

CONFIRMATION MENTORING

Friends for the journey

In the 1989 Report of the Confirmation Task Force of our church, the members of the Task Force agreed that the church needs to change its theology, practice, preparation and administration of Confirmation (and probably even the name itself). Most of us would agree with these recommendations

by John Wilton

The *Book of Alternative Services* provides very little information about the Confirmation service in today's church, other than to say Confirmation should normally be done as part of the liturgy of Baptism. There is nothing said about the preparation of those seeking Confirmation. This paper is an attempt to put the Confirmation liturgy, and its preparation, into the present-day context of the Anglican Church of Canada. It is rooted not so much in liturgical correctness as in the reality which most parish priests and congregations have to deal, at least in this part of the country.

Before I became a parish priest in a suburban parish with a relatively large number of adolescents, I would have outlawed the Confirmation of young teens as inappropriate, outdated and prone to revisiting the mistakes of the past when Confirmation was often graduation out of the church. But when I began to listen to the requests for Confirmation from the young people in my parish, I had to soften that view. The first thing I had to do was make sure that the request for Confirmation came from the young people themselves, and not from their parents or grandparents. I remember incurring the wrath of one mother in the parish at an introductory Confirmation preparation session attended by both teens and parents. I made it clear that the ones who made the final decision about Confirmation would be the young people themselves. One young woman of about 14 made it very clear right then and there that this was her mother's idea, not hers. I invited

her to attend some of the preparation sessions and then decide. Her mother was furious. Now it is well-known that those seeking Confirmation, no matter their age, need to ask for it themselves.

When I asked these young people what it was they were seeking out of Confirmation, I found a variety of responses. Usually it was an opportunity to state independently their belief in God and their desire to be part of the church. This desire for independence was what convinced me that all my views about Confirmation (held for all the right reasons) were not serving well the young people whom I had promised to serve.

Once the decision was made to continue, at least for now, the practice of Confirmation of young teens, along with older teens and adults, I had to decide how to prepare them for this stage of their Christian journey. After trying two or three different packaged Confirmation curricula I realized there had to be a better way. These curricula all made the mistake of assuming this was going to be my last chance to fill up these kids with all the information they would ever need to be fully-functioning members of the Church. This is, of course, very far from reality. As the Task Force said, "Confirmation courses devised on the assumption—ion that this will be the last time for any formal teaching on the Christian faith have some of the desperation of the banking system about

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LETTERS

Two years ago I attended a choral Evensong at my home church; Christ Church, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. This service was one of the celebration events marking the church's 150th anniversary. During the course of the service I experienced an amazing feeling of coming home. The beautiful simplicity of sung collects and responses and the disciplined harmony and pointing in the psalms and hymns gave me a feeling that I was truly worshipping God. After the service I gave a short talk on the use of contemporary music in Anglican churches.

I grew up in rural Nova Scotia. As a boy soprano I spent a lot of my youth in the Anglican church singing English church music. My mother, a former student of Healy Willan, directed junior choirs in my father's churches. I spent my summers in Anglican choir camps where English choir directors taught boys and girls to sing anthems, hymns and psalms, the importance of the events of the liturgy, and the role and discipline of the music and choir supporting the liturgy. I loved it all.

When I was about fifteen, a group of monks from the order of the Holy Cross came to my father's parish of St. Paul's Charlottetown to do a four day mission. On the first night of the mission, three monks walked to the front of the church hall. One had a guitar, one had a washtub with a broom handle attached to it (this turned out to be a home-made string bass), and the

other had a washboard. They introduced themselves and taught us a song. During the mission we learned many new songs, had a lot of fun, and experienced a new awareness of the Holy Spirit. These new songs were soon being played at the coffee hour after the Sunday service. Soon after that, a new church service was added using an experimental liturgy from the Episcopal Church and folk music accompanied by guitars, piano and gutbucket (the home-made bass). The new service attracted a new congregation.

At this time I was playing the guitar at the 9:15 service and singing bass (my voice had changed), at the 11:00 a.m. service. Ever since then I have felt that both styles of worship have a place in the church. The BCP liturgy speaks to me, feeds me from my Anglican heritage, and appeals to me as a trained singer. It's my experience that contemporary liturgy speaks to unchurched people- people who need to hear God's message in familiar language, who are used to hearing songs with emotional content accompanied by guitars and who feel that they are welcome in the community because of the informal yet worshipful space created during worship.

As a church musician, it's my job to ensure that the music supports the liturgy and is of a quality to give God glory, whatever the style of service.

John Macdonald
*Musician, Trinity Church Streetsville,
 Diocese of Toronto.*

The Hoskin Group is a society committed to the ongoing renewal of the Church in worship and mission. Our ministry is to provide resources which focus the debate, inform the practice, and evaluate the experience of our liturgical life.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Membership in the Hoskin Group involves maintaining an annual subscription to *Liturgy Canada* as well as agreement with the Hoskin Group's Mission Statement.

Subscriptions only are available to non-members. (**Subscription rates effective June 1, 1996:** 1 year: \$20.00; 2 years \$35.00; 3 years \$50.00.)

Due to the added expense, the Hoskin Group is monitoring the feasibility of continuing to enclose *Open*. For the time being, however, we will include this valuable publication. Your response is appreciated.

Advance notice: Annual General Meeting, May 2-3, 1997. This event will include devotions and a dinner. Further details will be forthcoming.

FRIENDS FOR THE JOURNEY
(Continued from page 1)

them” (i.e. that this information can be ‘banked’ for future retrieval when it is relevant). If the desire of the young people was for some guidance on how to be adult members of the church, then why not put them in touch with some real live practising adult Christians?

It was then that I recalled an article by William Willimon in *The Christian Century* that I had read some years before. In dealing with a similar problem in his parish, he came upon the idea of providing mentors for Confirmation candidates to replace the traditional classes led by the clergy. Willimon says

“The church needs to realize that one of its greatest resources is its ability to bring generations of disciples together. Confirmation should give youth an opportunity to confirm their developing faith, but perhaps more important, it should provide the church the opportunity to confirm the developing young Christian—to say ‘You are one of us already. God has plans for your life. We want to take time with you to give you the skills, insights and experiences you need to be faithful.’”¹

So began a two-year process of trial and error on the part of the Education Committee of our 250-family suburban parish. What follows is an attempt to describe the process we followed in the winter and spring of 1995 as we prepared ourselves and nine teens and two adults for Confirmation by the Bishop on May 14, 1995. It is important to state that the process was exactly the same for the adults as it was for the teens. We believed that you don’t foster the incorporation of young people into the ministry of the church by treating them as second-class citizens. We were proved to be right when we saw the same level of commitment, maturity and desire for spiritual growth from both groups.

The schedule of events and activities went as follows: We began with a sermon giving the current theological thinking about Confirmation and outlining our proposal for a new way of preparing people. This was reinforced in the parish newsletter and by announcements by members of the Education Committee.

Next, we invited all members of the parish, including the teens, to nominate people to serve as Confirmation mentors. A job description was provided, along with a list of the qualities we felt to be necessary for a mentor. We then met with potential candidates to outline the process in detail including the

expectations of candidates and parents. Two weeks later, after receiving a number of nominations, the Education Committee matched candidates and mentors and phoned the mentors to formally recruit them. Because of the process, no one refused (flattery at having been nominated is a great motivator). The first stage in the mentoring process was to have an all-day event for candidates and mentors together. The purpose of the day was to get to know each other better, to begin to learn together, to share a meal and to have some fun. This was followed the next day (Sunday) by a commissioning of mentors and candidates and prayer for their work together.

Candidates and mentors met weekly in person or by phone. All were given a copy of the book *Keeping the Promise 2* (adapted for Canada) to use as a basis for discussion. (This book was published after we began our planning for this process and includes many of the ideas we had already been working on.)

About a month before the Confirmation service, all the candidates and mentors attended a full day retreat led by one of the Sisters at a local Convent. During Holy Week, all candidates and mentors attended and participated as they were able. The preparation finished with a tour of our diocesan Cathedral and two days before the Confirmation a parish pot-luck supper in honour of the candidates after which the Bishop conducted a rehearsal.

Candidates were expected to “shadow” their mentor for the whole three-month preparation period. If the mentor was a Churchwarden, the candidate attended at least one Wardens meeting. If the mentor was an Intercessor, the candidate helped prepare and lead the Prayers of the People on at least one occasion, and so on. This shadowing included the mentor’s ministry outside the parish. So one young woman assisted her mentor in canvassing for the Cancer Society, another helped at a literacy class and another at a service club. In addition to meeting weekly to discuss various aspects of the faith, candidates and mentors also worked together on a social service project or ministry investigation which involved finding out about some part of the Church’s ministry in the world (e.g. ministry to people with AIDS, the Primate’s Fund, prison chaplaincy, etc.). The results of this research or ministry was presented at the pot-luck supper.

The candidates also attended four “classes” with me during this period to

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discuss some of the more academic aspects of the faith.

The Confirmation Liturgy

We tried to ensure that the liturgy on the day of Confirmation reflected the mutuality of candidates and mentors and that it had been the whole parish which took part in the preparation, not just the candidates and priest.

Each of the candidates took some part in the liturgy (servers, readers, intercessors, sidespersons, etc.).

Each candidate was presented to the Bishop by the parish priest, mentor and parents (for the teens).

At the Laying on of Hands, mentor, parents and priest gathered around the kneeling candidate and visibly supported the candidate by laying a hand on his or her shoulder as the bishop laid hands on. This was very moving for all concerned (as an “ordination huddle” can be).

This program was very well-received by all members of the parish of all ages. One year after the Confirmation, all candidates are involved in the parish to some degree, and many of the mentor/candidate friendships continue to flourish. One older member of the congregation asked if she could be confirmed again because her own confirmation had been so boring and meaningless. And one of the younger teens said he could hardly wait until it was his turn to be confirmed. I would be happy to share more of the details of our Confirmation Mentoring program if you wish to contact me. ☒

John Wilton is a priest in the Diocese of Toronto. He was the incumbent at St. Joseph’s, Brampton, and is taking up a new incumbancy at St. George’s, Willowdale.

Notes:

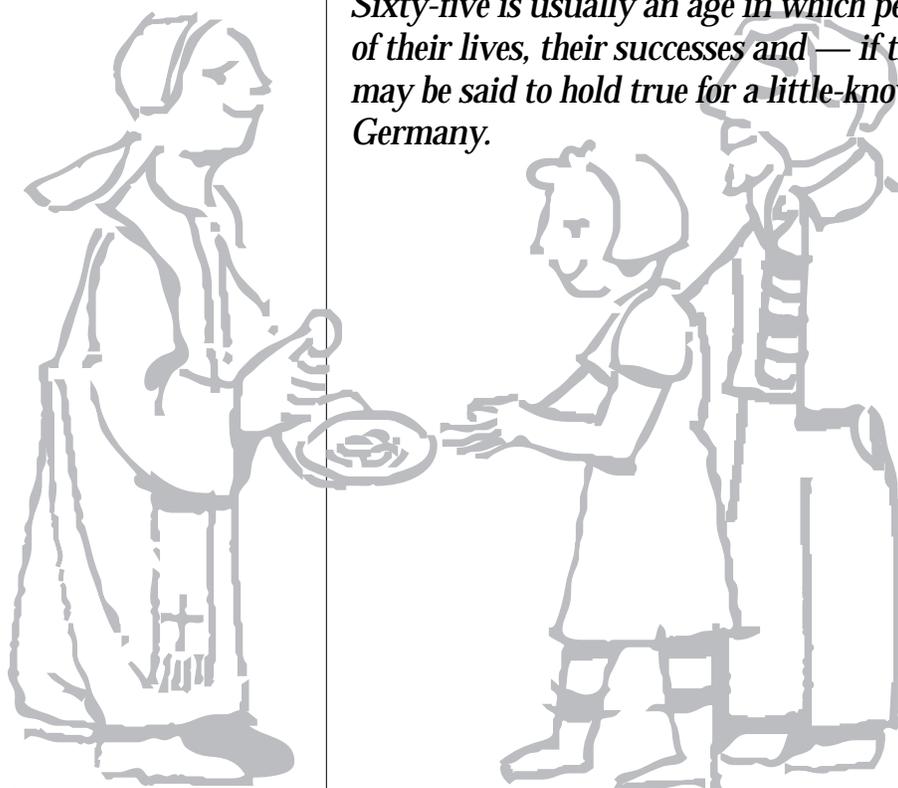
1. William Willimon, “Taking Confirmation Out of the Classroom”, *The Christian Century*, March 16, 1988.
2. Andrew D. Parker, *Keeping the Promise*, Morehouse Publishing, Harrisburg, PA, 1994.

EUCCHARIST AND CATHOLICITY:

The influence of *The Book of Alternative Services* on the *New Altar Book* of the Old Catholic Church in Germany

Sixty-five is usually an age in which persons look back at the achievements of their lives, their successes and — if they are honest — failures. The same may be said to hold true for a little-known agreement signed in Bonn, Germany.

by Thaddeus A. Schnitker



On 2 July 1931, official delegations from the Church of England and the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht put their signatures under a short text which, after ratification by the respective supreme bodies, established intercommunion between these two parts of the catholic Church. This text, unsurpassed in succinctness and setting the example for other communion agreements, reads,

1. Each Communion recognizes the catholicity and independence of the other and maintains its own.
2. Each Communion agrees to admit members of the other Communion to participate in the Sacraments.

3. Intercommunion [changed by the 1958 Lambeth Conference to “Full Communion”] does not require the acceptance of all doctrinal opinion, sacramental devotion, or liturgical practice characteristic of the other, but implies that each believes the other to hold all the essentials of the Christian Faith.

In time, almost all the other Churches of the Anglican Communion, including the Anglican Church of Canada, joined this pact which came to be known as the Bonn Agreement.

The Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht are those catholic Churches which claim to have preserved the faith of the Ancient Church of the first millennium, without the accretions of the Roman Church. They established their own organization and hierarchy in the 18th and 19th centuries, due to the rejection of papal powers. Those Churches exist in The Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Croatia, the United States and Canada (as the Polish National Catholic Church belongs to this Union, they are still bound by the Bonn Agreement, despite the unilateral termination of their agreement with The Anglican Church of Canada), and Poland.

Since 1931, bishops of one Communion have regularly participated in the laying-on of hands at the consecrations of bishops of the other Communion, and there is complete interchangeability of clergy in Europe (as far as the German Old Catholic Church is concerned, this includes female priests and bishops from Anglican Churches). This Full Communion has begun to take hold at grass root levels, as Anglican and Old Catholic parishes enter into twinnings; regular international meetings of Anglican and Old Catholic theologians and of all the bishops on the continent of Europe complement the picture.

One of the fruits of this Bonn Agreement may be said to be the new altar book of the officially so-called Catholic Diocese of the Old Catholics in Germany, published in 1995. It is the third official book for the celebration of Holy Eucharist, after the first, published in 1888, and the second, published in 1959. In the beginning of the '80s, the liturgical commission of that diocese started a new round of revision. As the 1959 book was deemed to be a rather romanizing book — it had reintroduced features of the Roman Mass which the first altar book had abandoned already —, it became clear to the members of that commission that, if the diocese were to be sincere in its wish to be as close to the Undivided Church as possible, the new German liturgical books of the Roman Catholic Church could not be simply adopted, albeit with (slight) alterations. The theology of the Church, of the eucharist and of the ministry, as well as the pastoral

situation of the parishes were too different from those of the “other” catholic Church to be suitable for the Old Catholic diocese. Furthermore, the advances in liturgical scholarship since the mid-60s, when the Roman Catholic books had been drafted in Rome, were too obvious to be left out of consideration. As the revision got under way, it became apparent that Anglican books for the celebration of the Eucharist, under whatever name they were in force, were consulted even before any others. (Part of the reasons for this was the fact that the then presiding Bishop was extremely involved in filling the Bonn Agreement with life, and was a liturgiologist himself.) It turned out that the single most influential book in this round of revision proved to be *The Book of Alternative Services of The Anglican Church in Canada*.

This book has been an instant success with the members of the liturgical commission, as they realized the catholicity of it, without any combination with strictly Roman doctrine or practice, the sensibility for current vernacular balanced by reverence for the intentions of traditional English liturgical language, and a clarity of structure which unfortunately is almost completely missing in the *Alternative Service Book 1980* of the Church of England. The tradition begun by the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* of The Episcopal Church has shown some mature fruits. It may in this context not be by sheer coincidence that it is a Canadian liturgist who serves as the Official Representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury (in his capacity as the most senior bishop in the entire Anglican Communion) to the International Old Catholic Liturgical Commission, with full voting rights.

There has been the direct adoption of material from the Canadian book: the first Thanksgiving over the Water (from Holy Baptism, pp. 156-7) and the Litany of Penitence (from Ash Wednesday, pp. 283-5).

Although other Old Catholic Churches do know an invocation and intercession of the saints, like the Roman Church does, the German Old Catholic Church has in its new book avoided any such intermediary dignity of the saints. The litany, e.g., used at ordinations and other opportunities sings, “With N. — we praise your name, O Christ”, rather than “Saint N. — pray for us”. The collects used in *The Book of Alternative Services* have proved to be a particularly fruitful source for the new German texts. Eight collects have been translated; for the other feasts, the Canadian texts

“This Full Communion has begun to take hold at grass root levels, as Anglican and Old Catholic parishes enter into twinnings; regular international meetings of Anglican and Old Catholic theologians and of all the bishops on the continent of Europe complement the picture.”

have always been consulted and included in the thrust of the prayer.

On an indirect level, the middle section of the Prefaces (pp. 218-26) have often served as an inspiration for the German Prefaces. The beginning and the end of the Preface have retained the traditional doxological style rather than the *berakah* style as adopted in the Canadian book. But the concrete reason for giving thanks on that particular day have often been adopted for the German texts.

The majority of the (23!) Eucharistic Prayers have much in common with the strictly Trinitarian structure as maintained in the Canadian book: praise of the Father, anamnesis of the mighty acts of God through Christ, including the words of institution (which retain their proper prayer form by saying that Christ "praised your compassion", "gave you thanks and praise", etc.), and epiclesis of the Holy Spirit over bread and wine and those who eat and drink from the Holy Gifts.

The German Old Catholic diocese is

aware of its indebtedness to the Canadian Anglican Church and appreciates that the "doctrinal opinion and liturgical practice" which have found their characteristic expression in *The Book of Alternative Services* would help German Catholics worship God in celebrating the one mystery of Christ in which all Churches find their deepest unity. ☩

The altar book, *Die Feier der Eucharistie*, is available from the Bishop's Office, Gregor-Mendel-Strasse 28, 53115 Bonn, Germany, at the cost price of (converted) CAN-\$70 (including p&p) in both a bound and a loose leaflet version. An English translation will be available on floppy disks from the same address in 1997.

Notes on the author:

The Rev. Dr. Thaddeus A. Schnitker, *Episcopal Church, professor of liturgy at the diocesan seminary Bonn, lecturer in liturgy and Anglican theology at the Old Catholic department of theology at Bonn University, president of the German section of the St. Willibrord Society (the Anglican / Old Catholic society devoted to filling the Full Communion with life).*

The return of William Trelawny

"...William had a gift, an achingly beautiful soprano voice. Every Christmas Eve, in the glow of the candlelight procession, his clear solo voice would lead off the midnight service with the first verse of "Once in Royal David's City."

Today is the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord. To honour the day we had a baptism of our own, though I doubt it bore much resemblance to that event so long ago.

by Brian Parson

For one thing, the baptizees kept their clothes on. For another, we had people who didn't want to be there, friends and relatives of the candidates who pouted their way through the service as if I were some junior high school teacher making extreme and unusual demands - like that they actually participate in the service. Sullenly they stood there, staring back at me, daring me to come down and ream them out. I was tempted, believe me.

In Jesus' day they wouldn't have had it so good. There would not likely have been pews, for instance. Or orders of service with neatly typed page references and little cartoon announcements to make it easier for children to follow along. I doubt there would have been greeters, or "Welcome" cards, or friendly opening remarks from John the Baptist, or accommodating photo opportunities round the font afterwards. There was just sun and heat and crowds. There was water, of course, and then the wilderness.

It makes it a little hard to understand why Jesus would have put himself through it. It was not as if he needed a "baptism of

repentance for the forgiveness of sins," as the Gospel of Mark describes it. Did his Mom push him into it, kind of like Confirmation many years later? "Come on now, Jesus, you've been moping around this house long enough. A little water never hurt anybody. All your friends are being done. You want to be the only one not baptized?"

Or was it one of those things you do, not because it makes much rational sense, but because it feels suddenly necessary, even urgent, like a groom on his way to the church who can't resist the urge to drive out one last time past his old childhood home. There he pulls over to the curb and just sits awhile. It is something he does only half thinking. But he is trying to remember who is. Then he takes a deep breath, puts the car in gear, and moves out into the rest of his life.

Anyway, it put me in mind of the return of William Trelawny a few years ago to St. Jude's, the rural parish I served when I was newly ordained and fresh out of college. Father David is there now, and has been since I left. As ex-rector I get to hear the kinds of things my predecessor probably heard about me. This could be a sobering thought.

Father David is the age of the sons and

daughters of most of his parishioners, sons and daughters who have grown up and moved away. So "Father" is an honorary title more than a descriptive one, but he insists upon it nonetheless. To their credit this congregation has trained many young clergy over the years and they respect his wishes, but with a knowing smile that makes him feel even younger than he is. How well I remember that smile.

St. Jude's stands in the middle of a forked intersection as you head east out of town, a resolute symbol of the Anglican "middle way." One road takes you northward through rolling countryside past dairy farms and woodlots in a huge loop that eventually leads you out past Holy Family Catholic Church, high atop O'Gorman Hill, and then back into town from the west. The other road takes you to the highway and on to the city. This is the route most people are looking for.

That year the notice board on the front lawn read, "A Church for Those Who Don't Know Which Way to Turn." Words of comfort, I guess, for out-of-towners who were just trying to find their way home but who got caught instead on the northern loop, bringing them right back to the same spot. Just once, they likely said to themselves, it would be helpful if the Church took a stand on something and actually pointed the way.

William Trelawny found his way back to St. Jude's easily enough, though it had been maybe thirty-five years. He had grown up here, an only child to parents who lived in a rented house out on the Twelfth Line. William - and it was always William, never Willy or Bill - was skinny and shy and never hung around with the other kids his age. The family made no effort to fit in, keeping to themselves. So William didn't play hockey and they didn't go to church.

But William had a gift, an achingly beautiful soprano voice. It was Miss Harkness, his fourth grade teacher, who coaxed it out of him and then got him to join the choir at St. Jude's where she herself sang. Every Christmas Eve, in the glow of the candlelight procession, his clear solo voice would lead off the midnight service with the first verse of "Once in Royal David's City."

This soon became a Christmas tradition all its own. A deep hush would fall on the congregation as people closed their eyes and listened to that sweet unearthly sound, so close to them there in the darkness and yet so strangely distant, like the voice of an angel. Tears would appear on flushed cheeks and glisten like tiny stars in the flickering light.

For some, it was in these still moments, after all the baking and sewing and shopping, after all the long days and the shrinking dollar, that the Christ Child would come to them again. Until his voice broke, and then no one heard

much about William any more, and then he moved away.

But people still talked about that boy with the golden voice, usually at Christmas when some new child would be given the solo part, a part at which they were destined to fail. People would say, "That was really nice this year. But, y'know, I can still hear that Trelawny kid clear as a bell. Now *he* could sing!"

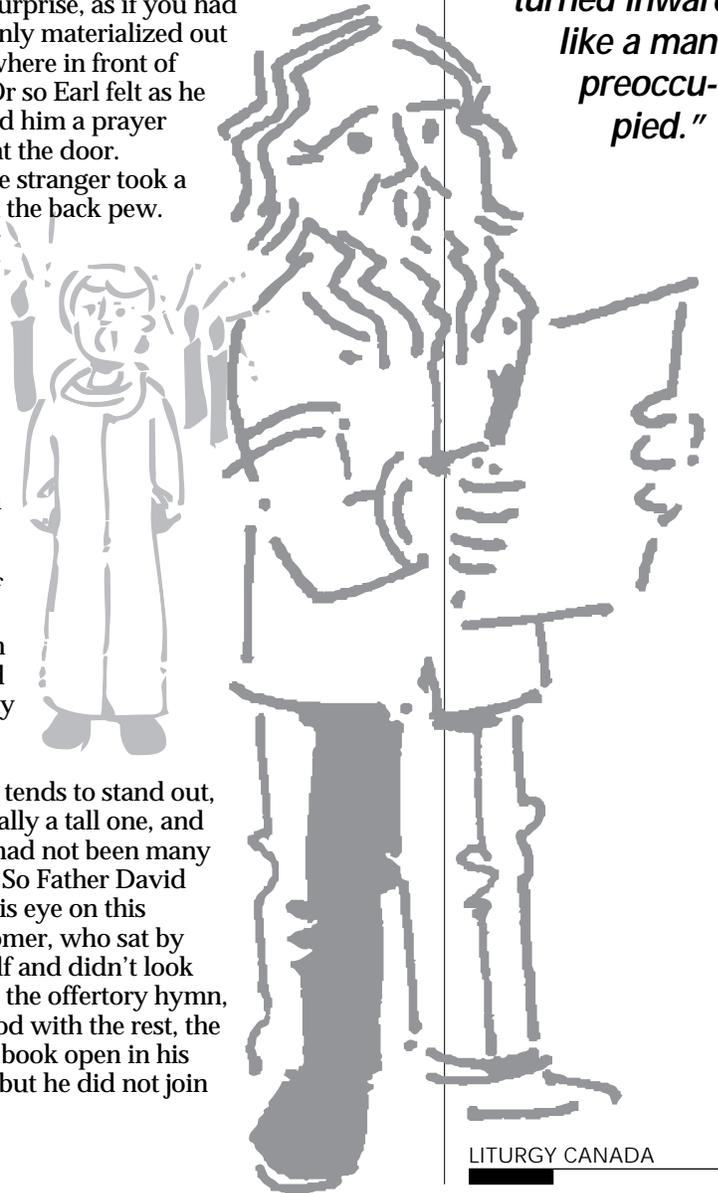
Trelawny had so entered the town's oral history that no one thought of him as having grown up. So when a tall man with a greying beard pulled up to the church in an old Volvo station wagon just before service time one Sunday, people gave him the once-over side-glance they reserve for city folk and other suspicious strangers.

He walked with a slight stoop, suggesting a taller frame than he would have chosen for himself. His eyes were dark and his face was deeply lined, which made him a little frightening, except that his gaze seemed to be turned inward, like a man preoccupied. When he looked at you it was with surprise, as if you had suddenly materialized out of nowhere in front of him. Or so Earl felt as he handed him a prayer book at the door.

The stranger took a seat in the back pew.

Father David noticed him right away. When you have a congregation of thirty-five on a good Sunday a newcomer tends to stand out, especially a tall one, and there had not been many lately. So Father David kept his eye on this newcomer, who sat by himself and didn't look up. At the offertory hymn, he stood with the rest, the hymn book open in his hand, but he did not join

"He walked with a slight stoop, suggesting a taller frame than he would have chosen for himself. His eyes were dark and his face was deeply lined, which made him a little frightening, except that his gaze seemed to be turned inward, like a man preoccupied."



“I was just saying, or wondering, if perhaps Mr. Trelawny here might like to honour us with a song, as many of us remember him from when he was a boy.”

in the singing.

Following the service Father David was distracted as he shook hands at the door, peering down the line for the newcomer.

“Good morning, Father David.”

“Good morning, Keith.”

“What cold hands you have this morning, Father.”

“Yes, Mrs. Bailey, but you know what they say ...”

“Nice service, Father.”

“Thank you. Um, sorry, Harry, but did you mean ‘service’ or ‘sermon’?”

“I meant ‘service.’ Good day now.”

But the stranger never appeared. Did he go out by the sanctuary door, Father David wondered? Or down to the church hall? Father David made his way back up the aisle. Mrs. Goode, the organist, was packing up her music. “It seems you have a visitor,” she whispered, directing his gaze to the vestry. Father David saw the stranger’s tall frame just inside the door.

“Hello,” Father David called out.

“Good morning,” the stranger replied slowly in a deep resonant voice. He stood awkwardly in the doorway as Father David reached out and shook his hand.

“You don’t know me,” he said after a pause, “but I used to come to this church. I used to sing in the choir.”

“That’s great,” Father David said, waiting.

“So. Where are you now?”

“I’m in the city. I’m at the university.”

“Ah.” There was another pause. “And what brings you back? Do you have family here?”

“No,” he said. “I want to be baptized.”

Father David was taken aback. He had once done a paper on adult baptism. This, he had written, was to be the way of the future as whole generations of unbaptized adults would find their way back to church. He had argued that, in preparation for this eventuality, baptismal tanks should appear in mainline churches and full immersion should once again become the norm for Christian baptism. It was a bold assertion, but he had stood firmly by it.

Now, shifting his weight slightly, all he could think to say was, “Isn’t this a little out of your way?”

Word spread quickly that William Trelawny had returned. In fact there was quite a buzz about town leading up to the baptism three weeks later, a day that had already been set aside for the baptism of the Trundle twins, Tara and Tiffany.

The church was half full and there was tangible excitement in the air, a sense of

anticipation that had been missing that fall season. The twins were a handful, slipping around in their matching satin christening gowns, but it was their mother, Daphne, who seemed to be the problem. Fussing continually, she passed them back and forth between their father and her sister, the godmother, whispering loud commands.

This was to have been her daughters’ occasion, having personally booked it with “the Reverend” two months ago. She had been up late the night before finishing the gowns and had prepared a cold buffet that was awaiting them at home. Meanwhile her husband, Tim, had chosen that morning to begin an oil change on the truck, until she hauled him in to wash up and get himself ready. He sat beside her awkwardly now, his tie askew, his blackened hands struggling to contain the squirming twosome.

When the time came William stepped forward to the font. People craned their necks, trying to make out any resemblance between this dark weary man and the high angelic voice that rang so clearly in their memories. He bent forward as Father David raised the baptismal shell to his head. “William John, I baptize you in the name of the Father ... and of the Son ... and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

The water poured down his forehead, collecting at the end of his nose. It ran onto his beard and dripped down onto his tie.

As Father David reached for the chrism, William raised his face. His eyes were closed, his brow arched in anticipation of the priest’s touch on his forehead. The morning sun shone down upon him through the baptistry window. Bathed in its warm glow, his face suddenly became that of a ten year-old child, expectant and trusting. It was a truly remarkable transformation. Gone were the deep lines, gone was the dark gaze. In that instant, they recognized him.

At the end of the service, as Father David was reading the announcements, a strange thing happened, at least strange for St. Jude’s. He was interrupted. He looked up. Wilf Smith was standing in his pew. “I was just saying, or wondering, if perhaps Mr. Trelawny here might like to honour us with a song, as many of us remember him from when he was a boy.”

Father David did not know what to say. Mr. Trelawny looked down at his hands. A smile spread slowly across his face. Looking around from the front pew, he nodded his agreement. An excited murmur rippled through the congregation. Father David went and sat down at the prayer desk.

(Concluded on page 12)

Worship At Trinity Anglican Church, Streetsville

Anglican liturgy is the stuff of my bones. Who I am has, quite literally, been formed by the words that I have prayed Sunday after Sunday. I experience a deep sense of awe and Otherness as a participant. I am fed in the most profound sense by Word and Sacrament. In a vital and vivid way it is the past invading the present so that it might be relived and appropriated. The Eucharist for me is at once a rehearsal of God's plan for salvation and the real presence of the Risen Christ in the bread and wine. by Debbie Dennis

So why am I the Associate Priest at Trinity Streetsville? I can remember my Anglo-Catholic friends responding in horrified disbelief when they heard about my appointment. I began to sense the implicit approval of others who previously would have questioned my salvation. My experience has taught me that ignorance and competition is still alive and well in the Christian community.

Quite simply, I am at Trinity because it is the best place for me to act out my priestly ministry at this point in my journey. I believe that Trinity Streetsville can be a prophetic model for the larger Church. Two of the voices in the Canadian Church that have significantly influenced me are Harold Percy and John Hill. In my opinion, the vision that Harold Percy offers differs very little in substance, as opposed to form, from what I understand to be the vision of John Hill. *What we are about is*

the intentional formation of mature disciples.

It is about making connections between people and faith. It is about involving people in the life of the Church because they seek it as the best means to live out the reality of their relationship with Jesus Christ.

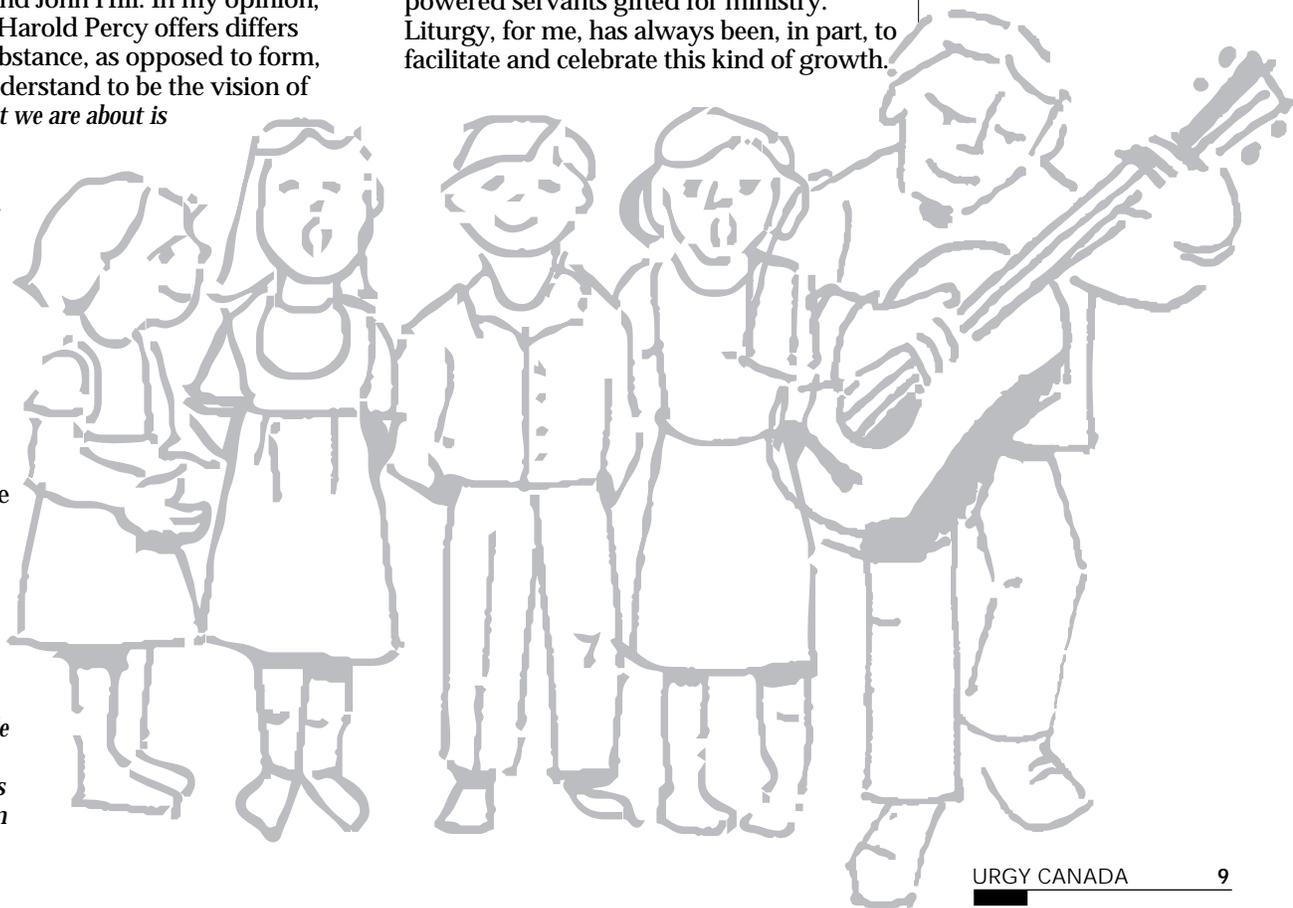
At Streetsville our focus is on the guest of Jesus who is the person

with little or no church background that finds the courage to attend worship. What we are about is not in giving seekers what they want but in removing as many barriers as possible in our desire to help people know the Living God. It is this core principle that often confuses, shocks and angers traditional Anglicans.

Innovative change, carried out with risk and boldness, linked solidly to a clear philosophy of ministry, has produced miraculous results. Under the leadership of Harold Percy, Streetsville has enjoyed tremendous numerical growth and, much more importantly, corresponding maturational growth. We have an educated laity who can articulate what they believe and who see themselves as empowered servants gifted for ministry. Liturgy, for me, has always been, in part, to facilitate and celebrate this kind of growth.

"At Trinity, we use contemporary music.

Not because we do not respect or value the beauty of the tradition which we have inherited, but because it can be a barrier. And ultimately we believe we are called to do not what we like but what will be the most effective."



“In spite of the perceived lack of structure, every act within the liturgy is intentional and well-thought out to create an experience that reinforces our philosophy of ministry. Nothing takes place without serious consideration of how it impacts on the overall purpose of worship.”

“The quality and style of our music is the single most effective means of attracting the unchurched.”

We begin where people are at. Once we engage them, then we can teach them. Most people who are thirty-something, with overcrowded daytimers, huge debt and two small kids do not immediately respond to organ music. When Harold Percy spoke at the synod of the Diocese of Toronto in 1994 he said: “Jesus Christ did not die to preserve the tradition of English choral music.” Those words caused a huge outcry. Do we believe that Jesus Christ did? Perhaps we have confused a glorious means with a more glorious end. At Trinity, we use contemporary music. Not because we do not respect or value the beauty of the tradition which we have inherited, but because it can be a barrier. And ultimately we believe we are called to do not what we like but what will be the most effective. John MacDonald, the Director of Music at Trinity, has written an accompanying piece which will explain this crucial aspect of our liturgy. The quality and style of our music is the single most effective means of attracting the unchurched. Many of our new members say that they came a second time because of it.

It is not our use of contemporary music, however, that causes the most controversy. It is the structure, or what is perceived to be the lack of structure, of the liturgy itself. We are intentionally informal and inclusive. Our gathering begins with some words of welcome from our service leader. We thank people for making the choice to come to church when they have many other options. We promise them not to waste their time and tell them that we will give them something that will help them live their life with more integrity. Then we ask the congregation to greet each other, especially welcoming any new people. This is a noisy and energetic moment in our service which we usually have to cut short! The children leave for their program after a time of singing. The children bring gifts of food for the food bank and money to support our sponsored children. We have two readings which are separated by music for reflection. Drama is often used to convey multiple levels of meaning through the power of story. Preaching is culturally relevant and a strong focus in our liturgy. We move to prayers, which can be a litany or extemporaneous. On some Sundays we use the Creed and General Confession. Otherwise, we do not open the prayer book until the Eucharistic Prayer.

In spite of the perceived lack of structure,

every act within the liturgy is intentional and well-thought out to create an experience that reinforces our philosophy of ministry. Nothing takes place without serious consideration of how it impacts on the overall purpose of worship. And we set high standards for the quality of our weekly offering to Our Lord. The form radically differs from traditional Anglican liturgy but the sense of wonder and the burden of sacred responsibility remains the same.

The comment that we hear most frequently is that “I felt something”. When we ask our newcomers to elaborate they say “I felt at home”, “I felt safe”, “I felt God’s Presence”. From that powerful experience, the next step is “I know something” and then “I believe something”. Our liturgy is not about creating a reality but entering into a reality that already exists. We work very hard to be a place of inclusion and acceptance. Our mission statement is: *we are a community of ordinary people seeking to follow Jesus in our time*. And our hearts desire is to continue to widen that circle.

People come back because of the music. They stay because of the genuine warmth of the community. And they are challenged to grow by the tone and style of the preaching. We do not use the lectionary. Instead we hold sermon series to do some primary evangelism and education right on Sunday morning. The sermon becomes a crucial feeding time for eager, new believers and literate, seasoned believers. Preaching is not to mold the listener for the Church but to serve the hearer by most effectively addressing his or her needs within the context of faith.

“People behave their way into belief.”

We especially seek to model inclusion in our Eucharistic hospitality. Anyone who feels called to receive Holy Communion is welcome to do so. Baptism is not a prerequisite. This was a growing edge for me. I had always seen Baptism followed by Eucharist as the culmination of an informed commitment to Jesus Christ. And yet I have been stretched by the results. I have come to see our invitation as a sign of God’s Grace - connection and intimacy in anonymous Mississauga. So many people tell us about the sense of affirmation that they felt being invited to share in the family meal. I have always delighted in seeing a child with her hands eagerly outstretched to receive Jesus and my own daughter Rachel has shared in the sacrament since her Baptism as an infant. Perhaps this is a growing edge for us as we continue to reflect on the role of Sacraments in the Anglican Communion. At

one time Rachel, too, would have been denied participation in this sacred act. John Maxwell spoke these wise words: people often behave their way into belief. Far from lowering our theology of the Eucharist, it becomes an even more powerful symbol.

A universal invitation to the Eucharist does not negate a strong commitment to Baptismal discipline. The average person who comes to us seeking Baptism will be a participant in the life of this community for nine months until their infant or child is Baptized. Regular attendance at worship is expected. The parents are asked to participate in our membership process, including attendance at Christian Basics and First Steps. Again, in order to remove a barrier, course names are simple and descriptive. Christian Basics is just that; a course in what Christians believe, beginning with a secular worldview. First Steps is about the first steps in becoming a committed follower of Jesus. In it, parishioners are taught about food and exercise. The food to nourish spiritual growth is scripture, worship and community. Exercise is prayer, ministry, and stewardship. Many choose to join a small group to continue their growth. After all this, Baptism is truly a meaningful celebration. It takes place in the context of a community that they know and has supported them. It is an informed decision to take vows which they intend to live out on behalf of their child. Baptism is seen as the sacramental high point in a believer's life.

“Idols come in many forms. Was mine being named?”

All of this is with the benefit of much reflection and first-hand observation of the results. I did not arrive at Trinity with such an understanding. I would like to risk some personal vulnerability. I was keen to respond to the opportunity to do ministry here because of the vision of this parish and the dynamic nature of the community. But I wondered if I could accept or be fed by the worship. After I had attended my first worship service here, I was overwhelmed. I needed to process what I saw in the security of my office, with my open prayer journal, in the quiet and honest light of God's Presence. I wept for myself. I wept because I believe that a “well-worn cassock and brilliant chasuble” is a powerful metaphor for the priesthood. And again, in order to remove any barriers, when we wear business attire, not vestments, when we preside. I wept because of what the structure of the liturgy means to me. And I thought “God, you can not possibly be calling me to go to this place.” There is upheaval enough in any major transition.

Then a very vivid memory came to mind.

It was of conflict with the most difficult lay person in my parish. She was a well-educated woman of a strong, traditional faith who could not tolerate even the slightest change to liturgy. I know the struggle that I had with her and the frustration I felt when she could not rejoice when changes to the liturgy were effective in reaching new people. Suddenly, I thought, I am no different than her. She, too, could give me well-reasoned and deeply held arguments condemning all that I had tried to do. She was blind. Did I also not suffer from a lack of clear sight? Would I refuse to go where I was called because I selfishly would not be open to change? What would I think of myself if I made this decision based on my preference and not on what would cause me to grow?

I was quite angry at God. I tried to convince myself that there was a flaw in this thinking. And then I felt incredible gentle and tender love. I would be sustained. My God did not change. The core truths that I believed remained the same. Idols come in many forms. Was mine being named?

During the Easter season, this parish has one of the most significant liturgies of our worship and corporate experience. It is the annual service of The Reaffirmation Of Baptismal Vows. Bishop Matthews, our Area Bishop, presides. This year we had thirty-six people respond, all seeking to make a public profession of their faith. All recent members with a new or renewed understanding of who they were in relation to Jesus Christ. The group gathers on a week night to meet with the Bishop before the service and to tell their stories. There are powerful stories of brokenness and despair. We had a street kid touched by the ministry of our youth drop in center state that he now knew who he belonged to. We had a successful, competent and high-profile business woman nervously speak about her trust in this community. It was to walk on holy ground. I do not know of a more satisfying way to exercise priestly ministry.

Liturgy at Trinity is catholic, intentional and holy: catholic in the sense of being universal and orthodox; intentional in seeking to form mature disciples; and holy because in it we enter into the reality of being in relationship with the Living God with our hearts and minds. Our liturgy truly is the work of the people in a contemporary style that they can relate to. Worship is not the preservation of a tradition but the most effective communication possible. ☩

“I was quite angry at God. I tried to convince myself that there was a flaw in this thinking. And then I felt incredible gentle and tender love. I would be sustained. My God did not change. The core truths that I believed remained the same. Idols come in many forms. Was mine being named?”

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- To segregate or not. Perspectives may range from "church growth" to historic.

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THE RETURN OF WILLIAM TREWLANY (Continued from page 8)

Mr. Trelawny got up and spoke quietly to Mrs. Goode. "Why, of course I do," she beamed, digging into her bag and pulling out a dog-eared music book. He took his position at the top of the chancel steps, a little off to the side.

Mrs. Goode began.

Suddenly, the church was filled with a rich baritone voice. He had chosen the Lord's Prayer, in a setting he had sung countless times as a boy. Mrs. Goode, focused intently on the music before her, began swaying uncharacteristically on the organ bench. The congregation sat transfixed, barely breathing, until with the rising crescendo of the final cadence he came to

the end. Only then, in the hush that followed, did some move a hand to wipe away a tear.

They never saw William Trelawny again. There was a reception down in the church hall after the service and people spoke with him. But then someone asked where he was and he had gone - a middle-aged man on his way to somewhere, coming home to remember who he was. ■

Brian Pearson is a priest in the Diocese of Niagara. His contribution marks an invitation for others to contribute well crafted liturgical narratives. - ed.