Liturgical Prayer

Convener: Margaret Schreiber, OP (smschreiber@spdom.org) is Sub-Prioress at Sacred Heart Convent in Springfield, Illinois. Dr. Rodica Stoicoiu (rodicastoicoiuphd@gmail.com) served as Convener *pro tem*.

Members in Attendance: Stanislaus Campbell, Bernadette Gasslein, Paul Janowiak, Anne McGuire, Sharon McMillan, Roc O'Connor, Michael Prendergast, Margaret Schreiber, Rocia Stoicoiu, Kyle Turner

Visitors: Christopher O'Brien, Kristopher Seaman

Description of Work: We began the meeting with welcomes and introductions. A discussion from last year's project proposal was first on the agenda. We reviewed the topics and determined the topics agreed upon last year remain relevant. After further discussion various methods for the 15-20-minute presentations were of interest: Interview parishioners on their experience of Mass, interview parishioners on their experience and then offer a reflection on their experience of Real Presence, engage conversation partners and reflect together on the meaning of Real Presence, prepare individual presentations/ reflections on liturgical spirituality. We decided that Real Presence in a formative way would be the lens for the presentations, contemporary interests (synod, ecclesiology, pneumatology) would be engaged as appropriate, and the context would be mystagogical catechesis. We appointed Roc O'Connor the organizer of the project. We also discussed Romano Guardini's book, *Liturgy and Liturgical Formation*, translated from German by Jan Bentz. In general, members of the seminar found the book difficult to read primarily due to the translator not updating the text with inclusive language. Several members pointed out the solid content of the book, highlighting his discussions on the Paschal Mystery, Incarnation, and the need for formation to engage symbols. Bernadette Gasslein gave a presentation on her experience of writing new verses to Bernadette Farrell's song, "Bread of Life" for the papal Mass held in Edmonton and compared it with another text of hers that was just published in the OCP collection of texts by women hymn writers, *Unite Our Hearts*. The text of the verses of the former was initially rejected because it was deemed to emphasize the Holy Spirit too much and did not give enough reference to the sacrament of the Eucharist. The discussion on her experience centered around the trinitarian nature of the liturgy and a need to express the transforming work of the Holy Spirit, i.e. the possibility of extending the second or communion epiclesis, in the texts of communion hymns. She raised the question of formation: How could it be, 60 years

after the council, that priests and masters of ceremonies in positions of authority and influence cannot recognize the place of the Spirit in Eucharist and its theology? We briefly discussed the Eucharistic Revival and ways we might respond to the upcoming Eucharistic Congress. As a seminar, the interest in contributing to the Congress was unenthusiastic.

Other Work and Plans for the Future: We will meet throughout the year refining presentations for a podcast/YouTube series and finalize the project at the 2024 annual meeting. We will look to the future of the seminar and brainstorm other ways we can share our research and interests within the academy and beyond.

Issues in Medieval Liturgy

Convener: Daniel J. DiCenso (ddicenso@holycross.edu) is Associate Professor of Music at the College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Massachusetts. Anne Yardley served as Convener *pro tem* for the meeting.

Members in Attendance: Katie Bugyis, Margot Fassler, Pawel Figurski, Barbara Haggh-Huglo, Walter Knowles, Richard Rutherford, Tyler Sampson, Anne Yardley

Visitors: Alison Alstatt, Jesse Billett, Donna Bussell, Elaine Stratton Hild, C.J. Jones, Samantha Slaubaugh, Innocent Smith, Kate Steiner

Description of Work: Our seminar's work in 2023 was divided between online and in-person presentations. We heard 14 diverse presentations, some of them work that is ready for publication and others "work in progress." As usual, our discussions were lively, and each presenter got helpful feedback.

Papers and Presentations:

- Alison Altstatt, "Virtual Pilgrimage in Reginold of Eichstätt's Trilingual *Prosa terminus et idem interminus*." This paper reconsidered the meaning and performance practice of the work's proper office for Saint Willibald in the context of another, lesser-known prosulated Alleluia for Saint Willibald from Oxford Bodleian Supra Selden 27, whose provenance was recently reassigned to Eichstätt.
- Samantha Slaubaugh, "The Beguines of Marseille: Douceline of Digne and the Liturgy of Dedication for the House of Roubaud." This paper argues that the hagiography for Douceline of Digne crafted a narrative of Douceline's ecstasy to portray the episode as the dedication of the beguine House of Roubaud in Marseille.
- Margot Fassler, "St. Mary Magdalene in Prague: Work in Progress." This presentation laid out some of the problems of working with office responsories in transition for the feast of Mary Magdalene at the Benedictine Abbey of St. George in Prague.
- C.J. Jones, "Translating Ordinals for Religious Women in the Fifteenth Century." This paper explored how the different late medieval German translators of the Dominican ordinal handled the prohibition against women proclaiming the gospel when adapting the ordinal's instructions for use in women's communities.

- Katie Bugyis, "Goscelin of Saint-Bertin's Matins Lessons for the Abbess-Saints of Barking Abbey." In this paper I prove that the late eleventh-century itinerant Flemish Benedictine hagiographer Goscelin of Saint-Bertin composed a set of Matins Lessons for the three abbess-saints of Barking Abbey, and these texts are preserved in London, British Library, Cotton MS Otho A.xii. Paleographical analysis of these Lessons further reveals that the scribe responsible for copying them also copied the Lives of Sts. Aethelburh and Wulfhild in Dublin, Trinity College, MS 176 (E.5.28), a late eleventh-century book of certain Barking provenance.
- Barbara H. Haggh-Huglo, "Foundations by Lay and Clergy for Chant and Liturgy in Northwest Europe: A Logical Approach to this History through Archives." Charters, obituaries, accounts, aldermen's registers, tax records, and chronicles attest to the many foundations made across northern Europe for liturgy and music. Using a foundation history of the Marian feast of the *'Recollectio festorum beate Marie virginis*' of Cambrai, I show how it is of broader consequence for dating manuscripts, interpreting paintings, and reconstructing a broader history of worship after 1300.
- Tyler Sampson, "Liturgical Rubrics, the Eucharist, and Theology in the Early Middle Ages." Through manuscript analysis, this paper considers the ritual directions for making the sign of the cross in the Canon of the Mass in the early Middle Ages to argue that eucharistic consecration was seen as a process of the whole canon.
- Kate Steiner, "The Mass According to W1: Tropes at St Andrews." This paper examined the use of poetic and musical form to express the anaphora in the music manuscript held in Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek 628 Helmst.
- Anne B. Yardley, "Work-in-Progress: Office of St. Melor." This presentation described preliminary work on a full monastic office (late 13th-early 14th century) for St. Melor at Amesbury Priory in England.
- Donna Bussell, "Work-in-Progress: The Magdalene Liturgy in England." This presentation is part of a larger project on Magdalene feasts in England and explores variations in the Sarum rite and illustration programs in select legendaries.
- Pawel Figurski, "The Eucharistic Liturgies and the Forging of Sacramental Kingship in Europe (c.800-c.1200): Introductory Chapters." Pawel shared the introductory chapters of his forthcoming monograph with the seminar ahead of time and led a discussion of salient issues during his presentation.
- Elaine Stratton, "Hild Medieval Liturgies for the End of Life: Determining the Practice(s) of Rome."
- Innocent Smith, "Bible Missals and the Franciscan Liturgy." Building on my forthcoming monograph Bible Missals and the Medieval Dominican Liturgy, I gave an overview of the phenomenon of bible missals and focused on a set of three 13th-century Franciscan manuscripts which provide texts for the entire liturgical year.

- Walter Knowles, Research Report. Walter presented the first stages of his research into the insights that North West Coast Indigenous practices of reconciliation provide on the early medieval practices of the sacrament of Confession (and vice versa).

Liturgical Hermeneutics

Convener: E. Byron (Ron) Anderson (Ron.Anderson@garrett.edu) is Styberg Professor of Worship and Associate Dean at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary and current president of Societas Liturgica.

Members in Attendance: Ron Anderson, Lawrence Hoffman, Jonghyun Kim, Gordon Lathrop, Jennifer Lord, Hwarang Moon, Melinda Quivik, Martin Rambusch, Tom Schattauer, David Stosur, Allie Utley, Richard Vosko, Michelle Whitlock.

Visitors: Seyeom Kim

Description of Work: In addition to a discussion about the proposals from the NAAL Academy Committee concerning the structure and timing of future NAAL meetings, the seminar engaged discussions with recent publications and work in progress from several members. Although we had not established a single theme for the session, the conversations found a common link around the question of the nature of the liturgical assembly, how it is formed, and the consequences of liturgical communities "in diaspora" (e.g., worship practices utilizing "Zoom" and other digital platforms).

Papers and Presentations:

- Jonghyun Kim, "The Political Dimensions and Contributions of Intercessory Prayer in Korea." Developing a chapter from his 2021 dissertation on daily prayer in Korean Protestant traditions, Kim explored how intercession functions as a "habitus" of the Christian community, evoking affections toward others and the world, forming a vision of God's kingdom, and serving as a means of forming the vision of a new society.
- Gordon Lathrop, *The Assembly: A Spirituality* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2022), chapters 1-4. In these chapters, Lathrop gives particular attention to how a "shared spirituality of centered openness, personal communality, and receptive participation" may renew Christian liturgical assemblies.
- Hwarang Moon, "The Influence of Korean Presbyterian Church Architecture on Worship and Faith Formation." Working from a description of three contrasting Korean Presbyterian worship spaces, Moon noted the lack of explicit theological reflection in their design, especially their shaping as educational/performance spaces, and reflected on the implications of the design of these spaces for theological and faith formation of a community.

- Melinda Quivik, "Questions on the relationship between 'real' and 'virtual' and the meaning of assembly." Quivik's short paper built on some of the questions raised in Lathrop's book, developing a conversation with philosopher David Chalmer's work Reality+ to help us think about the consequences for worship when offered through digital media.
- David Stosur, *Mystery All the Way Down: Refiguring Liturgy in Relational-Narrative Perspective*, introduction and chapters 1-2 from a book project in development. Stosur's book explores how we narrate our being-with-God to and for each other through our ritual action and liturgical participation, developing a conversation, especially with Ricoeur, Buber, Rahner, Searle, the relational metaphysic of Harold Oliver and others, to develop a relational ontology and narrative theology.
- Michelle Whitlock led a discussion of Brian Edgar, *The God Who Plays*, chapter 3, concerning the ways in which a "playful attitude" might inform our participation in worship and how setting aside the notion of worship as "work" might open new understandings of worship.

Other Work and Plans for the Future: The seminar members proposed two primary emphases for 2024:

- Continued development of Google site for seminar, begun in 2018, to provide an overview of our understanding of liturgical hermeneutics, with further exploration of its purpose and audience.
- Exploration of the theme of "liturgical imagination", drawing initially on a short paper by Tom Schattauer in which he sets out a set of categories that constitute the liturgical imagination (biblical, sacramental, ecclesial, ritual, eschatological, contextual) and expanded by the members to include such categories as the affective and linguistic. Papers might explore one of these categories, or a particular figure whose work serves as an exemplar of that category, or press beyond the categories to consider such questions as the connections between cognitive mapping and theological imagination.

The seminar also welcomes other related work and work in progress from seminar members.

Liturgical Language

Convener: Jennifer Baker-Trinity (bakertrinityj@augsburgfortress.org) is a deacon, and Program Manager for Worship Resource Development at Augsburg Fortress and ELCA.

Members in Attendance: Jennifer Baker Trinity, Rhodora Beaton, David Bjorlin, Gail Ramshaw, Martin Seltz, Steven Shaver

Visitors: Erik Christiansen, Cheryl Lindsay

Description of Work: The Liturgical Language seminar spent our time discussing five papers/presentations on a range of topics related to liturgical language. Hybrid technology allowed three of our presenters to be with us online while the other attendees were onsite in Toronto. We also considered topics for next year's meeting and the possibility of meeting jointly with another seminar for a portion of the allotted seminar time.

Papers and Presentations:

- Gail Ramshaw, "A Look at Some Recent Trinitarian Hymns." Gail Ramshaw presented a paper examining the texts of 21 recently written trinitarian hymns, and she questioned whether a reversion to near-Arianism is acceptable as a way to honor the Trinity.
- Cheryl Lindsay led us in a discussion, "Language of Hospitality and Belonging in Hybrid Worship." Cheryl shared findings from a survey the UCC Worship office conducted that considered "How do we describe the distinctiveness of our audiences and what do those descriptors convey?"
- Martin Seltz, "An Experiment in the Liturgical Proclamation of Scripture Based on the NRSV Updated Edition (2022)." Seltz shared the principles of emendation that have shaped the Readings for the Assembly (Emended) that will be available to subscribers of SundaysandSeasons.com for provisional use.
- Stephen Shaver, "Metaphors of Eucharistic Presence: Language, Cognition, and the Body and Blood of Christ." The seminar considered Chapters 2 and 3 of Shaver's book (Oxford University Press, 2021), helping the author consider what new questions could be considered.
- David Bjorlin, "The Potential Theological Limitations of Rhyme in Hymns." Bjorlin explored how rhyming can function theologically in hymns while also evaluating several proposals for how hymn/songwriters can mitigate against the seeming theological inevitability of rhyme.

- Rhodora Beaton, "Metaphors and Symbols: What Happens When Things Go Wrong." This paper drawing on Roman Catholic documents of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Pope Francis as well as other theologians invited the seminar into conversation on the role of symbol in the liturgy and outside it.

Other Work and Plans for the Future: In 2024, Gail Ramshaw will present a chapter from her forthcoming book, *Mystery Manifest: Metaphors for the Triune God, Past and Present*, perhaps the chapter, "God the Fire." David Bjorlin would like to explore cognitive linguistics and word choice in Liturgical Texts. We discussed the possibility of meeting jointly with the liturgical musical seminar for David's paper on hymn texts and possibly a paper that seminar would be discussing that would be of interest for liturgical language. We also discussed the possibility of exploring bilingual language worship, perhaps inviting a presenter from outside this specific seminar. This may not be in 2024, but something to consider for a future topic. We may also look at newly published or to be published worship resources from the traditions represented in our seminar.

Liturgical Music

Convener: Heather Josselyn-Cranson, OSL (hjosselyn@hotmail.com) is the Sister Margaret William McCarthy Endowed Chair of Music at Regis College in Weston, Massachusetts, where she teaches classes in music and religious studies. She also serves as Provincial General for the Order of Saint Luke.

Members in Attendance: Carl Bear, Emily Brink, Mary Fran Fleischaker, Fred Graham, Ouida Harding, Kim Harris, Jonathan Hehn, Alan Hommerding, Kenneth Hull, Heather Josselyn-Cranson, Swee-Hong Lim, Judith Kubicki, Jason McFarland, Michael McMahon, Mark Miller, Jan Robitscher, J.J. Wright, Lester Ruth, Anthony Ruff, John Weit

Visitors: Kai-Ton Chau, Melva Costen, Cheryl Costen Hibbler, Alan Ferguson, Kristian Kohler, Michael Lee, Mykayla Turner

Description of Work: Members of the Liturgical Music Seminar engaged in a full time of inquiry into the Church's music during our 2023 sessions. Our time was divided between exploring the beginning stages of research, responding to already-published projects, singing examples from musical resources, and sharing work on the joint publication of an ecumenical theology of liturgical music that the Liturgical Music Seminar is undertaking, to be published later in 2023 by GIA.

Papers and Presentations:

- Anthony Ruff, "Hymnody and Ecumenism," an exploration of possibilities for fostering an ecumenically-recognized body of hymnody.
- Jason McFarland, "Music and Theology in Eucharistic Communities," a draft of his chapter to be included in a forthcoming *Oxford Handbook on Music and Theology.*
- Emily Brink, "Metrical Psalmody," working toward an updated edition of her earlier work in this area.
- Alan Hommerding, "Sing with Understanding," a presentation of the new revision of this classic work.
- Mark Miller, "Revolution of the Heart," a participatory demonstration of many new hymns from his recently published collection.
- Jonathan Hehn, "Faithful Echoes: A Collection of Hymns by Bl. Basil Moreau," a presentation of previous work on translations of these hymns and a consideration of future implications.
- Swee Hong Lim and Lester Ruth, "A History of Contemporary Praise and Worship," an insider account of the research that culminated in this presentation.

Other Work and Plans for the Future:

- Visiting and playing on Seattle-area organs
- Further work on Ecumenical Hymnody
- Celebrating the publication of our Ecumenical Theology of Liturgical Music
- Possible shared sessions with other seminars

Liturgical Theology

Convener: Melanie Ross is Associate Professor of Liturgical Studies at Yale Divinity School and Yale Institute of Sacred Music

Members in Attendance: unavailable

Visitors: Lisa Hancock, Seyeom Kim, Tom McLean, Christopher O'Brien, Mykayla Turner, Sze-Long Wong

Description of Work: Our seminar discussed seven papers by seminar members. We also spent part of our time in a joint meeting with the Exploring Contemporary and Alternative Worship seminar group, discussing Melanie Ross's book, *Evangelical Worship: An American Mosaic* (OUP, 2021). The seminar concluded by discussing current works in progress and electing Jan Schnell Rippentrop as the new convener.

Papers and Presentations:

- Frank Senn, "Ritual and Sacrament as Bodily Practice."
- Neal Presa, "Between Memoery and Hope: Filipinx American/AAPI Communities and the *Leitourgia* for Justice, Belonging, and Identity."
- James Starke, "Liturgy as Mystery: A Proposed Foundation for Liturgical-Theological Reflection."
- John Witvliet, "Divine/Human Agency in Theologies of Worship."
- Amy Schiffrin, "Creeds and Confessions in Worship: Engraved upon Our Hearts."
- Tom McLean, "The Later Schillebeeckx's Unfinished Work on the Sacraments: A Report from the Archives."
- Bruce Morrill, "The Baptismal Formula Controversy in the US Catholic Church."

Other Work and Plans for the Future: We plan to vote via email later this year about a new book to read together. Several individuals also volunteered to contribute papers.

Liturgy and Comparative Theology

Convener: James W. Farwell (jfarwell@vts.edu) is Professor of Theology and Liturgy, Virginia Theological Seminary (Episcopal). He teaches and writes in the areas of liturgical and sacramental theology and comparative theology, focusing on Christian learnings from Soto Zen Buddhist practice.

Members in Attendance: Claudio Carválhaes, James Farwell, Ruth Langer, Martha Moore-Kiesh

Description of Work: The seminar continued its practice of mutual support and critique of members' ongoing work with comparative and interreligious liturgical studies.

Papers and Presentations:

- James Farwell, *The Way Unfolds: A Christian Commentary on Dōgen's Shōbōgenzō* (book proposal in progress).
- Ruth Langer, "Jewish Liturgical Memory" (work in progress).
- Martha Moore-Keish, "Comparative Liturgical Theological Reflection on Eucharist and Prasada."

Other Work and Plans for the Future: Next year we will continue with our format: a discussion on works-in-progress, beginning with exploration of Cláudio Carvalhaes' work: *How Do We Become Green People and Earth Communities? Inventory, Metamorphoses and Emergenc(i)es*; and we look forward to welcoming Domenik Ackermann to the group.

The group plans to explore possible future collaboration with seminars on Liturgical Hermeneutics and Critical Theories and Liturgical Studies.

Liturgy and Cultures

Convener: Ruth Meyers (rmeyers@cdsp.edu) is Hodges Haynes Professor of Liturgics at Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, California.

Members in Attendance: Bill Burke, Joseph Donnella, Mark Francis, Bernadette Gasslein, Don LaSalle, Ricky Manalo, Nathaniel Marx, Ruth Meyers, Jennifer Ackerman, Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero

Visitors: Hilary Bogert-Winkler, Kai Ton Chau, Maria Cornou, Hansol Goo, Seyeom Kim, Charles Leonard, Chris O'Brien, Aaron Wong, Joshua Zentner-Barrett

Description of Work: The seminar explored the intersection of worship and contemporary cultural contexts. The seminar takes a broad approach to "cultures," this year including art, children's participation in worship, online liturgies, and papal liturgies. Presenters utilized anthropological and sociological tools as well as historical and theological perspectives to analyze liturgical practices.

Papers and Presentations:

- Mark Francis, Short Communication on Pope Francis' "Desiderio Desideravi" and Antonio Sison, "The Art of Indigenous Inculturation" (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2022).
- Bernadette Gasslein and Bill Burke, "Inculturation and the Liturgies of the Papal Visit: What the Heck Happened?" Analysis of Pope Francis's visit to Canada this summer, intended to apologize for the Catholic Church's role in residential schools to the Indigenous peoples, Métis and Inuit people of Canada.
- Nathaniel Marx, "Children's Revival of Participation at Sunday Mass." Presentation of plans for a grant project in the Lilly Foundation's "Nurturing Children through Worship and Prayer" initiative.
- Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero, "Online Liturgies." Outline of essay commissioned for the *Oxford Handbook of Digital Theology*.
- Ruth Meyers, "Spiritual Communion as a Response to Hunger for Christ." Reflections on the use of this devotional practice by congregations during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Jennifer Ackerman, update on "Artful Leadership" curriculum.

Other Work and Plans for the Future: Participants in the seminar will present updates on research and other work in progress. We will explore possibilities for interacting with worshiping communities or their leaders in Seattle who are engaging with questions of interculturality in worship.

We would like to explore a joint session on online/virtual liturgies with the Formation in Liturgical Prayer seminar.

Modern History of Worship

Conveners: Katharine E. Harmon (kharmon@marian.edu) is Assistant Professor at Marian University in Indianapolis, Indiana. She specializes in pastoral liturgy and the history of modern liturgical renewal in the United States.

Members in Attendance: Sarah Blair, Rychie Breidenstein, Kent Burreson, Martin Connell, Timothy Gabrielli, Katharine E. Harmon, William Johnston, Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero, Shawn Strout, Karen Westerfield-Tucker

Visitors: Hilary Bogert-Winkler, Allan Ferguson

Description of Work: The History of Modern Worship seminar welcomes papers exploring the liturgical history of the modern era (c. 1500-present) by considering its theological, socio-cultural, and practical/pastoral aspects. We are committed to dialogue and interface between denominations, which greatly enriches our seminar's work. At this meeting, we found exciting intersections across our work regarding the theme of participation. Our first paper considered the practical and theological impact of online liturgies for Christian worship; then, we received a consideration of how Roman Catholic liturgical pioneers linked "active participation" to "salvation," along with a paper which contextualized the "liturgical movement" within the wider banner of "Social Christianity." We discussed the liturgical aspects of the diary of 17th-century Anglican, Samuel Pepys. Our final paper presented a history of the revision of the Church of England's liturgical books, with consideration of its impact for the contemporary Episcopal Church. As is our custom, we began our meeting with brief reports on our current work and research projects, and concluded with plans for next year's work.

Papers and Presentations:

- Kyle Schiefelbein-Guerrero, "Online Liturgies." This essay overviews the historical trajectory of technology's role in worship, and considers theological opportunities, challenges and recent debates put forward by online liturgies.
- William Johnston, "Liturgical Pioneers and their Motivation." This paper presents the driving concern of liturgical movement pioneers as focus on God's glory and people's salvation, rather than active participation alone.
- Katharine E. Harmon, "Liturgical Movement: Introduction." The liturgical movement is best understood as a Christian and sacramental social response to the needs of the modern world, described as a movement within "Social Christianity."

- Martin Connell, "Preying in Church: Christian Worship in the Diary of Samuel Pepys (1660-1669)." Pepys' work gives us a look at Christian liturgy in England in times of religious and liturgical change.
- Shawn Strout, "Liturgical Reform in the Church of England and its Influence on the Episcopal Church." Liturgical revision in the Church of England shows how significant shifts in authorization processes for liturgical resources have already occurred.

Other Work and Plans for the Future: At present, proposed projects for next year include:

- Hilary Bogert-Winkler: Church of Ireland prayer book history in the 17th century
- Martin Connell: A presentation on liturgy and literature
- Kent Burreson: A selection from a forthcoming work on Martin Luther and/or a "grassroots" approach to liturgy

Rev. Shawn Strout, Ph.D. was elected as the new convener.

Problems in the Early History of Liturgy

Convener: Jim Sabak, OFM (jimsabak@gmail.com) is the Director of Worship for the Diocese of Raleigh, North Carolina. He has taught at The Catholic University of America and the Franciscan School of Theology. He serves as the chair of the American Franciscan Liturgical Commission and is a member of Societas Liturgica.

Members in Attendance: John Baldovin, Teresa Berger, Paul Bradshaw, Harald Buchinger, Glen Byer, Nathan Chase, Charles Cosgrove, Rick Fabian, Pawel Figurski, Daniel Galadza, Maxwell Johnson, Lizette Larson-Miller, Martin Lustraeten, Anne McGowan, Anna Adams Petrin, David A. Pitt, Jim Sabak, Dominic E. Serra

Visitors: Innocent Smith, O.P.

Description of Work: The Problems in the Early History of Liturgy seminar discussed a variety of trajectories in the evolution of liturgical practice from the second to the tenth centuries. Among the areas researched were the understanding of Eucharist as an agape and meal practices in the Apostolic Tradition. We considered the role that singing played in liturgical and non-liturgical settings. The role of the Eucharistic Prayer as envisioned in the Roman Canon and the Euchologion of Sarapion. Patristic influences on contemporary Eucharistic euchology and theologies on Original Sin, as well as the ancient practice of exorcism rituals were studied. We compared liturgical practices in the cosmopolitan centers of Rome and Milan in the fifth and sixth centuries; and explored the varieties of song in the early hagiopolite tropologion and the impact of medieval Holy Week practices in Jerusalem on contemporary celebrations.

Papers and Presentations:

- Paul Bradshaw, "Eucharist and Agape"—a summary of early evidence for Eucharist and Agape.
- Charles Cosgrove, "Clement of Alexandria's Instructions about Singing at Christian Social Meals"—an exploration of Clement of Alexandria's description of evidence that early Christians that Christians who belonged to his social experience sang at Christian dinner parties, with repertoires that probably included biblical psalms.

- Nathan Chase, "Eucharist, Foodstuffs, Firstfruits, and Meal Practices in The Apostolic Tradition"—This paper explores the various layers in the document topically with an eye to where the document may have received its final redaction.
- Max Johnson, "Euchologion Sarapionis"—presented the preface and introduction to the Euchologion Sarapionis, to be published in the *Popular Patristics Series* by St Vladimir's Seminary Press. which is based on his 1995 *Orientalia Christiana Analecta* volume, this shorter version includes updated scholarship and a corrected text and translation.
- Pawel Figurski, *The Eucharistic Liturgies and the Forging of Sacramental Kingship in Europe (c.750-c.1250),* "Part One: Preliminaries"—an overview of the two chapters from the monograph which is a study of how the perception and practice of political power was often determined by slight, nearly invisible, bearers of beliefs conveyed in the liturgical manuscripts that were transported from one ecclesiastical centre to another and triggered various reactions to and understandings of kingship among medieval intellectuals; specifically the text focuses on the liturgical invocations of rulers during the crucial Christian ritual of the Eucharist (specifically during Canon Missae).
- Martin Lüstraeten, "The Standardization of Exorcism: From Freedom to Formula"—Starting with the observation that the exorcism of possessed appears in the lives of the saints as extemporized, the question is raised when formulas of exorcism were standardized and became written liturgy. Since the existence of written formulas for exorcism of the possessed is testified from the 5th century onwards and the formulas themselves from the 8th century onwards, evidence is collected to determine whether those formulas were already used then.
- Anna Petrin, "Patristic Influence in John Wesley's Theology of Post-Baptismal Sin"—The paper explores attempts reconcile the tension between outward sign and invisible grace at the heart of Wesley's understanding of baptism and its effects on the baptized. A first step to understanding is analysis of the patristic roots of Wesley's theology and examining how he navigated this tension practically in a pastoral setting.
- Harald Buchinger, "Perspectives on the Early Hagiopolite Tropologion"—discussed questions of the origins and codifications of the earliest Christian chant repertory in Late Antique Jerusalem in the framework of the development of liturgical singing in general and the development of the festal cycles in particular, paying attention also to the implications for the history of modal ordering.
- Dominic Serra, "Rome and Milan: Liturgical Independence and Dependence Regarding Chrismation"—Many assume that the differences between ancient Milanese and Roman liturgical practice are minor and even not significant of foundational differences in theological meaning. This paper highlights the differences in the postbaptismal chrismation rites and concludes that these are symptomatic of deeper differences between the practices in the sphere of Ambrosian influence in Italia Annonaria and those under Roman influence in

Italia Suburbicaria. These differences include ceremonial practice, eucholology, and are reflected in the physical construction of baptismal fonts in the two spheres.

- Rick Fabian, "Eucharistic Prayers at St Gregory Nyssen Episcopal Church"—written at the invitation of the Eucharistic Prayer Seminar, and published in Proceedings 2022, this paper described Eucharistic Prayers at St Gregory Nyssen Episcopal Church, San Francisco. They reflect changes in gospel criticism: Jesus not a future seer but urgent prophet: here comes God now, ready or not! Forgiveness precedes repentance. In place of Apocalyptic, the Great Entrance brings authority now for doing justice. God's raising Jesus makes Jesus' death a sacrifice. Biblical universalism replaces Abrahamic myth.
- Daniel Galadza, "Medieval Jerusalem's Holy Week Liturgy and Theology Today"—This paper (previously presented at a conference in October 2022 and discussed here prior to publication) examined a unique 12th-century Greek manuscript (Hagios Stavros Gr. 43) for Holy Week and Easter from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre according to the Rite of Jerusalem and proposed to examine the particular liturgical theology it expressed. The themes of topography, resurrection, and eschatology were examined by delving into the hymnography, scriptural readings, and rubrics of the liturgical text. Although the manuscript reflects a lost, 12th-century liturgical tradition, certain similarities with the current Byzantine Rite, as well as mystagogical approaches in Byzantine Rite liturgy that emphasize the imagination of the topography of Jerusalem in architecture and arrangement of every Byzantine Rite church, suggest connections between the Holy Week liturgy presented in the manuscript examined here and the current worship of Byzantine Rite Christians deserve further reflection.

Other Work and Plans for the Future: The seminar will continue its work in unearthing and analyzing the various complexities of early liturgical practices and the impact that such practices had upon the faithful who enacted them.

Queering Liturgy

Convener: Daniel Rodriguez Schlorff (daniel@schlorff.com) is the Senior Minister of the Third Congregational Church in Middletown, Connecticut. He earned the D.Min. and Certificate of Sexuality and Religion from the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California.

Members in Attendance: Stephanie Budwey, Bryan Cones, Scott Haldeman, C.J. Jones, Don LaSalle, Jason McFarland, Geoffrey Moore, Terry Todd, Lis Valle-Ruiz, Andrew Wymer

Visitors: Daniel Rodriguez Schlorff

Description of Work: The Queering the Liturgy Seminar examined newly completed books, chapters, and articles about queer topics and methodologies, written by seminar members.

Papers and Presentations:

- Stephanie A. Budwey, "The Liturgy Is the Expression of All the People of God, and All Those People Need to Have Their Voices Heard: Intersex from Liturgical Perspectives," a chapter from her book *Religion and Intersex: Perspectives from Science, Law, Culture, and Theology* (Routledge, 2023).
- Bryan Cones. "'A Queer Fidelity' Revisited: Beyond Same-gender 'Marriage'."
- Jason McFarland, "Mass Antiphons and the Dialectic of Liturgical Genre and Translation," *Questions Liturgiques* 102:1-2 (2022): 118-135.

Other Work and Plans for the Future: The 2024 seminar will focus on the collaborative book project Queering Worship (Seabury, forthcoming), to which several of the Queering the Liturgy Seminar members have contributed.

The Word in Worship

Convener: Timothy Lietzke (taleitzke@gmail.com) is the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA) in Valparaiso, Indiana, and an Adjunct Instructor in Theology at Valparaiso University. He holds a PhD in Public Theology from United Lutheran Seminary (formerly Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia).

Members in Attendance: Jennifer Ackerman, Gennifer Brooks, Edward Foley, Timothy Leitzke, Thomas Scirghi, Andrew Wymer

Visitors: Wayne Croft, Seyeom Kim

Description of Work: After a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19, the seminar is back up and running. We reviewed and discussed one book, and provided feedback on one book introduction, one essay draft, and one book proposal. Issues driving all discussion were ongoing racism and the challenges of remote worship.

Papers and Presentations:

- Thomas Scirghi, *Longing to See Your Face.*
- Jennifer Ackerman, "Good News at the Center of Bible Preaching and Justice Preaching," an introduction to a book in process, dealing with the divide between conservative and progressive homiletics.
- Timothy Leitzke, "Half-baked Homiletics or Well-aged Words," a draft of a paper on the connections between Word and Eucharist in digital worship.
- Gennifer Brooks, "New Limits in Preaching," a piece for review and discussion as a book on preaching post-2020 takes shape.

Other Work and Plans for the Future: Papers from Edward Foley (preaching and neuroscience), Jennifer Ackerman, Gennifer Brooks, Andrew Wymer, and Timothy Leitzke.

Part 3
Select Seminar Papers

What Grows in the Wilderness? Feminist and Womanist Liturgical Offerings in a Time of Societal Interregnum

Rev. Dr. Heather Murray Elkins, Dr. Elizabeth M. Freese, and Dr. Janet Walton

Introduction

In droves, Americans are walking away from Christianity altogether[1] or are leaving its traditional institutions, characterized by relatively long-standing forms of liturgy, and opting for novel, nondenominational forms of worship.[2] Collectively, this marks an exodus of great societal import. We in the Feminist and Womanist Liturgy Seminar are choosing to engage this phenomenon with curiosity, humility, creativity, and wisdom developed over decades through liturgical critique and experimentation. We share with other liturgical scholars an undeniable concern about the future, but we also sense that there is great promise in what we believe is a divine call into a wilderness of combined religious and social change. We submit that the very paradigms of society are in flux and that, in this context, the liturgical principles and approaches we hold dear—which have been heretofore marginalized—should be considered with fresh eyes, an open mind, and a loving heart. In the following, we offer a reflection on our history and approach to liturgy as well as a recent example, "A Ritual of Thistles," from our last gathering in January 2023. We then discuss the exodus from traditional Christian churches within a larger frame of transformation and commend feminist and womanist liturgy as a life-giving and new world-imagining praxis well suited to this time in the wilderness.

History and Principles

For the last 40 years, feminist liturgical scholars have explored alternative possibilities for liturgical prayer. The work of Marjorie Procter-Smith and our own liturgical experimentation in various small groups of women offer important examples of what has happened. The first year of the NAAL feminist seminar focused on a draft of Marjorie Procter-Smith's book. She began with pivotal questions: "Is liturgy one of the [cultural] forms . . . indicted by [Adrienne] Rich for their ability to 'reorganize victimization?' Does the liturgy 'translate violence' into beautiful

forms, disguising its danger for women?"[3] These questions beg for more specificity. How do our liturgical experiences open up new possibilities for women to live and pray? How do they embody what we are coming to know as women, as female human beings with distinctive gifts, insights and feelings? How do we say no to invisibility and inferiority? What aspects of liturgy can express honor of women? What demeans women? What perpetuates their oppression?

Many feminist and womanist scholars have asked the same questions within the parameters of their particular disciplines. As liturgical scholars, we have depended on their biblical and theological and sociological scholarship. From biblical scholars we have come to know about stories of women that have been omitted in our lectionaries. They are stories of terror where women are dismembered or raped. They are stories of courage where women are models of determination, of anger, of resilience. From them and with them we find the truths of our own experiences. From them, we have hope and support to trust our own insights about God and ourselves. It is difficult work to change perspectives that have existed for centuries where women have been trained to accept what is given without much questioning. But we have led one another to imagine and speak up for what we need and to trust the murkiness of trial and error.

As liturgical scholars, we also explore possibilities with varied biblical and theological interpretations for our liturgies. We ask ourselves: what do we know about God from the inside out? What images and words and actions urge a *true* connection with what is holy for us? How does "holiness" affect our day-to-day lives? What can we keep from our traditions and what do we need to let go? How can we support one another to move beyond what has "always been true" to what is true for us, now? As members of the Feminist and Womanist Studies seminar in the North American Academy of Liturgy, we work to name what is true for all those who identify as and are in support of women generally, while at the same time increasingly attending to our intersectional differences. We experiment with a wide range of words, symbols, sounds, and arrangements of spaces to try out and then evaluate what we are seeing and feeling and hearing.

Mary Collins, one of the founders of our study group, offered five principles to guide feminist worship. They provide points of evaluation for the work of our seminar.

1. Feminist liturgy is the ritualizing of relationships that emancipate and empower women.
2. Feminist liturgy is the production of the community of worshipers, not of special experts or authorities.
3. Feminist liturgies critique patriarchal liturgies.
4. Feminist liturgies have begun to develop a distinctive repertoire of ritual symbols and strategies.
5. Feminist liturgies produce liturgical events, not liturgical texts.[4]

In addition to altering relational structures to counter men's belief that "they have the right to use and abuse women," racism too, must be challenged through symbolic shifts, such as the de-linking of "black" from evil.[5] According to Mary Copeland, Christian liturgy, especially Eucharist, must be unequivocally a "countersign to the devaluation and violence directed toward the black body."[6] Further, as Korie Edwards observes, even within multi-racial congregations that view themselves as advancing racial equality, there are subtle symbolic structures and hierarchies of cultural heritage, which "may even reinforce whiteness."[7] Needless to say, there is enormous critical and constructive work to do for liturgy to incarnate the equal *imago dei* of and imagine justice for all people.

We offer here a liturgical example that represents our attentiveness to many of these principles. It embodies what is true for us. We performed this ritual during our 2023 Seminar session.

A Ritual of Thistles

A Ritual of Thistles

Feminist & Womanist Seminar
North American Academy of Liturgy
January 2023

Welcome to a time of story-telling and thistles. One of our ways of remembering into the future is to offer a gift, a show and tell involving Epiphany, journey, Magi, and women. The gift could be soap or socks, pennies or buttons; once it was Kotex slippers. This year, it's thistles. Why thistles? I welcome you into this space, this place that is dedicated to honoring and protecting women. This is where memory and imagination will lead us[i]. As Nelle Morton once wrote, quoting a line from Ruth Duck, "our journey is home".[ii]

[There is a candle and a hand fast cord with tassels of thistles in the center of the circle.]

Leader: In this season of Epiphany we travel by starlight, seeking wisdom. We form a circle, both virtual and in the flesh, around a candle made of mint and myrrh. In a time of unraveling, we hand fast ourselves together this day with ritual, and thistles, and string for the sake of our sisters, our siblings, our friends.

People: This candle and these cords carry the scent of sharp and sweet Wisdom.

L: This Thistle Farm candle is hand poured by a woman survivor of trafficking and exploitation.

P: "We light this candle for any woman still suffering out on the street and searching for a way home."[iii]

L: "For 25 years, the women at Thistle Farms have sparked a movement, lit a fire, created a sanctuary for all who need a safe place to simply be."

P: We, in this circle of Feminist/Womanist scholars, light this candle and pass this hand-fasting cord as a sign of solidarity and hope.

(The Candle is lit, and the hand fast cord is passed around the circle.)

L: Tell us the story of thistles.

Reader 1: It's a time of invasion, chaos, uprooting. A Viking raid on the monastery of Iona is recorded in 793 AD. It was the first of many acts of pillage and war, lasting until 1540. Stories of resistance begin to be shared around evening fires to encourage those who'd lost their crops, their cattle, the women and children of their clans. An indigenous protector of the people, the prickly thistle, takes root in the stories,. Barefoot Vikings, sneaking up to attack sleeping Scots, underestimate its thorns. Thus, a story seeds the myth, and the myth grows into a symbol of resistance and survival. The prickly thistle is proclaimed by King James as the national flower of Scotland in 1540.

L: Every good myth comes with a motto. For the Scottish thistle: "Nemo me impune lacessset", or "No one harms me without punishment." Another translation is: "Wha daurs meddle wi me?"

P: "Wha daurs meddle wi me?". Wha daurs meddle wi we?"

Reader 2: The thistle is defined as both a wild flower and a weed. Purple or blue are the common colors of thistle flowers, but its prickly stem and bristly branches discourage a casual picking. Thistles attract finches, bees and butterflies. Goats and sheep gain protein when they graze on thistles. But a thistle's ability to spread over open lands, overgrazed pasture, or untended fields makes it "invasive," and a target for chemical warfare. The Canadian Thistle is particularly hated by farmers.

P: "Wha daurs meddle wi me?". Wha daurs meddle wi we?"

L: Who would want to farm thistles?

Reader 1 "Thistles grow on the streets and alleys where the women of Thistle Farms have walked. Considered weeds by many, thistles have a deep root that can shoot through concrete and survive drought."

Reader 2 "The resilience, vibrancy, and healing qualities of the thistle parallel the survival and flourishing of women survivors."

P: "Wha daurs meddle wi me?". Wha daurs meddle wi we?"

Reader 1: Milk thistle, often called Blessed Milk Thistle has been used medicinally for over 2,000 years. It was often used by midwives and healers for depression and melancholy. Milk thistle is recommended for stomach disorders, and as a general tonic for new mothers. The seeds contain a substance called silymarin which aids in blocking toxins from entering liver cells.

Reader 2: "For many survivors, Thistle Farms is not a second chance at life. It's her first."

P: "Wha daurs meddle wi me?". Wha daurs meddle wi we?"

Reader 1: The thistle became an emblem of Mary in the Middle Ages because it evoked images of a mother's milk. The pinkish lavender color of the flower is associated with divine love and royalty.

L: But what about Genesis: 3:18 and the curse that turns the earth into a wasteland: "Thorns and thistles it will bring forth for you." How is it possible to redeem a symbol of desolation and destruction? "As for the land of my people, the thistle and the thorn bush shall come upon it, and joy shall be removed from every house. Isaiah 32:13:

Reader 2: "Like its rough exterior, the meaning of the flower is associated with aggressiveness, pain, protection and pride. Since thistle is defined as both a flower and a weed, the exact inference of the bloom can extend from less positive symbolism such as poverty and weakness all the way to qualities of might and brilliance."

P: "Wha daurs meddle wi me?". Wha daurs meddle wi we?"

Learning to Say Thistle

May I tell you a story about thistles? It's the oldest one I know. The hardest part for me was learning to say "thistle". I'm three years old. My mother and my older sister and I are in front of a congregation on Christmas Eve. We're part of the program. My sister's kneeling on one side of my mother's lap and I'm on the other. We're both wearing brand new pajamas which feels strange to me since we're in front of all these grownups. We're pretending to listen to my mother read from a book. We've practiced this at home.

She gets about half way through the story, and stops. She isn't supposed to stop. We know that, my sister and I know that. We look at each other across her lap. This is not what we practiced. She doesn't say anything; she just sits there gripping the book for dear life. Then, she makes a sound and stands up. The book goes flying, then she goes flying down the aisle, trying to reach someone standing in the back of the church. Suddenly, all the grownups go crazy, shouting, and clapping and jumping up and down like kids.

My sister and I are absolutely dumbfounded. We look at each other and stay put. I pick up the book. I knew you aren't supposed to throw books. The grownups seem to understand the mystery; they're crying and hugging each other and this stranger. In the midst of this Christmas commotion, my mother leads this man up to where we're waiting and says,

"Girls, this is your Daddy. He's home from Korea. Home from war."

Home for Christmas. Home is Christmas, the place where there's always room whenever you arrive. The lost is found; the dead return alive: it's called Christmas.

This story is wrapped around a memory whose significance is psychological, not historical. It could be seen as what Freud called a "screen memory".[iv] It's a narrative matrix of impressions and thoughts formed in experience that will shape my identity from childhood throughout life. It contains powerful impressions that are objective, often visual, although they differ from historical happenings. Connections between what is remembered and what is repressed can provide insight into a person's pattern of conflict resolution.

This book, this reading becomes my first holy text. I memorized it, relying on our Appalachian family's oral tradition. I remember reciting it as if it were a prayer at some point in the year that followed. I have a memory of lying belly down on a swing seat, trying to recite it without making a mistake. If I could tell the story right, whatever was lost or broken could be fixed and found. Over the years, I screened this memory. I forgot whatever caused the grief, motivated the screening. Among other forgettings was that the story my mother was reading came from the gospel of Luke. That was the public narrative considered the acceptable Christmas eve story. My conviction about telling the story right only strengthened over the years and continues to shape my identity as a storyteller and preacher.

It's not important to share what caused my screen memory to split open. It is important to me to claim as a woman, that what we recognize as sacred text for our lives is not constrained to authorized versions of the bible. This is simply one woman's story of how she learned to say "thistle". Listen for what the Spirit is saying.

> "He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
> And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;
> A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
> Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;
> He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
> And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,
> And laying his finger aside of his nose,
> And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;
> He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
> And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
> But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
> "Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night."[v]

L: That's the promise of this story: the lost are found; a time of peace is possible and, as this Thistle Farm candle reminds us, we can help to "light the way to healing, housing, employment—and a life our sisters, our siblings, never thought was possible."

P:"Wha daurs meddle wi me?". Wha daurs meddle wi we?"

The hand fast cord can be used as a sign that members of the group are ready to participate in sharing stories of our personal and professional lives. Pick the cord up, and then pass it to another when you're finish speaking. Extinguish the candle at the close of the sharing of stories.

Notes

i. Marjorie Procter-Smith, *In Her Own Rite: Constructing Feminist Liturgical Tradition* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 36.
ii. Ruth Duck, "Lead on, O Cloud of Yahweh," in *Because We Are One People* (Chicago: Ecumenical Center, 1974) as cited by Nelle Morton, *The Journey Is Home* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), xvii.
iii. The material in quotes comes from the packaging of a Thistle Farms mint myrrh candle. See http://www.thistlefarms.org/ and https://thistlefarms.org/blogs/the-women-of-thistle-farms.
iv. Freud's paper "Screen Memories" (1899a) initially presented screen memories as unconscious fantasy, shaped by repressed experience. These memories, associated with childhood, contain psychic significance, not historical accuracy. Freud later came to see these as a valuable source of insight into early childhood years (1914g, p. 148).
v. Clement Clarke Moore was a medieval scholar and Professor of Divinity who donated a portion of his family estate to build General Theological Seminary. His "Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas" was originally published anonymously in *The Troy Sentinel,* 23 December 1823.

Commentary

The Thistle Ritual is constructed to demonstrate solidarity as well as engender support for the women involved in Thistle Farms. The traditional presence of candles in worship is reformed by the use of a candle made by a community of women in recovery from sexual and economic violence. This object and its stories spark the connections between our work as scholars and the lives of women who are forced to work on the streets. The Thistle Farm women's embrace of the ecology and sociology of a weed as a source of strength can be reseeded into a liturgical form grounded in the theology of "the wilderness."

Biblical texts are among the textual sources used in crafting this form of ritual. One task is to confront biblical texts that sustain patriarchal bias in liturgy and preaching and reimagine them for our healing; hence the use of Genesis and Isaiah. Social media enables us to trace the cultural and organic connections between Mary and thistles. Both are called blessed; the plant possesses healing properties as well as an invasive quality. This parabolic association may account for patriarchal attempts to keep Mary meek, mild and on the margins.

The Scottish cultural history of its struggle to survive from invasions of Vikings and the English is another textual source for the construction of rituals that incorporate courage, self-identity, humor and defiance. In addition to the Scottish thistle myth, the ritual involved using a handfasting cord. It is tied to a Celtic tradition of social contracts between a couple in lieu of priest-presiding weddings. The cord, decorated with silver thistles, was used in the ritual to connect those who were physically present to those on-line. The handfast cords and their ceremonial use potentially offer another model of covenant-making. The paradoxical power of a simple weed can grow into a symbol of blessed "thistleness" for a community deeply rooted in the recognition of the organic generativity of marginality. Thistles survive, and "thistleness" offers a potent source for regrowth in both prayers and practices in a time of wilderness.

Another example of an ordinary object transformed into symbolic feminist/womanist agency is the broom that we've used at NAAL for the last twenty years. The broom was crafted in Appalachia by young women dedicated to preserving mountain culture at Berea. It is presented as a symbol of office for our seminar's convener, and its presence and story are shared as new members join and elders retire. The broom's ritual elements and emphasis follow the model of the Thistle Ritual: an ordinary object lifted up for holy use, embedded in a variety of textual sources, such as Luke 15:8-10 (finding lost coins), Matthew 12:47 (clearing out demons), *Poor Richard's Almanac* (cleaning corners), and the long association between brooms and women's agency, be it welcomed as whimsy or violently suppressed.[8]

There is a naming of the marginality, an invocation of our worthiness, and elements of humor as we engage in performative actions in relationship to these ordinary things of our lives. A broom reminds us of what we have to sweep away in order to make a way for what is new. We name what is good for us. Knowing it evolves. We say what is true and what is not. We sweep away many layers of habits of accepting what is hurtful. We break through the silence of neglect and disrespect. With courage, humor, and a determination to survive, we deliberately engage the criticisms and curses that have historically greeted our liturgical offerings in faith communities and academies.

These things have been true for us. What is not true for feminist/womanist worship is anything that demeans or disregards women, our bodies, our minds, our

abilities. What is true are expressions of relationships, human beings who care about one another and the realities of our world, who commit ourselves to draw out what is holy, what is good, and to urge each other to respond in light of it. We believe these things are not true and true, respectively, for many more people, who have never encountered such forms of worship, but who would find them resonant, healing, and joyful if they did.

Feminist and Womanist Liturgical Work in the Wilderness

Indeed, feminist and womanist liturgical research and praxis are likely sorely needed in this historical moment, which is an era shift, requiring additional sociological and even anthropological perspective to grasp. In his opening keynote address at NAAL's 2023 Annual Meeting, Vice President Glen Byer focused attention on the harsh reality that those gathered in deep appreciation of liturgy and its study must grapple with the fact that such appreciation appears to be rapidly diminishing in society. The scale and speed of change is astonishing. A recent study from Pew Research indicated that, despite having constituted about 90% of the U.S. population as recently as the 1990s, Christians only account for about 63% of the population now[9] and "could make up less than half of the U.S. population within a few decades," even potentially shrinking to 35% by 2070.[10] Current membership levels in religious institutions are even lower than levels of affiliation, with rates of belonging dropping from 70% to 47% just in the last 20 years.[11] Further, 30% of Americans presently identify as "nones" (no religious affiliation), and the majority of Protestants are now "nons" (attendees nondenominational churches that do not practice traditional liturgy), who have left mainline and, increasingly, Catholic institutions and have become the third largest U.S. religious group.[12] In short, the magnitude of movement away from affiliation with traditional Christian liturgical churches, in a very short amount of time, is enormous.

Coinciding with these religious shifts are Durkheimian alarms, perhaps most famously articulated in Robert Putnam's book *Bowling Alone* in 2000,[13] about a breakdown in social cohesion related to declines in civic participation and church belonging. Those concerns have only intensified since, as we are now experiencing a "social recession," in which a "growing number of people feel lost, lonely, and invisible" and are devoid of a meaningful symbolic life or a sense of participation within a "divine drama."[14] Those who know the value of committed spiritual community and who understand the profound spiritual benefits that deeply rooted liturgy can bestow are rightfully concerned. Calls to pro-social morality and institutional church revival, perhaps with new nods to justice concerns, seem reasonable in this context.[15] But is this "true," at least in any straightforward way? And why are so many going a different route?

Why are people spending inordinate amounts time and energy on the internet and social media, binge watching TV series, playing video games, indulging in porn, over-investing in youth sports activities, getting high, compulsively remodeling

and decorating to achieve the HGTV dream home, raging at cable news feeds and social media posts, chasing collective effervescence at major sporting events or concerts, awaiting the next input from Q to guide moral action, and, increasingly, wandering around the metaverse?[16] These pursuits are all in addition to the "workism" to which so many have devoted their souls for decades.[17] Inner voids and addictions are powerful, and even more so when massive amounts of money can be made by exploiting and worsening them. That we and our churches are immersed in an economic system ruled by the master addiction to profit is one good hypothesis to explain social and religious breakdown. But we must also ask what is so weak or unsatisfying about our liturgical spirituality that it may have left us at least uninterested in church, if not also more vulnerable to seemingly empty compulsions? To say that church decline is due only to external, malevolent forces avoids any internal reckoning, and it also assumes that decline is a purely negative phenomenon. As disturbing and socially dangerous as current church disintegration and work/entertainment-addiction trends may be, it is also conceivable that there is something positive and wise to discern within the apparent chaos.

The young and the politically liberal leave and become "nones" at higher rates.[18] And while older people are more likely than younger or middle-aged people to attend church, in general, that pattern is especially pronounced within traditional mainline Protestant, Catholic, and several conservative Christian denominations.[19] So the phenomenon is generational in part, but it is also a rejection of traditional churches more so than others. Young "nones," though, often see themselves as spiritual and many feel that they are experiencing a type of religiosity through social movements and protests.[20] Some actually appear to be embodying and expressing historically faith-based commitments to justice, but they do not necessarily feel supported by churches.[21] Still others are seeking and expressing spiritual fulfillment with chaplains, spiritual directors, and small idiosyncratic groups that ritualize together.[22] The desire for meaningful community and a spiritually alive path, therefore, does not necessarily vanish along with church membership or affiliation.

In addition, while the ranks of the sometimes quasi-spiritual "nones" swell, significant numbers of young people are drawn to nondenominational, low commitment churches, which tend to be more socially conservative and are often led and populated by those alienated from institutions more broadly?[23] One such church explains the appeal of these "nons," whose breaks with tradition often include the eschewing of liturgy:

> The Christian life . . . is one grounded in biblical principles, not ritual or dogma . . . Because each independent congregation can decide what the church believes and practices, the church can change and adapt to society. When a practice becomes outdated, the church can respond appropriately and adapt to serve their community and congregants. Being able to address the congregants' concerns without answering to a central organizational leadership can help the church decide their path. This ensures that the congregants have an opportunity to influence the growth

> and development of the church. It also means that these churches are dynamic and responsive, and have a low risk of getting stuck in dogmatic considerations that may not have any relevance in the lives of their congregants… Congregants can break away from traditions and live out their individualism in their worship and their affiliations.[24]

Among the sacrifices, of course, are rootedness, stability, a sense of historical connection, and ties and responsibilities bound over time. Some worship leaders attempt to mitigate the downsides of disconnection from establishment denominations by interspersing elements of traditional liturgy, though there are no indications that they are intending to "go back."[25]

If we combine this none/non phenomenon with all the other activities listed above that are associated with a "social recession," it is reasonable to argue that American society has entered a wilderness time, in which the old meanings, stories, liturgies, social orders, etc. are dissolving, and people are casting about and experimenting with what might take their place. The same pattern can be seen in political, economic, and social realms as well. Racial hierarchies, Christian supremacy, gender norms, relations of capital to workers and the earth/climate, old structural impediments to true democracy (e.g. the electoral college)—arrangements that are at least hundreds (or thousands) of years old and tied in one way or another to colonialism, elite class dominance, patriarchy, ecological extractivism, etc.—are all foci of deep critique and of defensive protection. Always rife with contradictions, uneasy reconciliations of tensions, and sometimes blatant oppressions, old social orders cannot stand when a critical mass find their arrangements to be unacceptable. But systems and people attached to them do not accept change easily, and then there are plenty of people trying to bridge polarizations. Messiness often ensues.

When those kinds of societal tectonic plates grind and move, so do the fundamentals of hegemonic cultural and religious forms. As elaborated by anthropologist Roy Rappaport, there are times in human history when major material circumstances build and build to the point that they force adaptive paradigmatic reckonings and transformations in all areas of society.[26] If beneficial adaptation to new realities is to succeed, and society is to continue to enable the well-being of its citizens, people must construct a sense of the "holy" that contributes to "wholeness and health."[27] Sometimes to arrive at that place, significant de- and re-sanctification of cosmologies, myths, authority, and sacred postulates must occur.[28] Similarly, in her contemporary commentary, social theorist Nancy Fraser argues that we are experiencing a dissolution of the shared, ideological "common sense" hegemony and systemic organization of our entire "institutionalized social order."[29] Invoking theorist Antonio Gramsci, who witnessed the destructive forces of fascism firsthand, Fraser explains that we must endure an "unstable interregnum" and various crises as "'The old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appear.'"[30] Young people may be especially sensitive to the stressors of these challenges and aware that they will have to live the longest with the results of how they are navigated. Cognizant of

failures of institutions to lead and less conditioned to seek solace and answers in "tried and true" traditions, they could be more motivated to explore new options.

By no means are those walking away from traditional Christian forms in agreement as to what was wrong with the old order or what new order should be constructed. And those who remain have still different perspectives on change, or resistance to it, from within the institutions. Broadly, then, perhaps it makes sense that intensified clinging to tradition, chaos, destruction, cautious experimentation, and new creations of divergent, diverse forms all exist at the same time. We could consider that this exodus from traditional Christianity may be just one dimension of a massive societal transformation, which no one can stop, but which actually has the potential to bring us closer to the beloved community of Jesus' vision, even if many are not Christian, per se. In that case, there is no "going back," nor should there be. In other words, pursuing renewal of a long-established, stable religious order embodied in traditional Christian churches and liturgy is likely as fruitless as pursuing renewal of traditional orders in other spheres of society—economic, political, educational, domestic, etc.—that are also increasingly rejected by Americans.

In all this, though, there is with religion, as with politics, economics, etc., certainly a crucial role for remaining, established, denominational church institutions—and maybe new ones—to play in facilitating transformation. They are uniquely positioned to combine some stability and cohesion with significant evolution.[31] But they must genuinely engage and be willing to be significantly changed by critics and creatives—internal and external—who are motivated by a common love of God and neighbor, but who, exactly because of that love, are also bringing tough truths and challenges to the fore. Feminist and womanist liturgical scholars, in keeping with a liberation ethics approach, for example, will assert that some traditions considered sacred and beyond reproach require serious interrogation and reconsideration because they serve systems of hierarchy and oppression, rather than human rights and abundant life for all.

We do not really have a choice but to trudge through the chaos and collectively pull forth life-giving, loving creativity, while we are also guided by the only constants, which are love and hope in it. Liturgy, as a space and process of sacred world-making and of cultivation of socio-symbolic orders of meaning, is perhaps alive and well in some hard to recognize ways, and it is certainly possible that "traditional" churches will decide to join, if more slowly, those who are exploring new liturgical forms. Feminists and womanists, who have been studying and engaging in liturgical innovation on the margins for a very long time, have much to contribute.

How will we fare in the wilderness? We dare to suggest a Thistle Ritual.

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