



**NORTH AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
LITURGY**

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Foreword

The academy work and communal spirit warmed all the participants at the annual meeting held in Minneapolis, Minnesota. There were 224 members in attendance and forty-eight visitors. We welcomed twelve new members.

In the vice presidential address, Donald LaSalle, SMM, explored how the ordinary experience of time “has an impact on one’s participation in liturgy, and how liturgy can influence one’s experience of time, as the liturgy provides a grounding for a spirituality of time.” Hugh Page Jr of the University of Notre Dame presented the plenary address. Page argued that “to ponder the intersections of biblical laments, the Blues, and the music of the artist formerly designated, and once again known as, Prince is timely, important, and much less odd than one might initially imagine.” In her response to the Berakah award, Ruth Langer addressed interreligious dialogue and interreligious prayer, especially in view of the academy’s various worship experiences. “In order to pray with the religious other,” she argued, “we need to understand each other’s theology and parameters for prayer. We also need to understand what our own prayers are expressing and why.”

Virgilio Elizondo received the Godfrey Diekmann Award. Elizondo was not able to travel, but offered a video taped address transcribed here. Abbot John Klassen, OSB, of St John’s Abbey and William Cahoy of St John’s School of Theology (where Godfrey taught) were in attendance. St John’s Abbey also hosted members for Mass for the Feast of the Epiphany.

Members enjoyed a special reception sponsored by Liturgical Press, “The Bible and the Blues.” Highlighting *The St John’s Bible*, the reception featured a performance by The Oblates of Blues, of whom President Maxwell Johnson is a member, as is Hugh Page Jr.

The breadth and depth of the academy’s work this year is shown in the seminar reports, and part three offers peer reviewed essay that came from seminar work.

The academy committee this year was: Maxwell Johnson, president; Donald LaSalle, SMM, vice president; Anne Yardley, treasurer; Troy Messenger, secretary; Paul Huh, delegate for membership; Anne Koester, delegate for seminars; Michael Witczak, past president; and Craig Satterlee, past past president. Rhodora Beaton, Foy Christopherson, Garrick Comeaux, Bob Farlee, Carol Frenning, Barbara Jensen, J. Michael Joncas, Heather Josselyn-Cranson, Anne McGuire, Antony Ruff, Rhoda Shuler, and Fritz West served on the local planning committee.

Planning is well underway for the 2016 meeting, which will convene in Houston, 7–10 January.

Richard E. McCarron
Proceedings Editor

Plenary Sessions

Part 1



Liturgy and the *Poesis* of Time

Donald LaSalle

Donald LaSalle, Ph.D., is a Montfort Missionary currently doing research and serving as an academic advisor at the University of Notre Dame.

We stand at the beginning of a new year yet to unfold, a year that has wrapped within it all its mystery and promise. Much of what will happen in the course of the year is unknown to us, and it will only become known in our living day to day, season to season, as we spend the time given us. The living that weaves the tapestry of this new year is accomplished by spending time.

Spending Time

Take a moment to think about your experience of time in the past month. Think of the last time you felt rushed or overloaded with too many things to do in too little time. How many of you had an experience like this in the past few weeks? How many of you had an experience like this in the past 48 hours?

In 1978, David Power, my teacher and mentor, gave a lecture at Catholic University in Washington entitled “Liturgical Ministry: The Christian People’s *Poesis* of Time and Place.”¹ In this lecture, David reflected on the Christian community’s creative act of living in time and place, and he saw this as a “poetry of history and ecology” that finds expression in liturgy. I would like to reflect on the experience of time in contemporary life in North American culture and the poetic role of time within the liturgy.

But first some cautions. I am approaching this from my perspective—Roman Catholic, white, male—with all the limitations that perspective brings. So my point of view will be a reflection on Christian, and primarily Roman Catholic, liturgy because that is what I know. I see these reflections as just one part of a conversation that calls for other dialogue partners who have other perspectives.

I will not engage the fascinating field of modern physics, with its reflections on the relationships among time, matter, and energy. Although I will refer to the connections between time and eternity in the liturgy, explicating that link will not be my primary purpose here. Neither will I treat the Liturgy of the Hours nor distinguish its relationship to time.

Now that I have told you what I am not going to do, I'd better do something. I would like to focus on the ordinary experience of time passing, how that has an impact on one's participation in liturgy, and how liturgy can influence one's experience of time, as the liturgy provides a grounding for a spirituality of time, a slow spirituality of time.

David Power and the Poesis of Time

For David Power, a community's reckoning of time is related to its mission to incarnate the Body of Christ today:

The Christian people in its bodiliness, which is the bodiliness of Christ, has its own way of dwelling in both [time and place], but this mode of being has to be constantly renewed, refashioned, since redemption is, in the word of Irenaeus of Lyons, a recapitulation of all times and all places, as is so beautifully expressed in the blessing of the Easter candle. It is to this recapitulation that liturgical ministry speaks, creating for each era and each environment a chronometry and an economy which tune into the new earth and the new age inaugurated by Christ in his resurrection. *It is a poetic function, one which makes by revealing and reveals by expressing.*²

This poetic function is intimately linked with the act of memorial within Christian worship in the liturgy, an act of remembrance that is infused with "a sense of the Lord's *kairos*, of his imminence in all moments and times."³ Christian liturgy, and here I am primarily thinking about Eucharistic celebration, is an act of memorial through the power of God's grace and the use of human language. As such, it is a creative act in which all members of the assembly participate.

It is through recall or memorialization that past events become present to us. Recall is an act of human consciousness and expression, not looking at an album of family photographs. Through recall, we *make* time. It is not a matter of joining one time with another. It is an *event* which is recalled, and the way in which that event is recalled makes the kind of time in which those who keep memorial live.⁴

This creative act of memorial is not a sentimental pretending that we were there when they crucified my Lord;⁵ nor is it a pantomime of events in salvation history. Rather it is a poetic remembering that creates a way of living today.

David Power expresses the impact of liturgical memorial on present time:

Through the recall of Jesus Christ, it is their intrinsic intention to create for Christians the possibility of their own free participation in the events and passages of life. Sometimes in the moods of sorrow, sometimes in those of joy, in thanksgiving or in earnest beseeching, in acclaiming or in hoping, but always in complete freedom, the Christian people creates

in liturgy the virtual time in which it may choose to participate in the activities of this world.⁶

Acceleration

I believe it is significant to pay attention to the impact of liturgy on the time that a community of faith creates, and the attitudes with which time is lived, in light of the way many people experience time and the passing of time today. Christians dwell in time, and that mode of dwelling needs to be continually renewed. It is useful, then, to reflect on how time is experienced and its implications for liturgical celebration.

Lizette Larson-Miller has recently made an important contribution to this reflection.⁷ In her article, “Consuming Time,” Lizette has pointed out how a consumer culture influences the praxis of time. When time is treated as a commodity, it presents challenges for communities who keep memorial of salvific events though the celebration of feasts and seasons. I would like to add another dimension to the conversation, closely allied to the commodification of time—that of acceleration. A chorus of sociologists, psychologists and economists has noted that acceleration—the increasing speed with which things happen and the rising expectations brought on by acceleration, constitute one of the dominant characteristics of contemporary experience. When David Power gave that talk at Catholic University over thirty-five years ago, smart phones and e-mail were not yet part of ordinary life. What does a liturgical *poesis* of time mean now that those “conveniences” demand our attention every day? How significant is a *poesis* of time in a culture of acceleration? Does liturgy have anything to bring to a world of increasing speed and instant expectations?

People constantly remark that they never have enough time. Even “time-saving improvements” do not seem to save time at all. Rather, they contribute to an accelerated pace of life.

In his development of a critical theory of late-modern temporality, Hartmut Rosa describes three types of acceleration in western cultures: technological acceleration, the acceleration of social change, and acceleration of the pace of life.⁸

- **Technological acceleration**, which first came to the fore in the Industrial Revolution, includes a continual speeding up the means of transportation, communication, and production.⁹
- **Acceleration of social change** involves an “increasing transformation of patterns of social association, of forms of practice and the substance of (practically relevant) knowledge.”¹⁰ Rosa points to the rate of change in work and careers as an example of accelerated social change. We have moved from a multigenerational constancy in a line of work (in which the same profession is passed on from parent to child), to individuals in each new generation choosing different careers that span an entire life, to a common phenomenon now of multiple changes of career within one person’s lifetime.¹¹ We could also point to a more recent rapid social

development. The last time the NAAL met twelve months ago, same-sex marriage was legal in sixteen states. Today it is legal in thirty-five states. [Ed. note: On 26 June 2015, the Supreme Court ruled that gay couples had the right to marry nationwide.]

- **The acceleration of the pace of life** is easily recognized in our unscientific survey a few minutes ago. We are affected by the demands to do more in less time, so that we can move on to the next thing, and do even more. Faster is better; multitasking is an admired skill. Acceleration of the pace of life crowds out leisure time. With the help of e-mail and smart phones, some people are never off the clock. The meeting may end, but it continues in a flurry of post-meeting e-mails. Some companies require that their employees who travel for business must book flights that offer Wi-Fi, so that they can work on their way to work. Even when there is time allowed for leisure, acceleration has an impact on relaxation. It promotes what Tilden Edwards has called a form of living that “oscillates between driven achievement (both on and off the job) and some form of mind-numbing private escape.”¹² A faster pace of life has led to what Hartmut Rosa describes as the “spectacular and epidemic ‘time-famine’ of modern Western societies.”¹³ The hunger for time generates a desire for more acceleration.

The social motors that drive these forms of acceleration, according to Rosa, include the laws of profit in a competitive capitalist market system that professes the faith that time is money. He also sees acceleration as a replacement for the promise of eternity. Acceleration is an answer to the problem of finitude and death. Given our finite existence, it is better to do more and to do it faster. This is one way to control time and to avoid an awareness that my time will come to an end. These three kinds of acceleration eventually become a self-propelling system, which is a chief contributing factor to alienation.¹⁴

An obvious window on the process of acceleration in life is our experience of e-mail. Sending a message to someone by e-mail is fast. We do not waste time getting out stationary, writing a letter by hand, finding a stamp and going to a mail box or the post office. It also allows the recipient of the message to receive it instantaneously. This should save both sender and recipient a significant amount of time. However, e-mail ironically does not save time. It heightens expectations that we correspond more rapidly, and it increases the volume of correspondence, both the wanted and unwanted variety. Now, it takes more time to weed through spam each day. Rather than having more time on our hands to relax, we can experience more pressure that adds more stress to life. Thomas Eriksen summed up this experience when he wrote: “E-mail is a blessing for the sender, but can be hell for the recipient.”¹⁵

The demand for ever increasing acceleration in Western societies, the expectation that everything could and should operate at a faster pace—computers, modes of transportation, and us—has generated a whole field of literature in sociology, psychology, and self-help books. This literature primarily points out the negative effects of the faster pace of life. Some books advocate ways to use time

more efficiently, to save time. Different approaches to time management abound. However, efforts at time management can also increase a sense of pressure in daily life, and often the techniques proposed simply add tasks to our busy days. In his book, *Faster*, James Gleick describes the double edged sword of time-saving:

In a slow world, a time-saving device made an unpleasant task—washing clothes, perhaps, pass faster. Now we live in a faster world. Our time has different layers. It might seem that to save time means to preserve it, spare it, free it from some activity that might otherwise have consumed it in the hot flames of busy-ness. Yet time-saving books are constantly admonishing people to do things. . . . Some of us say we want to save time when really we just want to do more.¹⁶

In her book *Alone Together*, M.I.T. Professor Sherry Turkle points out that connectivity technologies that seek to save time and connect people have a curious impact on both time and relationships. She notes that, in addition to eroding boundaries between work time and leisure time,¹⁷ they engender a preference for relationships with robots over face-to-face human relationships.

Overwhelmed by the volume and velocity of our lives, we turn to technology to help us find time. But technology makes us busier than ever and ever more in search of retreat. Gradually, we come to see our online life as life itself. We come to see what robots offer as relationship. The simplification of relationship is no longer a source of complaint. It becomes what we want. These seem the gathering clouds of a perfect storm.¹⁸

People can easily prefer efficiency over personal contact. Many of the undergraduates I work with do not even bother with voice mail and will only use text messages—they are faster (you don't have to wait for the phone to ring) and more impersonal (there is no chance you actually have to talk to the other person).

It has become a commonplace experience to see multitasking threaten conversation and table fellowship. It is not unusual for people sitting at a meal to pick up their phones when there is a lull in the conversation to check their e-mails or to send a text (and sometimes people don't wait for a lull in the conversation.) Relating to distant people through technology seems preferable to relating to the people sitting across the table.

Systems of time management seek to satisfy our hunger for more time. They tend to treat time as a commodity that is under our control. Another approach to control time is to privatize it. One of the functions of common time is that it creates community. Shared time can lead to shared experiences that create bonds among people. However, in some aspects of contemporary life there is an erosion of shared time. I am the master of my privatized time. I no longer need to go to the store during business hours where I can run into my neighbors and share news or complain about the prices. I can go shopping in splendid isolation in the middle of the night on the Internet. Even television has moved into the realm of private time. I no longer need to

experience the big game along with everyone else by watching it at the time it is played. Through DVR and other recording devices, I can watch it alone at a time that I decide.

Treating time as a privatized commodity is an attempt to impose some control over the accelerating pace of life, achieved at the cost of community and intimacy.

Manipulating time in a quest for multitasking remains a highly valued skill, even though research in neuroscience reveals that the brain simply cannot multitask. It just switches more rapidly between one operation and another. Multitasking is simply the brain operating at warp speed, a way of being that is both addictive and less effective than commonly thought.¹⁹

A Concern for Liturgical Celebration

Why should the phenomenon of acceleration in contemporary life be of concern to those of us who study liturgy and ritual and who have roles of leadership in liturgical formation? Well, the addictive desire for acceleration is a contributing factor in the destruction of the environment. That should be reason enough. In addition to that, acceleration, along with the commodification and privatization of time, weakens the ability of people to participate in the liturgy in a full, active, and conscious way. It is an obstacle to memorial, to thanksgiving, and to living the compassion of the Gospel—three central aspects of liturgical celebration.

Acceleration is an obstacle to memorial. The current default approach to time hinders a capacity to remember the deeds of God in hope of a future that has an impact upon the present. The faster we go, the less inclined we are to enter into the dynamic of anamnesis. Milan Kundera reflects on this in his novel *Slowness*:

There is a secret bond between slowness and memory, between speed and forgetting. Consider this utterly commonplace situation: a man is walking down the street. At a certain moment, he tries to recall something, but the recollection escapes him. Automatically, he slows down. Meanwhile, a person who wants to forget a disagreeable incident he has just lived through starts unconsciously to speed up his pace, as if he were trying to distance himself from a thing still too close to him in time.

In existential mathematics, that experience takes the form of two basic equations: the degree of slowness is directly proportional to the intensity of memory; the degree of speed is directly proportional to the intensity of forgetting.²⁰

When the rhythm of life is too fast, the past and the future collapse into the present.²¹ This diminishes the ability to see the present as existing “between memory and hope” (to borrow the title of a book edited by our president Max Johnson).²² Our capacity for memorial is weakened when life is experienced as a rapid sequence of fragmentary moments without connections to the past or the future. *Chronos* crowds out *kairos*.

For many, memory is confined to the latest news cycle. Stories fade from recall, as they are replaced by the latest crisis or curiosity. This lack of memory has serious consequences for liturgy and life. For example, seeing a report about an unarmed African American male killed by police as an isolated incident is very different from hearing the story with the memory of many similar deaths. Only the second perspective sees a social pattern that needs to be changed. Only the second perspective gives rise to the prophetic cry that black lives matter.

Our ability to remember the deeds of the Lord in such a way that it creates new ways of living in the present, in hope of a future, rests upon our capacity to change our pace to allow for the remembering and reflection that is at the heart of liturgical memorial.

Acceleration is an obstacle to thanksgiving. A purely instrumental use of our time can cloud our appreciation of time as a gift and our insight into the events of life as the place where God is at work. A fast pace of life creates conditions that favor having the experience but missing the meaning.²³ If we try to remedy our “time hunger” by treating time as a commodity to be used more effectively, we are more interested in being the manipulators of time rather than the recipients of the gift of time. If we succeed in managing our time better and multitasking more efficiently, then we have no one to thank but ourselves, and maybe the latest self-help book we have read.

Acceleration is an obstacle to compassion and hospitality. You are all probably aware of the classic Good Samaritan Study by social psychologists John Darley and Daniel Batson.²⁴ A group of seminarians was asked to participate in a study of religious education. After completing a questionnaire dealing with their beliefs, they were sent to another building to do one of two tasks: either to give a presentation on post-seminary job opportunities or to address a group on the parable of the Good Samaritan. Before the seminarians were sent off to give their presentations, some were told that they should hurry because they were late for their talk. Others were told they did not have to rush, but should go over to the other building anyway. On the route to the building the researchers planted a man slumped in a doorway, moaning and coughing. The most significant factor in determining whether a seminarian stopped to help the man was how hurried the student felt. Even the hurried ones in the group slated to speak about the Good Samaritan were less inclined to be moved by compassion. Some even stepped over the man in their haste to get to their appointed task. This contrived situation illustrates a tendency for hurried people to focus on their tasks and to filter out appeals to their compassion.

We can say all we want about the connections between liturgy and life, but when attendance at a liturgy is simply one item in a to-do list for a busy weekend, it will hardly have an impact on people’s consciousness. The pressures of social acceleration can make us harried travelers on the road to Jericho who have no time to notice those in need.

Some skills in time management may be helpful in certain situations. However, a more important approach to the acceleration of life is not by taking the road of efficient management. It is the road of appreciation that is needed, where time is received as a gift from God, and here is where liturgy can make a contribution.

Within Judeo-Christian traditions, time is seen as sequential and consequential. Human history moves like a pilgrimage toward a goal, even if that pilgrim path cannot adequately be pictured by a straight line. Time is understood not so much as coming from somewhere and going somewhere. Rather, it is appreciated as coming from Someone and growing toward Someone. Time is the matrix for the relationship between the divine and the human. It is the context for the development of human response to divine faithfulness.

For Christians, the Word of God become flesh in Jesus is the link between the contingent and temporal and the eternal. Because of this perspective, our time is related to the presence of Jesus in human history.

Christ yesterday and today
The Beginning and the End
The Alpha and the Omega.
All time belongs to him and all the ages.
To him be glory and power
Through every age and forever.²⁵

This belief, expressed in the blessing of the Easter candle, means that our time belongs to Christ, a time in which “no thought of ours is left unguarded, no tear unheeded, no joy unnoticed.”²⁶ Our time is a gift from God—a limited and finite gift, but a gift nonetheless, and one that calls for appreciation.

Abraham Joshua Heschel on Time

In the face of the commodification and privatization of time, the reflections of Abraham Heschel open a path for understanding time as a gift, and receiving it with reverence and appreciation. Heschel’s approach to time in his meditations on the Sabbath is particularly pertinent in today’s context of social acceleration.

In a comparison between time and space, Heschel emphasizes the importance of an appreciation of time in the face of an emphasis on a conquest of space characteristic of modernity.

There is a realm of time where the goal is not to have but to be, not to own but to give, not to control but to share, not to subdue but to be in accord. Life goes wrong when the control of space, the acquisition of things of space, becomes our sole concern.²⁷

From his perspective on Jewish ritual, which he describes as “an architecture of time,”²⁸ Heschel sees an appreciation of time to be a centripetal force for bringing people together and a call for a certain humility in the face of our status as mortals created by God. While I can claim space, put a fence around it and call it mine, I cannot do the same with time. I do not possess time; I share it with others who are contemporaries.²⁹

Heschel stresses a Biblical sense of time that is not a chronological sequence of bland moments, but is a textured and distinctive story given to us as a gift.

Unlike the space-minded [person] to whom time is unvaried, iterative, homogeneous, to whom all hours are alike, qualitiless, empty shells, the Bible senses the diversified character of time. There are no two hours alike. Every hour is unique and the only one given at the moment, exclusive and endlessly precious.³⁰

Heschel's perspective helps us to see that time is the quintessential noncommodity. It cannot be saved; it can only be spent, and such a spending is not a commercial transaction, like money given in exchange for something. Time is given away, never to return, in an act of self-emptying.

Heschel's insights into time as a ground for understanding the Sabbath can also help us understand the role of time in Christian liturgy. I am not claiming that Christian liturgy is either a continuation or a replacement of the Sabbath. I believe that an approach to time in Christian liturgy has much to learn from Heschel and from the keen reverence for time that Jewish rituals and observances continue to have.

Liturgical Celebrations in an Accelerated World

Can Sunday celebrations of the Eucharist have an influence on a world marked by acceleration?

First, let us be realistic. Liturgy is not going to put the brakes on all the forces of acceleration. Multitasking and time management will continue. Economic forces will continue to encourage the commodification of time and promote calendars that are not in sync with the liturgical year. However, liturgical celebrations that promote an awareness of the assembly's place in history, and that weave a conscious reverence for the holy gift of time, can provide alternative pace setters which create a rhythm that puts forces of acceleration in perspective. For this to happen, the dimension of liturgy as anamnesis needs to be accented in a robust manner.

Catechesis in the Depth Dimension of Liturgical Participation

A more conscious participation in the dynamic action of liturgical memorial requires catechesis in the depth dimensions of liturgical participation, one that recognizes and accents the anamnestic thread woven throughout the liturgy. Keeping memory of what God has done in human history enlivens an appreciation of time as a holy gift. Now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation, when that now is understood as connected to the past and future of salvation history, when that now is seen as a gift entrusted to us.

The Witness of Keeping the Liturgical Year

Lizette Larson-Miller has shown how a commitment to the celebration of the liturgical year can be a prophetic act on the part of the assembly. Respect for the temporal dimension of liturgy, even risking the inconvenience of clashing with other calendars, offers a hope filled alternative to the market's manipulation of our

desires and promise of instant gratification. Communities formed by the patterns of the liturgical year are invited to participate in “consciously practiced time” both in the gathered assembly and in domestic practices.³¹

Being still, ceasing multitasking, in order to glimpse God, to allow the Holy Spirit to penetrate our constructions of material goods and busyness, is a gift that the church can offer to the world, and doing so as a community is a particular challenge and expression of the church pointing to hope in eschatological fulfillment.³²

Accenting Anamnesis in Celebrations of the Eucharist

Accent on the thread of anamnesis that runs through the liturgy makes the celebration itself a formation in the art of keeping time and honoring it as a gift. Here are a few brief examples, each one requiring more development.

The act of assembling in a dis-assembled world is significant; it is a practice of real presence. With the exception of a few megachurches where you can watch the Sunday service while nibbling on a bagel in the church’s food court, Sunday worship implies the real presence of people in the same place at the same time. The act of assembling is a witness to the value of common prayer in a world that increasingly opts for virtual reality and contact with others from a distance, often under the veil of anonymity. Assembling is an act of anamnesis in which all the living of the community is remembered and gathered into the celebration.

The presidential prayers, and especially the opening prayers, bring to the fore an awareness of God’s action in human history and in the lives of people today. These prayers are not only petitions; they are acts of remembrance. Here, however, the new translations of these prayers do not always serve us well. It is hard to keep track of what you are remembering when you are lost in the currents of a seemingly endless dependent clause.

The Liturgy of the Word, celebrated with a rhythm and pace conducive to active listening, silence and reflection, facilitates the dynamic of keeping memory and enables the Word of God to dwell in the assembly in all its richness and wisdom.

Preaching that models the recalling of God’s action in the Scriptures as it interplays with life experience and future hopes is also a form of anamnesis. Preaching that is anamnestic and mystagogical reflects a mindset that honors the gift of time as part of salvation history. It can shape the imagination of the assembly in their approach to the ways they spend time.

The power of liturgical music is a form of the ministry of the Word. As such, it can act as an interpreter of liturgical memorial. Music obviously has an effect on the pace of liturgy, since it enables a meditation on language that is drawn out in rhythm and melody. Liturgical song does not simply set a mood or serve as an ornament to the liturgical action. Music is in itself a form of interpretation, an embodied homiletic.³³

Praying the eucharistic prayer in a way that respects the narrative pace of the prayer with its various changes in tempo, calls the community to linger in grateful

remembrance of the self-giving of God in Jesus that in turn calls for the self-giving of the community.

Vigilance

David Power has referred to vigilance as an apt metaphor for the attitude of Christian people who engage the *poesis* of time in the liturgy. Liturgical celebrations in which an appreciation for the gift of time is brought to the fore can promote the virtue of vigilance within the worshipping community. To be vigilant is to be sober and alert, “that is, in full possession of one’s senses, on the ready, quick to note what is going on, or what is just around the corner.”³⁴ This poetic and prophetic attitude is guided by the icon of Jesus as the paradigm of “a vigilance which opens hearts to the God of the parables and the beatitudes, and eyes to the revelation which comes from things of overpowering simplicity and even poverty.”³⁵

A sense of vigilance born from a liturgical *poesis* of time can create a prophetic sensitivity to the time of others, particularly those whose time is devalued. (And, in a culture of acceleration, to devalue someone’s time is to devalue someone as a person.)

One of my tasks in working with first-year students at the University of Notre Dame is to read the applications of incoming students. These applications include a page where students indicate what jobs their parents do. I am amazed to see how many students put down next to their mothers’ name: unemployed. Looking at the educational background of these women, it is clear that many of them interrupted their careers to take on the tasks of child rearing. When you look at the number of siblings in the family, you can be sure that these women are not spending their days sitting on the sofa eating bonbons.

Around the same time David Power gave his presentation on the *poesis* of time and place, there was another talk given at the law school of American University, where NPR legal correspondent Nina Totenberg described a significant legal issue of the moment: equal pay for equal work. More than thirty-five years later, despite some advances, there is still a gender gap in earnings. According to 2010 figures derived from the U.S. Census, women earn 19 percent less than their male counterparts.³⁶ The same can be said of the devaluation of the time of the working poor and the less educated, whose earning power continues to be eroded. What is the prophetic function of a liturgical *poesis* of time in a world in which women’s time and the time of the poor are devalued? Do the ones whose time is devalued have a voice in the action of liturgical anamnesis?

A liturgical *poesis* of time offers possibilities for prophetic living in an accelerated world that does not have to be controlled by the desire for a calculus of action motivated by profit and competition. It can be part of the creation of a slow spirituality of Christian life.

Spending Time at the NAAL Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the North American Academy of Liturgy is also an act of *poesis* in a world of acceleration. We make a decision to spend time together at the beginning of each year. Our gathering is a creative act. We choose to spend time with one another, as companions, colleagues, contemporaries. Even though we may

have a “cold coming” in getting here, even if it is “the worst time of the year for a journey,”³⁷ even though occasionally our time together and our common worship may be a source of irritation and criticism (and such constructive criticism is a good thing), we keep returning nonetheless, year after year. And this time spent together is creative of collegial bonds that encourage us and sustain us in our work.

Being together at the same time is important. Despite the occasional Skype session in a seminar, there does not seem to be in the Academy (nor, in my opinion, should there be) a move toward making the annual meeting a webinar—something we could attend from the comfort of our homes. And even though some of us may have to arrive late or leave early on occasion, we still see value in experiencing the whole meeting from beginning to end. There is a value in being together, in spending time (organized and unstructured time) together. Our being together to work in seminars is a *poesis* of time, as our creative work is shared, reviewed, criticized, and improved.

We stand at the beginning of this year, as we always do, in mutual welcome and in remembrance of those whose time with us has come to an end. One year, some year, each of us will be named and remembered at this opening rite. Until then, let us honor and savor the time we have now. May this time help us in our various traditions to promote liturgy and worship that honor time as a gift from God as it instills in us a vigilance and a gratefulness for what can be created. Now is always the acceptable time. Now is the time we have been given. Now is the time to create anew.

Notes

- 1 David N. Power, “Liturgical Ministry: The Christian People’s *Poesis* of Time and Place,” *Worship* 52, no. 3 (1978): 211–22.
- 2 Power, 211–212, emphasis added.
- 3 Power, 214.
- 4 Power, 216.
- 5 Kim R. Harris pointed out to me that the history of the African American spiritual “Were You There When They Crucified My Lord,” reveals a dynamic form of anamnesis when the song was sung as a remembrance of the crucifixion of Jesus and in light of the lynching of African Americans. The memory of the one who was nailed to the tree was sung in memory of those unjustly hung from a tree. Only in other later contexts was the song used in a naïve and sentimental way. I am grateful to Kim Harris for this insight.
- 6 Power, “Liturgical Ministry,” 217.
- 7 Lizette Larson-Miller, “Consuming Time,” *Worship* 88, no. 6 (2014): 528–42.
- 8 Hartmut Rosa, *Alienation and Acceleration: Towards a Critical Theory of Late-Modern Temporality* (Malmö, Sweden: NSU Press, 2010). See also Hartmut Rosa, *Social Acceleration: A New Theory of Modernity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).
- 9 Rosa, *Alienation and Acceleration*, 16.
- 10 Rosa, *Alienation and Acceleration*, 17.
- 11 Rosa, *Alienation and Acceleration*, 19–20.
- 12 Tilden Edwards, *Sabbath Time: Understanding and Practice for Contemporary Christians* (Minneapolis, MN: The Seabury Press, 1982), 4.
- 13 Rosa, *Alienation and Acceleration*, 20.

- 14 Rosa, *Alienation and Acceleration*, 31.
- 15 Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Tyranny of the Moment: Fast and Slow Time in the Information Age* (London: Pluto Press, 2001), 59.
- 16 James Gleick, *Faster: The Acceleration of Just About Everything* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1999), 231–232.
- 17 Sherry Turkle, *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 13.
- 18 Turkle, 17.
- 19 See Daniel J. Levitin on the addictive qualities of multitasking. David HersHKovits, “Neuroscientist Daniel Levitin Explains Why Multitasking Is a Harmful Addiction,” http://www.papermag.com/2014/09/daniel_levitin_the_organized_mind.php (accessed 28 December 2014).
- 20 Milan Kundera, *Slowness*, trans. Linda Asher (New York: Harper Collins, 1996), 39.
- 21 See Rosa, *Alienation and Acceleration*, 18.
- 22 Maxwell E. Johnson, ed., *Between Memory and Hope: Readings on the Liturgical Year* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2000).
- 23 See T.S. Eliot, “The Dry Salvages,” in *Four Quartets* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1943), 24.
- 24 John M. Darley and C. Daniel Batson, “‘From Jerusalem to Jericho’: A Study of Situational and Dispositional Variables in Helping Behavior,” *The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 27, no. 1 (1973): 100–108.
- 25 From the preparation of the paschal candle at the Easter Vigil, in *The Roman Missal*, English translation according to the third typical edition of the *Missale Romanum* (2002), for use in the dioceses of the United States of America (Franklin Park, IL: World Library Publications, 2012), 315.
- 26 From the alternative opening prayer for the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, in *The Sacramentary*, revised according to the second typical edition of the *Missale Romanum* (1975), 1 March 1985, for use in the dioceses of the United States of America. English translation prepared by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Co., 1985), 284.
- 27 Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath: Its Meaning for Modern Man* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), e-book edition, 2011, location 158.
- 28 Heschel, location 225.
- 29 Heschel, location 86.
- 30 Heschel, location 225.
- 31 Larson-Miller, “Consuming Time,” 540.
- 32 Larson-Miller, 539.
- 33 “As the art form of music depicts or images virtual time, so it is with the more creative uses of music in the liturgy. *Insight* into the possibilities and virtualities of living events and passage is what is offered in music, not just the transitory emotions which may occur as the piece is being sung or listened to.” Power, “Liturgical Ministry,” 216.
- 34 Power, 212–13.
- 35 Power, 222.
- 36 See The U.S. Department of Labor and The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Women in the Labor Force: A Databook*, December 2011, 1. <http://www.bls.gov/cps/wlf-databook-2011.pdf> (accessed 27 December 2014).
- 37 See T.S. Eliot, “Journey of the Magi,” no. 8 of *The Ariel Poems* (London: Faber and Gwyer, 1927).

Introduction of the *Berakah* Award Recipient

Clemens Leonhard

Clemens Leonhard, Dr. Theol. from the University of Vienna, is professor of liturgical studies, Seminar für Liturgiewissenschaft, Katholisch-Theologische Fakultät, Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster. He is the author of The Jewish Pesach and the Origins of the Christian Easter: Open Questions and Modern Research (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 2006), among many other publications.

This evening, my role is that of John the Baptist. I am not, however, the voice that is crying out *in the desert*; I am the voice that is crying out *after the dessert*.

Now, several important rituals in Christianity and Judaism emerged from the context of the ancient Greek and Roman ways to hold festive banquets called *symposia*. In the ancient symposium as well as in our banquet, the most important activity comes *after* the eating. So let me briefly introduce today's important person and guest of honor, Rabbi Ruth Langer.

The basic points of this introduction are well known. Ruth did her postgraduate studies in the field of rabbinic literature. She was ordained in 1986. She continued her studies in Jewish liturgy at the Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati and at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Ruth received her doctorate 1994. Right after her studies, she became a member of Boston College. Ruth was promoted to the office of a full professor of Jewish Studies at Boston College in 2012.

Introducing Ruth Langer cannot be a presentation. Its points are just obvious: scholarly excellence, absolute integrity, and an unremitting commitment to the right causes.

The genre of choice to be applied in an introduction of Ruth Langer is the *litany*—for the litany allows us to celebrate a long chain of merits and achievements. The best model for today's occasion is, furthermore, a piece of poetry from the Haggadah of Pesach. It is called after its refrain, *dayyenu*. You know that words receive their meanings in their context. In its present context, the Hebrew term *dayyenu* must be paraphrased in the following way: “Even what has been said in each single stanza of this litany would already be sufficient for making Ruth a worthy candidate for the Berakah award.” This is roughly the plain meaning of *dayyenu*. Tonight, I shall recite *five* stanzas out of the great number of stanzas

of the litany about Ruth and conclude each of them with *dayyenu*. Now, let us begin the litany.

At the turn of the last century, Ruth published a most useful book, *To Worship God Properly: Tensions between Liturgical Custom and Halakhah in Judaism*.¹ Of course this book is worth reading for its discussions of theses and analyses. But once you open this book, you will see that Ruth discusses *en passant* many important issues of Jewish liturgy in a detailed way. This book is a veritable manual of Jewish liturgy. We may respond: *Dayyenu!*—which means, “This alone would be sufficient for making Ruth a worthy candidate for the Berakah award.”

Let us move on to the second stanza. Occasionally, I am talking to colleagues who are members of international groups working for the promotion of the mutual understanding between Christians and Jews. Each time that such a conversation mentions persons (whom both of us know), Ruth’s name will come up. She is an untiring participant in initiatives of the Jewish-Christian dialogue that are held on the highest level of scholarship. In this context, she also publishes studies of direct concern to the interests of this academy. Just to name a few: “The Liturgical Parting(s) of the Ways” between Christianity and Judaism, or “Jewish Liturgical Memory and the Non-Jew: Past Realities and Future Possibilities.”² Ruth also discusses questions of interreligious prayer. Her expertise and interests transcend the boundaries of the study of liturgy. Thus, she spoke and wrote about “theologies of the Land and State of Israel,” about the Shoah, and about the concept of covenant. We can say: *Dayyenu!* Which means—as you know: “This alone would be sufficient for making Ruth a worthy candidate for the Berakah award.”

The third stanza actually continues the second one. Ruth has published the magisterial study about the *Birkat haminim*. This is one of the blessings of the weekday Amidah, the central prayer of the Jewish liturgy of the hours. It is a blessing against the so-called *minim*. Let me translate *minim* as “heretics” for now. Read the book in order to know in which respect this translation is correct or incorrect. The book is called: *Cursing the Christians? [Question Mark!]: A History of the Birkat Haminim*.³ Apart from its excellence in historical, philological, and theological scholarship, this book shows how Ruth understands the role of academic research as a contribution to interreligious dialogue. She takes up one of the thorniest issues of liturgical history between Christians and Jews. Already in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, the Christian writers Jerome and Epiphanius claimed that the Jews curse Christ and a certain kind of Christians in their prayers. Ruth unfolds the exciting story of this blessing in terms of suspicion, censorship, self-censorship, resistance against censorship, as well as humanistic concerns within the reform movement with regard to this blessing. Ruth would never misrepresent a single dot in a manuscript because of considerations of political correctness or interreligious diplomacy. Nevertheless, every page of this study shows that it is actually written in support of interreligious learning and understanding. It is written in order to promote trust and friendship between Christians and Jews. *Dayyenu!*—“This alone would be sufficient for making Ruth a worthy candidate for the Berakah award.”

Beginning the fourth stanza of this litany, let me remark, that many of us refer to the statutory prayers of Judaism in order to compare this tradition with liturgies of Christianity. However, some of the most important discussions of this

field are conducted in Modern Hebrew. The great scholar of Jewish liturgy and Jewish liturgical poetry, Ezra Fleischer—of blessed memory—published a seminal and innovative study on the emergence of the Amidah. Ruth engaged him in a discussion and suggested some modifications of his theses. As a side effect of this debate, we have an excellent summary and evaluation of Fleischer’s theses and his own response to it in English. Ruth does not only build bridges between religions, but also between different areas, languages, and cultures of science. Continuing this work of translation and introduction, she presented her most recent work in our seminar of this academy: an annotated bibliography on Jewish liturgy. *Dayyenu!*—“This alone would be sufficient for making Ruth a worthy candidate for the Berakah award.”

The fifth and last stanza looks at Ruth’s work explicitly from a non-Jewish perspective, like my own approach to her studies. Let me introduce another metaphor here. Trying to grasp some aspects of a *Jewish* understanding of Judaism may be compared with travelling in a foreign country. As a foreigner, I make mistakes. I misunderstand codes, and I show up in the wrong places at the wrong times. Lucky is the traveler who finds an excellent guidebook! A list of Ruth’s writings is the table of contents of a liturgical scholar’s guidebook to Judaism. Take her studies on the reading of the Bible in Jewish liturgy, for example. Until I found the respective chapter in this virtual guidebook, I thought that I understood what it means to read the bible in a liturgy. Well, go to Ruth’s papers, if you want to see the subtle differences in the performance of the ritual, to learn bits of an insider’s interpretation, and to understand the relationship to similar performances in other religions. And here is the good news: this guidebook is growing and expanding every year! This Berakah award points to the past as well as to the future. A last time for today: *Dayyenu!*—“This alone would be sufficient for making Ruth a worthy candidate for the Berakah award.”

Let me abide by the constraints of my actual role here: that of John the Baptist. He is supposed to act as nothing but the voice that cries out in the desert (or after the dessert), and so I am supposed to decrease and step down after all that crying. You may repent and turn away from this nice way of life *later*. Please enjoy the conferral of the Berakah award and Ruth Langer’s response *now!*

Notes

- 1 (Cincinnati, OH: Hebrew University Press, 1998).
- 2 “The Liturgical Parting(s) of the Ways: A Preliminary Foray,” in *A Living Tradition: On the Intersection of Liturgical History and Pastoral Practice*, ed. David A. Pitt et al. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012), 43–58. “Jewish Liturgical Memory and the Non-Jew: Past Realities and Future Possibilities,” in *Jewish Theology and World Religions*, ed. Alon Goshen Gottstein and Eugene Korn (Oxford and Portland, OR: Littmann, 2012), 167–86.
- 3 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

THE NORTH AMERICAN ACADEMY OF LITURGY

presents the

2015 BERAKAH AWARD

to

Ruth Langer

Scholar of Jewish prayer and liturgy,
Wise and caring teacher, intrepid editor,
Tireless facilitator of interfaith dialogue:

You have sounded the depths of history in texts,
vital knowledge of Torah & Tradition for today
showing common humanity in living prayer.

For the integrity of your work,
the wisdom of your intellect and speech,
your unfailing ecumenical spirit, and
your gift of uncommon hospitality to all,

We offer this Academy's praise and thanks.

הודו ליהוה כי-טוב



The Blessings and Challenges of Interreligious Prayer

Ruth Langer

Ruth Langer, Ph.D., is professor of Jewish studies and associate director of the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning at Boston College.

First, my deepest gratitude to Maxwell Johnson and the Academy Committee for this honor. I'm still not sure why they turned to me this year. Past recipients of the Berakah Award have accomplished much more; many of you are far more worthy. But because Max insisted, I accept, including the challenge of communicating something meaningful after a full day, an enriching meeting, and through the haze following a good meal. Thank, you, Clemens, for your generous and heartfelt introduction. Getting to know you and being challenged by your thinking has been one of the greatest joys of these meetings for me.

I want also to express my deepest thanks to Larry Hoffman. Shortly after I began teaching at Boston College, he, seconded by my colleague Bob Daly, SJ, insisted—in no uncertain terms—that I must come to the next meeting. Larry's presence is sorely missed here, and we pray for long years of health for his wife, Gayle.

That 1996 meeting was in Cincinnati, with its *supposed* promise of a reasonably moderate climate. Few who were there have forgotten the snow storm that shut down Cincinnati and then snarled the east coast. While I enjoyed friends and library time in Cincinnati, my dear husband was stuck at home with very small children and ice dams sending waterfalls into the house. My husband and children, the latter now grown and out of the house, send their greetings, thanks, and regrets that joining me here this weekend was impossible.

Being a Sabbath-observant Jew at this meeting has often not been simple, either logistically or emotionally. So another set of thank yous need to go to my companions in creating a sense of Sabbath—especially to those with whom I have shared meals, song, and, where possible, walks to local synagogues. Our services and dinners in San Diego and Toronto remain treasured memories. Thanks also to those who have offered other, simpler forms of help through the years. Being here has always been important.

I also want to mention Frank and Ruth Henderson, whose presence at these meetings I very much miss. Frank (the 1997 Berakah recipient) and I share a common interest: the intersection of liturgy and Christian-Jewish relations. We both

have dealt with this historically, hoping to contribute to new thinking about our own liturgies that can then contribute to further repairing the relations between our communities. Frank, more than I, has also contributed to this practically, not just naming problems, but also generating and making available alternative resources for actual liturgical use. My calling seems to be somewhat less practical and more academic. But because it also involves teaching in the theology department of a Jesuit university, thinking about interreligious relations and creating resources for others who—I hope—will act is very central to what I do.

In Cincinnati, the opening rite was not at a church, but at the grand Plum Street Temple, where I had been ordained ten years earlier. The ordination ceremony packs that huge synagogue to the gills and fills it with the music of choir and band. I learned what the NAAL is from that first liturgy: although we as a community did not come close to physically filling that massive space with its questionable acoustics, we filled it with joyful sound in praise of God in a way that I had never before experienced. No one held back. Most could read music and participate even if the melodies and words were unfamiliar—something one does not normally experience at synagogues! The service itself was true to the history of that building, largely using prayers that would have been heard there over its history. Yet it was a service for the NAAL community, not a conventional Reform Jewish service.

Interreligious Dialogue and Interreligious Prayer

Subsequent to that, interacting with folks at these meetings has been a constant experience of interreligious dialogue and interreligious prayer. Rather than speak about my forthcoming book, an annotated bibliography on Jewish liturgy,¹ or about the details of manuscript evidence for the *birkat haminim*,² what I would like to explore with you this evening are some reflections, from my Jewish perspective, on prayer in this interreligious context, and I would like to do this through the lens of the theme of “hospitality.” The intentional hospitality of this academy, its constant work to be warmly welcoming and to broaden the borders of its community, is truly a *berakhah*, a blessing, and something worth celebrating. Yet, neither offering nor receiving this hospitality successfully is at all simple.³

Several years ago, Stephanie Perdew VanSlyke, with some minor input from me, edited a volume of the journal *Liturgy*, dedicated to thinking about interreligious prayer. The introduction points out the growing ubiquity of this phenomenon. It distinguishes between two sorts of worship situations: one in which there is a clear host and guest, where welcomed guests are expected to accommodate themselves to the local norm; and one in which members of different communities join to construct a shared ritual experience. This second category might involve parallel prayer where each group offers prayers according to its own tradition while others listen, alternating as hosts and guests or simultaneously praying in their own way; or prayers chosen as tradition neutral, seeking to generate a full, common community where there are no hosts or guests.⁴ These modes all have found their places in our academy’s liturgical life.

We do gather for tradition-specific liturgies, where the expectation is that there will be hosts and guests.⁵ How does or should hospitality function in such situations? The “academy liturgy” used to be on Friday night presided over by our president according to his or her tradition. (What it says that the hour became last night’s blues concert instead I’ll not pursue. . . .) The daily liturgies, now in the morning, demonstrate best practices, local experiences, or explore new possibilities, led by a particular constituency of the academy. While the vast majority of such services have been explicitly Christian, I have a few times over the years been challenged to offer hospitality as well with a Jewish service. At least for those who have joined me, when provided with the right tools to enable them to join in, my experience has been a repetition of the dynamic in Cincinnati—of a warm, eager participation that significantly overcomes the problem of not having a community of hosts. Overall, though, it is theologically much easier for Christians to join in Jewish prayer than the reverse.

According to the program, some seminar groups this year designated their Friday morning prayer time as *terce*. Research reminded me that this means a sort of late *shaharit* service. . . . What actually happened? The seminars that prayed the Divine Office, interspersing explicitly Christian prayers among Psalms, offered tradition-specific liturgy as well, even from an inner-Christian perspective.

Without question, there is an implicit hospitality expressed as the norm for our tradition-specific liturgies. All members of the academy are welcome; most now dodge issues of shared communion. Often, many of those in attendance are guests at some level, but for me, at least in my mind, as a Jew, I am a welcomed spectator. That isn’t a problem per se. There is much I can learn, but such venues do usually presume explicitly Christian prayer.

What happens, though, when a liturgy presumes that all present are insiders to the community and leaves no room for spectator-guests? I’ve been at liturgies where the presider sprinkles the community. I respect the importance and symbolism of this reminder of baptism, the power of this ritual to reinforce the community of the church. However, what does it say to guests, perhaps even to those whose baptism is not recognized there? Is it welcoming? For me, if it is a welcome, it is particularly problematic. This sprinkling makes me want to flee, and barring that, to duck, or somehow shelter myself physically—maybe an umbrella? This water impinges on my integrity as a guest—more so than anything else that I have experienced personally in churches. Its reminder to me is of the house of catechumens sitting at the entrance to the Jewish ghetto in Rome; of our uncle’s sister who disappeared as a teenager into a convent in Poland, only to be reunited with her family decades later;⁶ of Edgardo Mortara, secretly baptized by his nursemaid and subsequently removed from his parents’ home and raised by the pope. . . .⁷ For Jews, baptism is a freighted issue. Baptism offered as an expression of Christian love invalidates my identity as a Jew.

This is harsh, so let me ask, “Is there anything that my tradition does that similarly excludes?” Absolutely! But because Jewish liturgy is gesture poor, the problems are verbal. The horizon of traditional Jewish prayers is our own community. Prayers recognizing a greater humanity express an “us” versus “them” mentality. Guests cannot be insiders to such prayers, and I squirm when I must

teach them to Christians.⁸ These are precisely among the places that less traditional Jews, who have the freedom to do so, have often introduced changes.

I warn my students against *ever* making unsubstantiated global claims—but here goes. *All* of our liturgies were constructed to enhance in-group identity and to make communal boundaries very clear. This creates real challenges to one's presence, let alone participation, in the liturgy of a community not one's own. Yet, today, the likelihood that a guest will attend any given service is high. Does our contemporary call for liturgical hospitality mean that we must cease using ritual to define our communal identity? Each community needs to answer this according to its own resources. But the question itself indicates that the challenge of offering liturgical hospitality goes deeper than greeters or ushers.

Complexity of Hospitality

An example of the complexity of hospitality comes from an experience at our Chicago meeting. In those days, we regularly took organized, wonderful, enriching field trips to local liturgical sites mid-meeting. Some of us went to a Russian Orthodox Sunday morning liturgy. Someone from the academy was kind enough to whisper in my ear throughout, explaining what was happening throughout this long service. His hospitality was critical in making this a positive venture into totally unfamiliar territory. However, the church itself was not thrilled about our presence. When it came time for communion, the local priest announced abruptly, loudly, and at some length, that only those with Orthodox baptism were eligible to receive. With this, we were transformed from ignored guests into gawking, unwelcomed tourists. That we all were excluded was to be expected, but there was nothing discrete or gentle about its communication. I contrast this with a subsequent experience, attending the Sunday liturgy of my Greek Orthodox priest doctoral student with our class. We, of course, were spectators at communion, but his welcome was warm and personal. His sermon integrated us deliberately into the community; he designated seminarians to serve as our guides throughout. Similarly, I regularly take this class to a local synagogue that offers this same sort of welcome, including using a prayer book with transliteration and explanation, announcing page numbers, and a quiz the rabbi session after the service.

The challenge, then, is how to welcome guests as guests, respecting both the host's and the guests' limits on and possibilities for participation. It isn't easy! Both sides need to know the parameters, preferably in advance. When we invite guests to into our Orthodox Jewish world, usually for life-cycle events, we try to communicate our community's basic expectations of dress and Sabbath observance so that no one is embarrassed and we can maximize the welcome.

The issues around constructing shared worship experiences are actually more complex and, for people like us, more interesting. The academy is committed to this form of worship as well. I have experienced this as a specific outreach to non-Christians, and especially and most effectively, to Jews. Next 28 October will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the promulgation of *Nostra Aetate*. Not only is the ability of Catholics to pray with Protestants an outgrowth of the Second Vatican Council, as Max Johnson discussed in his vice presidential address last year,⁹ but the opening

to non-Christians is a product of this defining moment as well. The desire of what has become an academy of hundreds of Christians to make a handful (at most) of Jews feel welcome can only be acknowledged as something utterly unprecedented before our post-Holocaust age. This goes beyond hospitality in any superficial sense; it seeks to construct new communities of mutuality and reciprocity—while maintaining diversity.

Our meetings have over the years included as many as three interreligious, tradition-neutral liturgies, designed to be fully inclusive to all our members. Max pointed out last year and again in his presidential report at the business meeting today that these are rightly our “academy liturgies,” because all attendees are fully participants and no one is a guest.¹⁰ We are one community. We hold such worship for our opening rite, including its memorials for recently deceased members; our former closing liturgy, usually very brief and sometimes ill-attended; and the table prayer at tonight’s always well-attended banquet. However, we need to ask: What criteria need to be met to generate the situation of shared hospitality and mutuality that we seek? Generalizing from our experiences, what can we learn for the other 362 days of the year? How do we “say something” through interreligious worship? How do we envision its components to avoid its being a series of frontal presentations, sermon-like pronouncements, or a feel-good, sing-along of nice neutral songs? How do we achieve meaning and spiritual depth with the unfamiliar?

One criterion for shared worship seems obvious: American civil religion generally allows mention of God, but nothing more specific.¹¹ A reference or address to God as Triune or specifically to Jesus would exclude non-Christians. What individual participants understand by the words chosen is perhaps immaterial. This, of course, presumes that the English word “God” is appropriate for adherents of other religions. We should note, though, that this reflects a hegemony of monotheists, theists, and western realities. In the real world “out there,” even God needs to be named with caution.

Other issues present more subtle challenges. Let me draw here on actual examples from involvement in planning our interreligious liturgies. Several years ago, those preparing the music for the opening rite wanted to include “Amazing Grace.” Based on my permission to name “God,” a hymn or prayer that does not mention Christ would seem automatically neutral, right? This hymn does not even mention the word “God” until its final lines, and “grace” itself also seems pretty neutral, however amazing! Indeed, there are many who do interpret this as a virtually secular song; it has entered the world of popular culture.¹² Take a moment, though, and recall the text’s message. Is it really so neutral? Indeed, its understanding of how God manifests “amazing grace” is deeply Christian. The hymn teaches that without this grace, the fallen “wretch” cannot be “saved,” is “lost” and “blind;” with it, he or she is saved, found, and sighted. This sounds to me like a mainstream interpretation of the meaning of Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection, one dependent on the *very* Christian concept of original sin. The text itself is full of allusions to New Testament language. That it is deeply embedded in western cultural vocabulary does not make “Amazing Grace” less Christian. To claim its neutrality is somewhat akin to a story I heard on National Public Radio one year about the “Judeo-Christian” celebration of Christmas. It erases Jewish, and Christian, distinctiveness.

Hearing through the Other's Ears

Now is not the place—or the hour—for a theology lesson. My point is that interreligious prayer has deep similarities to successful interreligious dialogue. In dialogue, it is key to learn to hear through the other's ears. In this case, I know that the musicians were focused on the *performance* of a beloved piece, not on an analysis of its words. In addition, many Christians and even Jews are not even aware of how specifically Christian this hymn is. The very fact that I knew the words when the issue arose suggests that I, too, had once been oblivious to its actual message, satisfied simply that it did not name Jesus.

Dialogue and education, then, are key. In order to pray with the religious other, we need to understand each other's theology and parameters for prayer. We also need to understand what our own prayers are expressing and why. For joint prayer, the words chosen must be acceptable to all. The service itself does need to integrate familiar elements from all those represented, but in such a way as to avoid introducing incongruities or transgressing the norms of any participants.

Another example: At Washington Post editor Ben Bradlee's Episcopal funeral at the National Cathedral in October, his Jewish friend and physician recited *kaddish*, a prayer praising God that is the best known Jewish memorial prayer.¹³ A few days later, and completely unrelated, Troy Messenger asked my opinion about including *kaddish* in the memorials of our opening rite. I nixed the idea, because in my traditional Jewish world this particular prayer is only recited as a memorial prayer by near relatives¹⁴ and within a quorum of Jews—and we meet neither criterion. The point of *kaddish* is not primarily the mourner's expression of grief (though it functions that way), but the prayer quorum's praise of God in its responses.¹⁵ While the gesture at Bradlee's funeral was well intentioned, I found the juxtaposition of *kaddish* with the Lord's Prayer at Bradlee's church funeral to be highly questionable.¹⁶ In our case, there are other Jewish memorial prayers that could be used. But perhaps we should memorialize individuals according to their own traditions? This is indeed what we did this year, as each memorial took its own form, and a communal response alluding to the beatific vision, used in previous years, was eliminated. This is a case where parallel or sequential prayer has its place.

Let's move away from words. How does worship space affect the dynamics of interreligious prayer? I have experienced our academy's opening rite once in a synagogue, often in a local church of note, and not infrequently in the hotel itself. The Academy Committee frequently struggles with the relative advantages of exploring the meeting's location, viewing and experiencing its key religious architecture, versus enabling tired travelers to stay put. As a location for the shared hospitality of interreligious prayer, though, what happens when we gather in an established, dedicated worship space? That space reflects, usually intensely, the specifics of its regular community, and all the more so when we meet in a church during the Christmas season. While we are all, to some extent, guests and tourists in that space, recipients of its hospitality, some will be guests more than others. Those from aniconic Protestant traditions probably feel as little at home in elaborately decorated Catholic churches as Jews do. Creating a situation of shared interreligious prayer in such a setting, then, has an almost insurmountable challenge:

the liturgical content, however neutral, will almost inevitably be interpreted by the space. Noticing Central Lutheran's giant cross made me think twice about singing "Come to the Tree of Life," words that initially seemed innocuous. A building itself creates hosts and guests.

Hotel ballrooms, on the other hand, are inherently challenged as liturgical spaces. However beautiful, the room begins as a barren boxy wasteland. This leaves possibilities for transformation up to the limits of imagination—but also of budget and realism. Can we successfully transform a multipurpose space into one that helps us feel the presence of the Divine? Such a setting, while inherently religiously neutral, has its own real drawbacks.

What we choose to do in either space, of course, is still the key. How do we organize our experience? What successfully signals "worship" to those gathering? If we choose completely creative, unfamiliar elements or ones that signal some other setting, then we fail. Were we to hand everyone bags of popcorn as they enter a dimly lit room in which comfy auditorium style seats face a screen, the message would be all wrong. So, too, would beginning with the National Anthem or ending with a school fight song. So what is right for shared prayer? Do we have shared expectations of what a liturgy will contain, how it will begin and end, and the order of the parts?

This is a question that we as an academy generally have not asked, but specific messages are embedded in our structural choices. Two examples: church services generally begin and end with the formal entry and egress of the officiants. This is certainly functional, it probably gets people there on time, but it also marks the theologically differentiated status of the presider(s). However, what happens theologically if the prayer leader emerges from the midst of the congregation? My rabbi generally arrives after the service begins and leaves long after it ends. He sits among us. While deeply respected and ultimately in charge, his status—liturgically—is no different than any other congregant. Indeed, he can't sing, so this is just as well! So an interreligious service that demands a processional, recessional, or vestments raises questions.¹⁷

More critically, we always incorporate Scripture. But when? The rabbis placed their required prayers *before* the Torah reading, and most services do not have one.¹⁸ Christians foreground the readings, especially if there is a Eucharist or its equivalent. Muslim liturgy comes entirely from the Qur'an. In each case, structure, choice of text, and order of texts conveys a message. To follow one model or another consistently suggests a hegemony of a particular understanding of Scripture's role in our lives. A truly interreligious use of Scripture requires not only choosing the texts carefully, but also questioning their location in the service.

Finding Balance

As our academy's liturgical life has evolved, though, we have reached a different kind of balance. We do not express our full mutual hospitality through any one liturgy, but through the aggregate. The usually subtly Christian structure of the opening rite finds significant balance at our tables tonight. Our combination of prayers over wine and bread,¹⁹ and then a grace *after* the meal, is a Jewish structure.

By combining these prayers with our gifts to others, we elevate our tables into altars. In my tradition, including some learning also explicitly invokes God's presence. The Mishnah teaches, "Rabbi Simeon says: Three who eat together and . . . share words of Torah, it is as if they have eaten at God's table. . . ."²⁰

I thank you so much for this honor and for this opportunity to share some words of Torah, to think with you about how we can and do offer interreligious hospitality through our liturgies—whether this be when we welcome guests into our homes or when our communities draw together in a larger cause. May God grant *berakhah* to this academy and to all of us. May the fruits of this meeting enrich our lives as we go forward in our various modes of service to the world.

Notes

- 1 *Jewish Liturgy: A Guide to Research* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015).
- 2 See the appendices of my *Cursing the Christians?: A History of the Birkat HaMinim* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).
- 3 On this theme, see my forthcoming "Parameters of Hospitality in Interreligious Participation: Jewish Experiences," in *Ritual Participation and Interreligious Dialogue: Boundaries, Transgressions and Innovations*, ed. Joris Geldhof and Marianne Moyaert (Bloomsbury, forthcoming).
- 4 "Interreligious Prayer: Introduction," with Stephanie Perdew VanSlyke, *Liturgy* 26, no. 3 (2011): 1–10.
- 5 These fit the category that the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue's 1991 *Dialogue and Proclamation*, no. 42, summarizing its own 1984 *Dialogue and Mission*, no. 35 (Secretariat for Non-Christians), calls "the dialogue of religious experience, where persons, rooted in their own religious traditions, share their spiritual riches, for instance, with regard to prayer and contemplation, faith and ways of searching for God or the Absolute."
- 6 Rachel Sarna Araten, *Michalina: Daughter of Israel* (Spring Valley, NY: Distributed by P. Feldheim, 1986).
- 7 See, among others, David I. Kertzer, *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1997).
- 8 I regularly teach a Jewish liturgy course at Boston College. To avoid these themes would be dishonest and self-defeating.
- 9 "Sacrosanctum Concilium: A Liturgical Magna Carta Then and Now," *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy* (2014): 20.
- 10 Johnson, 23.
- 11 Robert N. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," in *American Civil Religion*, ed. Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1974), 21–44. However, what presidents and political leaders invoke (his interest) does not necessarily hold for the *prayers* delivered as invocations and benedictions at inaugurations. See, for instance, Mark D. Roberts, "The Inaugural Prayers of Billy Graham," (2009) <http://www.markdroberts.com/htmlfiles/resources/inauguralprayersbillygraham.htm> (accessed 4 January 2015), who includes the texts themselves and notes in his analysis that although Graham invoked Jesus, he never used the names "Jesus" or "Christ" in this context. Rick Warren in 2009 concluded "I pray in the name of" followed by "Jesus" in four languages (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJeNsPIC3vE>). In 2013, civil rights leader Myrlie Evers-Williams concluded her invocation, "In Jesus' name and in the name of all who are holy and right, we pray. Amen." The benediction, though, by Episcopal priest, Rev. Luis León, invoked only God's blessing. In general, we see here a movement away from Bellah's concept of civil religion, though, as Roberts points out, Warren's invoked Jesus as his own personal mode of prayer. This topic deserves renewed attention.
- 12 "Amazing Grace," *Wikipedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazing_Grace (accessed 29 December 2014).

- 13 The funeral liturgy put together by his wife, Sally Quinn, was described as “eclectic.” See “Family, Friends, and Colleagues Gather to Pay Final Tribute to Benjamin C. Bradlee,” *Washington Post* (29 October 2014), with a video of the entire lengthy service. The *kaddish* recitation is at about the two hour point. http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/family-friends-and-colleagues-gather-to-pay-final-tribute-to-benjamin-c-bradlee/2014/10/29/74e8b770-5ea9-11e4-9f3a-7e28799e0549_story.html (accessed 24 December 2014).
- 14 With one exception: The Fast of the Tenth of Tevet, which fell on New Year’s Day this year but ended before our Opening Rite, has become a day of communal recitation of *kaddish* for those lost in the Holocaust, especially those for whom their death date, the normal date of memorial, is unknown.
- 15 There are additional layers of complexity here. *Kaddish* does function in traditional Jewish understanding much in parallel to Christian memorial prayers in that it aids the soul of the deceased (not an element that less traditional modern Jews emphasize). For a discussion of the emergences of this prayer, see Leon Wieseltier, *Kaddish* (New York: Knopf, 1998).
- 16 The Lord’s Prayer is also demonstrably Jewish in its origins, but actual usage and associations mean that it is not a neutral prayer. See the articles collected in Jakob J. Petuchowski and Michael Brocke, eds., *The Lord’s Prayer and Jewish Liturgy*, trans. Elizabeth R. Petuchowski (London: Burns and Oates, 1978).
- 17 To mark themselves as Jews, rabbinic figures have sometimes worn a *tallit* (prayer shawl) in interreligious settings. For instance, Chief Rabbi Elio Toaff of Rome, when Pope John Paul II visited his synagogue in April 1986, wore not only a *tallit* but also the white robe and hat he likely otherwise reserved for the fall holy days. One can also find pictures of his successor, Rabbi Riccardo di Segni, wearing a *tallit* when meeting with Pope Benedict XVI.
- 18 The exception is the Sabbath afternoon service. The primary reading is on the Sabbath morning.
- 19 In Jewish tradition, wine always precedes bread. When the order is reversed, the echo becomes more of the Last Supper and eucharistic practice.
- 20 Avot 3:3.

Introduction of the Godfrey Diekmann Award Recipient

Mark R. Francis

Mark R. Francis, CSV, SLD, is president of the Catholic Theological Union, Chicago, Illinois. His most recent book is Local Worship, Global Church: Popular Religion and the Liturgy (Liturgical Press, 2014).

It is my privilege to introduce the Academy's 2015 Godfrey Diekmann awardee, Fr. Virgilio Elizondo. Virgilio Elizondo is widely acclaimed as the founder of U.S. Catholic Latino theology. In 1972 he established MACC, the Mexican American Cultural Center (now the Mexican American Catholic College) in San Antonio, Texas, arguably the preeminent center for the study of Hispanic theology and ministry in the United States. He has lectured and taught throughout the western hemisphere and on every continent. His numerous honors include being named one of *Time* magazine's spiritual innovators for the new millennium, six honorary doctorates, the John Courtney Murray Award for outstanding theological contributions from the Catholic Theological Society of America, the Johannes Quasten Award for excellence and leadership in theological development from the Catholic University of America, the Humanitarian Award of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and Notre Dame University's *Laetare* Medal. His writings on the interplay between culture and religion, especially the importance of *mestizaje* or ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity, are reflected in books such as *Galilean Journey: The Mexican American Promise* (in its eighth edition, Orbis Press, 2000); *The Future is Mestizo: Life Where Cultures Meet* (sixth edition, Colorado Press, 2000) and *Guadalupe: Mother of the New Creation* (in its third edition within the first year of publication, 1997) and with Tim Matovina, *Mestizo Worship: A Pastoral Approach to Liturgical Ministry* (Liturgical Press, 1998).

From the beginning of his scholarly career Virgilio has directed the attention of the wider Church in the United States to a context that was often ignored or rarely taken seriously—that of the growing Mexican American Community. Along with such Latin American theologians as Gustavo Gutiérrez and Enrique Dussel, he was the first Mexican American theologian to underscore the importance of rooting theological reflection in the experience of the people, especially the poor, and of respecting their insights expressed through their cultural symbols and popular religious practices. This focus was the foundation upon which he developed

a distinctive approach to pastoral theology that began with the basic question posed in his doctoral dissertation at the *Institut Catholique*: “If the poor and excluded are God’s privileged children, then the God-expressions of the poor and excluded are privileged expressions of God and thus a fundamental source of theological reflection.”¹

In an interesting convergence with the approach to the faith of Pope Francis, Elizondo has consistently warned us of an elitism—either from the left or the right—that alienates the majority of Christians and prevents them from assuming an active role in building up the church. He, like Pope Francis, has emphasized that for theology to be a matter of heart as well as head, it must be in synch with the experience and insights of the poor, characterized as the faithful holy people of God. As Virgilio reminds both church leaders and academics:

It seems that church officials and professionals are always calling the people to convert, to change, to correct, and to purify, and at times, even to give up what is sacred to them. But is it not true that the faithful also have much to teach the church and the theological academy about the God who is alive in their lives? The poor, the simple, the suffering have divine insight into the meaning and power of the incarnation, the cross, and the resurrection of Christ in our homes, streets, and neighborhoods today. The people *can* teach the church—if the church will only listen to them.²

Elizondo’s theological and pastoral interests are themselves rooted in listening to the people. As rector of the Cathedral of San Fernando in San Antonio from 1983–1995, he oversaw a recovery and revitalization of the worship life of this, the oldest cathedral in the United States, in a way that took into account the diversity of not only the Catholic people of San Antonio, but was also sensitive ecumenically and interreligiously. Local rabbi and friend of Virgilio, Samuel Stahl, publicly acknowledged the rich religious traditions San Fernando Cathedral under Virgilio’s leadership offered the city of San Antonio and expressed his gratitude for the sensitivity to Jewish Christian relations in the way the passion was enacted there.³

As Virgilio and his frequent collaborator Tim Matovina expressed in their book on San Fernando,

We rejoice in our diversity, our *mestizaje*, because no one person, ethnicity, race or religion can exhaust the beauty and grandeur of God. Only a God who is beyond all human barriers can lead us to transform our differences from sources of division to sources of enrichment.⁴

Mindful of his many theological and pastoral contributions to liturgical ministry in the diverse cultural context in which we live in the United States, the North American Academy of Liturgy is pleased confer the 2015 Godfrey Diekmann Award on Fr. Virgilio P. Elizondo.

Notes

- 1 Virgilio Elizondo, "Theology's Contribution to Society," in *From the Heart of Our People: Latino/a Explorations in Catholic Systematic Theology*, ed. O. Espín and M. Días (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1999), 50.
- 2 Virgilio Elizondo and Timothy Matovina, *San Fernando Cathedral: Soul of the City* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1998), 15.
- 3 Timothy Matovina, "Latino Catholics and American Public Life," in *Can Charitable Choice Work?* ed. Andrew Walsh (Hartford, CT: Pew Program on Religion, 2001), 68.
- 4 Elizondo and Matovina, *San Fernando Cathedral*, 113.

THE NORTH AMERICAN ACADEMY OF LITURGY

presents

The Godfrey Diekmann Award

to

Fr. Virgilio Elizondo

Priest, world-wide teacher, editor, prophetic
Founder of Latino Theology:

You stand where cultures meet to witness to the
God of surprises and to the compassion of Guadalupe,
Mother of New Creation. For half a century your
untiring theological and pastoral work for justice,
liturgical vitality, and ecumenical understanding
have been a beacon of light. Your own Galilean journey—
whether at the Mexican American Culture Center or Notre
Dame and beyond—embodies faith, hope, caritas,
and a taste of Reino de Dios.

For all these gifts we rejoice in presenting you the
Godfrey Diekmann Award in this year of our Lord 2015.



Liturgy of the People

Virgilio P. Elizondo

The Reverend Doctor Elizondo was not able to be at the annual meeting. He sent a video response to the award. The editor has transcribed the video presentation and provided some images that Elizondo shared in his narrative.

I am very grateful and humbled, really, to receive this award, this Godfrey Diekmann Award. Godfrey was a very, very good friend of mine, and he had visited San Antonio. And we developed a good friendship. I am very grateful for the association of liturgists—Max Johnson as president and the members of the board and all the members—for recognizing my liturgical work.



Actually I have always loved the liturgy; certainly I love the Mass. I am a priest: I love to say the Mass, to celebrate the Eucharist, as that which is central to our faith. But I also love the liturgy of the sacraments, the liturgy of the word, and I love even more the liturgy of the people.

The liturgy is the work of the people of God. And in our tradition, in our Mexican tradition, our Latin American tradition, liturgy is a very rich expression of



all the people. We have the posadas around Christmastime. We have the beautiful way of the cross on Good Friday, where the people gather together in the market square, and they reenact the judgment of Christ, the way of the cross, and the crucifixion. It's a very moving service. And it's a service that is truly participatory, because all of the people take part in it—not just the ones who are taking a part in the actual dramatization. The people that are there are not just as spectators. They are there as participants. And so it's a very beautiful expression. And throughout the year there are the very different expressions of faith, and it is the work of the people. It's a work of faith because people do not really see it as a play. They say it's a real dramatization of the real thing. In fact, we like to say that on Good Friday in



San Antonio, the veil of time and space are removed, and people are taking part in the actual event. And so liturgy is the work of the people.

I think it's very important that we see that. And certainly the central part of the liturgy is the Eucharist. But then the other sacraments that lead to the Eucharist. But then also the expression of the people that linked to the Eucharist because it's a real reliving of the faith. And so I am really grateful to the association for recognizing the work that I do. And more than myself, I think the award goes to the people: to the people that I have ministered to and the people that have ministered to me in the way that they have prayed and worshipped and really lived out the Gospel. I have learned a lot from the people and think that if I have anything to offer, it is because I have learned so much from the people themselves.

So thank you very, very much! I am very grateful to the members of the association. I wish I could be with you, but I am in San Antonio. I am a little bit crippled and can't walk well because of a knee problem, but I am very much with you in spirit and I hope that you have a very good meeting. And once again I am humbled and honored and very, very grateful to all of you for this award, this Godfrey Diekmann award. Thank you and God bless you.

An *Unlikely* Conversation: Laments, Blues, and the Music of the Artist Known as Prince¹

Hugh R. Page Jr.

Hugh R. Page Jr, D.Min., Ph.D., is an Episcopal priest, the Walter associate professor of theology (Hebrew Scriptures), dean of the first year of studies, and associate professor of Africana studies at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana.

A Philologist's Secret Playlist

The music of Prince R. Nelson has long fascinated me. It was part of the soundtrack for my years as a graduate student and professorial neophyte in the 1980s and 1990s. His songs were the texts *unofficially* in conversation with the primary and secondary sources that were my stock-in-trade as philologist and Bible scholar. Of course, one was not allowed to reference Prince and others who were part of the great Minneapolis musical experiment in Harvard dissertations on the ancient Near East. In fact few, if any, aspects of Black material or expressive culture were judged to have much meaningful to say about ancient myth, epic, or poetry in such works. Nonetheless, as I would later discover, Prince, and no small number of other artists, are very much a part of a long and complex history of biblical interpretation and reception among Africana peoples in the Americas.

Prince is conversant in these idioms. He is, as well, a remarkable innovator whose music continues to break new ground while connecting with older traditions, not the least of which is that of classic Blues.² Moreover, expressive genres like Blues, along with the music of Prince, have much light to shed on the *lexicon* of despair, the *syntax* of restoration, and the *poetics* of resistance, as such are articulated by those the late Howard Thurman termed in his classic tome *Jesus and the Disinherited*, “people who stand with their backs against the wall”—i.e., those forced from the mainstream by systems that reify social inequities. Those so situated have a special understanding of and allegiance to what Thurman terms the “religion of Jesus.”³ Thus, to ponder, the *intersections* of biblical laments, the Blues,

and the music of the artist formerly designated, and once again known as, Prince is timely, important, and much less *odd* than one might initially imagine.

Liberal Interpretation of Standard Keynote Address Rubrics

However, as a starting point, let me to say a few words about the rubrics that typically govern preparation for and delivery of a keynote address, particularly one touching in any way on the subject of biblical lament. For a scholar like myself, formed in a relatively conservative tradition of ancient Near Eastern research, preparation for a presentation of this kind would normally involve a three-step process. The first would consist of a fresh form critical assessment of the lament *genre* in the latter prophets and writings of the Hebrew Bible. The second would entail taking a look at Sumerian and Akkadian laments, which are not-so-distantly related cousins to the lament traditions of ancient Israel. The third would involve selective engagement of the scholarship considered to be pivotal in the study of the *lament*. These preliminaries would no doubt set the stage for the production of a relatively straightforward rehearsal of the current state of lament research and some of its larger implications for liturgical studies. In the best of all scenarios, you would remain awake through such a presentation, give the occasional head nod to signal agreement with several points, and acknowledge my efforts, were I *not* to drone on too long, with polite applause.

Unfortunately, or perhaps happily, these protocols have been rather liberally interpreted given our location (Minneapolis, Minn.), the liturgical juxtaposition of two living texts—the Saint John’s illuminated Bible and Chicago-Style Blues⁴—on the second night of the conference, and the request by your president that this talk touch not simply on a biblical verse form, but on an evolving Africana musical tradition and a local artist as well. Thus, what I hope to do is offer a few improvisational *riffs* on lament, Blues, and Prince as a way of probing some of their deeper structural and thematic resonances: connections that are not without significance for those interested in the rich discursive relationship between liturgy and lived experience.

Lament, Life, and Thurman’s Wall Community

We are in a city whose history and social textures have been, and continue to be, uniquely shaped by people of African descent. They were part of the disparate amalgamation of traders and settlers who came to the Minnesota Territory in the eighteenth century.⁵ Their descendants, and others who have come to the state since then from throughout the United States and other parts of the global African diaspora, have had a profound impact on the landscape of both Minneapolis and St. Paul. The history of Black migration, settlement, and economic advancement has created a regional *character* markedly different from that of other Midwestern enclaves such as Chicago and Detroit. Some might suggest that at various times in its history, the environment in the Twin Cities was perhaps more conducive to the development of a stable African American middle class than it was elsewhere in the United States. However, as recent events in the news have shown, there remain significant problems affecting the Black population of the Twin Cities: e.g., poverty, educational access, and tensions with local police.⁶ As is the case in other

parts of our country, there are in Minneapolis those who, in the words of the late Howard Thurman, “stand with their backs against the wall,”⁷ exist “in a climate of deep insecurity,”⁸ and struggle to get by with an extremely slim “margin of civil guarantees.”⁹ Therefore, is not unexpected that such an *ethos* would nurture an arts scene in which issues of this kind would be reflected.

Such an environment is not unlike those giving rise to *one* species of lament in both ancient Mesopotamian and Syro-Palestinian settings—elegies composed to decry corruption in; separation from; or the conquest, collapse, and demise of cities. There are, of course, several well-known biblical exemplars of the genre: e.g., Isaiah 1:21-31; 29:1-10; Lamentations; Psalm 137; Matthew 23:37/Luke 13:34 (focus on Zion/Jerusalem); Isaiah 46-47; Jeremiah 50:11-16 (centered on Babylon); Jeremiah 49:3-6 (Ai); Isaiah 17:1-6; Jeremiah 49:23-27 (referencing Damascus); and Isaiah 23:1-12 (focus on Tyre). What can we say of the history, form, and function of such laments?

We know that they stand firmly within a long and complex tradition, whose genres can be subclassified *via* a number of criteria. Assyriological research has been very important in identifying the larger cultural matrix within which ancient Near Eastern lament traditions took shape. For example, Samuel Noah Kramer called attention in the late 1950s to the Sumerian roots of biblical exemplars.¹⁰ William Hallo’s scheme for lamentations in Mesopotamia is particularly useful in this regard.¹¹ Within the much larger categories of “congregational” and “individual” lament, he proposes further subdivisions by language (Sumerian, Akkadian, or bilingual); dialect (*EME.GIR* or *EME.SAL* in Sumerian); specific thematic *foci* (e.g., deities, cities, monarchs); function (e.g., personal assuagement and prayer); instrumentation involved in performance (e.g., tambourine or harp); and literary genre (e.g., elegy, letter-prayer, individual prayer, prayer for the heart’s appeasement, prayer to acknowledge suffering). He notes the usefulness of these texts in gaining a better understanding of biblical laments, while at the same time gently warning against facile comparison.

Within the realm of biblical studies, form critical scholarship on the Bible, beginning with Hermann Gunkel (1862–1932) and Sigmund Mowinckel (1896–1974), made productive use of this remarkable trove of texts in an effort to understand biblical laments and other *Gattungen*.¹² Of course, some would argue that pride of place for identifying the metrical pattern of perhaps the most important poetic structure—the *qīnā* verse form—belongs properly to Karl Budde (1850–1935).¹³ Budde is credited with noting that its distinguishing prosodic feature consisted in the juxtaposition of long and short cola in a single poetic couplet.¹⁴ An example from the opening chapter of Lamentations, which is perhaps the most prominent example of the lament genre in the Bible, is illustrative.

	Syllable Count ¹⁵
How isolated the city sits,	9
Once teeming.	4
The preeminent one among the nations has become like a widow,	11
The leader of the provinces has been forced into servitude.	15
(Lamentations 1:1)	

The *qinā* was, no doubt, one of several forms used in the lament tradition of ancient Israel. The utilization in Lamentations of acrostics as a literary element, it has been suggested, could have been to signal one or more of the following: the cyclic nature of despair and hope; movement toward the cessation of suffering; or effort to provide stability in the wake of social chaos.¹⁶ Some have suggested that its asymmetrical form is the prosodic counterpart to a ritual performance that accompanied it.¹⁷

Beyond such generalities, is there anything more we might surmise? Are there *new* insights we might gain about these compositions if we were to foreground the life experiences of the Africana community in this city, Minneapolis, and other urban enclaves in pondering their structure, prosody, and content? Wilma Bailey, in her “Lamentations” entry for the just-released *Fortress Commentary on the Bible*, has suggested that we take note of the book’s challenge to wrestle with the opacity of “the real culprits in disaster,” implicit “permission to emote,” and encouragement to set limits—for the sake of community health—on “the grieving process.”¹⁸ Such could, in a real sense, be applied to many other compositions falling within the lament genre.

To Bailey’s observations, I would add that there is a hermeneutical strategy for reading lament, ancient and modern, embedded within the late Howard Thurman’s understanding of the “religion of Jesus.” Moreover, that same set of interpretive guidelines, when utilized in the interpretation of Blues and the music of an artist like Prince, reveals that both are sites of very sophisticated theological reflection. Such makes it possible for us to appreciate them as healing *librettos* whose lyrics and rubrics erase the artificial dividing line between sacred and secular and allow life—inclusive of its ambiguities, messiness, and inequities—to be laid bare, queried, and ultimately affirmed. Thurman’s interpretive rubric is set within the following synopsis of Jesus’s core teachings:

What, then, is the word of the religion of Jesus to those who stand with their backs against the wall? There must be the clearest possible understanding of the anatomy of the issues facing them. They must recognize fear, deception, hatred, each for what it is. Once having done this, they must learn how to destroy these or render themselves immune to their domination. In so great an undertaking it will become increasingly clear that the contradictions of life are not ultimate. The disinherited will know for themselves that there is a Spirit at work in life and in the hearts of men which is committed to overcoming the world.

... If the individual puts at the disposal of the Spirit the needful dedication and discipline, he can live effectively in the chaos of the present the high destiny of a son of God.¹⁹

Reading between the lines and beyond the gender exclusive language typical of Thurman’s late 1940s context, one can see that for him, the “religion of Jesus” is at base level a manifesto for a socially conscious spirituality with

an activist orientation having six mandates: (1) to understand the salient issues; (2) to deal in a straightforward manner with extant social realities—fear, deception, and hatred; (3) to destroy or immunize oneself against these realities; (4) to deconstruct contradiction from a teleological perspective; (5) to recognize the *numinous* underpinnings of lived experience; and (6) to utilize personal determination and available spiritual resources in making a way through pervasive chaos.

Can the *elegies* composed in response to the real or perhaps ritually reenacted conquests of cities like Ur, Babylon, or Jerusalem be understood as efforts—using word, sound, and performance—to ponder the sometimes intentionally concealed factors driving social collapse? Can the prosody of lament be a vehicle for identifying, naming, and immunizing oneself against the impact of despair and other disempowering emotions? Can the expression of anger at the perceived absence of a deity, a general prelude to disaster, also be a way of coming to terms with those occasions when abandonment is incapable of teleological reframing? Can lament be understood as a fundamentally *numinous* and *liminalizing* genre capable of generating eschatological convergence among those that suffer across space and time? Is there benefit in applying such a paradigm to the reading of biblical laments such as Psalm 137, with its poignant expressions of grief (137:1), pointed anti-Babylonian sentiment, harsh critique of Edom (137:7), and clearly articulated desire for retribution (137:8)? Can the same be said of Jesus's brief yet powerful lament over Jerusalem recorded in the synoptic tradition (Matthew 23:37)? If so, what does this suggest about the use this model for reading a genre analogous to lament—namely Blues?

Reading in Blue

Blues is a remarkable musical form with Africana roots a complex history. At one time, it was supposed that one could trace for Blues a straight line of development from African American work songs and spirituals. There is now every reason to believe that perhaps these, and other genres of Africana musical expression, grew up alongside one another and long had a discursive relationship.²⁰ It is organic, has a number of subgenres, and continues to evolve today. Blues scholarship is, as one would expect, extensive and growing.²¹ Overall, it has a comprehensive gaze that takes in the entirety of the human experience and many of its artists are unapologetic in their commentary on topics including sex, relationships, politics, urban decay, and—not surprisingly—the spiritual world. Some are scandalized by this specificity, feeling that it somehow undermines the respectability politics essential to African American social uplift. Others, like Cornel West, find in Blues and another Africana art form, Jazz, salutary patterns for professional life. In an online interview conducted while he was still a faculty member at Princeton University, West actually refers to himself as “a bluesman in the life of the mind,” “jazzman in the world of ideas,” and “soul brother in the academy.”²² Wherever one falls in the spectrum of opinion about Blues, what James Cone says of this remarkable music is strikingly resonant with what Thurman says about the “religion of Jesus” and those “against the wall”:

The blues are true because they combine art and life, poetry and experience, the symbolic and the real. They are an artistic response to the chaos of life. And to sing the blues truthfully, it is necessary to experience the historical realities that created them.²³

It is music intimately tied to the lives of people living at, and sometimes in danger of being crushed by, that “wall.” One can hear this in any number of songs. Victoria Spivey’s “Detroit Moan” recorded in the 1930s offers a fine example:

Detroit’s a cold, cold place, and I ain’t got a dime to my name.
Detroit’s a cold, hard place, and I ain’t got a dime to my name.
I would go to the poor house, but Lord you know I’m ashamed.
I been walkin’ Hastings Street, nobody seems to treat me right.
I been walkin’ Hastings Street, nobody seems to treat me right.
I can make it in the daytime, but Lord these cold, cold nights.²⁴

Another is Koko Taylor’s “Bad Avenue,” recorded many decades later:

Let me take you down on Bad Avenue.
Let me take you down on Bad Avenue,
Where the men tote shotguns,
And the women carryin’ pistols too.²⁵

These songs deal with the *realities of place*, whether one has in mind a specific city, or a sad, dangerous thoroughfare in any town. Whether Detroit or “Bad Avenue,” both appear to be—in a word—Godforsaken. Strikingly, and not unlike many other Blues lyrics, they do not make direct reference to a deity. However, although there are no references to “chariots” swinging “low” or other biblical tropes, it could be argued nonetheless that insofar as they come from a *milieu* in which many hold the entirety of life to be part of a spiritually infused *relational quilt*, they are in fact as sacred as any spiritual or hymn. Theirs is a universe of discourse in which artists are allowed to give voice to the *saga* of real experience in a manner both free and unfettered. Whether in songs like these, or in others such as Willie Dixon’s “Hoochie Coochie Man,” McKinley Morganfield’s “Mannish Boy”—co-authored with Ellas McDaniel and Mel London²⁶—in which the Africana spiritual repertory for protection and healing are encountered, many Blues artists presume the existence of the same “Black Sacred Worldview” acknowledged by the Black Church.²⁷ To be a Blues woman or man is, therefore, to be involved in the “singing down” of Thurman’s “wall” by *conjuring a truth* that heals and creates new possibilities.

Prince—Continuing the Tradition of Africana Protest

It is precisely in the realm of such new possibilities that our attention can, and should, turn to the artist, Prince, a performer and songwriter whose work has enjoyed enormous popularity since the 1980s. Unlike many Blues artists, his

work displays a nuanced encounter with the Hebrew Bible, New Testament, and extra-biblical traditions. Prince was born Prince Roger Nelson on 7 June 1958 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. His father, John Nelson, and mother, Mattie Shaw, were part of his father's band, the Prince Rogers Trio. The oldest of their two offspring, Prince was named for that musical group. From the relative obscurity of a local three-piece group (Grand Central) in his early teens, Prince gained international acclaim for his album *1999* and the *Purple Rain* soundtrack. For the latter, he garnered a Grammy Award and an Academy Award in 1985.²⁸ His musical corpus includes scores of albums and hundreds of individual songs. Of these, quite a few deal with religious themes.

Many express surprise at the fact that so much of the Prince's *oeuvre* is religiously oriented, particularly given the overtly erotic content of much of his music. Yet, there is reason to believe that this diversity is a reflection of a unique spiritual vision. One can also see, particularly in his earlier work, engagement of an extraordinary range of social, political, economic, and personal preoccupations (e.g., social inequity, economic disenfranchisement, violence, crime, drug addiction, United States/Russian relations, intellectual and artistic property debate, etc.). A brief survey of songs from Prince's classic corpus is illustrative of his engagement with both the Bible and religion.

In "1999," one of his first *major* hits, "the party" is seen as a place of escape from impending millennial cataclysm. The vision conveyed in the song, which appears on the surface to advocate an approach to life purely Epicurean in scope, contains allusions suggestive of something more. He says:

People let me tell you somethin'.
If you didn't come to party, don't bother knocking on my door.
I got a lion in my pocket and, baby, he's ready to roar.
Everybody's got a bomb, we could all die any day.
But before I let that happen, I'll dance my life away.²⁹

One wonders if the lion imagery isn't a reference to the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" in Revelation 5:5. If such is the case, then the pre-millennial party described is not a hedonistic escape from reality, but a joyful celebration made possible by a confident eschatological hope.

The theme of freedom is revisited in the song, "Free," an exhortation to far reaching liberation from personal pain, sin, inhibited movement, intellectual constraints, and political oppression. The song's second chorus raises the perennial question of whether we, the audience, are willing to fight for this important right:

Soldiers are a-marching, writing brand new laws
Will we all fight together for the most important cause?
Will we all fight for the right to be free, free?

Free to change my mind
Free to go 'most anywhere, anytime.³⁰

Perhaps we should see in these lyrics a response to both the Exodus traditions and the Pauline corpus—e.g., 1 Corinthians and Galatians.

The award winning *Purple Rain* album contains several selections with an assortment of possible biblical *reflexes*. The first is the title cut, “Purple Rain,” in which the color imagery and allusions to “rain” and “bathing” might be understood to have Christocentric and initiatory associations. The second is, “I Would Die 4 U,” whose opening two stanzas and choruses make “Love” a messianic divine *hypostasis* and employ the dove as a symbol thereof:

I’m not a woman
I’m not a man
I am something that you’ll never understand
I’ll never beat you
I’ll never lie
And if you’re evil I’ll forgive you by and by
‘Cause you, I would die for you, yeah
Darling if you want me to
You, I would die for you ³¹

The dove image may well have been influenced by the artist’s familiarity with Genesis 8, Song of Songs 5:2 and 6:9, and the traditions concerning the baptism of Jesus in Synoptic and Johannine traditions (e.g., Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; and John 1:32). This imagery is resumed in the song, “When Doves Cry,” which might have been inspired by Isaiah 38:14.³² The poignant refrain—“How could you just leave me standing, alone in a world that’s so cold?”—and the anguished self-questioning that is the song’s focus, are reminiscent of the prophetic plea:

I cry out like a crane, like a swallow;
I moan like a dove
My eyes languish
I am in dire straits O Lord,
From your heavenly place—rescue me! (Isa 38:14)

On his *Around the World in a Day* album (1985), there are several songs worthy of note, not the least of which are “America,” an incisive critique of capitalism, communism, and nuclear proliferation; and “The Ladder,” the lyrics for which were actually written by Prince’s father and appear to offer a *midrash* on both Genesis 28:12 and the Greek story of Electra.³³ Finally, in the song “The Love We Make,” on his *Emancipation* album (1996), Prince constructs a *via media* between the future eschatology embodied in parts of the Pauline corpus and the realized eschatology found in the gospel of John.³⁴

These lyrics can be treated as a discrete universe of discourse in which Prince defines himself as member of the human family, artist, social activist, parent, lover, and person of faith. In terms of the spirituality articulated therein, it emphasizes: (1) belief in a high God who is creator, redeemer, and sustainer of

the world; (2) the ineffable power of love in its most concrete and esoteric of manifestations; (3) the essential goodness of the body and of sexual pleasure; (4) the *domestication* of apocalyptic eschatology through the transformation of symbols; (5) the resolution of teleological longings *via* love and communal formation (e.g., bands, parties, and personal liaisons); (6) the importance of affirmative/positive thinking and living; and (7) the centrality of freedom. There is evidence within the corpus of vigorous intellectual engagement with biblical texts and themes as well as an effort to wrestle with their lived implications.

Like the poets whose laments we encounter in the Bible, and the artists whose works are considered part of the classic Blues canon, Prince is, in his own way, working as a member of the Africana community at Thurman's "wall," using his unique musical and poetic vision to take it apart brick by brick. In some ways, this is one way of understanding the plot of the movie *Purple Rain*. One could argue that through creative engagement with the entirety of Africana life, Prince has constructed a *mythopoeic vision* for life in a Minneapolis in which Thurman's "wall," and all others, have been transformed into bridges that promote cross-cultural communion.³⁵

Lament, Blues, Prince, and the Promotion of Unlikely Conversations

As long as the "walls" of which Thurman spoke long ago continue to exist, lament, Blues, and hybrid forms of expression that blend and *bend* the former will thrive. As citizens of an academy with a particular appreciation for the role ritual plays in the lives of women and men, we need to be more attentive to those places where creative thinking about wall dismantling and transformation are occurring. There was a time when one could assume it was taking place in churches. Unfortunately, such is not always the case today. Many of us try to keep such efforts alive in the academy. Regrettably, such is not easy to do given the fiscal and other pressures that drive the modern academic enterprise and further commodify research, teaching, and service.

If opportunities for conversations like the one I have tried to mediate in this essay are to become the norm, we will have to make less rigid the boundaries for academic discourse and invite an ever-widening circle of contributors into our conversations. This is risky on many fronts. However, if we as scholars are to contribute in any meaningful way to the important work of building just communities in places like Ferguson, Missouri; New York City; and Minneapolis, Minnesota—and in fashioning liturgies that nurture and sustain them—our most important research may well need to take place on street corners, at protests, during "die ins," and in bars where ordinary *folk* still perform rites of lamentation, live the Blues, and dream of "standing in the Purple Rain."

Notes

- 1 This article is a lightly edited version of the plenary talk delivered at the 2015 annual meeting of the North American Academy of Liturgy (NAAL). I would like to thank current NAAL president, Rev. Dr. Maxwell Johnson, for the invitation to deliver this keynote address and the opportunity to think once again about a topic on which I first started working, to the surprise of myself and many colleagues, some fourteen years ago.
- 2 On the music of Prince, the secondary literature in popular venues is too vast to cite. Three have proven to be most informative in preparing this article: D. Hill, *Prince: A Pop Life* (London and New York: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1989)—a selective personal profile with discography from 1978 through 1988; C. L. McInnis, *The Lyrics of Prince Rogers Nelson: A Literary Look at a Creative, Musical Poet, Philosopher, and Story Teller* (Jackson, MS: Psychedelic Literature, 2007)—a close reading and analysis of the lyrics of Prince; and Prince and R. St. Nicholas, *21 Nights* (New York: Atria Books, 2008)—a memoir of the twenty-one night performance of Prince and the New Power Generation at the O₂ arena in London, England.
- 3 Howard Thurman, *Jesus and the Disinherited* (1949; rpt. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1996), 7.
- 4 For those not present, reference is made here to the display of the St. John's Bible and the live performance of the Oblates of Blues from South Bend, IN.
- 5 See, for example, the surprisingly useful elementary tract by N. Murphy and N. Murphy-Gnatz, *African American Stories in Minnesota* (St. Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2000), on Black Minnesotans.
- 6 The 5 February 2015 blog entry by Ben Johnson in the *Minneapolis City Pages* offers some rather sobering data on the state of the metropolis.
- 7 Thurman, 7.
- 8 Thurman, 34.
- 9 Thurman, 35.
- 10 W. C. Gwaltney, "Lamentations, Book of," in *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation, K-Z*, ed. J. H. Hayes (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999), 46.
- 11 W. W. Hallo, "Lamentations and Prayers in Sumer and Akkad," in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, ed. J. M. Sasson, vol. 3–4 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2000), 1871–1881.
- 12 See, e.g., D. Rian, "Mowinckel, Sigmund Olaf Plytt," in *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation, K-Z*, ed. J. H. Hayes (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999), 166–168. J. J. Scullion, "Gunkel, Johannes Heinrich Hermann," in *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation, A-J*, ed. J. H. Hayes (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999), 472–473.
- 13 On Budde, see R. Smend, "Budde, Karl," in *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation, A-J*, ed. J. H. Hayes (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1999), 146–147.
- 14 Gwaltney, 46.
- 15 The count here is according to the vocalization of the Masoretic Text and counts vocal *schwas* as metrically significant phonemes.
- 16 W. E. Lemke and K. O'Connor, *Lamentations: Introduction*. In *The Harper Collins Study Bible: Fully Revised and Updated: New Revised Standard Version*, ed. Harold Attridge (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2006), 1085–1086.
- 17 Hallo, 1879.
- 18 W. A. Bailey, *Lamentations*, Fortress Commentary on the Bible: The Old Testament and Apocrypha, ed. G. A. Yee, Hugh R. Page Jr, and M. J. M. Coomber (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 772.
- 19 Thurman, 108–109.
- 20 See, for example, the illuminating profile of Aretha Franklin's father, Rev. C. L. Franklin, in the recent biography of Aretha Franklin by D. Ritz, which illustrates the intersections of the Gospel and Blues traditions in his ministry and personal life: Ritz, *Respect: The Life of Aretha Franklin* (New York, NY: Little, Brown, and Co., 2014), 15–22.

- 21 Of the more important studies with theological implications are those of the late LeRoi Jones (Amiri Baraka), *Blues People: The Negro Experience in America and the Music that Developed from It* (New York, NY: Morrow, 1963); James Cone, *The Spirituals and the Blues: An Interpretation* (New York: Seabury, 1972; repr. New York: Orbis Books, 2001); Angela Davis, *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1999); Julio Finn, *The Bluesman: The Musical Heritage of Black Men and Women in the Americas* (New York: Interlink, 1992).
- 22 See Cornel West, "On Clothing and Style Prepidemic Magazine's Exclusive Interview," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwIxPYoXnYM> (accessed 2 January 2015).
- 23 Cone, 103.
- 24 V. Spivey, "Detroit Moan." On Victoria Spivey, *Complete Chronological Works in Chronological Order*, volume 4, 30 August 1936–21 July 1937. Newton Stewart, UK: Document Records, 2000. http://www.lyricsfreak.com/v/victoria+spivey/detroit+moan_20190676.html (accessed 16 March 2015).
- 25 K. Taylor, "Bad Avenue." On Taylor, *Old School*. Chicago, IL: Alligator Records, 2007. <http://www.lyricswow.com/koko-taylor/bad-avenue-video/> (accessed 16 March 2015).
- 26 This classic appears on Rolling Stone magazine's "500 Greatest Songs of All Time" list. See <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/lists/the-500-greatest-songs-of-all-time-20110407/muddy-waters-mannish-boy-20110527> (accessed 21 February 2015).
- 27 For a description of this worldview, see S. Floyd-Thomas, J. Floyd-Thomas, C. B. Duncan, Stephen G. Ray Jr., and N. L. Westfield, eds., *Black Church Studies: An Introduction* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2007), 80–85.
- 28 For salient high points in the life of Prince, see the treatment of D. Hill, *Prince: A Pop Life* (London and New York: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1989), 17, 67. For additional useful information, see the brief biographical sketch on the Internet Movie Database website, http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0002239/bio?ref_=nm_ov_bio_sm (accessed 21 February 2015); the Princevault.com website, http://www.princevault.com/index.php/Main_Page (accessed 21 February 2015); and the unofficial Prince fan site, <http://prince.org> (accessed 21 February 2015).
- 29 Prince, "1999," On *1999*, NPG Records, Inc. 1984. These lyrics are taken from the transcription found at <http://www.metrolyrics.com/1999-lyrics-prince.html> (accessed 6 March 2015).
- 30 Prince, on *1999*. These lyrics are taken from the transcription found at <http://www.metrolyrics.com/free-lyrics-prince.html> (accessed 21 February 2015). Please note that Prince frequently uses ciphers and symbols in the transcriptions on his CDs, thereby adding a secondary interpretive layer to his songs.
- 31 Prince and the Revolution, "I Would Die 4 U," on *Purple Rain*, NPG Records, 1984. The following lyrics are taken from the transcription found at <http://www.metrolyrics.com/i-would-die-4-u-lyrics-prince.html> (accessed 21 February 2015).
- 32 Lyrics available at <http://www.metrolyrics.com/when-doves-cry-lyrics-prince.html> (accessed 16 March 2015).
- 33 "America," <http://www.metrolyrics.com/america-lyrics-prince.html>; "The Ladder" <http://www.metrolyrics.com/the-ladder-lyrics-prince.html> (accessed 6 March 2015).
- 34 See <http://www.metrolyrics.com/the-love-we-make-lyrics-prince.html> (accessed 6 March 2015).
- 35 This is perhaps one way to understand the subplot of Prince's 1990 cinematic feature, *Graffiti Bridge*.

Seminar Reports

Part 2



The Advent Project

Convener: William H. Petersen (*emeritus dean and professor of Bexley Hall Seminary, Fairport, NY*)

Seminar Participants: Jill B. Comings, Suzanne W. Duchesne, Elise A. Feyerherm, W. Richard Hamlin, Laura Moore, William H. Petersen (by Skype for several sessions)

Visitor: Deborah Appler, Taylor Burton-Edwards, Michael Jordan

Papers and Presentations

Deborah Appler and Suzanne W. Duchesne, “Theoretical and Practical Implications of a Tested Model Clergy Workshop for Trial Use in an Expanded Advent.” The paper provides a model for collaborative workshops with scholars and pastors to plan for an expanded Advent (seven weeks). Its presentation is double: (1) a narrative of the presentation context and some of the theological and biblical interpretations for some texts; and (2) strategies for how such interpretations might be employed by pastors based on perceived parish values and pastoral insights concerning congregational needs. The model workshop introduced hermeneutical and homiletical consideration of unaltered RCL Hebrew Bible/Old Testament for the period. These texts provided fresh understandings of God’s promised presence in the present through the Advent Project’s eschatological lens. Both scholarly research and particular contextual analysis of each congregation are involved.

Elise A. Feyerherm, “*Come, Desire of Nations*: Experiencing the Music of Daily Advent Worship.” The paper argues that, in addition to *praise*, the crucial Advent themes of *longing* and *incompleteness* should govern the selection of canticles for the Daily Office in this season. Attention should be paid to the way canticles use vocatives and imperatives in terms of calling out to God and criteria for canticle selection should focus on ones concerned not only with what God has done but what God has promised to do in the future. In terms of musical settings, the paper shows how unresolved musical cadences help to keep us in that Advent place of

waiting and longing. The season calls us to live with such spiritual vertigo for awhile, its songs should do likewise.

W. Richard Hamlin, "Advent Traditions and Variations: Timing, Colors, and Wreaths." This paper is a brief exploration of the history of Advent followed by an examination of traditional Advent colors and the use of the Advent wreath in church. The emphasis is one of the wide range of Advent observations. The paper concludes with a suggestion that our Advent usages need rethinking, including the crafting of new traditions that match our contemporary understandings.

Michael Jordan, "Promoting an Expanded Advent in Congregations Newly Appropriating a Liturgical Year." The author draws attention to Advent practices in modern free churches; they may be bent toward evangelism, spiritual growth, or justice initiatives, but in general they are didactic and idiosyncratic. The author then talks about how an expanded Advent may be appealing to free churches, and what must be overcome to speak coherently to free-churchers about Advent and a potentially expanded season.

Laura Moore, "Receiving the Kingdom as a Child: Resources for Integrating Children into Worship and Rethinking the 'Jesse Tree' in an Expanded Advent." At issue for many in parish leadership is how to celebrate Advent and Christmas fully with their congregations without, on the one hand, overcrowding the parish schedule, or, on the other hand, jettisoning beloved traditions. This presentation offers a flexible schedule that any parish may use or adapt as needed, including how to coordinate a season outreach project and suggesting dates for Advent Lessons and Carols, the Greening of the Church, a Christmas pageant, and a parish Christmas party.

William H. Petersen, "Remembrance of Things Past, Present, and Future: *Thy Kingdom Come*, or Judgment as Advent's Forgotten Focus." Contemporary English-speaking culture tends to perceive *judgment* simply as *judgmentalism* and thus to reject it outrightly whether on human or divine terms. This paper addresses (1) the problem of common parlance, (2) *judgment* as addressed in Scripture, whether as something to be feared and cataclysmic or welcomed and salutary, and (3) the difficulty of time and eternity in regard to judgment. Reasserting Christ as the *norma normans normata*, especially with regard to eschatological considerations, the paper concludes with practical considerations for dealing with the theme in liturgical texts and performance during an expanded Advent.

Other Work and Plans of the Seminar for the Future

The seminar held a discussion around the topic: "Iconic Liturgical Gateway or the Season's Black Hole? The Advent Wreath as Event Horizon." In addition to plans for adding further trial use congregations of traditions across the spectrum in the U.S. and Canada, we plan over the next three years to focus on moving the Episcopal Church to the possibility of an expanded Advent for trial usage.

Christian Initiation

Convener: Stephen S. Wilbricht, CSC (*assistant professor of religious studies, Stonehill College, Easton, MA*)

Seminar Participants: David Batchelder, Dennis Chriszt, Nicholas Denysenko, Timothy Fitzgerald, John Hill, Anne Koester, Lawrence Mick, Anthony Sherman, Mark Stamm, Victoria Tufano, Paul Turner, Catherine Vincie, Stephen Wilbricht

Visitor: Garrick Comeaux, Diana Dudoit Raiche, Marit Rong, Lisa Weaver

Description of Work

The seminar continued its ongoing discussion of various aspects of initiation: baptism, baptismal spaces, catechumenal processes, confirmation, and ongoing faith formation related to initiation with reports from the field on current practices.

Papers and Presentations

John Hill, a member of the Canadian Anglican Primate's taskforce, opened our seminar work with a presentation titled "The Blessing of Water, East and West." He focused primarily on the reference to the sacredness of all water, found in such texts as Luther's "Flood Prayer," and questioned why this reference dropped out of Anglican euchology after 1552. He asked: "Does this abandonment of the Eastern witness to the sacramental nature of all water signal a weakness in Western sacramentology (and perhaps even in ecclesiology and soteriology)?"

Lisa Weaver, a doctoral candidate at The Catholic University of America, offered a presentation titled "An Examination of the Pneumatology in Fourth-Century Jerusalem as Reflected in Cyril's Catecheses." Her thesis was that Cyril's description of the work of the Holy Spirit seems to shift in relationship to the water bath in the author's thinking. Her ongoing project is to determine the reason for this shift.

Nicholas Denysenko, assistant professor of theological studies and director of the Huffington Ecumenical Institute at Loyola Marymount University, led the

seminar in a discussion of his new book, *Chrismation: A Primer for Catholics*. The seminar proceeded in a lively discussion concerning the role of Chrism as sealing baptism and the importance of the Eucharistic assembly as the source of the community's ongoing growth in the life of the Spirit.

Victoria Tufano, senior editor at Liturgy Training Publications, and Anthony Sherman, former executive secretary of the Secretariat of Divine Worship, offered a report on the RCIA presented to the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions in October. Specifically, they discussed the canonical implications of revising the National Statutes for the Catechumenate.

In a joint session with the members of the Ecology and Liturgy seminar on Saturday morning, Catherine Vincie, professor of sacramental and liturgical theology at Aquinas Institute of Theology, presented her new book, *Worship and the New Cosmology*. Vincie argued that much work needs to be done in providing liturgical texts that reflect the development of the sciences. After her brief introduction, the group engaged in a fruitful discussion.

The second portion of our morning session examined the topic of preaching and the new cosmology. Larry Mick, a presbyter of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, presented his work titled "Preaching from a New World View," and Ben Stewart, assistant professor of worship at the Lutheran School of Theology and convener of the Ecology and Liturgy seminar, presented a homily prepared for Ash Wednesday. Members of both seminars validated the importance of engaging science within the context of preaching and proposed ideas for ongoing research.

In our final session, Paul Turner, a presbyter of Kansas City-St. Joseph, led a discussion on the paper he delivered to the FDLC, titled "My RCIA: The Meaning of Adult Initiation in the Post-Vatican II America." In his paper, he identified six principles that governed his reflection on the adult catechumenate: (1) adaptation strengthens worship, (2) catechetical formation accompanies liturgical practice, (3) ministries are diversified, (4) the sequence of the initiation rites reveals the paschal mystery, (5) uncatechized Catholic adults need appropriate care, and (6) other Christian assemblies share a valid baptism with Roman Catholicism.

Other Work and Plans for the Future

Mark Stamm will present on his book, *Devoting Ourselves to the Prayers: A Baptismal Theology for the Church's Intercessory Work*. Catherine Vincie will present her paper on mystagogical preaching. Steve Wilbricht will present a paper on Ember Days in relationship to the New Cosmology. Anne Koester will raise issues presented by the millennial generation as it pertains to Christian Initiation. Diana Dudoit Raiche will offer a paper on pastoral issues related to Christian Initiation. Paul Turner will lead us in a discussion of his manuscript on confirmation, and he will update the seminar on ICEL's work in preparing green books for the RCIA and Infant Baptism.

Ecology and Liturgy

Convener: Benjamin M. Stewart (*Gordon A. Braatz Associate Professor of Worship and dean of Augustana Chapel at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Chicago, IL*)

Seminar Participants: Kate Allen, Gordon Lathrop, Mary McGann, Lawrence Mick, Susan Marie Smith, Benjamin Stewart, Samuel Torvend

Visitors: Deborah Appler, Joseph Bush, Marty Haugen

Description of Work

In addition to papers engaging the intersection of ecology and liturgy, the seminar held a joint gathering with the Initiation seminar (discussion of Catherine Vincie's *Worship and the New Cosmology: Liturgical and Theological Challenges* and Lawrence Mick's paper, "Preaching from a New World View"), and visited local faith-based environmental justice activists (at St. Luke's Presbyterian Church, Wayzata) to discuss liturgy and environmental activism.

Papers and Presentations

- Mary McGann, "The Meal that Reconnects: Eucharistic Eating and the Global Food Crisis"
- Lisa Dahill, "The View from *Way* Below: Inter-Species Encounter, Membranes, and the Reality of Christ"
- Samuel Torvend, "The Failure and Promise of Liturgical Orientation toward Care for this Wounded Earth"
- Lawrence Mick, "Preaching from a New World View"
- Benjamin Stewart, "Remapping the Power Grid: How Christians Contest Environmental Injustice by Mapping Power through Public Ritual Oriented by the Image of Wound"

Other Work and Plans for the Future

Possible future projects include: consideration of the ecological/cosmological anchors of the liturgical year (solstice, vernal equinox, and full moon), as well as other ecologically rooted dimensions of the liturgical year; engagement with the question of the shift away from the oil/carbon economy while in Houston; the liturgical implications of Pope Francis's work on climate change; lament, intercession, and the woundedness of creation; Houston and NASA: locale for considering cosmology; catechumenal formation for an ecological age; a possible joint seminar with initiation.

Emerging Critical Resources for Liturgical Studies

Convener: Sharon R. Fennema (*assistant professor of worship and director of worship life, Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA*)

Seminar Participants: Kimberly Belcher, Stephanie Budwey, Benjamin Durheim, Sharon Fennema, Dirk Lange, Gerald Liu, Richard McCarron, Rebecca Spurrier, and Kristine Suna-Koro

Visitors: Antonio Alonso, Marty Haugen, David Turnbloom

Description of Work

For the 2015 meeting, our seminar discussed the implications of the work of postcolonial theorist Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak for liturgical studies, focusing on essays from the book *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2012). Participant's papers explored Spivak's claim that aesthetic education provides an instrument for implementing global justice in a way that resists the effects of globalization, and her emphasis on performative aesthetics as evoking critical thinking that exceeds normalized logics. After sharing a morning prayer service designed by our convener and spending time introducing ourselves, our work, and lives since our last meeting, we proceeded with a work-in-progress presentation by Kristine Suna-Koro of a chapter from her book on postcolonial sacramental theology that focused on the methodological impact of postcolonial theory for sacramental theology, considering the impact of colonial history and cultural imperialism on the doing of sacramental theology. We concluded our time with a discussion lead by Sharon Fennema of implications of Spivak's "aesthetics of the impossible" as a paradigm through which to understand the relationship between worship and ethics, rooted in response-ability and relying on traces of what has gone before.

Papers and Presentations

Gerald Liu, “Learning from the Liturgical Language of Terror.” This essay explored the religious language associated with terrorist acts such as the attacks on 9/11 and the ISIS beheadings. Weighing two interpretations from Gayatri Spivak and Bruce Lincoln, we discussed the secular and sacred dimensions of such violence its implications for theological education.

David Turnbloom, “The Burden of the Liturgy: Implied Worshippers.” With this paper, we considered the connection between Spivak’s assertion that the implied reader of a work of literature is an ideal that forms the imagination of the student of literature and the ways in which liturgies do likewise. Becoming the worshipper implied by a particular liturgy is the requirement for authentic Christian identity. We discussed the proposal that if revelation happens through historical mediation of symbols, then the burden of the liturgy is the expectation that the Christian must think with and through the symbols of a particular liturgy if they want to be the type of person that God speaks to.

Rebecca Spurrier, “Touching the Distant Other: Revisiting Spivak’s ‘Harlem,’ Recalling Absalom Jones.” This paper engaged Spivak’s efforts to trace vanishing and discontinuous lines of culture and identity through old photographs in her essay “Harlem,” recovering what has been lost through “development” without romanticizing or homogenizing a lost culture. Drawing on black and disability aesthetics, we were led to explore the connection between Spivak’s work with photographs of a disappearing Harlem and pieces of art created by people with psychiatric disabilities as part of wellness and recovery activities that form a community’s everyday liturgy.

Ben Durheim, “Christ, Alien and Native: Drawing Implications from Spivak for Christ Present in Faith.” This paper applied Spivak’s insights in her essay, “Resident Alien,” to the concept of unification with Christ, especially as the Finns tend to read it in Martin Luther, understanding Christ as the foremost player of “the Great Game,” i.e., the foreign power putting on the dress of the locals, that is, humanity, along with the implications of this theoretical intersection for liturgical practice.

Other Work and Plans for the Future

As the seminar marks our tenth year of work together, we will focus our time in 2016 on exploring the ways in which the work we have done over the last decade continues to unfold in our current thinking and writing. Participants will offer short papers and lead the group in discussing how the work of theorists and theologians like Cathy Caruth, Louis-Marie Chauvet, Homi Bhabha, Jean-Luc Marion, Judith Butler, Michel de Certeau, and others continues to shape our engagement with the field of liturgical studies, exploring new contours in our thought about what liturgy is and how it connects to life in the world.

Environment and Art

Convener: Martin V. Rambusch (*chairman, Rambusch Decorating Company, New York, NY*)

Description of Work

The first presentation was by Jan Robitscher, “Contemplating Sacred Spaced Though Differing Abilities.” Taking a cue from work of seminar member David Caron, OP, presented in 2012 on *Visio Divina*, Robitscher offered a narrated slide presentation of several churches: Gesu Chapel of the Jesuit School of Theology, Saint Mark’s Episcopal Church (both in Berkeley, California); Neuenkirche, Würzburg, Germany; the cathedrals of Norwich and Wells, England; and Marcel Breuer Chapel of Saint John’s Abbey. She showed how, as person with low vision, she entered and contemplated a sacred space. What is important is that over time having low vision does not limit her ability to truly appreciate and, in time, to pray in and with the environment of worship.

The seminar toured the Basilica of Saint Mary and Christ Church (Lutheran).

Julia A. Upton, RSM, presented “The Work and Works of Mercy of Adé Bethune.” After giving an overview of Bethune’s early life and education, Upton focused on Bethune’s liturgical designs, beginning with Saint Paulinus Church in Clairton, Pennsylvania (1936); St Joseph the Work Church on the island of Negros in the Philippines (1950); Christ the Sun of Justice Chapel in Benson, Vermont (1953); Saint Leo Church in St Paul, Minneapolis (1962) (redesigned as the merged parish of Lumen Christi). Upton concluded with Bethune’s last great work, the development of Harbor House in Newport, Rhode Island (2002), a complex for the elderly and her work in combining five historic properties in the city’s Point section.

Michael Driscoll presented “Toward a Liturgical Aesthetic: Fostering the Sense of the Sacred.” Driscoll noted that the topic of aesthetics has become quite popular in theological circles, but its liturgical application has yet to be fully tapped. Driscoll argued that every expression of true beauty can thus be acknowledged as a path leading to an encounter with God and with Christ. He drew on the writings of Popes Francis, Benedict XVI, and John Paul II. He also looked at

Thomas Aquinas on the three transcendentals and noted that Bonaventure offered *pulchrum* for beauty to the list. He suggested a renewed esteem for beauty as a means of touching the human heart and enabling the truth and goodness of the Risen Christ to radiate within it.

In the final sessions, the seminar gathered to hear about current projects by membership and other committee items for consideration.

Eucharistic Prayer and Theology

Convener: Charles S. Pottie-Pâté, SJ (*ecclesial assistant for Christian Life Community in western provinces of Canada, pastoral work in Ignatian spirituality, and resident priest at St. Mary's Cathedral in Calgary, AB*)

Seminar Participants: Robert Daly, SJ; Barbara Thorington Green; John Laurence; Sebastian Madathummuriyil; Geoffrey C. Moore; Gabriel Pivarnik; Charles Pottie-Pâté, SJ; Amy Shifrin

Visitors: Matthew Olver; Carl Rabbe

Description of Work

We engaged in a very rich variety of presentations on different aspects of the theology of the Eucharistic prayer, along with one new Eucharistic prayer on the ecological theme and another Prayer of Holy Communion in a feminist mode. Lively discussions ensued for each of the papers. We had no difficulty in using up all the seminar sessions!

Papers and Presentations

Robert Daly, SJ, "Ecological Eucharology." This presentation included a prayer of thanksgiving meant to express "the feelings and aspirations of a Judaeo-Christian faith that is also comfortable with a quantum-cosmological, developmental-evolutionary worldview." This newly composed Eucharistic prayer (from the post-Sanctus to the doxology) was recited aloud with a sung memorial acclamation. There followed a lively discussion affirming the richness of imagery, language, and theological content in this first "draft." There was much appreciation for this new attempt of a contemporary "ecologically themed" Eucharistic prayer.

Barbara Thorington Green, "A Prayer for Holy Communion." The author continued her desire to compose a thanksgiving prayer using feminine images for God, inspired by Julian of Norwich and Catherine of Siena. This text was recited

aloud, followed by a fruitful discussion of a number of the images used, their theological background and impact, and some new images that might free us from the inherited baggage of the past that have a negative or limiting understand of God's work of salvation in Christ as a work of unconditional love for us. The members appreciated the elements of tenderness, maternity, and passionate love expressed in this prayer and offered some recommendations for revision.

Geoffrey Moore, "Mapping the Eucharistic Sacrificial Complex: Maurice de la Taille and John Wesley." This presentation provided a rich dialogue between two theologians from different Christian tradition—Roman Catholic (de la Taille) and Methodist (John Wesley). The author gave us a rereading of sacrifice (oblation/immolation in de la Taille) with Wesleyan understanding of "we offer ourselves in thanksgiving." Christ's sacrifice is transformative of us as celebrate the Eucharist. He suggested a restructuring of the sacrifice complex as a triad of Supper—Cross—Resurrection that shows that sacrifice's *telos* is not death but resurrection. Thus we have the triad: "life—death—living (a different life: resurrection)". The notion of completion is central.

Robert Daly, SJ, "Words of Institution and Atonement." The continuation of this theme from last year's presentation led the author to present the outline of a doctoral student's thesis of a Girardian interpretation of the words of institution, "Do this in memory of me." After giving summary of René Girard's mimetic theory, the presenter reviewed the table of contents of this doctoral thesis and then focussed on the fivefold "subversion" in the institution narrative. This thesis is an effort to develop a new grammar of "sacrifice"—a recovery of the deeper meaning of sacrifice.

Sebastian Madathummuriyil, "Mediating the Sacred: Sacramentality in Dialogue with Hinduism—Book Project." Our presenter is from India who has lived in the West for twelve years. He is searching in this project to see if we can use Eastern modes of thoughts to talk about the sacraments and whether the West can learn something from Eastern thought in the area. After offering important concepts in various traditions of Indian philosophy, he noted for us the elements of worship in East Indian culture. His desire was to do some comparisons of Hindu and Christian worship and he offered some examples. Our discussion centred on being more clear on the methodology and focussing more on specific notions, e.g., mediation, presence, and sacramentality.

Gabriel Pivarnik, OP, "Eucharist as the Sacrament of the Spirit." The presenter introduced this paper as part of a larger context: the Holy Spirit and the sacraments. The Emmaus narrative in Luke 24 served as springboard for these reflections, noting that the Holy Spirit was central in Luke's portrait of Jesus and his mission. There is a manifold presence of the Spirit as well as that of Christ. The threefold action of the Spirit, the love of the Triune mystery: (a) mediates Christ to the faithful in the Eucharist; (b) unites us to the mission of Christ; (c) groans within us with the longing of Christ.

Other Work and Plans for the Future

John Laurance: new book on Eucharist in a more popular style; Amy Shifrin: "Sanctity of Life," a eucharistic prayer for marriage rite; Brent Peterson: Presentation

on Luther's eucharistic theology; sharing of the creation of eucharistic and baptismal liturgies for his denomination; Bob Daly: "Variations on Ecological Eucharology" and sacrifice in pagan rites; Geoffrey Moore: Eucharistic prayer from feminist perspective (possibly in a joint meeting with the Feminist Studies seminar).

Exploring Contemporary and Alternative Worship

Convener: Taylor W. Burton-Edwards (*director of worship resources, The General Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church, Nashville, TN*)

Seminar Participants: Susan Blain, Taylor Burton-Edwards, David Lemley, Heidi Miller, Lester Ruth, Mons Teig, Karen Westerfield Tucker

Visitors: Emily Andrews, Nelson Cowan

Papers and Presentations

Lester Ruth, “The History of the Term Contemporary Worship in North America.” Using wide ranging interviews and literature reviews (notably the NGram function of Google Books), Ruth identified and described three different “rises” of the use of the term “contemporary worship” to describe worship in North America: 1920s–1930s, 1960s–early 1970s, and late 1990s with the beginning of a wane in usage in the latter part of the first decade of the twenty-first century.

David Lemley, “Contemporary Worship Music and Christian Formation: From *Jesus People* to *Jesus Culture*.” Lemley used Lawrence Grossberg’s matrix for describing how popular music in its musical forms and texts invites participation by its listeners (“Another Boring Day in Paradise: Rock and Roll and the Empowerment of Everyday Life,” *Popular Music* 4 (1984): 225–228) to map the differing ways the music of the Jesus People in the 1960s and 1970s (often attributed as leading to the rise of contemporary worship music) and Jesus Culture (a group with songs on the CCLI top 100 list for the past decade) invites participation by its listeners/participants in contemporary/modern worship in North America.

Heidi Miller “Evoking, Enacting, and Embodying: Returning to the Body in Worship.” Miller explored and challenged the long history of educational models in Christianity that have downplayed bodily participation in tension with our claims to be an incarnational faith, in which word becomes flesh, and not simply another expression of word. She noted what it often takes for us truly to learn something new is for our bodies to learn it. Jesus provided a striking example of evocative bodily

learning that leads to new forms of enactment and wider cultural embodiment, and Christian liturgy has spotlighted it in the Maundy Thursday ritual. This may be used as a model for imagining new ways in which Christian ritual both can and does evoke, rather than suppress, bodily learning, new personal enactment, and wider cultural embodiment.

Taylor Burton-Edwards, “How North American Contemporary/Modern Worship Embodies the Sacraments: Actual and Intended Ritual Form.” Burton-Edwards reviewed the insights of Robert McCauley and E. Thomas Lawson about the degree of sensory pageantry and relative frequency on ritual form (*Bringing Ritual to Mind: Psychological Foundations of Cultural Forms*, Cambridge University Press, 2002) and the additional perspective of Lindsay Bell about the significance of relative emotional salience in encoding memory (“Behavioral and Electrophysical Correlates of Attention in Cross-Modal Distraction,” Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Florida, 2011). Using McCauley and Lawson’s terms, Christian baptism historically fits the “special agent” form of ritual (high sensory pageantry, many elements unique to the rite, non-repeatability) while the Eucharist fits the “special patient” form of ritual (lower sensory pageantry, many repeated and repetitive elements within it, and itself frequently repeated). Burton-Edwards proposed a methodology for testing how a range of very large or megachurches using a contemporary/modern form of worship (a) explicitly identify their theology of the sacraments and (b) actually embody the sacraments in practice to determine how well the ritual form aligns with the intent of that sacramental rite within that congregation’s and denomination’s official theology.

Other Work and Plans for the Future

This year’s seminar presenters will bring updates on their ongoing work to the 2016 meeting. Two others unable to be present this year (Swee Hong Lim and Eric Mathis) will be invited to present in 2016 as well. Taylor Burton-Edwards was invited (and accepted the invitation) to continue to convene the seminar for another three-year term.

Feminist Studies in Liturgy

Convener: Carol A. Cook-Moore (*assistant professor of worship and preaching and chapel elder at Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, DC. She is also an elder in the Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church.*)

Seminar Participants: Kathy Black, Carol Cook-Moore, Jill Crainshaw, Ruth Duck, Sue Moore, Heather Murray Elkins, Susan Roll, Deborah Sokolove, Janet Walton

Visitor: Carl Petter Opsahl

Papers and Presentations

- Heather Murray Elkins presented “Imagine What You Want to Remember: Collecting the History of the Feminist Studies in Liturgy Seminar.”
- Deborah Sokolove presented her most recent book, *Calling on God: Inclusive Christian Prayers for Three Years of Sundays*, co-authored with Peter Bankson. A collection of public prayers originally written for Seekers Church in Washington, DC.
- Susan Roll presented “What Does it Mean to Do Anamnesis in a Feminist Way?” A critical assessment of definitive aspects of feminist anamnesis, drawing from the work of Marjorie Procter-Smith, Judith Christ, Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Johann Baptist Metz, and other feminist scholarship.
- Kathy Black presented “Rhythms of Religious Ritual: The Yearly Cycles of Jews, Christians, and Muslims.” A book project focused on identifying the patterns of observance in these traditions, identifying the layered complexity of ritual activity in multireligious settings.

Other Work and Plans for the Future

At the 2016 NAAL meeting, the presentations will include the following areas of research: Race, gender, trauma, and violence; an exploration of Third

Wave Feminism; the culmination of collecting the history of the Feminist Studies in Liturgy Seminar. In preparation, seminar members will read a text together. Those interested in participating can contact the seminar convener.

Formation for Liturgical Prayer

Convener: Anne C. McGuire (*director of programs, ministries, and pilgrimages at the Shrine of the Holy Relics in Maria Stein, OH*)

Seminar Participants: Anthony Aarons, TOR; Stanislaus Campbell, FSC; Gerald Chinchar, SM; Terry Fournier; Jeremy Gallet, SP; Patricia Hughes; Paul Janowiak, SJ; Anne McGuire; Michael Prendergast; Margaret Schreiber, OP; Joyce Ann Zimmerman, CPPS

Visitor: Gilbert Ostdiek, OFM

Description of Work

The Formation for Liturgical Prayer seminar exists to cultivate a profound awareness of the forces affecting the formation of the faith community for liturgical prayer. To achieve this purpose, the seminar studies and reflects on the ecclesial, social, psychological, and cultural conditions brought to bear on the celebration of the liturgy.

Liturgy of the Hours and Formation of the Assembly, based on our 2014 work, began this meeting's work. Stan Campbell's documentation was a springboard for raising questions about adaptation and communal celebrations. The struggles with a variety of accessible materials, both online and print, that tend to privatize the praying of Liturgy of the Hours, as well as distort the prescribed form and psalm selection, was a major focus of the discussions. The challenge to form leaders of prayer, both clergy and lay, in the historical, theological, and pastoral emphases of the Hours presented fodder for 2015 presentations. Patty Hughes will be working on a case study implementing intentional celebration of Liturgy of the Hours for diocesan staff; Michael Prendergast will provide an updated and annotated bibliography to assist in formation of clergy and laity responsible for leading communal celebrations of the Hours.

A discussion of liturgical and devotional prayer, led by Joyce Ann Zimmerman, was lively and challenging. Several issues were raised, and one paper for next year was offered: Anne McGuire will address the sanctoral cycle and its importance in relation to the temporal and festal cycles. We also had a great discussion on Timothy O'Malley's book *Liturgy and the New Evangelization*, including its natural relationship and invitation to Pope Francis's *The Joy of the Gospel*. Next year we will include at least one book discussion as well. We concluded our work revisiting our seminar's mission statement, which helped us as we look forward to the 2016 meeting.

Historical Research: 16th Century to the Present

Convener: Jonathan S. Riches (*dean and the associate professor of liturgics and theology at Reformed Episcopal Seminary, Blue Bell, PA*)

Seminar Participants: Sarah Blair, Richie Bridenstein, Kent Bureson, Martin Connell, Arlo Duba, Katherine Harmon, Tim O'Malley, Jonathan Riches, Anthony Ruff, Kyle Schiefelbein, Glen Segger, Frank Senn, Carrie Steenwyk, Karen Westerfield Tucker

Visitors: Nelson Cowan, Peter Jeffery, Matthew Olver

Description of Work

The seminar began with Morning Prayer, an historic liturgy, led by Frank Senn. Introductions and greetings from members both present and absent along with updates on works in progress were then given. Two books were discussed and eight papers presented. A workshop and discussion on how to write encyclopedia articles was included with one presentation.

Papers and Presentations

Discussion of Katherine Harmon's work, *There Were Also Many Women There: Lay Women in the Liturgical Movement*, was led by Tim O'Malley. Conversation focused on private space, a vision of womanhood, social history, and the role of current events in the liturgical movement.

Kyle Schiefelbein presented "Sin and Brokenness, Passage and Purpose: Reforms in Recent American Lutheran Rites for the Pastoral Care of the Sick. Discussion centered on healing rites in general and their use.

Carrie Steenwyk presented "Worship and Christian Education in the Work of Isaac Waats" bringing together various primary sources regarding Watts' views of worship, liturgy and Christian formation.

Martin Connell shared his paper, “Bibles Don’t Kill People: Righteous Xenophobes in Philadelphia Common School (1827–1844).” An engaging conversation followed regarding discrimination and violence as they relate to liturgy and worship.

Tim O’Malley’s book, *Liturgy and the New Evangelization*, was discussed in detail, focusing on the ideas of framing history, secularization, transformation, and practical application. Conversation was led by Jonathan Riches.

Arlo Duba then shared his soon-to-be published paper, “Greek, *Kyrie Elieson*—And the Third Use of the Law.” Kent Burreson presented, “A Beautiful Story Witnessing the Beauty of God and Creation in worship. An interesting liturgical theological discussion followed each offering.

Frank Senn led a workshop in writing encyclopedia articles using his article on Reformation Liturgies from the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia* to lead the discussion.

Jonathan Riches presented his paper, “Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi, Lex Vivendi, and the Reformed Episcopal Church.”

Other Work and Plans for the Future

After discussing this paper the seminar discussed its mission and plans for next year. It was agreed to change the seminar’s mission to a format that emphasized its diverse and interdisciplinary nature and penchant for practical application. It was decided that papers should be limited to 15–20 pages and should be submitted to the convener by 15 November 2015.

Issues in Medieval Liturgy

Convener: Joanne Pierce (*professor, Department of Religious Studies, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA*)

Seminar Participants: James Donohue, Margot Fassler, Peter Jeffery, Michael Joncas, Walter Knowles, Don LaSalle, Daniel Merz, Joanne Pierce, Michael Witczak, Anne Yardley

Visitors: Daniel DiCenso, Michael Flynn, Mary Margaret Hoden, Nicholas Kamas, Rebecca Maloy, Henry Parkes

Papers and Presentations

Michael Witczak, "S. Gall Mass Orders: Concluding Notes on the 'Search for the Origins of the Rhenish Mass Order.'" Michael Witczak presented the outline of an article intended for *Ecclesia Orans* to serve as conclusion to the four editions of *ordo missae* manuscripts that he published there (the last three of which with Daniel Merz). Part of the presentation revolved around Andreas Odenthal's recent article in *Archiv für Liturgiewissenschaft* that positions the Rhenish Mass order as part of the Ottonian liturgical reform, closely aligned with the liturgical books produced in Fulda.

Henry Parkes, "Ottonian Liturgy and the Concept of Ordo." This paper explored the meaning of the word *ordo* as applied to liturgical texts from tenth- and eleventh-century ('Ottonian') Germany. Seeking to move beyond a formulation common in philological scholarship, which holds that an *ordo* is a kind of literary genre, he proposed some ways of thinking of *ordo* as a textual culture, more closely allied to historical and intellectual developments of the period. He did this under four categories: combination of materials; stockpiling and over-provision; ordering patterns that go beyond simple performance exigency; and written control over ritual outcomes.

Nicholas Kamas, "Notes on Accusations of Altar-Washing and Rebaptism (Canon 4), in Honor of the 800th Anniversary of the Fourth Lateran Council."

Several Latin sources (mid-11th to early 13th century) complain of Greeks receiving Latin “converts” by (re)baptism and washing altars used by Latin priests. Although Latin sources and secondary literature view these actions from an ecclesiological standpoint, Byzantine sources indicate that these issues more concern traditional liturgical polemic than any formal schism between the churches of Rome and Constantinople.

Daniel DiCenso, “List-Type Mass Antiphoners and What They Reveal about the Role of Writing and Literate Processes in the Transmission of Chant.” List-type Mass antiphoners have been regarded as the least useful type of source in evaluating how the transmission of chant may have occurred in the early Middle Ages. However, in this paper he argued that the list-type antiphoners are actually the most valuable of any sources in revealing the inner workings of the transmission process—a process that may have occurred more “like Tragedy” than “like Homer.” DiCenso also presented, “Chant in Low Places?: Brussels, ms. 10127–44.” Brussels, KBR, ms. 10127–44 is well known as the earliest complete source of Gregorian chant for the Mass. Despite its iconic status, however, the origins of the Brussels manuscript, its identity as one of the earliest “music books,” the identity of its maker(s), and the book’s intended use and audience have been poorly understood. Recently, a scholarly consensus has arisen that the manuscript may have been made by or for rural priest. This paper argues that the Brussels antiphoner was not made to support rural liturgy, but liturgy in a large liturgical center.

Margot Fassler, “Sequences by Dominican Nuns: Repertory and Liturgical Commentary.” Margot Fassler presented on Dominican nuns from Paradies bei Soest in Westphalia as liturgical commentators, with a focus on a sequence repertory they compiled in around 1380. Her work is part of a book project by a team of authors, concentrating upon Düsseldorf, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek MS D 11, a gradual with a sequentiary. This deluxe codex was planned, copied, notated, and illuminated by the nuns themselves, and several of the sequences it contains may have been written by them as well. Taken as a whole, the book offers a unique window of opportunity for exploring their views of the liturgy.

Other papers were by Rebecca Maloy, “Text, Melody, and Biblical Exegesis in the Old Hispanic *Sactificia*,” and Mary Margaret Hoden, “A Visible Manifestation of the Invisible: The Relationship of the Architecture of Salisbury Cathedral and the Liturgy of the Sarum Use.”

Other Work and Plans for the Future

The new convener is James Hentges, OSC (jameshentges@icloud.com). Plans for the Houston meeting in 2016 include: Postponed papers from the 2015 meeting by Katie Bugyis and Joanne Pierce; Michael Joncas, “What Do We Mean by Allegorical? (Florus and Amalar)”; Rebecca Maloy on the *Orationale* of Orona (prayerbook of the Old Hispanic liturgy); and new research by Nicholas Kamas, Michael Witczak, and Margot Fassler.

Liturgical Hermeneutics

Convener: Ron Anderson (*Styberg Professor of Worship, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL*)

Seminar Participants: Ron Anderson, Michelle Baker-Wright, Ninna Edgardh, Edward Foley, Margaret Mary Kelleher, Gordon Lathrop, Jennifer Lord, Gil Ostdiek, Melinda Quivik, Marit Rong, David Stosur, Mons Teig

Visitors: Emily Andrews, Garrick Comeaux, Bryan Cones, Dirk Ellis, Layla Karst, Allie Utley

Description of Work

The seminar began its work this year with presentation of papers by several seminar members. Melinda Quivik presented “Musement on Experience as a Way of Knowing.” Her use of “musement” draws on the work of Charles Sanders Peirce, whose work the seminar has been engaging over several years, to explore the work of human imagining. In this particular paper, Quivik sought to apply Peirce’s triadic construct of meaning-making to liturgical experience, an exploration from which she intends to eventually address whether and how the structuring of time, the creation of a calendar, the naming and observance of days and seasons, contributes to faith. Her paper began with a consideration of experience, explored the triadic character of reality and of signification in Peirce’s work, and applied this to a brief interpretation of word, baptism, and eucharist. She concluded, “musement is the vehicle of the assembly’s engagement, communally gathered, individually marveling (or wondering), with infinite options all from the same center.”

Ed Foley lead a discussion based on his paper, “In Case You Missed It: The Homily in the Context of *Evangelii Gaudium*” (praytellblog.com, 13 August 2014). As he notes in the introduction to his paper, Foley’s concern was to explore the connections between the homiletic sections in *EG* and the surrounding material “on being a missional church, the crisis of communal commitment, and the social

dimensions of evangelization.” His paper provided a brief exploration of the theological anthropology of the document, its ethical focus on the virtues of mercy and joy, the audiences of evangelization, and the implications of the whole for the homiletic enterprise.

David Stosur presented “Narrative Signification and the Paschal Mystery: Liturgy, Participation, and Hermeneutics,” forthcoming in *Questions Liturgiques* later in 2015. Stosur sought to “bring together key concepts in the thought of Rahner, Crites, Searle, and Ricoeur as a framework for exploring the narrative features of liturgy. He noted that his approach sought both “a hermeneutics of liturgy, i.e., the science of interpretation of sacramental, ritual activity, and as a conception of liturgy that considers such activity *itself* to be a hermeneutical enterprise.” In the conclusion of his paper, he explored the implications of a narrative approach for considering the faithful’s full, conscious, and active participation in the liturgy.

Jennifer Lord and Ninna Edgardh both lead conversations regarding new work. Lord discussed her experience of walking the Camino de Santiago, wondering how persons interpret such a set of experiences, how such experiences can be shared with others in such a way that invites them onto the journey, and how various forms of ritualization provide interpretive frames for the pilgrimage. Edgardh invited reflection on a project to explore the interplay and conflicts between liturgy (*leitourgia*) and Christian social practice (*diakonia*) as they are expressed in a late modern Nordic context, especially in Sweden, and how these may contribute to the communication of the Christian faith and the production of meaning.

The final sessions of the seminar focused on “mapping hermeneutics for liturgy.” Seminar members were provided with an annotated bibliography of the work of the seminar for review. They were invited to identify distinctive trajectories of the seminar as well as missing pieces or voices in that work. Several key questions emerged as a guide to this “map”: What is meaning? How is liturgical meaning made? Where does one find meaning in the liturgy? How does one interpret liturgical meaning? Who does the interpreting? For whom is interpretation done and how is interpretation received? How do we interpret liturgy and how does liturgy provide an interpretation of the “liturgy of the world”? Given the influences of biblical hermeneutics on liturgical hermeneutics, we noted the relative absence of specific attention to biblical hermeneutics in the work of the seminar.

In light of this discussion, several projects emerged for the coming year: development of a seminar website by which to share the work of the seminar; writing short “dictionary” of articles on topics related to liturgical hermeneutics that will be presented and reviewed at the 2016 meeting; reading together Ronald Hendel’s *The Book of Genesis: A Biography* (Princeton, 2012); and undertaking a series of joint sessions with other seminars as a means to learn with and from those seminars. The seminar has set up a website at <https://sites.google.com/a/garrett.edu/liturgical-hermeneutics/>.

Liturgical Language

Convener: J. Barrington Bates (*interim pastor, Zion Lutheran Church, Staten Island, NY*)

Seminar Participants: Barry Bates, Rhodora Beaton, Bob Farlee, David Gambrell, Gail Ramshaw, Martin Selz

Description of Work

Our lucky thirteenth year suffered from a “perfect storm” of events that resulted in only three full presentations. Several of our regular members were unable to attend or were unwilling to do so because of the unusually early start date of the meeting.

Papers and Presentations

Gail Ramshaw, “A Eucharistic Prayer for Year C.” As requested by David Gambrell for standard Sundays of Year C, Gail presented a eucharistic prayer incorporating the language and imagery of Luke’s gospel and Acts. A fine discussion led to some editorial changes, with special consideration of the casting of the *verba*.

Rhodora Beaton, “Liturgical Language: Reception and Revelation.” In recent years, the Roman Catholic magisterium has begun to attend more deliberately to the ways that encounter with God’s revelatory word is experienced in the present day—especially in the liturgy. This attention can be examined through the lenses of three recent documents: *Verbum Domini*, an apostolic exhortation authored by Benedict XVI in 2010; Pope Francis’s 2013 apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*; and “*Sensus Fidei* in the Life of the Church,” a 2014 document produced by the International Theological Commission. While each of these documents deals with issues of revelation from a variety of perspectives, each attends carefully to the liturgy as both the privileged context for the human faith reception of God’s very self, and as the formative context for the correct discernment of revelation. This paper invites discussion on the role of epicletic prayers in the liturgy of

the word, the relationship between liturgy and Scripture as proposed by Pope Emeritus Benedict, and the potential of the *sensus fidei* as formed by the liturgy, for ecumenical dialogue.

David Gambrell presented on proposed revisions to the Directory for Worship of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Other Work and Plans for the Future

- Compilation of the seminar's work over the past thirteen years
- Barrie Bates, "Why Liturgical Language Still Matters"
- Book study of Riddley Walker by Russell Hoban (orig. Jonathan Cape Ltd., and Summit Books, 1980).
- Carol Cooke Moore (guest presenter), women's bible study resources in the United Methodist Church
- David Gambrell, epiclesis over the Word
- David Gambrell, analysis and performance of his newly published hymn texts (GIA press), possibly in conjunction with another seminar
- Gail Ramshaw, draft of an "Amen Corner" essay for *Worship*
- The language of *Glory to God*, the recent hymnal of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.
- Preliminary work on the continuing importance of liturgical language (perhaps as a group project)
- With a generous spirit, what can Presbyterians learn from "contemporary worship"?
- Marriage: "What would a fully inclusive marriage rite sound like?"
- Texts of hymns for schools
- A eucharistic prayer for Year C of the lectionary

Liturgical Music

Convener: Kenneth R. Hull (*associate professor of music and director of the worship and music program at Conrad Grebel University College, University of Waterloo, ON*)

Seminar Participants: Mark Bangert, Emily R. Brink, Victor E. Gebauer, Kim R. Harris, Stig Wernø Holter, Alan Hommerding, Paul Huh, Kenneth R. Hull, Steven R. Janco, Heather Josselyn-Cranson, Robin Knowles Wallace, Jason J. McFarland, Anthony Ruff, Scott Weidler, Paul Westermeyer, Cynthia Wilson

Visitors: David Bjorlin, John Hanson, Mark Mummert, Jorunn Raddun, Kristin Sundt

Papers and Presentations

Jason McFarland presented material on the traditional funeral chant of Quizhou, China, where he has been living for the past two years as a member of the Peace Corps. Various possible avenues of further research on this extremely long and as yet untranslated into English and untranscribed piece were discussed.

Heather Josselyn-Cranson presented “A Full, Conscious, and Active . . . Listening?” that argues for the importance of active listening in engaging with liturgical music and describes what active listening might look like, taking cues from the published writing of Aaron Copland and Frank Burch Brown.

Cynthia Wilson and Kim Harris presented “The Music Canon of the Black Church: Sign and Symbol,” based on a chapter from Cynthia Wilson’s doctoral dissertation. Cynthia identified four types of spirituals: codes, social commentary, didactic songs, and sermonettes, based especially on Old Testament stories. Kim argued that the repertoire of spirituals reveals the creation of a distinctive religion in which Moses the deliverer is as important, or even more important, than Jesus the fellow sufferer.

Robin Knowles Wallace presented “The Impact of Congregational Singing on Everyday Life: Results of a Survey,” an initial report on the data she collected by means of an online survey that she conducted between July 2013 and May 2014.

The Liturgical Music seminar met jointly with the Liturgy and Culture seminar for a discussion of Mark Bangert's "Dynamics of World Musics: A Methodology for Evaluation" and "The Last Word? Dynamics of World Musics Twenty Years Later," successive chapters in the just published volume, *Worship and Culture: Foreign Country or Homeland?* edited by Gláucia Vasconcelos Wilkey (Eerdmans, 2014). The first of these essays originally appeared in 1994 and was written as part of the process that led to The Nairobi Statement on worship and culture. Drawing especially on the writing of John Blacking and Alan Lomax's Cantometrics project, Bangert outlined ten characteristics of the song of an ideal liturgical assembly. Reflecting twenty years later on his earlier work, Bangert aligned points made in his earlier paper with the four touchstones of the Nairobi Statement and expanding his earlier thinking with reference to the writing of Jacques Attali and Christopher Small.

Stig Holter presented a paper on the new Norwegian hymn book, *Norsk Salmebok 2013*. His presentation generated many questions and considerable discussion on the issues raised by the necessity of including texts in both versions of the Norwegian language, as well as in other related languages used by various minority groups. Since our questions prevented Stig from completing his presentation, the paper will be distributed to seminar members via e-mail.

Paul Westermeyer introduced his paper, distributed earlier, titled "To the Glory of God and the Good of Humanity." In this paper, Paul challenges the use of music as a means of attracting worshippers and the abuse of the word "mission" to mean growing the church. Lively discussion ensued.

Paul Huh and guest Brother Bob Hanson of St. John's Abbey presented the early stages of their theological thinking about J. S. Bach's six cello suites, including possible number and other symbolisms embedded in the music.

Other Work and Plans for the Future

In addition to welcoming new work from seminar members, the following presentations have been proposed: Kim Harris and Steve Janco on the legacy of the workshops in African American Catholic liturgical music held at St Joseph's College, 1974–78; Ken Hull on the role of music congregational spiritual formation; Judith Kubicki on theology in Christian hymnody; Anthony Ruff on a topic to be announced; and a review of the new hymnal, *One in Faith*. We will also consider ways of continuing our conversation on music in culture, possibly by inviting an ethnomusicologist in the Houston area to join us for one session.

Liturgical Theology

Convener: Judith M. Kubicki (*pro tempore*) (*associate professor of theology, Fordham University, NY*)

Seminar Participants: Emily Andrews, Fred Ball, Lorraine Brugh, R. Bruce Cinquegrani, Arlo Duba, Joris Geldhof, Deborah Geweke, Barb Hedges-Goettl, Nathan Jennings, Tod Johnson, Bill Johnston, Judith M. Kubicki, Jan Rippentrop, Lester Ruth, Don E. Saliers, Philip Sandstrom, Rhoda Schuler, Kristine Suna-Koro, Mark Lloyd Taylor, Gláucia Vasconcelos Wilkey, Andrew Wright

Visitors: Tony Alonso, David Bjorlin, Nelson Cowan, Jon Gathje, Layla Karst, Unyong Kim, Matthew Olver, Matthew L. Pierce

Description of Work

In preparation for the work of the seminar, participants read two books and four papers that were distributed via e-mail. The seminar began its first session with Morning Prayer prepared by Lorraine Brugh with the assistance of Rhoda Schuler.

Papers and Presentations

Judith M. Kubicki led the discussion of *Praying and Believing in Early Christianity: The Interplay between Worship and Doctrine* by Maxwell E. Johnson (Liturgical Press, 2014). She initiated discussion by highlighting several points about the book, in particular, Johnson's treatment of the adage by Prosper of Aquitaine. Her questions focused on the book's emphasis on the interplay between scripture, tradition, and worship for discerning true belief. The seminar was pleased that Max Johnson, NAAL President, attended the seminar and offered insights into his approach.

This was followed by a discussion of Barb Hedges-Goettl's paper, "Why Calvin's Theology Reflects 'Up': The Role of the Body in Christian Faith." Calvin used the term "up" to indicate distance and to differentiate between sinful human beings and divine purity and the otherness of the divine. Calvin's desire to understand Christ as inhabiting a particular location also highlighted the importance of the body to

faith, the bodily resurrection of Christ and believers, and the union of believers with Christ's body, especially in the Lord's Supper. Discussion focused on Calvin's Eucharistic theology, recognizing that differentiation, as opposed to enmeshment, makes relationship possible.

The seminar discussed "Praying at the Edges (Or Fraying?)" by Mark Lloyd Taylor and Alissabeth Newton. The paper teased out the liturgical theology expressed in a new Sunday evening eucharistic service at an Anglo-Catholic Episcopal parish, asking whether the service could legitimately be called "emergent." Discussion focused on exploring details of the service and the parish; whether there is a "shared grammar" across all five Sunday eucharistic gatherings of the parish; the impact of the worship space (the parish hall) for the evening service; and what theology or ordained ministry undergirds this improvisational service.

Respondents Rhoda Schuler and Todd Johnson led a discussion of Melanie Ross's book, *Evangelical vs. Liturgical? Defying a Dichotomy*. Unable to attend, Melanie e-mailed comments to the seminar before discussion commenced. Conversation focused on stereotypes that make meaningful dialogue between liturgical and free churches difficult and how that challenge might be overcome through liturgical theology. An important point raised included the distinction between evangelical worship and evangelicalism. Forms of evangelical worship are often found in traditionally liturgical churches and evangelicals often worship using traditional liturgical forms.

Joris Geldhof's paper, titled "Liturgical Theology in German Romanticism," argued for an important correspondence between two phenomena that have not been examined together from a systematic theological perspective. The paper highlighted intriguing similarities between liturgical theology and German Romanticism. Both realities share common ground in the key category, "organism," that focuses on life as well as coherence. The paper showed, first, that there was an interesting kind of liturgical theology done by representative of the Catholic Tübingen School and, second, that the Liturgical Movement was intrinsically Romantic in its theological approach to the liturgy.

Matthew Pierce presented "Locating Liturgy," a paper that examined the idea of *place* in light of Christian liturgy. Using the methodology of juxtaposition employed by Gordon Lathrop in the *Holy Things/People/Ground* trilogy, the paper argued that the human experience of place arises from the blending of distinguishable components: location, culture, nature, and a sense of proper ordering among them. With these components in mind, the paper engages *Places of Redemption* by Mary McClintock Fulkerson, one of the few recent treatments of place that discusses the liturgy.

Other Work and Plans for the Future

The seminar voted to ask Timothy Brunk to serve another term as convener. Suggestions for next year's meeting include reading two books, *Heavenly Participation* by Hans Boersma and *Worship and Culture* by Glauca Vasconcelos Wilkey. Paper proposals include such topics as liturgical participation as an act of human empathy, a comparison between the theologies of Aquinas and Chauvet, visual exegesis and liturgical theology, and a theology of pilgrimage.

Liturgy and Culture

Convener: Mark Francis, CSV (*president and professor of liturgy, Catholic Theological Union at Chicago, Chicago, IL*)

Seminar Participants: Dan Anderson, Denise Anderson, Bill Burke, Joseph Donnell, Mark Francis, Bernadette Gasslein, Eunjo Mary Kim, Stephen Larson, Ricky Manalo, Ruth Meyers, Jim Olson. NAAL members in attendance for one or more sessions: Ed Foley, Tom Splain, Gláucia Vasconcelos Wilkey

Description of Work

This year, we focused on a new collection of essays available in November 2014 edited by Gláucia Vasconcelos Wilkey, *Worship and Culture: Foreign Country or Homeland* (Eerdmans, 2014). After discussing the two key articles in this collection (Gordon Lathrop, “Every Foreign Country a Homeland, Every Homeland a Foreign Country,” and Anscar Chupungco, “Re-envisioning Liturgy and the Components of Culture”), Daniel Anderson shared a chapter in his dissertation “A Theory of Transculturation,” offering another definition of “transculturation” that the group found helpful. Joseph Donnell led us in a discussion of his article in *Worship and Culture*, “Inculturation, God’s Mission, and The Crucian *Old Year’s Night* Liturgy.” Ricky Manalo discussed the outline of an article in progress titled “Contextualization and Intercultural Competency Skills for Preaching.” James Olson presented part of his dissertation on funerals titled “A Connecticut Yankee at the Gates of Heaven: A Study of the Rites Surrounding the Death of a Christian in the Connecticut Conference, UCC at the beginning of the 21st Century.” Ruth Myers presented a chapter in her book, *Missional Worship, Worshipful Mission: Gathering as God’s People, Going Out in God’s Name*. Finally, we had a joint session with the music seminar where Mark Bangert led both seminars in a discussion of his two articles in *Worship and Culture*: “Dynamics of World Musics” and “Dynamics of World Musics Twenty Years Later.”

Other Work and Plans for the Future

We will continue to use *Worship and Culture: Foreign Country or Homeland* as a basis for our discussions at our next meeting in Houston. Three articles in particular from that anthology will begin our conversation. Centering on the Nairobi Statement of the Lutheran World Federation, Bernadette Gasslein and En-Joo Kim will present an evaluation of this document. We will then focus on “Vatican II and the LWF Project: Points of Convergence” and ask its author, Margaret Mary Kelleher, to explore a Catholic perspective of its main features. We will then take up Stephen Burns’s “A Fragile Future for the Ordo?,” hoping that its author will be able to join us. In the event that Stephen cannot attend, Joseph Donnelly will lead the discussion. We also thought it important to look at one of the key concerns for any of our discussion of liturgy and culture, “What, Then, Do Theologians Mean When they Say ‘Culture?’” by Benjamin Stewart. The discussion will be led by Ricky Manalo.

Bernadette Gasslein will present an article by Teresa Berger, “*Participatio Actiosa* in Cyberspace? Vatican II’s Liturgical Vision in a Digital World” (http://www.saintjohnsabbey.org/files/6513/8306/2879/Berger_Participatio_Actiosa.pdf). Ruth Meyers will update the group on the Episcopal Church’s progress with the marriage rite in light of the new civil legislation on same-sex marriage. We will also allot time for a discussion of works in progress by members of the seminar.

Problems in the Early History of Liturgy

Convener: Stephanie Perdwew VanSlyke (*senior pastor, First Congregational Church (UCC) of Wilmette, IL, and affiliate faculty in Christian history at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, IL*)

Seminar Participants: John Baldovin, Paul Bradshaw, Harald Buchinger, Glenn Byer, Hans Christoffersen, Rick Fabian, Tom Fisch, Bert Groen, Peter Jeffery, Robin Jensen, Max Johnson, Ruth Langer, Lizette Larson-Miller, Clemens Leonhard, Annie McGowan, Stephanie Perdwew VanSlyke, Dave Pitt, Walter Ray, Nicholas Russo, Jim Sabak, Dominic Serra

Visitors: Cara Aspesi, Hugo Mendez, Lisa Weaver

Papers and Presentations

In her paper, “The Origins of the *Refrigerium*: A Reevaluation,” Cara Aspesi argued that the fourth-century Christian practice of celebrating feasts at martyrs’ shrines on their *dies natalis* was not directly descended from traditional Roman feasts for the dead, but rather from the Christian rite of celebrating a *refrigerium* meal. However, the custom of ‘feasting’ on the *dies natalis* of the martyrs persisted even after its original purpose had been lost, such that the *refrigerium* should be seen as the most direct ancestor of the fourth-century martyrs’ feasts.

Paul Bradshaw presented a paper on “The Roots of the Paschal Vigil Readings.” He concluded that there was never a standard number of readings in the earliest sources, and very little evidence for a literary relationship with regard to the choice of texts to be read. The same core texts tend to occur because their themes were central to the feast, and there is a wide diversity of other readings. The only thing they had in common is that they were understood to be in some way typological.

Bert Groen shared his reflections on “Therapeutic Water and the Small Water Blessing in the Greek Orthodox Tradition: Some Historical Flashbacks.” The flashbacks to the historical evolution of the Small Water Blessing concentrated on

several main features: initial phases; variety of manuscripts; first day of the month; water blessings and interfaith practices; therapeutic shrines; and the impact of the imperial court at Constantinople.

In “The Symbol and Reality of the Centralized Altar in African Ecclesiology,” Robin M. Jensen argued that, on the basis of archeological evidence, the altar was placed well into the center of the nave of African churches until the mid-Byzantine period and sometimes beyond.

Ruth Langer presented a report on her annotated bibliography on Jewish liturgy, *Jewish Liturgy: A Guide to Research*, forthcoming from Rowan and Littlefield Publishers, February 2015.

Clemens Leonhard’s paper, “Marcion, the Dating of the Canonical Gospels, and Liturgical Studies,” addressed the fact that in the last decade, renewed interest in the reconstruction of Marcion’s Gospel (mid-second century) led to revisions of our assumptions about the literary relationships between the canonical gospels as well as their dating.

In “The Occasion(s) of Hesychius of Jerusalem’s Homilies at the Lazarium,” Hugo Mendez explored the content of two fifth century homilies preached on the subject of Lazarus’s resurrection (Hesychius, *Hom* 11, 12). Mendez argued that the concentration of Nativity imagery in the opening paragraph of the second suggests it written for use during the sixth day of the Epiphany octave, celebrated at the Lazarium in the period of the Armenian Lectionary. Mendez also raised the possibility that the gospel of the resurrection of Lazarus (John 11:1-46) might have become attracted to the Epiphany 6 celebration based on a close reading of the chronology of the fourth gospel.

Walter Ray presented “Narrative, Calendar, and Ritual Meal in the *Book of Jubilees*,” arguing that many scholars have assumed that, because the *Book of Jubilees* is concerned with all Israel, it cannot have originated in a group separated from Israel. A careful reading of Jubilees’s narrative, especially as it is plotted using the festival calendar, suggests rather that it came from a group who intentionally separated themselves from the rest of Israel for the sake of Israel.

Nicholas V. Russo’s paper, “Did Jesus Baptize? The Historicity of Jesus’s Baptizing Ministry in the Gospel of John and Its Implications for the Origins of Christian Initiation.” This paper suggested alternative interpretations of the Johannine tradition and highlighted potential difficulties in positing a baptizing Jesus as the sole source and impetus for early Christian baptism. The pluriformity of early Christian practices with a marked discontinuity with the ritual and ascetic practices of Jesus suggest that a baptizing Jesus is only one of several sources and models contributing to the shape of early Christian baptismal practices.

In “Sources for Keeping Vigil in Ancient Rome: A Reaction to Evangelical Enthusiasm?” James Sabak inquired as to the origins of the practice of keeping vigil in the ancient church at Rome. In particular, inquiry is made as to whether or not Christian vigil keeping developed along devotional and liturgical lines specifically constructed to honor Christian martyrs or as a targeted response to channel and control culturally conditioned enthusiastic and ecstatic behaviors not in keeping with perceived standards of Christian decorum.

Dominic Serra's paper addressed "Justin Martyr on Baptism: How Roman is his Evidence?" The absence of paschal referents in Justin Martyr's discussion of baptism and his preference for regeneration as an image of the sacrament should not be taken to suggest that his testimony is based upon Eastern rather than Roman practice.

Lisa M. Weaver's "An Examination of Pneumatology in Fourth-Century Jerusalem as Reflected in Cyril's *Catecheses*" presented a portion of her dissertation research on the pneumatology of fourth-century Jerusalem as reflected in the homilies of Cyril of Jerusalem. The focus was on the sacramental activity of the Holy Spirit as reflected in the prebaptismal and postbaptismal homilies.

The seminar enjoyed a lively discussion of the arguments, methodology, and conclusions in Ramsey MacMullen's book, *The Second Church: Popular Christianity ad 200–400*. The discussion was facilitated by John Baldovin, who distributed book reviews from several sources as a basis for conversation.

Other Work and Plans for the Future

The seminar thanked Stephanie Perdew VanSlyke for her six years of service as convener and elected Stefanos Alexopoulos to a three-year term as the next convener of this seminar.

Queering Liturgy

Convener: W. Scott Haldeman (*associate professor of worship, Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL*)

Seminar Participants: Susan Blain, Steph Budwey, Bryan Cones, Sharon Fennema, Scott, Haldeman, Don LaSalle

Description of Work

The Queering Liturgy seminar met over lunch twice during the condensed meeting format in 2015. On Friday, we had a brief check-in and a report on the reception of our NAAL 2014 morning prayer service that was used in Cleveland at the UCC Church House during the Gay Games. Then we shifted into working-group mode. First, we focused on our hymnal project. Steph Budwey, Susan Blain, and Scott Haldeman presented our ideas for a “queer” hymnal at the Hymn Society in July 2014. Hymn writers and church musicians are supportive. We now need to develop a concrete proposal to show both publishers and foundations to make this a reality. A subgroup of the seminar will work on this and return to the Hymn Society in 2015 to shape this innovative collection of hymns and supporting materials. Second, we returned to our book project. Our first call for contributions did not yield the essays we need. A new invitation has been shaped and distributed. A sufficient number of authors have now signed on. The essays also constitute a body of work by members of the seminar and beyond the academy that presses questions at the intersection of queer theory and liturgical theology to further our common reflection and research.

Our second conversation focused on a classic text in queer theory, Judith Butler’s *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York and London: Routledge, 1993), a text we read together before arriving in Minneapolis. One major theme that emerges when thinking Butler and liturgy at the same time is the ambiguity of liturgy as both a place of the reinscription of gender/sexuality binaries (among others) and an occasion for the parodic performativity that may free us from the same.

Other Work and Plans for the Future

In 2016, we plan to read and discuss essays to be included in our collection tentatively titled *Queering Christian Worship: Reconstructing Liturgical Theology* and to make further progress on the hymnal project.

Ritual Theory and Performance

Convener: Thomas Splain, SJ (*parochial vicar, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, San Jose, CA*)

Editor's Note: The seminar, begun in 1976, met informally for the last time at the January 2015 meeting.

Visual Arts and Liturgy

Convener: Mark E. Wedig, OP (*associate dean, professor and chair, department of theology and philosophy, Barry University, Miami, FL*)

Seminar Participants: Foy Christopherson, Carol Frenning, Mark Wedig

Visitors: Debra Korluka, Doug Westendorp

Papers and Presentations

In relationship to its mission to promote research and discussion regarding the current use of the visual arts within the worship setting, the Visual Arts and Liturgy Seminar, at the 2015 annual meeting, featured the following four presentations:

Debra Korluka, iconographer, presented “Images for Eastern and Western Liturgy.” She focused on the role of a lay, woman iconographer in the Orthodox tradition, examining the unique patronage of various ecclesial communities.

Doug Westendorp, painter and sculptor, presented “Full Circle: Ontological Perspectives in Western Art.” This presentation focused on aesthetic metaphors of religious presence in the Western Christian tradition and in modernity. The artist presented photographs of his sculptural work.

Mark Wedig presented “Architecture and Visual Catechesis in 16th-century Oaxaca.” This presentation introduced Wedig’s sabbatical project of examining the building projects of the Dominican friars in the evangelization of indigenous populations in sixteenth-century New Spain.

Carol Frenning presented “Minnesota’s Visual Response to the Liturgical Movement: The Work of Frank Kacmarcik and Ed Sovik.” This presentation followed the photographic presentation that Frenning prepared for the NAAL.

Other Work and Plans for the Future

The group will read *Transcending Architecture: Contemporary Views on Sacred Space* (CUA Press, 2015) edited by Julio Bermudez. The 2016 seminar will be dedicated to examining the various contemporary interpretative perspectives on religious architecture that are explored in this edited volume.

Word in Worship

Convener: Brian T. Hartley (*dean of arts and sciences, professor of religion, Greenville College, Greenville, IL*)

Seminar Participants: Gennifer Brooks, Brian Hartley, David Jacobsen, Nam-Joong Kim, Tim Leitzke, Tim Ralston

Visitors: Dawn Chesser, Michael Jordan, Andrew Wilson, Sunggu Yang

Papers and Presentations

Papers discussed chapters from ongoing dissertation work as well as potential publication projects by individual members.

Tim Leitzke, “The Spirit By Any Other Name . . . 1 John 5 and Luther’s Trinitarian Explanation of Proclamation.” Leitzke examined Martin Luther’s translation of 1 John 5:6 in the context of the development of his doctrine of ubiquity. Leitzke argues that Luther intentionally chose an inferior but doctrinally correct translation in order to buttress the Trinitarian concepts upon which his homiletic was built.

Nam Joong Kim, “The Role of African American Preachers and Preaching in Social Transformation and Anti-Racism: Gardner C. Taylor and Gary Simpson.” This paper examined the role of two prominent African American preachers, Gardner C. Taylor and Gary Simpson at the Concord Baptist Church of Christ, Brooklyn. It reviewed how they have engaged in social transformation with the church community in their particular contexts through their preaching ministries and pastoral engagements. From them, preachers today can understand their role and responsibility for social transformation in solidarity.

Sunggu Yang, “The First Female Preacher—Mary Magdalene after Christ: Her Appearance in the Sermons of Contemporary Women Preachers.” Following scholarship that names Mary Magdalene as the first female apostle and evangelist of Jesus Christ, the paper presented evidence from the Bible, church tradition, and today’s contemporary culture.

Michael Jordan, “The Reliable Narrator in Preaching.” Jordan argued that the task of preaching is analogous to the role of narrator in a work of literature and explored the literary device of an “unreliable narrator,” who is an obstacle rather than a help to understanding the actual events of a story and their import. He argued that preachers risk being “unreliable narrators” when they demonstrate to listeners that they do not understand the people or the texts they understand as sacred.

David Jacobsen, “Word and Sacrament: The Problem of Meaning for the Disestablished Church in a Disenchanted World.” This paper used insights from the work of philosopher Charles Taylor and liturgist Graham Hughes to gain a deeper appreciation for the problem of meaning-making in connection to a theology of Word and Sacrament in a secular age of disenchantment. Jacobsen drew as well on Hughes’s notion of the “vocative” in worship to make room for a more deeply theological appropriation of constructivist notions of “finding and making,” making for a revised, public theology of Word and Sacrament going forward.

Gennifer Brooks, “Reaching Out, Reaching In: A Proclamation from the Margins.” Brooks used the story of the Ethiopian eunuch to address the issue of marginality, particularly in relation to the situation of Black people in the United States and the denial of their full humanity that has resulted from the hegemonic systems that have become normative in society and have infiltrated the church. The proclamation of the eunuch that demands and claims by right Christ’s gift of salvation through baptism offers a model for marginalized people, calling them to claim their rights to full humanity regardless of their societal location.

Other Work and Plans for the Future

- Gennifer Brooks, “The Place of the Holy Spirit in Contemporary Preaching”
- Ed Foley, book project on the history of preaching
- Tim Leitzke, “The Eternal Communicator: The Holy Spirit’s Work in Luther’s Trinitarian Homiletic”
- Sunggu Yang, “Homiletical Aesthetics: An Introduction to Cinematic Preaching”

Select Seminar Papers

Part 3



A Theory of Transculturation

Daniel R. Anderson

Daniel R. Anderson, Ph.D., serves as adjunct professor of congregational mission and leadership at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. He is also the executive director of the Minnesota Consortium of Theological Schools.

The phenomenon in which a Lutheran confessional tradition is expressed in cultures of emerging ministries is a result of *transculturation*. Each culture is transformed and new cultural phenomena emerge in the process. This understanding of transculturation draws upon the work of Fernando Ortiz who introduced the neologism *transculturation* to the field of sociology in his book *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* in 1940.¹

Ortiz described transculturation as a process of *deculturation* and *neoculturation* in a paragraph contrasting transculturation with acculturation that will set the stage for this conversation:

I am of the opinion that the word *transculturation* better expresses the different phases of the process of transition from one culture to another because this does not consist merely in acquiring another culture, which is what the English word *acculturation* really implies, but the process also necessarily involves the loss or uprooting of a previous culture, which could be defined as deculturation. In addition it carries the idea of the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena, which could be called *neoculturation*.²

This theory of transculturation emerged in a study of emerging ministries within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) as helpful in understanding what is happening at the margins of the denomination in new ministry development. This essay explores the missional implications for transcultural ministry in the twenty-first century context.

Emerging Ministries in an American Lutheran Story

The American Lutheran story can be viewed from numerous perspectives. This version of the story draws upon historical and liturgical resources viewed

from a vantage point of transculturation. Historians such as Eric Gritsch,³ Clifford Nelson,⁴ and Abdel Ross Wentz⁵ have written from distinct vantage points over the course of the past sixty years. The story that emerges is a story of immigration, the development of ethnic- and language-based synods, mergers of synods, and strains of Lutheran orthodoxy and pietism in a developing nation.⁶ Liturgical scholars such as Luther Reed,⁷ Frank Senn,⁸ and Geoffrey Wainwright⁹ have traced the development of Lutheran liturgies in America from the use of traditional liturgies from homelands through the formation of a shared liturgy in English to the traditional, contemporary, and alternative forms of worship experienced at the time of this study. The purpose of the following overview of an American Lutheran story is to situate emerging transcultural ministry in the context of a Lutheran cultural and liturgical history.

1620–1888: An Immigrant Church

The first Lutherans to come to America arrived from the Netherlands and Sweden in 1620. Waves of immigrants followed from Germany and the Scandinavian countries. Lutheranism was the established state church in those countries. In this new world, Lutherans were just one of many minorities. Immigrant Lutherans gathered with fellow immigrants and worshipped in the languages, liturgies, and traditions of their home countries. They formed ethnic/language-based synods of Lutheran congregations. Between 1840 and 1875, fifty-eight different Lutheran synods were formed in the United States.¹⁰ Immigration to the United States from traditionally Lutheran, northern European countries continued through the first two decades of the twentieth century.

At first, pastors and worship resources were supplied from home countries. Eventually second- and third-generation families of immigrants transitioned to English as their primary language. The need for English-language resources, liturgies, and theological training for clergy emerged. Lutheran synods began to work together to develop resources and educate clergy.¹¹

1888–1978: The Common Service Era

In 1888 the Common Service was published in English coinciding with the merger of several Lutheran synods into the United Lutheran Church in America.¹² The use of a common liturgy and language facilitated a century of mergers that led to the formation of the ELCA in 1988. In 1917 the *Common Service Book* was published which included occasional services and hymns in English in addition to the Common Service liturgy. The *Service Book and Hymnal* (SBH) replaced the *Common Service Book* in 1958 and was the culmination of the Common Service/Common Liturgy tradition.¹³ More recent Lutheran hymnals, including the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (LBW) published in 1978 and *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (ELW) published in 2006, have moved away from the Common Service/Liturgy to the use of ecumenically developed texts and liturgies. ELW incorporated diverse liturgies, hymnody, and songs drawn from many ethnic traditions and musical genre. It was developed as a “core rather than a comprehensive resource.”¹⁴

At the end of the nineteenth century, giving up worship in the language and cultural heritage of their homelands for the sake of a common language, liturgy, and worship life was a sacrificial but missional move.¹⁵ It enabled the mergers of numerous ethnic-based synods into a handful of Lutheran denominations with global and ecumenical impact in the twentieth century. It also reflected the acculturation of northern European immigrants (particularly their children) into the American culture.¹⁶

The Common Service era from 1888 to 1978 ensconced American Lutheranism in an essentially monocultural expression of Lutheranism with a common language, common liturgy, common calendar, and common eighteenth- and nineteenth-century northern European hymnody. The Common Service era created a shared identity for American Lutherans and a niche in mainstream culture.¹⁷ Within those narrow cultural boundaries, American Lutheranism grew to more than five million members in the ELCA at its founding in 1988 along with several million Lutherans in other Lutheran synods and denominations.

1978–Present: Toward Transcultural Mission

The last decades of the twentieth century were volatile times. The rise of media culture through radio, television, movies, audio and video recordings, and ultimately the internet and social media brought the civil rights movements, wars, and global events, along with entertainment into our living rooms and now, to our smart phones. Vatican II brought a sea change of reform in the Roman Catholic Church that reverberated ecumenically. Evangelical Christianity rose in prominence relative to the mainline churches. Baby Boomers in mainline churches incorporated contemporary worship modeled after free church praise and worship styles.¹⁸ Traditional and contemporary services coexisted in congregations in part to attract church shoppers, to slow the decline of mainline churches, and to meet the worship style needs of congregational constituencies.

The median age in the ELCA in 2008 was fifty-eight. That means at least half of the participants in the ELCA grew up in the mid-twentieth century, Common Service, Christendom era of Lutheranism with ‘traditional’ worship. Another significant portion grew up in the late-twentieth century, meet-the-needs-of-the-people, consumeristic era of American Lutheranism with ‘contemporary’ worship options.¹⁹ Lutheran congregations struggle over the segments of the American population that are missing from their congregations: young adults²⁰ and non-northern European ethnic groups.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, postmodern generations of Americans are coming of age and new waves of immigrants are arriving from the global south and east. The participants in emerging ministries in this study come from these populations. They represent the young adult and ethnic communities missing in ELCA congregations.

In summary, the story of Lutheranism in America had diverse beginnings in multiple cultures as northern European immigrants gathered in ethnic/language based synods to worship in the languages and the theological, spiritual, liturgical and musical traditions of their homelands. The Common Service era merged the Lutheran churches into a common, essentially monocultural identity and language

that served its mission and established its niche in a modern-Christendom, early-twentieth-century environment. The United States has since become a nation of microcultures with a growing number of people who have never learned to pray in their own or any cultural languages. The Lutheran story in America has moved from an era of diverse immigrant cultures, through a monocultural/monolingual era of Lutheran identity to the current, multi-microcultural environment in which mission is transcultural.

Alternative Understandings of Transculturation

Transculturation, which was initially defined in contrast to acculturation, was eventually defined as synonymous with acculturation. We will explore that development and explore the use of the term transculturation in the context of the Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture, developed by the Lutheran World Federation.

Transculturation as Acculturation

When Fernando Ortiz introduced the term *transculturation* and the process of deculturation and neoculturation to the field of sociology, he did so with the blessing and support of Bronislaw Malinowski, a “great figure in contemporary ethnography and sociology.” Ortiz wrote, “When the proposed neologism, *transculturation*, was submitted to the unimpeachable authority of Bronislaw Malinowski . . . it met with his instant approbation. Under his eminent sponsorship, I have no qualms about putting the term into circulation.”²¹ Malinowski wrote the introduction to Ortiz’s book. In his introduction, Malinowski contrasted *acculturation*, also a recent addition to sociological terminology, with transculturation. Here is Malinowski’s explanation of the word *acculturation*:

Aside from the unpleasant way it falls upon the ear (it sounds like a cross between a hiccup and a belch), the word *acculturation* contains a number of definite and undesirable etymological implications. It is an ethnocentric word with a moral connotation. Immigrants have to *acculturate* themselves: The “uncultured” are to receive the benefits of “our culture”; they must change and become converted into “one of us.”²²

Malinowski equated ‘acculturated’ with ‘assimilated.’ He continued with a description of the new term, ‘transculturation’:

Every change of culture, or, as I shall say from now on, every transculturation, is a process in which something is always given in return for what one receives, a system of give and take. It is a process in which both parts of the equation are modified, a process from which a new reality emerges, transformed and complex, a reality that is not a mechanical agglomeration of traits, nor even a mosaic, but a new phenomenon, original, and independent. To describe this process the word *trans-culturation*, stemming from Latin roots, provides us with a

term that does not contain the implication of one certain culture toward which the other must tend, but an exchange between two cultures, both of them active, both contributing their share, and both cooperating to bring about a new reality of civilization.²³

Malinowski clearly articulated the difference between acculturation and transculturation along with his personal commitment to use the term *transculturation* when discussing change of culture. The interesting twist in the story is that he did not. Malinowski made minimal use of the term and did not acknowledge Ortiz as the source of the term. The *Oxford English Dictionary* included the word *transculturation*, credited Malinowski for its introduction, and defined it as a synonym for *acculturation*.²⁴ Malinowski contributed to the misunderstanding of the term *transculturation*.

Transcultural as “Beyond Culture”

The term *transcultural* was ensconced in the Lutheran conversation in the “Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture: Contemporary Challenges and Opportunities” through the Department for Theology and Studies of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) in 1996.²⁵ A team of about twenty scholars from five continents was gathered in Hong Kong in 1994 and Nairobi in 1996 to explore the relationship between worship and culture from a global perspective. They proposed that worship relates to culture in four ways: as transcultural, contextual, countercultural, and cross-cultural.

First, it is transcultural, the same substance for everyone everywhere, beyond culture. Second, it is contextual, varying according to the local situation (both nature and culture). Third, it is countercultural, challenging what is contrary to the Gospel in a given culture. Fourth, it is cross-cultural, making possible sharing between different local cultures.

In their description of transcultural, they suggest that particular elements of faith and worship are beyond culture in the sense that they are the same “substance” in any culture. For example, they argue that grace, gathering in word and sacrament, reading from the Bible, baptizing in water in the Triune name, ecumenical creeds and the Lord’s Prayer, even a shared liturgical structure, are not limited to a particular cultural expression and are therefore beyond culture; but, such elements are contextualized into specific cultures (their second affirmation).

Karen Ward responded to the Nairobi statement in “The Future of Worship in the ELCA: Exploring the Critical Issues,” a report presented to the ELCA in 1998.²⁶ She fleshed out the four categories from the Nairobi statement using additional resources to support the positions, including *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry*, a 1982 report from the World Council of Churches’ Faith and Order Commission.²⁷ Her concluding statement described the “transcultural pattern of worship”:²⁸

This transcultural pattern, this essential order of our worship, calls us to gather around strong, focused and weekly celebrations of word and

sacrament, to renew and deepen the baptismal ordo of formation, bathing and communal integration, and to be dedicated to participating in God's peaceful and just reign in our world.²⁹

The Lutheran use of the word 'transcultural' as 'beyond culture' is different from Ortiz's use of the term regarding cultural encounters and change. The Lutheran use of the term transcultural reflects ideas of Lamin Sanneh who would agree that God's word is intended for expression in each culture: "I treat Christianity as a religious movement, or as a vernacular translation movement."³⁰ Robert Schreiter also argued that the Gospel can and must be expressed in local theologies. He described the process as the "dynamic interaction of all three of these roots—gospel, church, culture—with all they entail about identity and change, to have the makings of local theology."³¹

Transculturation, as defined by Ortiz, is a process of engagement between cultures. The Gospel does not come to us "beyond culture." The message of Christianity or the Gospel is always culturally expressed. Any translation of the message or construction of local theology must involve a transcultural process of the engagement of one cultural expression with another. Emerging ministries in the ELCA are engaging a Lutheran confession of the gospel through transculturation.

The Concept of Transculturation in Other Settings

Ortiz's concept of transculturation as deculturation and neoculturation appears in other settings, sometimes drawing directly upon his work and other time without explicit reference. Transculturation also resonates with philosophical concepts such as Gadamer's "fusion of horizons." This section will explore the concept of transculturation as it emerges in other settings.

Transculturation and the Fusion of Horizons

Hans-Georg Gadamer's concept of a *fusion of horizons*, particularly as he related it to the working out of common language in conversation, is helpful in thinking about transculturation. Gadamer argued "the fusion of horizons that takes place in understanding is actually the achievement of language."³² Gadamer applied a linguistic hermeneutic of dialogue.

Every conversation presupposes a common language, or better, creates a common language. Something is placed in the center, as the Greeks say, which the partners in dialogue both share and concerning which they can exchange ideas with one another. Hence, reaching an understanding on the subject matter of a conversation necessarily means that a common language must first be worked out in the conversation. To reach an understanding in a dialogue is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one's own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we were.³³

Viewed from a perspective of transculturation, Gadamer described a process of dialogue in which dialogue partners engage in a process of linguistic deculturation that leads to neoculturation—a *communion in which we do not remain what we were*. Neoculturation in a transculturation process and the creation of new language in a fusion of horizons in a dialogical process are similar results. Engagement with the Bible is a transcultural process that results in a fusion of horizons.

Transculturation and the Bible

The Bible is a transcultural text: a collection of books from various genre written in Hebrew and Greek over the course of centuries, the most recent addition written about nineteen-hundred years ago, with no original manuscripts extant, formed into distinct collections of Jewish and Christian canon, and translated into numerous languages. The cultures that produced the Bible are two- to four-thousand years old at this point. We have no direct engagement with those cultures or authors except through the text.

Gadamer's concept of a *fusion of horizons* suggests that readers of the Bible are unable to "speak of an original meaning of the work without acknowledging that, in understanding it, the interpreter's own meaning enters it as well."³⁴ In this fusion of horizons the reading of scripture is a transcultural act—a form of personal and corporate deculturation and neoculturation. Christians and others approach the text anticipating that transformation will result from the meeting.

The culture of the Bible itself changes when translated into a new language. Gadamer states a concept that is commonly accepted in our day: "every translator is an interpreter."³⁵ The most common discourse for the use of the term *transculturation* related to the Bible is in discussion of translation. Again, we turn to Lamin Sanneh who argued that "God's purposes are mediated through particular cultural streams" and "all cultures and the languages in which they are embodied" are "lawful in God's eyes" which makes it "possible to render God's word into other languages."³⁶ When the Bible is translated into new languages it is translated into new cultures with the images, metaphors, and meanings that are brought to the text by those cultures. The Bible is transculturated in the process of translation as well as in the process of being read with as many fusions of horizons as there are interpreters.

A Transcultural Narrative and Theology

The biblical *narrative* can be viewed through a lens of transculturation as God's people encountered other cultures.³⁷ If we pick up the story with Jacob and sons, Joseph's foray into Egypt and the resulting translocation of the tribes of Israel were transcultural experiences.³⁸ Following Moses out of Egypt into the wilderness and eventually entering a promised land were others.³⁹ Transitions to judges and kings were significant cultural shifts. The building and eventual destruction of the temple, subsequent exile in Babylon, return from Babylon, rebuilding of the temple, occupation by Rome, destruction of the second temple, and the experience of diaspora all had transcultural ramifications of deculturation and neoculturation.

Biblical *theology* can also be viewed transculturally. Theophany and tabernacle encounters with God's glory, the giving of the law, temple theology, *shem* (name),

and *kabod* (glory) theologies that emerged in response to the destruction of the temple,⁴⁰ a reengagement with temple theology in the second temple era, the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ and the development of a Christian gospel are some of the significant transcultural theological shifts recounted in the Bible. The physical and theological shifts of the church from a Jewish center in Jerusalem to the Gentile churches of the Paul's letters were additional transcultural shifts.

Transculturation in the Bible can be viewed *congregationally*. The churches addressed by letters in the NT (either attributed to Paul or in chapters two and three of Revelation) lived betwixt and between their traditional cultures and the culture created through their encounters with the Gospel. The issues addressed in the letters point to their unique contexts and the problems that developed as new cultures of Christianity emerged within them. The church in Jerusalem faced pressures and persecution from Jewish leaders and Roman forces and the cultures that each defended. The transcultural encounters with the Gospel experienced in NT churches have been experienced in churches throughout Christian history and were experienced in ministries emerging within the ELCA.

At a minimum, the biblical story tells us that encounters with God and God's word bring about deculturation and neoculturation in some form of transcultural transformation. Paul encouraged this process in Romans 12:2: "Do not be [acculturated] to this world, but be [transculturated] by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."⁴¹

Transculturation and Transliteracy

Hans-Georg Gadamer and Stephen Bevans with Roger Schroeder used a hermeneutic of dialogue in their work. Gadamer referred to "the primacy of dialogue, the relation of question and answer" in understanding texts in a fusion of horizons.⁴² Bevans and Schroeder view mission from a perspective of dialogue: "Mission today . . . needs to be thought about and carried out in the spirit and practice of dialogue. . . . Mission is not just a matter of *doing things for* people. It is first of all a matter of *being with* people, of *listening* and *sharing* with them."⁴³ In both cases a common language is created or shared for the sake of understanding. Simon Biggs explored the use of multiple languages in a transcultural environment—*transliteracy*.

Biggs asked what effect recent developments in global communications are having on language and its readers and writers. He quoted the same definition of transculturation from Ortiz that I used earlier regarding transculturation, deculturation, and neoculturation to assist in understanding how changes in culture and language have developed. Biggs wrote:

The suggestion here is that we are all engaged in an interplay of cultural interactions and appropriations, which is now occurring within a world of highly mobile peoples saturated with communications media. Language, a technology fundamental to the human condition, is the primary means by which this process occurs. . . . Transculturation functions . . . where human migration has proceeded, for multiple reasons, in multiple directions.⁴⁴

He continues: “The concept of *pluriliteracy* proposes that certain individuals and communities function within highly multilingual environments where multiple languages are employed in various contexts.” Pluriliteracy is usually related to spoken and written languages. Biggs used the term *transliteracy* to refer to the ability to read, write, and interact across a broad range of platforms, including signing, speaking, handwriting, print, TV, radio, film, art, and digital social networks. He says: “In the media-saturated societies of today’s world it can be assumed that many people are transliterate, capable not only of interpreting information across media and linguistic forms but also translating information from one cultural context to another.”⁴⁵

Biggs refers to *self-definition*:

People define themselves through language and create their own sub-cultural linguistic fields, their own ‘tribal’ codes, in order to establish their identity and be identified by other members of their ‘tribe.’ This might be done through the clothes they wear, the language they employ or the means through which they transmit their messages. This is an iterative process where people evolve new dialects that in turn define self.⁴⁶

Transculturation as an iterative process of learning new dialects, defining and redefining self in dialogue with the numerous microcultures encountered daily in American (and global) contexts seems to be substantively different from the kind of transculturation experienced in the midst of colonization that the term was coined to describe. The process however is the same: deculturation leads to neoculturation when engagement with other cultures occurs.

Transliteracy in Emerging Ministries

Emerging leaders, as indigenous leaders, were fluent in the cultural languages of their ministries. They developed fluency in Lutheran confessional languages through seminary training. The gift of emerging leaders in their contexts was they had already begun the process of translating the Gospel into their own cultural languages. Developing an emerging ministry was a process for emerging leaders of helping people from their own cultures engage the Gospel in their own cultural languages and developing a new Gospel-shaped culture in community with one another.⁴⁷

Transcultured participants in emerging ministries developed the skills of functioning among or between cultures. Participants in emerging ministries continued to be hipster young adults, or African American, or Hispanic, or LGBTQ, or northern European while participating in an emerging community shaped by a Lutheran confession of the Gospel. Their indigenous cultural identities shaped their confession of the Gospel, and their confession of the Gospel shaped their perceptions of their identities.

On another level, engagement with a Lutheran confessional culture is not an emerging ministry participant’s only experience of transculturation. It is common to encounter people from diverse cultures in daily life (particularly in the public sphere), and to engage those cultures to the extent we must or choose. It was not

so common to meet diverse cultures within congregations or emerging ministries in the ELCA.

So, if many people, as Biggs claims, are transliterate, able to function in multiple cultural environments in public contexts and capable of learning new dialects in the iterative process of self-definition, why are people in congregations in the ELCA so challenged by multicultural engagement in church? Why does the homogeneous unit principle still apply in congregational life—including in emerging ministries?

Transculturation and Homogeneity

Before Donald McGavran introduced the phrase *homogeneous unit principle* as a principle of church growth in 1970, Gibson Winter described the phenomenon from the perspective of the development of the metropolis in *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches*. He contrasted “impersonal interdependence” that people experience in work, school, and other public settings with “communal insulation” in personal communities that we experience in our neighborhoods and, by extension, churches. The development of metropolitan areas depended upon our abilities to interact impersonally with a wide variety of people; but we tend to live in neighborhoods where people are like us ethnically, and even more so, socio-economically. “Since churches have traditionally anchored their communal life in residential areas, they inevitably become victims of the pathology that assails neighborhood life.”⁴⁸ The downside of neighborhood contextuality is homogeneity.

A Protestant congregation collapses when it cannot recruit a socially homogeneous membership. Every social group depends on numerous factors to sustain its life; each group, however, has its key to life, without which it ceases to be; this is its principle of life. One would expect the principle of life in a congregation to be faith, but in the major denominations it is social homogeneity or economic integration.⁴⁹

In *Understanding Church Growth*, Donald McGavran described a *homogeneous unit* as “simply a section of society in which all the members have some characteristic in common.”⁵⁰ That simple concept coupled with the idea that “people like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic, or class barriers”⁵¹ grew out of his study of growing churches.⁵² The homogeneous unit principle applies beyond churches. McGavran described the world’s population as “a mosaic, and each piece has a life of its own that seems strange and often unlovely to men and women of other pieces.”

The ELCA is becoming more ethnically diverse through growth in the numbers of ethnic-specific ministries; but, like the nation described by McGavran, the ELCA is a mosaic. The multicultural ministry of the ELCA is focused in ethnic communities. The ELCA has six Ethnic Associations: African American Lutheran Association, American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association, Association of Lutherans of Arab and Middle Eastern Heritage, Association of Asian and Pacific Islander-ELCA, Latino Lutheran Association, and even a European American

Lutheran Association that work to develop leadership and ministry within and among ethnic communities.⁵³

Ethnicity is just one of the ways we gather in homogeneous units. People select congregations based upon socio-economic similarity. Congregations and people within congregations cluster in homogeneous units based upon cultural characteristics such as worship style preference, age-based ministry, gender-based ministry, and even political positions.

Emerging ministries included in this study also gathered in homogeneous units using McGavran's definition that "all the members have some characteristic in common." Each ministry had at least one cultural characteristic that reflected the cultural unity of participants—what Winter called its *key to life* or *principle of life*. One multi-ethnic ministry held a commitment to diversity as its dominant unifying cultural element. Music and worship styles reflected the cultural distinctiveness in each ministry.

Each of the ministries studied had unifying cultural characteristics that a visitor would either experience as welcoming or as foreign to their own cultural experiences and preferences. Each of these emerging ministries was transcultural in relation to the ELCA and filled with transliterate participants (in "impersonal interdependence" areas of public life); yet, they gathered in church ("communal insulation" in a personal community) with participants who shared essential elements of their culture.⁵⁴ There was great diversity among emerging ministries and limited diversity within.

Transculturation and *Nepantla*

It was a conversation with an emerging leader about *nepantla* that led me to the concept of transculturation. He described his experience of *nepantla* as a place in between—neither one nor the other—between Mexican and U.S. cultures. He was a poet and shared a poem with my research team about his desire to have his ashes spread in the middle of the Rio Grande so that he might be at rest where he had always lived—between cultures, in *nepantla*.

Viewed from the process of transculturation, *nepantla* might be the equivalent of the place where cultures meet and from which something new emerges. *Nepantla* scholars, however, describe *nepantla*, not as a place, but as a process. James Maffie described *nepantla* processes as "dialectical, intermediating, transactional, oscillating, betwixting-and-betweening activities, middling, and abundant with mutuality and reciprocity." He added that *nepantla* processes were "transformative processes because they are simultaneously destructive and creative."⁵⁵ His descriptions of *nepantla* echo the transcultural process of deculturation and neoculturation.

Lara Medina described *nepantla* as a place of *balance* between cultures: To be *en nepantla* is to exist on the border, on the boundaries of cultures and social structures, where life is in constant motion, in constant fluidity. To be *en nepantla* also means to be in the center of things, to exist in the middle place where all things come together. *Nepantla*, the center place, is a place of balance, a place of equilibrium, or . . . a place of chaos or

confusion. . . . As you make your way through life, *nepantla* becomes the place you live in most of the time—home. How we choose to occupy our home is crucial.⁵⁶

Lara Medina concluded her chapter with this line: “*Nepantla* spirituality offers a choice, a choice to exclude or to include.”⁵⁷ Emerging ministries in the ELCA, to the extent they are transcultural, also live *en nepantla*.

Emerging Ministries en Nepantla

Visitors have attended emerging ministry worship gatherings and asked if they were actually in a Lutheran church. Common service era Lutherans might suggest that emerging worship is not Lutheran worship. Confessionally, they’re wrong. Culturally, they’re also wrong. The Lutheran tradition, of which the ELCA is a part, is a confessional tradition. The Augsburg Confession, published in 1531, is a defining document for the Lutheran tradition. Article VII of the Augsburg Confession defines the church:

It is also taught that at all times there must be and remain one, holy, Christian church. *It is the assembly of believers among whom the gospel is purely preached, and the holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel.* For this is enough for the true unity of the Christian church that there the gospel is preached harmoniously according to a pure understanding and the sacraments are administered in conformity with the divine Word.⁵⁸

The Augsburg Confession Article VII defines church in terms of Word, sacrament, and assembly. The next line in Article VII says, “It is not necessary for the true unity of the Christian church that uniform ceremonies, instituted by human beings, be observed everywhere.”⁵⁹ Ceremonies are confessionally, contextually, and culturally shaped. Word and sacrament are emerging in new Lutheran cultural expressions—part of the neoculturation process as Lutheran and other cultures engage one another in *nepantla*.

Nepantla was both a personal and a communal experience for emerging leaders. Ethnic and hipster cultural identities set participants in emerging ministries apart from mainstream American culture as well as from traditional Lutheran cultures. To be Lutheran and Hispanic in America, for example, meant you were neither a “typical” Lutheran nor a “typical” Hispanic nor a “stereotypical” American, but somewhere in between—in *nepantla*. Transcultured Hispanic American Lutherans learned to speak multiple cultural languages, including Spanish, English, Lutheran, and whatever other cultural languages they would need to communicate in their jobs or the greater community, in order to live in *nepantla*. To embrace cultural diversity requires a willingness to dwell in *nepantla* and engage with the other in *nepantla* in a process of transculturation.

The process of intentional transculturation, whether among or within congregations, involves at least four movements: (1) a movement into

nepantla (a middle ground between cultures) through a commitment to meet those of other cultures; (2) a movement to *dialogue* with those of other cultures that involves cultural give and take (mutual deculturation) to create a shared culture (neoculturation); (3) a movement to *perichoretic community* in shared Word and sacrament; and (4) a movement to join in God's *mission* in the world together.

Emerging ministries are examples of ways the ELCA has engaged in transcultural mission to develop "diversity among" ministries. The cultural mosaic of the ELCA is a little more colorful (particularly around the edges) and traditional Lutheran culture is a little less traditional. Emerging ministries have contributed to the cultural diversity of the ELCA. It remains to be seen if transculturation as an intentional process can move the ELCA beyond its efforts of developing "diversity among" ministries to developing cultural "diversity within" congregations and ministries.

Notes

- 1 Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995), 97–103.
- 2 Ortiz, 103.
- 3 Eric W. Gritsch, *A History of Lutheranism* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002).
- 4 E. Clifford Nelson, *The Lutherans in North America* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980). Nelson's work was first published in 1975, prior to the formation of the ELCA in 1988.
- 5 Abdel Ross Wentz, *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964). Wentz's book was first published in 1955, during the height of the common service era of American Lutheranism.
- 6 Richard J. Perry, ed. *Catching a Star: Transcultural Reflections on a Church for All People* (Minneapolis, MN: Lutheran University Press, 2004), 198–201. James Mayer recounts a similar synopsis of this history in his chapter, "White Lutherans: Who We Are, What We Bring, What We Need."
- 7 Luther D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy: A Study of the Common Liturgy of the Lutheran Church in America* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1959); Luther D. Reed, *Worship: A Study of Corporate Devotion* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1959). Luther Reed was a preeminent Lutheran liturgical scholar at the height of the common service/common liturgy era of American Lutheranism. His books were texts for seminary worship courses. He began his book *Worship* with a twenty-four page chapter on "The Church Building."
- 8 Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997); Frank C. Senn, *The People's Work: A Social History of the Liturgy* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006). Senn is among the most prolific of Lutheran liturgical scholars of our age.
- 9 Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life: A Systematic Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980); Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, *The Oxford History of Christian Worship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006). Wainwright writes from the perspective of a liturgical theologian.
- 10 Eric W. Gritsch, *Fortress Introduction to Lutheranism* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1994), 57.
- 11 The first Lutheran seminary in the Americas was formed in Gettysburg, PA, in 1826.
- 12 The development of a common service in English was the subject of great debate at the time. The "common service debate" took place in the 1880s leading up to 1888 primarily in articles, editorials, and letters to the editors in *The Lutheran Church in Review* (now published as *The Lutheran Quarterly*).

- 13 The Common Liturgy was a slightly revised version of the Common Service.
- 14 *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, pew edition (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), 7. Beyond philosophical commitments to particular liturgies, current technologies provide access to a myriad of worship resources that could not have been imagined in the Common Service era. A comprehensive resource was necessary at that time.
- 15 This was an example of a transcultural process: deculturation for the sake of neoculturation.
- 16 Acculturation is taking on another culture as your own, or in the case of an infant, growing into your native culture. The term *melting pot* came into use in 1908 reflecting an expectation that immigrant cultures would merge into one American culture. My grandfather who emigrated from Norway as a young man learned English, although spoken with a bit of an accent, and never allowed his children to learn Norwegian.
- 17 Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy: A Study of the Common Liturgy of the Lutheran Church in America*, 225. Luther Reed provided a description of Lutheran worship during this era. “The genius of Lutheranism reacts not only against a casual or irreverent approach to God, but also against externality and display in public worship. We seek to approach God directly, simply, sincerely. The simplicity and forthrightness of our liturgy require corresponding qualities in its setting and rendition. Overelaboration, fussy decoration, excessive ceremonial, concertistic music are all out of harmony with the Lutheran understanding. A strong sense of historic values and of what is inherently worshipful, distinctive, and beautiful, however is entirely in the Lutheran spirit. Creative activity, controlled by established principles, should be encouraged. We must expect the liturgy itself to receive minor revisions from time to time—possibly even some development.”
- 18 Paul R. Nelson and Frank W. Stoldt, “The Future of Worship in the ELCA: Exploring the Critical Issues” (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), 74–75. The ELCA studied 402 congregations “whose worship life is exemplary” and reported their findings. Definitions and descriptions of contemporary worship were provided. The top three of twenty or so descriptors were the use of current music styles, the use of bands, and preaching from someplace other than a pulpit.
- 19 The introduction of contemporary worship in Lutheran congregations could also be viewed as a transcultural process of contextualizing worship in the musical and cultural languages of the Baby Boomers. As one who helped to introduce contemporary worship in congregations in the ’80s and ’90s, I would suggest that both views, attractional consumerism and contextual enculturation, resonate with reality.
- 20 Even young people within their own families belong to different cultures than their parents and grandparents and are noticeably absent from Lutheran congregations as young adults.
- 21 Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, 103.
- 22 Ortiz, lviii.
- 23 Ortiz, lviii–lix.
- 24 Ortiz, xlv–xlvi. In the introduction to the English edition published in 1995 Fernando Coronil tells this story and traces the development of the use of the terms. He points out that Ortiz’s book was not available in English at the time for the Oxford English Dictionary editors to use in their deliberation.
- 25 Lutheran World Federation, “Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture: Contemporary Challenges and Opportunities,” in *Lutheran World Federation’s Study Team on Worship and Culture* (Nairobi, Kenya: Lutheran World Federation, 1996). The Nairobi statement has been published in numerous places and is available on the ELCA and LWF websites.
- 26 Karen Ward was serving on the churchwide worship staff of the ELCA at the time. She went on to develop an emerging ministry, the Church of the Apostles, in the Seattle area and has had significant influence on the emerging church conversation. She is currently serving as an Episcopal priest in Portland, OR.
- 27 World Council of Churches, “Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry,” (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982).
- 28 Gordon Lathrop, *Holy People: A Liturgical Ecclesiology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999), 117–31. Lathrop has been a strong proponent of the use of an *ordo* in worship and traces its

development here. His influence has been significant in Lutheran congregations that have moved away from more formal liturgies to liturgies structured around an *ordo*. Lathrop was a co-chair of the team that developed the Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture. See also: Gordon Lathrop, *Central Things: Worship in Word and Sacrament* 8 (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2005). Dirk Lange has also contributed to this conversation: Dirk G. Lange and Dwight W. Vogel, eds., *Ordo: Bath, Word, Prayer, Table: A Liturgical Primer in Honor of Gordon W. Lathrop* (Akron, OH: OSL Publications, 2006).

- 29 Nelson and Stoldt, "The Future of Worship in the ELCA: Exploring the Critical Issues," 19.
- 30 Lamin O. Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, American Society of Missiology Series 13 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989), 7.
- 31 Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985), 21. Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder have also engaged the topic of contextual theology in helpful ways. Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, Faith and Cultures Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002); Stephen B. Bevans and Roger Schroeder, *Prophetic Dialogue: Reflections on Christian Mission Today* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011).
- 32 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 370.
- 33 Gadamer, 371.
- 34 Gadamer, 578.
- 35 Gadamer, 389.
- 36 Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, 47.
- 37 One of the most useful books that addresses mission in the Bible and in the missional conversation is David Bosch's work in which he provided a thorough biblical study for his explication of the missional church. David Jacobus Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991).
- 38 The people of Israel flourished in Egypt but did not assimilate. Had the people of Israel assimilated, the people of Egypt may not have felt as threatened or felt the need to subdue the people of Israel in slavery. See Exodus 1:1-14.
- 39 Being in the wilderness and being *en nepantla* might be similar experiences.
- 40 Trygve N. D. Mettinger, *The Dethronement of Sabaoth: Studies in the Shem and Kabod Theologies*, Coniectanea Biblica, Old Testament Series 18 (Lund: CWK Gleerup, 1982). Mettinger describes the transitions from *sabaoth* to *hem* and *kabod* theologies.
- 41 *Conformity* is an aspect of assimilation and acculturation. Further, I am suggesting that *transformation* (or *metamorphosis* as in the Greek) is related to deculturation and neoculturation in a process of transculturation. Transculturation is a transformational process.
- 42 Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 362.
- 43 Bevans and Schroeder, *Prophetic Dialogue: Reflections on Christian Mission Today*, 20.
- 44 Simon Biggs, "Transculturation, Transliteracy, and Generative Poetics," (2008): 6, www.littlepig.org.uk/texts/trans.pdf (accessed 8 May 2015). This essay is available in several locations online in addition to the one cited here, including on SlideShare.
- 45 Biggs, 8.
- 46 Biggs, 7.
- 47 This contrasts with typical cross-cultural missionary models where one must first learn the culture and languages of the people before one can communicate the gospel.
- 48 Gibson Winter, *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches: An Analysis of Protestant Responsibility in the Expanding Metropolis* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1961), 29.
- 49 Winter, 69.
- 50 Donald A. McGavran and C. Peter Wagner, *Understanding Church Growth*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1990), 69.
- 51 McGavran and Wagner, 163.
- 52 Mark Lau Branson and Juan Francisco Martínez, *Churches, Cultures and Leadership: A Practical*

Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), 17. Branson and Martínez have updated McGavran's language a bit: "The Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP) states that people respond most effectively to the gospel in ethnic or culturally specific churches."

- 53 Information about ethnic associations in the ELCA is available at <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Congregations-and-Synods/Ethnic-Specific-and-Multicultural-Ministries> (accessed 8 May 2015). These associations have evolved into Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Ministries in the current structure of the ELCA (2015).
- 54 Winter, *The Suburban Captivity of the Churches: An Analysis of Protestant Responsibility in the Expanding Metropolis*. Winter's observations continue to resonate.
- 55 James Maffie, "The Centrality of Nepantla in Conquest-Era Nahua Philosophy," *The Nahua Newsletter* 44, no. 11 (2007): 15.
- 56 Lara Medina, "Nepantla Spirituality: Negotiating Multiple Religious Identities among U.S. Latinas," in *Rethinking Latino(a) Religion and Identity*, ed. Miguel A. De La Torre and Gaston Espinosa (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2006), 265–66.
- 57 Medina, 266.
- 58 Robert Kolb, Timothy J. Wengert, and Charles P. Arand, *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 42 (emphasis mine).
- 59 Kolb et al.

Implications of Aesthetic Education for Liturgical Education

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The broadcasts and announcements of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) [also known by the Arabic acronym, Daesh] appall and outrage. The violence they showcase has a political aim—to establish a worldwide caliphate. Twenty thousand foreign fighters have already joined Daesh, with 150 from the United States so far.¹ Associated attacks have occurred in France, Australia, Nigeria, and Cameroon. Their violence proceeds in a military fashion. During the merciless immolation of Jordanian pilot Moaz al-Kassasbeh militants stood in matching uniforms similar to U.S. Marines.² The violence of Daesh is economic. Ransoming hostages, smuggling contraband, extortion, and selling crude oil products are among the tactics that accompany and sustain the ruthlessness of the organization. The Moaz al-Kassasbeh video posts a reward of “100 gold dinars” (an ancient form of currency purportedly reminted by Daesh) “to whoever kills another crusader pilot.”³ For liturgical scholars, it is perhaps most important to recognize that the violence of Daesh is also theological. Enlisting the work of Gayatri Spivak and Bruce Lincoln, we consider here how liturgical scholarship can take seriously the theological dimensions of modern terror and its liturgical language and question whether there is a manner of liturgical pedagogy that can operate with a persuasiveness that does not inculcate students into ideology.

The Daesh videos recount a narrative of sacred sacrifice and duty that begins with Muslim conquests of the seventh century.⁴ A hagiography coheres their incomprehensible brutality. A visual encomium to God adorns their historical narration of warring. In each broadcast a “black standard” flies onscreen in the form of an icon graphic or as a flag waved by militants and declares the *shahada*, a statement of faith—“There is no god but God. Muhammad is the messenger of God.” In its context the message can be read as a gruesome theological provocation. And that theological underpinning to the Daesh broadcasts demands the attention of liturgical scholars and teachers.

In order to turn toward the kind of liturgical examination I am proposing, it will be helpful to consider two recent studies of the 9/11 attacks: one from

postcolonial literary scholar Gayatri Spivak and one from religious historian Bruce Lincoln. Spivak asserts why we need humanities education during an age beguiled by terror. Lincoln interprets a list of directives found in the unloaded luggage of a 9/11 hijacker to show how the terrorists of that day acted out of sacred duty.

Spivak: Humanities Education in an Age of Terror

In “Terror: A Speech after 9/11,” Gayatri Spivak asserts that 9/11 is not just about religion.⁵ Rather, the attacks led to the tragic conceptualization and application of “terror” as an ideological alibi for the U.S. government to justify the “curtailment” of civil liberties and sanction dubious and seemingly endless military operations. War rages against an abstraction—terror. Social order depends upon preventing a constant threat without any predictable manner of occurrence—terror. For Spivak, political and legislative measures against terror will not bring peace, only the very thing that those measures hope to stop—more terror.

Rather, Spivak diagnoses an urgent need for what the humanities singularly delivers, “a persistent attempt at an uncoercive rearrangement of desires, through teaching reading.”⁶ Spivak sees humanities education as widening the individual imagination to greater collective benefit by providing a set of intellectual lenses to read the heterogeneity of human lives as a profundity that compels people to find different approaches for better secularism. Humanities education “de-transcendentalizes” modes of human difference like culture and religion. It puts them on the ground by exposing culture and religion as idioms that do not refer to anything into which we ought to place our faith. Instead, humanities education calls for conviction learned in nimble and imaginative “pedagogy” and “scholarship” that can engage the multiplicity and complexity of human difference with the hope of yielding thoughtful dialogue and action, such as learning the language of another, so that ever expansive understanding can grow, and peace can be pursued through clearer communication.

Spivak’s argument is penetrating. Yet it seems that her call for a sobered conscience-raising, culture-engaging, and religiously-undistracted humanistic reading cannot but include religious inquiry. How can we ignore the theological force of today’s Islamist terror? Terrorist attacks like 9/11 and other atrocities like the barbarism of Daesh enact political, military, and economic fury through savage interpretation of sacred text. Those extraordinary acts of violence also find their rationale in the language of prayer and tradition and their energy from communities of faith. Today’s broadcast terror communicates subtle and overt theological meaning and ritualized piety beyond comprehension. Put another way, the terrorist attacks speak liturgically.

Lincoln: Act of Sacred Duty

In *Holy Terrors: Thinking about Religion after September 11*, religious historian Bruce Lincoln analyzes Arabic instructions found in the effects of 9/11 hijackers to show that their motivations proceeded from a rationalized and not a fanaticized sense of sacred duty.⁷ Lincoln interprets the instructions as guidelines for spiritual preparation during the night before the attacks. On the one hand, he undertakes

an expert humanistic reading of which Spivak would be proud. On the other hand, the artifact Lincoln presents and his humanistic analysis of it helps us to see the theological profundity at work in a document presumably used as part of the preparation for the September 11, 2001, attack.

A prayer of repentance opens the final instructions found in the luggage of Mohammed Atta, “pilot” of American Airlines Flight 11 scheduled from Boston to Los Angeles: “In the name of God, the most merciful, the most compassionate. . . . In the name of God, of myself and of my family. . . . I pray to you God to forgive me from all my sins, to allow me to glorify you in every possible way.”⁸ The opening language of the first address to God sounds rather “orthodox,” according to Lincoln. Then an invocation references the self in a rather unconventional manner. But that reflective turn leads to a request for forgiveness that foreshadows the deadly action to come. For Lincoln, the phrasing suggests a martyr’s understanding of what will take place.⁹ What I also want to point out is that, at face value, the language resembles devotional phrasing that arguably any liturgical scholar or practitioner might use. What Lincoln conveys is that, with more than a casual glance, it becomes clear that the invocations display how profoundly and intensely religious the motivations of the hijackers were. In fact, the instructions that follow the introductory prayer consistently articulate piety and faith as foundational to the attack.

Consider these selections from thirty-eight sections enumerated by Lincoln:

§7 Pray during the night and be persistent in asking God to give you victory, control, and conquest, and that He may make your task easier and not expose us.

§12 Remember the words of Almighty God: “You were looking to the battle before you engaged in it, and now you see it with your own two eyes.” Remember: “How many small groups beat big groups by the will of God.” And his words: “If God gives you victory, no one can beat you. And if He betrays you, who can give you victory without Him? So the faithful put their trust in God.”¹⁰

§36 Afterwards, we will all meet in the highest heaven, God willing.

§38 And may the peace of God be upon the prophet.

A devotional arc becomes apparent in the excerpts above. Directive §7 issues a call to interior prayer for strength and protection from God. In §12 the Qur’an is quoted to steel the nerves of the soon-to-be hijackers. The verses instill them with confidence that their plan is reminiscent of how God has tipped the scales toward victory for those who have been outnumbered before. The passage provides anamnestic reasoning in order to help the hijackers place absolute trust in God to guarantee a successful outcome to their mission. The instructions then pivot toward the future as §36 articulates the promise of an eschatological horizon. They are heaven bound, and §38 offers a final closing benediction and reiteration that the plans are rooted not in religious fury but faithfulness to the teachings of Muhammad.

Lincoln stresses how the directives provide “insight into the way al Qaeda constitutes itself as a religious institution that acts on behalf of a broader religious community (the Islamic *ummah*).”¹¹ I want to suggest that the text resembles a manual of prayer. The attackers “should pray for success, victory over their enemies, also for God’s mercy and assistance,” and practice those prayers at designated times and places (§§7, 8, 10, 13, 17). Verses from the Qur’an are not only quoted in the instructions but “were to be spoken into cupped hands, then rubbed into one’s body and equipment so their power could be quite literally incorporated (§14).” The instructions are like elements of a sacrament received to become one with the hijacker’s very being. Lincoln further states, “Driving to the airport, the men should “remember God constantly” (§18) and thereafter offer a series of prophylactic prayers every time they enter new space or terrain (§§18, 19, 23, 26).” Ongoing prayer inscribes their mission. The mayhem that the hijackers will soon cause is so spiritually focused that their first victims (the flight attendants) are characterized “as sacrificial beasts, whose throats would be slit in ritual fashion (§13; cf. §15).”¹² The lethal mindset and eventual barbarism embraced by the hijackers are warranted by doxological speech that casts their tactical moves as practices of worship.

Thus, the document, despite its harrowing content, operates as a kind of prayer manual whose are liturgical. They are a work of people adhering to a faith. The instructions also express a vision that makes the disturbingly violent work of faithful people religiously coherent.

Liturgical Engagement of Artifacts and History

As such, if the instructions found in the luggage of Atta and his comrades constitute liturgical directions and, if on 11 September 2001, hijackers did indeed perform sacred duty, then theological education and liturgical scholars and practitioners must engage artifacts like these and others. The kind of plural designation of what constitutes liturgy and the wide attention to public “liturgies” seem to follow the intercultural and interreligious liturgical study recommended by Ruth Langer in her acceptance speech of the North American Academy of Liturgy 2015 Berakah Award.¹³ Langer may not have, however, been considering something sinister as the Daesh videos. In any case, to be sure, liturgical scholars and practitioners must also reckon with the fact that the United States, still a majority Christian country, was conceived in war, unified in war, and the last century was saturated with worldwide bloodshed:

- 1914–18 WWI
- 1939–45 WWII
- 1950–53 Korean War
- 1959–73 Vietnam
- 1990–91 Persian Gulf War
- 2001 War in Afghanistan
- 2003 Iraq War
- 2001– War on Terror

The United States also has a history of appeal to manuals of prayer in order to baptize violence upon its citizens. Consider “A Prayer for the President of the Confederate States, and all in civil Authority”:

O LORD our heavenly Father, the high and mighty Ruler of the universe, who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers upon the earth; Most heartily we beseech thee with thy favour to behold and bless thy servant, THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES, and all others in authority; and so replenish them with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that they may always incline to thy will, and walk in thy way. Endue them plenteously with heavenly gifts; grant them in health and prosperity long to live; and finally, after this life, to attain everlasting joy and felicity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*¹⁴

The collect above comes from an 1863 Episcopal *Book of Common Prayer* assembled for the Confederate United States of America. Following a resolution of the first General Council of the Protestant Episcopal churches in the Confederate States of America the prayer books were printed in London by Eyre and Spottiswoode but the plates used to produce the items bore the imprint J.W. Randolph, Richmond, VA. The prayer books were smuggled contraband. An initial shipment was lost in the Union blockade. Another shipment funded by North Carolina clergy made it to Southern congregations and were purportedly used with regularity.¹⁵ The mention of the prayer here again is to show how even the United States has employed liturgy to justify the worst kinds of violence.

Domestic trajectories of historical analysis must come into consideration as well when we consider how liturgical scholarship can take seriously the theological dimensions of modern terror and its liturgical language even if the grammar in today's liturgies of terror operate out of a faith tradition different from Christianity or our own. Citizens of the United States cannot forget the ways in which the United States has coopted religious zeal to provide verve for battle as we try to understand how it is that our neighbors in other parts of the world undertake horrifying violence in the name of God. I want to acknowledge the need for more detailed scholarship of theologically driven violence from the United States even as I focus attention here to a discussion of why liturgical scholars must watch the Daesh broadcasts and consider their theological dimensions.

Just at the time of my writing this essay, a twenty-two-year-old was killed by Danish police. He was identified as a gunman who sprayed thirty shots into the Kruttønden café in Copenhagen, killing filmmaker Finn Norgaard, 55, on Saturday, 14 February 2015 (Valentine's Day). The next morning, he took the life of Dan Uzan, 37, a security guard at the Copenhagen synagogue. Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt drew the following conclusion, “We feel certain now that it was a politically motivated attack, and thereby it was a terrorist attack.”¹⁶ The attack certainly had a political agenda but her correlation does not fully consider the context of the killings. The first shooting took place at a conference entitled, “Art, Blasphemy, and Freedom of Expression,” where cartoonist Lars Vilks, 68, was in attendance. In 2007 Vilks drew the prophet Muhammad as a dog. At each

place where shots were fired and lives taken, the gunman is reported to have shouted *Allahu Akbar* (“God is greater” or “God is the greatest”), which witnesses also claimed to have heard from the Kouachi brothers of the Charlie Hebdo attacks.¹⁷ And the second victim died at a synagogue. The murders were theological in their scope.

At the time of this writing, it is not known whether the Copenhagen gunman was linked to Daesh. Also today, a video was released where twenty-one Egyptian Coptic Christians were processed along a Lybian shoreline and beheaded in a highly ritualized, choreographed, and professionally produced video entitled, “A Message Signed with Blood to the Nation of the Cross.”¹⁸ A fighter in the video claims that the group kills the hostages in order to avenge “Muslim women persecuted by Coptic Crusaders in Egypt.”¹⁹ Another caption reads, “The people of the cross, followers of a hostile Egyptian Church,” and a statement is also made that “safety for you crusaders is something you can only hope for.”²⁰ Again, a hagiography of vengeance provides rationale for despicable language spoken and violence undertaken in the name of God against people of God. As disconcerting as it is, the militants of Daesh see themselves as performing sacred duty.

Training Ministers amidst “Liturgies” of Terror

Terror is not an abstraction when faced with the broadcast massacre of those Egyptian Christians or any images of terror from 9/11 forward. If a principle aim of liturgical scholarship and pedagogy is to prepare liturgical leaders who manifest the mercy and love of God through public worship, we cannot engage in those educational aims while ignoring the ways in which “liturgies” of terror are communicating very different desires of God. It is possible to train liturgical leaders who are not only capable of responding to the evil of Daesh in indirect ways by providing in response rituals of solace and care for the grieving or those outraged in parish settings? Can we also train liturgical leaders who can also provide an alternative, who can move within society as “extremists of love” combatting the real and broadcast violence of Daesh with surprise operations of hospitality and radical healing?²¹

Before answering these questions and others like them, it will be helpful to enter into dialogue with Spivak again. By championing a humanities style of literacy, Spivak wants to destabilize the concentration upon political science and law as pillars of secularism and formation of a just society. Jurisprudence and public policy cannot bring peace. Yet she is also suspicious of theological discourses of justice—movements like “liberation theology”—and the validity of theological concepts like grace as an operative hope for establishing peace in the world. Instead, she calls for a “de-transcendentalizing” of “the radically other”—a radical and charitable imagining of those unlike us in order to know them deeply even as they remain unknown and perhaps even indecipherable. Spivak illustrates what she means by meditating upon the habit and clairvoyance of a female suicide bomber.

For Spivak, the female suicide bomber sends a suicidal resistance message that is “both execution and mourning, for both the self and other, where you die

with me for the same cause, no matter which side you are on, with the implication that there is no dishonor in such shared death.”²² The female suicide bomber is not so much a gendered or religious subject as a victim of cultural instruction that has “drastically rearranged” the desires of a young mind (for Spivak, “only the young” mind could be so rearranged) toward extreme violence that eventuates in a zero sum outcome.²³ A female suicide bomber sends a message that, for Spivak, “will never be heard.”²⁴ Any possibility of dialogue, if the bombing is indeed a message, ends in the annihilation of self and the lives of others.

The cultural instruction that persuades the young to die such identity- and meaning-destroying deaths must be interrogated and shown as misleading with humanities education that is de-trivialized and instead realized as absolutely foundational to imagining how to enact social relationships that can move toward universalizable justice, freedom, and peace shared by all.

To begin outlining the kind of humanities education she espouses, however, makes a curious theological segue. She recalls turning to Martin Luther King Jr.’s “Beyond Vietnam” and finding “resonance” with his injunctions that the United States should not consider itself the “divine messianic force” of God.²⁵ Nor should the United States be surprised when other nations “do not leap to negotiate” given the history of violence that the United States has perpetrated.²⁶ For Spivak, King’s critique captured then, what she sees now as a deadly social misunderstanding that prevents transformational dialogue from happening that could disarm the female suicide bomber or perhaps even prevent the cultural instruction that coerces her to sacrifice her life with the paradoxical effect of meaninglessness. King links objection against Vietnam to a call for protest against U.S. deployment and investment of violence abroad (Venezuela, Guatemala, Cambodia, and Peru). Presumably Spivak references King strategically. For her, though he is a Christian preacher, the force of his words transcends religion. He promotes national humility and an awareness that take into serious consideration the interests of the rest of the world. His claims represent for Spivak assertions that de-transcendentalize the other—in this case, the United States. King’s words constitute a canonized, respectable, and accessible appeal for U.S. citizens to see themselves as part of a larger global humanity. King’s moral vision works seamlessly with Spivak’s line of argumentation.

Yet what she downplays in the words of King is his consistent theological reflection. As King delivers “Beyond Vietnam” in Riverside Church on 4 April 1967, he makes clear that while his message takes his audience beyond Vietnam, it does not reach beyond “our calling as sons of the living God.”²⁷ King paradoxically sets his message within the complexity of religious pluralism and verses of the New Testament:

This Hindu-Muslim-Christian-Jewish-Buddhist belief about ultimate reality is beautifully summed up in the first epistle of Saint John: “Let us love one another (Yes), for love is God. (Yes) And every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love. . . . If we love one another, God dwelleth in us and his love is perfected in us.” Let us hope that this spirit will become the order of the day.²⁸

King positions the struggle for a “new world” in a shared calling to live as children of God as presented in the gospel of John and with thoughtful engagement of religious plurality around the world.

The speech ends with the inclusion of a direct quotation of Amos 5:24. “If we will but make the right choice, we will be able to speed up the day, all over America and all over the world, when justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream.”²⁹ For King overcoming “racism, extreme materialism, and militarism” and establishing nonviolent coexistence that celebrates the wholeness of humanity throughout the world requires living into the promises of God. Put another way, for King, grace as unrelenting hope and fortitude for a new world undergirded by the love of God must abound in order to make enduring peace a reality.

The humanities education Spivak envisions, however, involves the reinvention of a theological concept like grace as “necessary metalepsis.”³⁰ By *metalepsis*, Spivak means that grace is an “effect of an effect” without attribution to any particular cause. For Spivak, grace is an imperfect term inherited from the history of Western religious and philosophical thought that must be extracted from any association with divinity. She builds her argument as an extension from Kant, who wrote at a time when theological faculties were “dominant.” Yet in today’s universities, grace must instead be reconsidered and repurposed as a lesson compelling perpetual patience and hospitality for the stranger, perhaps best practiced in the learning of other languages or the close reading of texts outside the conventions of what one would normally consider as illuminative of knowledge, according to Spivak.

Grace as metalepsis encourages learning from the “singular” and “unverifiable.”³¹ Spivak sees the humanities-style grace she defines as missing from both liberation theology that literalizes the metaphors of a religious culture to end human suffering and suicide bombing that recodes religious narrative as a narrow act of self-destruction that devastates human lives for an indecipherable end. In order to avoid the problematic oscillations and outcomes of religiously inspired action, she points toward humanities education, which reframes religion and culture as idioms to be read and investigated with intellectual and humanistic rigor so that wider understanding of peoples around the world can flourish.

Spivak insinuates that religion only clouds thinking that could move toward a worldwide ethic of respect and care for the other. Her line of argumentation implies apprehension toward how theologically driven education can produce ideological action. Yet for King, a world of compassion cannot exist without trust in God.

Liturgical Pedagogy

If Spivak’s earlier appeal to King quietly disrupts or demands more from the diminution of religion that she recommends and provides another option in addition to the style of humanities education she promotes, is there a manner of liturgical pedagogy that can operate with persuasiveness that does not inculcate students into ideology? Is it possible to position liturgical pedagogy publicly such

that it is unafraid to teach promises that cannot be “de-transcendentalized” into a oneness of reason that unites the diversity of humanity? Can liturgical scholarship and pedagogy promote the recognition of cultures as more than idiomatic expressions of convergences and divergences with respect to secularism? Instead, can culture and religion be approached as sites filled with communities where perforations of enduring belief flicker in various gatherings of diversified people? In addition to a humanistic need to examine terror as a problematic association with “Islamic” and a troubling evolution in U.S. domestic and foreign policies, is there a place for education that unabashedly appeals to the sacred and elucidates meaning from ritual practices of worship in order to benefit society beyond ecclesial constituencies? Dissemination of the uncoercive rearrangement of desires through teaching reading that Spivak stresses would have probably resulted in a different kind of religious participation from Atta and his fellow hijackers on 9/11. At the very least it would have been more difficult to harmonize Islam with violence the ways in which they did. If Craig Stephen Hicks had received the humanities education Spivak endorses, perhaps Deah Barakat, Yusor Muhammad, and Razan Mohammad Abu-Salha would still be alive.³² Yet is there something less cerebral and more theologically nuanced that liturgical scholars and teachers can bring to disable terror and hatred here and abroad?

To each question above, I answer “yes,” yet without knowing exactly what answering yes wholly entails. In the Daesh broadcasts so far, the killers have all been young men, not female suicide bombers. Perhaps they have been coerced into making impossible correlations between horrific actions of violence and Islam. Yet Lincoln’s analysis suggests that one way to take seriously the violence of today’s young terrorists is to consider that the perpetrators may be committing to their activities with a very precise and detailed theological epistemology. Following Lincoln’s academic disposition but carrying it further into the interests of theology, I assert that we as liturgical scholars and educators must watch with our own eyes and, in as much as it is possible, without the filters of media the violence that Daesh has broadcast for the world to see. Because the violence that Daesh shares is not only posted publicly in order to outrage. It is a tool of recruitment, of conversion. Young people, it seems mostly men, are watching highly ritualized decapitations and immolation explained by cinematic religious narrative and they are thinking, “I want to be a part of that.” Not only are they conjuring that thought; they are compelled to join a movement of transgression that dares to invoke the name of God, in Syria and Lebanon, and within the surprise attacks of groups “right at home” about which we know very little.

Studying that violence and trying to understand what it is communicating and why will yield better liturgical pedagogy and research and introduce the goods of liturgical scholarship into public deliberations about Islamist extremism. We will be addressing a dimension of the public discourse that is largely being ignored—the theological motivations of modern terror. It is not easy or perhaps even possible to find or view all the videos that have been released. Yet a video like the Peter Kassig footage clearly shows how a sophisticated theological outlook based in early Islamic history propels the program of Daesh.³³ We need to watch the Daesh broadcasts because grace is more than a metalepsis.

Grace is a judgment upon the evil that Daesh perpetuates. It is a judgment haunting the horror of those videos, a reality whose presence we struggle to detect when confronted with violence of such magnitude. Yet grace still somehow persists especially in the midst of utter hopelessness. Grace clarifies a confounding world when we love and forgive our enemies, those whom we hate. Figuring out how to do that after the broadcasts of Daesh will take all of the theological imagination we can muster. Grace is a judgment that we hope for from God when viewing the sins of Daesh. It is also a response from God that we teach in liturgical courses and about which we write in liturgical scholarship and for which we can pray and enact, even if imperfectly or transgressively, as those who embody Christ in our liturgical endeavors.

I am not only alluding to something like a political theology. Instead I am trying to articulate a liturgical reality capable of opening student, imagination and our imagination as educators to widen what we consider liturgy to encompass and how the variety of liturgical artifacts in the world can expand the reach of liturgical studies into the public sphere and increase the relevance of the liturgies that we already perform.³⁴ I am not defining any event that mentions God as liturgy. Yet I am arguing that the Daesh broadcasts and other widely disseminated acts of modern Islamist terror constitute liturgical occurrences. Those acts are done in the name of God, as a form of prayer, and warrant our closest examination.

Notes

- 1 "President Obama stating ISIL is a potential threat to the U.S.," <http://america.aljazeera.com/watch/shows/live-news/2015/2/obama-isil-is-potential-threat-to-us.html> (accessed 12 February 2015).
- 2 "ISIL has matching digital camo in execution video," <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/02/03/is-shown-in-matching-digital-camo-in-execution-video/22837539/> (accessed 12 February 2015).
- 3 See minute marker 20:00. <http://video.foxnews.com/v/4030583977001/warning-extremely-graphic-video-isis-burns-hostage-alive/?#sp=show-clips> (accessed 13 February 2015).
- 4 Consider the first 14 minutes of "Although the Disbelievers Don't Like It" (the video showing Peter Kassig) or just the opening sequence where a light is shown spreading from a Daesh flag planted in the Middle East to shine over Europe, then Asia and North America. <http://www.clarionproject.org/news/gruesome-islamic-state-video-announces-death-peter-kassig> (accessed 13 February 2015). For more on the expansion of early Islam, see Efraim Karsh, *Islamic Imperialism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013).
- 5 In Gayatri Spivak, *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 372–398. The essays in this book were the focus of the NAAL Emerging Critical Resources Seminar for 2015.
- 6 Spivak, *Aesthetic Education*, 373.
- 7 Two other copies were found in the belongings of other hijackers. Though redacted by the U.S. government, the beginning excerpt of the instructions provided by Lincoln is nonetheless revealing.
- 8 Bruce Lincoln, *Holy Terrors: Thinking About Religion after September 11* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 93.
- 9 Lincoln, 8.
- 10 Sura 3:154. Qur'anic reference provided by Lincoln.

- 11 Lincoln, 8. In Arabic, *ummah* means “nation” or “community.”
- 12 Lincoln, 9–10.
- 13 Ruth Langer, “The Blessings and Challenges of Interreligious Prayer,” see in this *Proceedings* volume above p. 28.
- 14 Diocesan Missionary Society Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia, *Prayer Book for the Camp* (Richmond, VA: MacFarlane and Ferguson, 1863), 12–13. Available at <http://docsouth.unc.edu/imls/peccsa/prayer.html> (accessed 14 February 2015).
- 15 Edgar Legare Pennington, “The Organization of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the Confederate States of America” in *The Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 17, no. 4 (1948): 330.
- 16 Steven Erlanger, “Police Say They Killed Suspect in 2 Attacks in Copenhagen,” *New York Times* (15 February 2015). <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/16/world/europe/copenhagen-attacks-suspect-is-killed-police-say.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=first-column-region®ion=top-news&WT.nav=top-news> (accessed 15 February 2015).
- 17 Charles Duxbury (in Copenhagen) and Anna Molin (in Stockholm), “Suspected Copenhagen Gunman Is Killed as Denmark Reels from Attacks,” *Wall Street Journal* (15 February 2015). <http://www.wsj.com/articles/danish-police-kill-suspect-in-copenhagen-shootings-1423989155> (accessed 15 February 2015).
- 18 “ISIL Says Christian Egyptian Hostages Killed in Lybia,” *Al Jazeera* (15 February 2015). <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2015/02/isil-video-execution-egyptian-christian-hostages-libya-150215193050277.html> (accessed 15 February 2015).
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Ahmed Tolba and Michael Georgy, “Sisi Warns of Response after Islamic State Kills 21 Egyptians in Lybia,” *Reuters* (15 February 2015). [http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/02/15/us-mideast-crisis-libya-egypt-idUSKBN0LJ10D20150215_\(accessed 15 February 2015\)](http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/02/15/us-mideast-crisis-libya-egypt-idUSKBN0LJ10D20150215_(accessed 15 February 2015)).
- 21 I borrow the phrase “extremist of love” from Ted A. Smith, *Weird John Brown: Divine Violence and the Limits of Ethics* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014).
- 22 Spivak, *Aesthetic Education*, 385.
- 23 Spivak, 385.
- 24 Spivak, 386.
- 25 Spivak, 388.
- 26 Spivak, 388.
- 27 Martin Luther King Jr., “Beyond Vietnam,” 4 April 1967 (New York, NY: Riverside Church, 1967). See transcript and audio at http://mlk-kpp01.stanford.edu/index.php/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_beyond_vietnam/ (accessed 8 May 2015).
- 28 King.
- 29 King.
- 30 Spivak, *Aesthetic Education*, 396.
- 31 Spivak, 396.
- 32 “Three Muslim Students Killed at North Carolina Campus,” *Al Jazeera* (11 February 2015). <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/02/students-murdered-university-north-carolina-campus-150211093231033.html> (accessed 15 February 2015).
- 33 “Gruesome Islamic State Video Announces Death of Peter Kassig,” *The Clarion Project* (16 November 2014). <http://www.clarionproject.org/news/gruesome-islamic-state-video-announces-death-peter-kassig> (accessed 15 February 2015). Compare the video with notes from the Quilliam Foundation analysis: <http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/publications/free/detailed-analysis-of-islamic-state-propaganda-video.pdf>. Yet the analysis provided by the Quilliam foundation should not be read uncritically.
- 34 For an excellent exploration of divine violence and judgment, read through the figure of John Brown as a response to state authorized and exceptional violence and the question of evaluating historical figures as freedom fighters or fanatics, see Smith, *Weird John Brown*.

