

Issues in Prayer Book Revision

• VOLUME 1 •

edited by

Robert W. Prichard

Contributors:

James W. Farwell

Nathan G. Jennings

Patrick Malloy

Andrew McGowan

Robert W. Prichard

William Bradley Roberts

Amy C. Schifrin

Bryan D. Spinks

Shawn O. Strout

James F. Turrell

CONTENTS

Tables	ix
Preface	xi
1. Criteria for Prayer Book Revision and the Preface to the 1549 Prayer Book Nathan G. Jennings	1
2. The Language of Worship Robert W. Prichard	19
3. Moving Offices: Daily Prayer in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer and Beyond Andrew McGowan	49
4. The Baptismal Revolution of 1979 James F. Turrell	71
5. The 1979 Prayer Book's Baptismal Office and the Potential of Revision James F. Turrell	87
6. A Reflection on the Eucharistic Prayer in Light of the Possible Revision of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer James W. Farwell	105
7. Calling Down the Holy Spirit: A Consideration of the Implications of the Texts of the Epiclesis in the Episcopal Eucharistic Liturgies Amy C. Schifrin	121

8. “The Word of the Lord”: An Examination of the Use of Lectionaries in the Episcopal Church Shawn O. Strout	143
9. Burial Rites Patrick Malloy	169
10. The Apostolic Tradition and Liturgical Revision Bryan D. Spinks	203
11. Has the Time Come for Hymnal Revision? William Bradley Roberts	213
12. The Style and Format of the Book of Common Prayer Robert W. Prichard	221
Index	241

TABLES

Number of Days of Commemoration and Saints	161
Number of OT References in <i>Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2006</i> and <i>Holy Women, Holy Men</i>	162
Number of Epistle References in <i>Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2006</i> and <i>Holy Women, Holy Men</i>	162
Number of Gospel References in <i>Lesser Feasts and Fasts 2006</i> and <i>Holy Women, Holy Men</i>	163

Criteria for Prayer Book Revision and the Preface to the 1549 Prayer Book

NATHAN G. JENNINGS¹

The Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music (SCLM) has responded to the General Convention’s resolution 2015-A169 directing it “to prepare a plan for the comprehensive revision of the current Book of Common Prayer and present that plan to the 79th General Convention.”² It is difficult to predict in advance how the General Convention will respond, but whatever the decision it reaches, it will certainly be appropriate to reflect on the criteria underlying any plan of revision or correction, or any judgment that alteration is not appropriate at this time. I suggest we

1. The Rev. Dr. Nathan G. Jennings is the J. Milton Richardson Associate Professor of Liturgics and Anglican Studies and Director of Community Worship at the Seminary of the Southwest.

2. General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of . . . the Episcopal Church, Salt Lake City, 2015* (New York: General Convention, 2015), 886–87.

return to the criteria of the preface to the 1549 prayer book,³ the first prayer book in our tradition, as guideposts to look at and to reflect on before we begin to take up the task of any future revision. These criteria are: (1) that the worship of the church should be grounded upon Holy Scriptures, (2) that it should be agreeable to the order of the primitive church, (3) that worship should be unifying to the church, and (4) that it should be edifying to the people. My reasoning is not due to a belief that we ought to be antiquarian or because of a belief that the Episcopal Church is simply defined by our tradition in a strict or a legalistic way. Rather, the suggestion stems from the fact that these criteria have, in a haphazard, organic way, become a part of our “DNA,” our “genetic” inheritance as Anglicans and as Episcopalians.

In addition to these four well-established criteria, I suggest another. But before I do, allow me a brief literary digression. Science fiction author Isaac Asimov devised “Three Laws of Robotics” for his fictional world. These laws were intended to protect humanity from the rising power of the robots. Yet in his short story collection, *I, Robot*,⁴ machines nearly take over the human race. As a result, Asimov imagined the development of a “Zeroth Law.” Because the previous three had been hardwired into the robots in logical order, the scientists and engineers in Asimov’s story could not simply add a fourth law and achieve the result of human protection. Asimov

3. I am emphasizing the 1549 preface over Cranmer’s authorship, as his sole authorship has recently come into doubt: “[I]t remains difficult to know how much of ‘Cranmer’s Prayer Book’ is actually Cranmer’s personal composition.” Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer: A Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 414.

4. The Zeroth Law isn’t named as such until *Robots and Empire*, and R. Daneel Olivaw, one of Asimov’s continuing characters, hardwires it into his own brain over thousands of years. See Isaac Asimov, *I, Robot* (1950; Bantam hardcover ed., New York: Bantam, 2004) and *Robots and Empire* (New York: Doubleday, 1985).

described this Zeroth Law as more binding, even, than the first of the Three Laws of Robotics.

Similarly, even though these four explicit criteria of Cranmer are present in the 1549 Book of Common Prayer, I propose a “Zeroth” criterion be added, in the spirit of Asimov. This Zeroth criterion is implicit in the manner in which Thomas Cranmer went about his work of liturgical reformation. I would sum up this Zeroth principle of the prayer book tradition as “continuity with immediate inheritance.” When Cranmer began compiling the English liturgy for the Church of England in the 1540s, he did not do what Anabaptists, Reformed Christians, and some Lutherans did elsewhere in Europe. These other traditions, to varying degrees, simply discarded much of the previous liturgical inheritance of the Western church.⁵

Of all the Protestant traditions, the Church of England, and therefore, our own Anglican tradition thereafter, was the most liturgical. When Cranmer applied these four explicit criteria to the reform of worship in the Church of England, the Zeroth criterion was always in play. For the most significant action Cranmer took to reform the liturgy was simply to translate much of the current Sarum use of the Roman rite—that is, the text, lectionary, calendar, and rubrics of the form of the Roman rite in use at Salisbury Cathedral—from Latin into sixteenth-century English vernacular. Simply translating into English was itself an act of reform, a radical one that was subject to much dispute. Thus the founding act of our prayer book tradition is the maintenance of continuity with previous inheritance. In this

5. Martin Luther’s Latin Mass (*Formula Missae*) of 1523 retained much of the received liturgical tradition. It was, however, intended for use only in Wittenberg; Luther encouraged other churches in sympathy with his reform to make their own revisions. The *Formulae Missae* was, moreover, followed by other revisions that were less tied to the received Roman rite. In general, however, the Lutherans did keep more of the liturgical inheritance than the continental churches of the Reformed tradition.

case, it was done through translation of previous liturgy. This Zeroth criterion of continuity with our immediate inheritance, like Asimov's Zeroth Law of Robotics, manifests a more fundamental commitment of our prayer book tradition than even that of the explicit four.

In the following essay, I discuss each of these criteria one by one, starting with the first and ending on the Zeroth. Each section of commentary includes what the criterion meant in its context, and how it appeared and was used during the Liturgical Movement of the twentieth century that would develop our 1979 prayer book. Then I reflect on how the criterion suggests we might best go forward with liturgical revision today.

I. Grounded upon Holy Scripture

The prayer book is the result of the Reformation in the Church of England, and that reformation was, in large part, a desire to reform church practice and teaching based on a return to Holy Scripture. At least, that is how the reformers saw their own efforts. In many ways, they lacked historically accurate knowledge of both scripture and the early liturgy that might have aided their fulfilling this goal more clearly and succinctly than they were able, however much that this was their goal.

As Cranmer went about making his changes in order to develop the Book of Common Prayer, at times he found himself unable simply to translate the Sarum rite into English due to his commitment to the Reformation's theological trends. He would then paraphrase the prayer grounded upon his discernment of its function in the liturgy into a form more acceptable to a Reformed theologian's ear and heart. His chosen method was to draw upon scripture, either by directly quoting it, or by making an allusion or reference to it, resulting in prayers more theologically satisfactory to a Reformer.

I would like briefly to note that the way in which this criterion works in Anglicanism is different than, say, the way in which the

regulative criterion works in the Reformed tradition of our neighbors. The criterion of *sola scriptura* was applied to worship as the regulative principle by our Reformed neighbors thusly: if it is not in scripture, it ought not be in worship. To this day, certain branches of Presbyterian churches will not sing hymns during the divine service on Sunday mornings. Only psalms are sung at worship because they are found in scripture.

What is interesting here is that although the English Reformation falls under the greater umbrella of the Reformed tradition (more so than, say, the Lutheran-Evangelical tradition), we did not, in our Thirty-Nine Articles, for example, simply take up *sola scriptura* as a principle and thereby take on the Reformed regulative principle for worship. Instead, the phrase “grounded upon holy scripture” corresponds in the Articles to the notion that we cannot teach anything in the church that is “repugnant to scripture.” There is a great deal of difference between these two guiding criteria.

When applied to worship, it means that we no longer need to have a regulative criterion that says that we cannot, in worship, have anything not explicitly found in scripture. Instead, we hold up the act of worship to the light of scripture, and if we discern that it is not repugnant to scripture, we simply keep it.⁶ Take for example, the *Sursum corda*, the Latin name for the dialogue between celebrant and congregation that precedes the Eucharistic Prayer. When examined through the regulative principle, we have to deny it; it must be deleted from Reformed worship. But if we hold it up rather to the criterion of avoiding anything repugnant to scripture, as there is nothing in the *Sursum corda* repugnant to scripture, we find that we are inclined to keep it. Thus, even though not found in scripture,

6. This tendency to keep whatever we can points forward to the Zeroth principle of continuity with immediate inheritance.

because it is not repugnant to scripture, we have the *Sursum corda* in our worship to this day.

At the time of the Liturgical Movement, the twentieth-century Roman Catholic and Anglican reform that led to the revision of the Roman Catholic missal after Vatican II (1962–65) and to our current 1979 Book of Common Prayer, this criterion of scripture was not forgotten, of course. The framers of the 1979 prayer book used this criterion in a way quite similar to Thomas Cranmer's own. That is to say, when the time came for new prayers to be composed, the framers of the 1979 prayer book deliberately looked to scripture and did their best to compose new prayers that either directly quoted scripture, paraphrased, or alluded to it. I would hope that any future prayer book revision will uphold this criterion genetic to our inheritance as Anglicans.

Much of the liturgical supplementary material that has come out of the SCLM since the publishing of the 1979 prayer book has continued to uphold the Anglican criterion of direct scriptural quotation, or paraphrase, or allusion. However, some of the material seems to bear the stamp of more heady academic theology currently in vogue, or other secular ideologies that we have "baptized" as the direction in which the church ought to go, or that the church as "chaplain" to current society ought to baptize. My hope, going forward, is that prayer book revision, whenever new prayers are incorporated, would continue to uphold the tradition of grounding any newly composed liturgical material strictly upon scripture in this same manner. Whatever liturgical supplementary material we consider for addition to a future revision of the prayer book, our decision would benefit from a stricter interpretation of what it means to have our liturgy grounded upon Holy Scripture.

II. Worship Agreeable to the Order of the Primitive Church

Thomas Cranmer had available to him the various attempts at performing worship that scholars of the continental Reformed tradition and the Lutheran-Evangelical tradition had made before him or were making concurrently. He also had before him various forms of the Roman rite, especially the Sarum use, and it seems evident that he also had before him Eastern liturgical material such as the liturgy of St. Chrysostom.⁷ In addition, he had the Church Fathers to which to refer, especially St. Augustine, St. Chrysostom, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, and others, who wrote about, and alluded to, the liturgies they used. In the main, however, we do not have much of an historical record of early liturgies, for these were part of the oral tradition of the church and prior to the fourth century were in many ways deliberately kept oral and not written down. Cranmer and other reformers did the best they could to reconstruct what early Christian worship might have been, triangulating from all this disparate material what might have been the practice of the early church.

At the time of the Liturgical Movement, an explosion in new historical scholarship concerning Christian liturgies burst into the Western world and Western church; for example, many translations of ancient liturgies became available in the vernacular, including English. People who were passionate about liturgy were thrilled by

7. Ashley Null, a contemporary Thomas Cranmer scholar, has been working for the past decade on Cranmer's commonplace books, his collections of source quotations. The books offer concrete evidence of the sources that Cranmer used. Null's "Cranmer and the Sacraments," in *Christian Theologies of the Sacraments: A Comparative Introduction*, ed. Justin S. Holcomb and David A. Johnson (New York: NYU Press, 2017), traces the deep influence of Cyril of Alexandria on Cranmer's Eucharistic doctrine. Volume three of Null's projected multivolume Oxford Cranmer project will deal more broadly with Cranmer's Eucharistic sources under Edward VI, but that work is still a few years off.

these discoveries. For us as Anglicans, the result was a large amount of liturgical renewal across the Anglican Communion; the result for us as Episcopalians was the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. We already had as our inheritance, in a way not present for other liturgical traditions such as Roman Catholics or even Lutherans, a desire to have worship agreeable to the order of the primitive church. Whenever we as Anglicans or Episcopalians discover more about early Christian liturgies, we get excited about it and want to give it a try.⁸ That's exactly what occurred leading up to, and finally resulting in, the 1979 prayer book.

Since the time of the 1979 prayer book, however, further historical studies have called into question many of the basic assumptions upon which the framers of that prayer book relied. We need to continue to revise prayers books with this second criterion of agreeability to ancient forms of worship. When new historical knowledge comes to light, it is always something we ought to consider. However, just looking at what happened in the 1979 prayer book should perhaps slow us down a bit. We need to be careful in thinking that current historians have reconstructed the most final and most accurate knowledge of a historical reality.⁹ If we were suddenly to so modify our 1979 prayer book inheritance according to current historical liturgical trends, we might find ourselves disappointed in yet another generation to discover that we were yet again wrong to assume we had found the ultimate reconstruction of ancient liturgies. Scholarship often reopens issues that members of one

8. Another example of this from our history is the way in which Thomas Rattray's commentary on the liturgy of St. James of Jerusalem led to the formation of the eighteenth-century revision of the communion service in the Wee Bookies of the Protestant Episcopal Church of Scotland.

9. See, for example, the chapter ten in this volume in which Bryan Spinks discusses the changing scholarship on a document once assumed to be *Apostolic Tradition* by Hippolytus of Rome.

generation were convinced they had settled once and for all. So we need to be wary of buying too wholesale into any currently popular academic reconstruction of ancient historical liturgies.

III. Worship Should Be Unifying to the Church

Of course, it is important to recall that the Book of Common Prayer was to be common. In the way that common law is common, in the way that common parliamentary procedure is common, Cranmer wanted a prayer book that allowed commonality across the English people, so that they could be unified in their worship. This represents a trend in liturgical change; throughout history, liturgy follows pendulum swings. This pendulum swings throughout history in general, in the West in particular, and especially for us as a Reformation church and tradition. The two movements of this pendulum swing consist of a movement toward greater liturgical proliferation on the one hand, and then a swing back to greater liturgical unification on the other. The first move of the pendulum pushes boundaries and expands options. The second moves toward unity and the filtering out of the unnecessary.

Both of these movements have positive and negative aspects. The movement to push boundaries is positive because, again, it expands options, it allows for localization and for greater diversity and catholicity of observance. However, what is negative about that direction is that it can tend toward festooning the liturgy unnecessarily, toward proliferation of unneeded prayers and rites, and toward dividing Christians from one another as they become increasingly unable to recognize that their worship unites them.

The other direction also has its positive and negative. On the positive side, the pendulum-swing in the direction of unity sorts and shifts, selecting liturgical material of lasting value to the community and to greater unity. On the negative side, the move toward

unity can suppress local diversity and create a hierarchical control. These two movements bring balance to the Christian observance of liturgy in general, and balance to our Anglican and Episcopalian observance in particular.¹⁰

At the time of the Reformation, Cranmer was trying to move toward greater unity, suppressing many different uses of the Roman rite throughout the English realm, not to mention throughout Christendom in general at the time, and to bring about a conformity of practice so that all English-speaking Christians could know that they were members of the same church, being formed and transformed by the same liturgical activity.

At the time of the development of the 1979 prayer book, the pendulum was swinging the other way. The 1979 prayer book was an attempt to push boundaries, to expand options, to try out new and different things, and to bring forward more ancient practices. The theory in play in 1979 was roughly that we would be committed to a shared order of worship but provide for interchangeable parts—a range of Eucharistic prayers, prayers of the people, optional lesser feasts, alternate forms, etc. The approach is likely drawn from Gregory Dix's idea in *The Shape of the Liturgy* that the liturgy has an unchangeable shape that itself conveys meaning. Now is a good time to reflect on how well the fixed-structure-with-flexible-parts approach has functioned to unite the people. So, for example, it may be time to drop the second postcommunion prayer from Rite II, or to specify that the option to drop the confession in the Eucharist is not to be exercised during Lent, or to give seasonal direction to

10. I am indebted to a conversation with Bob Prichard, the Professor of Church History and Instructor in Liturgies at Virginia Theological Seminary, for this particular insight. Prichard himself was drawing upon the insights of Anton Baumstark (1872–1948), who posited a set of “laws” descriptive of the ways in which liturgies develop over time.

the use of the various forms of the Prayers of the People and the Eucharistic Prayers.

Since then, the liturgical materials produced and given as supplementary options by the SCLM have continued this trend toward the pushing of boundaries, the expanding of options, and allowing for more localization, but also bringing further division. One can go to the East Coast, the West Coast, the Midwest, and feel that one is worshipping in different Episcopal churches in each of these places. In many ways, this is a sign of catholic diversity; however, equally yet oppositely, in many ways it can be a sign of division and a lack of common prayer.

We may be tempted in a further prayer book revision to continue moving in the direction of pushing boundaries, expanding options, continuing unnecessary proliferation, and festooning of the liturgy. We've done this enough, and it is time to return to the ancient Anglican criterion of worship being unifying to the church. We would be wise to allow the pendulum to swing now in that direction.

IV. Worship of the Church Should Be Edifying to the People

Included within the criterion of “edifying to the people” is the now-famous phrase from the Thirty-Nine Articles that the liturgy ought to be a language “understood of the people.”¹¹ So the first and most basic meaning of the liturgy being edifying to the people is that the liturgy be in a language that the people understand. The liturgy is indeed a mystery, but it ought not be a mystery because we cannot understand the words being said. Translation of the liturgy is a basic criterion of the various Eastern churches and is a criterion

11. Article XXIV, “Historical Documents,” Book of Common Prayer (1979), 872.

of all Protestant churches. We are a people of the Word, the Word made flesh, and so understanding is core.

Furthermore, what was meant by “edifying to the people” at the time of the Reformation was a Reformation focus on being didactic, and frankly, just “teach-y” and “preachy” in the liturgy. One can see in the liturgy various points at which Cranmer and the other framers of the prayer book tradition inserted teaching moments—doctrinal point moments—to ensure that our good Protestant laity were properly educated as to what is occurring in worship so that they do not err and stray from good Protestant ways into Romish thinking or perhaps thinking that it is too nonconformist.

For example, we have an exhortation, which may be said prior to Rite I communion being celebrated.¹² This exhortation is an introduction to the communion service so that we know what we are really celebrating and how we ought to prepare ourselves. We have a kind of introduction to the Daily Office in the bidding to confession in the Rite I Morning Prayer, letting people know what the office is supposed to be for and how it is supposed to be used and approached.¹³ We have the introduction to the marriage service that is now so famous that Hollywood and television make use of it: “Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today. . . .”¹⁴ Again, it is built-in homily to the service itself in order to ensure that everyone, including priests, who at the time of the Reformation might not know what they were doing, understood what was actually occurring in a good, Protestant, Reformed, theological fashion.

This very didactic approach to liturgy is not the meaning of the criterion of edifying to the people taken at the time of the

12. *Book of Common Prayer* (1979), 316–17. The 1979 exhortation draws on elements from the three separate exhortations that were found in the 1928 and early editions of the prayer book. See *Book of Common Prayer* (1928), 85–89.

13. *Book of Common Prayer* (1979), 41.

14. *Ibid.*, 423–24.

framing of the 1979 prayer book. At that time an important, and potentially misleading, phrase was popular: *lex orandi, lex credendi*, sometimes parsed into English as “praying shapes believing.” Therefore, the liturgy was understood to be edifying to the people by those framers as something that shaped the very beliefs of the church, forming the foundation of the beliefs and doctrines of the Christian people.

Some of the new edifying material wound up in the *Book of Occasional Services*. We tried to adopt something like Rites of Christian Initiation for Adults, as the Roman Catholics had developed in Vatican II, but modified for use in our context. *The Book of Occasional Services* contains a series of catechetical and mystagogical meetings and worship services designed to prepare people for and understand initiation as Christians in the Episcopal Church.¹⁵ This has not been used as much as might have been hoped. But that worship should be edifying to the people is fundamental to our inheritance as Episcopalians.

In recent liturgical scholarship, there has been a slight reinterpretation of the role of worship in edifying the people. For some, the shape of the liturgy is no longer understood to have any historical or theological content of its own, but is rather understood as an empty mold into which one can pour any language and any theological presumptions that inculcate the current theological or ideological vogue. The nineteenth-century Roman Catholic scholars who revived the tag *lex orandi, lex credendi* understood the liturgy to be a fixed category that offered a counterbalance to changing theological ideas in their church; many Episcopalians today regard the liturgy from the opposite perspective, as a vehicle for shaping laity into believing more what we think the church ought to believe in

15. Catechetical instruction generally precedes participation in the sacraments, while mystagogical instruction follows.

our day. We thus turn the liturgy into a tool for community formation and frankly, a tool for propaganda.¹⁶

We need to be very careful in approaching liturgical revision from this perspective. For the liturgy to be edifying of the people, the main point is that it be in the language understood by the people, thus ensuring that we continue to have contemporary language available without skewing our traditional language inheritance, due to its importance in our worship and in our English language. Having truly sound liturgical materials available so that people understand what they are engaging is the second part of this. However, when we compose liturgical verbiage for current theological and ideological trends, I believe we violate the first of Cranmer's criteria, which is that liturgy needs to be grounded upon Holy Scripture. If the prayers and rites that we compose and compile in our prayer book revisions do not sound like Holy Scripture to us, do not sound like the scripture is speaking to God and God is speaking to us through scripture—either through direct quotation or by paraphrase and allusion—then we have strayed from our first criterion of grounded upon scripture, in an exaggerated attempt to be true to our fourth criterion of being edifying to the people.

The Zeroth Criterion

To conclude, I return to my proposed Zeroth criterion, that of continuity with immediate inheritance. This criterion is not explicit in any of Cranmer's writings, but I would argue that it is implicit in the way in which he applied the four explicit criteria. For example, when Cranmer went about revising the liturgy he inherited into the

16. For a thoughtful examination of the concept of *lex orandi, lex credendi*, see chapters 7 and 8 of Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life: A Systematic Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

first and second prayer books, what he did was not simply to eliminate all liturgy received in the Western Catholic church of his day. Rather, he looked at the worship available, looked at other reformers' efforts, looked to the East, and then compiled a liturgy that had continuity, for English people, with their previous inheritance, while conforming to the theology and teachings of the Reformation of the Western church.

The first way in which Cranmer wanted to reform worship was to use the printing press to get all of the worship books used by a Western Catholic priest of the time into one book. There were several books that needed to be used by any particular parish priest in order to get through one liturgical year. He wanted it all compressed into one book; first and foremost, that meant reformation of the liturgy through editing, redacting, cutting—things just dropped onto the cutting room floor, so to speak. As soon as a Reformed theologian like himself looked through the liturgy of the day and found something that seemed repugnant to scripture or a bit too “Romish,” the first and easiest action to take was simply to excise it.

It is important to remember that the next action he took was simply to translate. Cranmer did not write new liturgies, he inherited the Roman rite focusing on its Sarum use, and translated much of it. As examples we have the *Sursum corda*, the Preface, the *Sanctus*, and in the 1549 prayer book, still the *Benedictus qui venit*.¹⁷ He simply translated from Latin into Elizabethan vernacular.

When Cranmer came across something he thought he could not simply cut, but that he was also uncomfortable merely translating, he would paraphrase it into something more fitting to his Reformed

17. The *Benedictus qui venit* (the initial Latin words of the phrase “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord”) was included at the end of the *Sanctus* (“Holy, Holy, Holy”) in the 1549 edition of the Book of Common Prayer. It was dropped in the 1552 and subsequent editions of the prayer book and not restored until the American 1979 and other late twentieth-century prayer book editions. See Book of Common Prayer (1979), 334, 362.

theology, using scriptural quotations or allusions. Failing that, only then would he compose a new prayer whole cloth, nevertheless still following the inherited structures and forms of his immediate inheritance. For example, we still have in our current prayer book many collects Cranmer composed that very strictly follow the form of a collect inherited in the Western Catholic tradition.

So this is our inheritance as Anglicans and as Episcopalians: not simply to follow Cranmer's four criteria in some sort of liturgical vacuum, but to apply these four criteria to the current liturgical inheritance. In many ways, this is still the case in our 1979 prayer book; people might especially point to Rite I. However, many of those who put together the current prayer book and many of those who continued on the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music assumed that we would eventually phase out Rite I and simply move to contemporary language.¹⁸ If that were the case, we would then lose the anaphora (the Eucharistic Prayer) that has characterized Anglican worship, especially our Scottish/American Episcopal tradition of the Holy Communion that has shaped us for hundreds of years.¹⁹ That would be a sad loss, one that I would not recommend.

However, in many places of the 1979 prayer book, we simply lost any liturgical continuity whatsoever.²⁰ Many scholars have written about the way in which the current Rites of Initiation, especially the Rite of Holy Baptism, have much work that needs to be done,

18. See the second chapter in the volume for a further discussion of the rationale for retention of Rite I texts in a future edition of the prayer book.

19. The American and Scottish prayer books retain a Eucharistic Prayer based on that in the English 1549 Book of Common Prayer. Most other churches of the Anglican Communion used a form of the Eucharistic Prayer from the English 1552 Book of Common Prayer. See *Book of Common Prayer* (1979), 333–36.

20. It should be noted that the 1979 prayer book is a new prayer book. All other prayer books in the United States of America are revisions of the 1789 prayer book.

such as reordering the shape. However, no one has made the simple point that the current rite of baptism in the 1979 prayer book has no verbal continuity with any other rite that we have inherited as Anglicans. There is absolutely no continuity between our previous 1789 prayer book tradition and our current prayer book. Much of this is for good and inevitable reasons because our baptismal theology has undergone deep transformation. However, in the baptismal rites and in many other rites, I suggest that, going forward, the best way is not only to maintain continuity with our immediate inheritance—in this case, the 1979 prayer book—but also to retrieve better, and greater, continuity with our previous inheritance of our 1789 prayer book tradition.

Trying to create a better amalgamation between the 1928 and the 1979 prayer books before we have lost the generation that remembers worshiping under the 1928 would be wise. For example, in the baptismal rite, we could keep much of the fundamental actions of the rite that we have in the 1979 prayer book, reshaping it according to more recent historical and theological scholarship, but also retrieving and renewing some of the traditional verbiage that has been formative for Anglicans for over 400 years. Doing this, and other similar revisions throughout our current prayer book, would place ourselves not only in touch with the four explicit principles of the 1549 prayer book, but would also reground us within their shared, more fundamental assumption: a criterion of continuity with previous inheritance.