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Anglican Eucharistic Liturgy: a Church-Planting Hope for the Post-Christian Culture of the Pacific Northwest

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GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

ANGLICAN EUCHARISTIC LITURGY: A CHURCH-PLANTING
HOPE FOR THE POST-CHRISTIAN CULTURE
OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GEORGE FOX EVANGELICAL SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

ANTHONY D. KRIZ

NEWBERG, OREGON

JANUARY, 2011

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DISSERTATION ACCEPTANCE CERTIFICATE


ANTHONY D. KRIZ


DATE: MARCH 11, 2011

TITLE:

**ANGLICAN EUCHARISTIC LITURGY:
A CHURCH-PLANTING HOPE FOR THE POST-CHRISTIAN CULTURE
OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST**

***WE THE UNDERSIGNED CERTIFY THAT WE HAVE READ
THIS PROJECT AND APPROVE IT AS ADEQUATE IN
SCOPE AND QUALITY TO COMPLETE THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DOCTOR OF MINISTRY IN
LEADERSHIP AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION DEGREE***


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Abstract

The question addressed in this dissertation may be stated as follows: *What hope does Anglican Eucharistic Liturgy bring to the future of church planting within the increasingly post-Christian urban centers of the Pacific Northwest?* According to our research of a sample zip code of inner-city Portland, Oregon, only one in four people self-identify with Christianity and less than one in five attend church. Churches are shrinking and closing rapidly and our culture is increasingly defined as post-Christian. The plans of the recent church-planting efforts are losing ground. There is no one-size-fits-all solution, but there is significant evidence that the Anglican Eucharistic Liturgy will speak today, where other strategies have not.

In Chapter One, the cultural reality of the Pacific Northwest is described in greater detail, including the specifics of our unique and localized research, which shows this spiritual state in shocking detail. Within this context the Anglican Eucharist will also be explained in greater detail and will foreshadow the solution to come.

Chapter Two and Chapter Three lay the global-historical continuity of liturgical worship and forms. Throughout biblical times (Chapter Two) and church history (Chapter Three), by the leading of God, the people of Jehovah have voted again and again, across generations and cultures, that liturgy is meaningful and transcendent. These liturgical forms were defined and solidified from the church's earliest times.

In Chapter Four, the essential dance of contextualization is defined. As the church continues to serve and love into post-Christian culture, it must strive to keep the forms and passions of consistent church history, while incarnating the unique and particular voice of each localized context. Chapter Five provides a critique of existing church planting methods.

Chapter Six contains our solution. It considers the structural viability of birthing Anglicanism in the western United States and follows with a discussion of the Eucharistic Liturgy in light of post-Christian encounter with truth, post-Christian experience of community and post-Christian Spirituality. Conclusion: the liturgy will speak.

Appendix 1 reveals and explains the results of the 97217 survey. Appendix 2 provides creative suggestions for the administration of the Anglican Eucharistic Liturgy in a culture like inner-city Portland, Oregon.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Hebrews 10:25

Identifying the Problem

Clint and Kelli are your typical young Portlanders. Both of them love the city and have chosen to put down roots and raise their family in Portland's inner Eastside. They have been married for ten years. They live in the increasingly popular Alberta district. Their home is characteristic of that Portland early twentieth-century style with its heavy features, shuttered windows and a wide, covered front porch.

They have three young kids ages six, four and two. It is a growing trend among these young "hipsters" to have good sized families. It seems that the "me first" orientation of the 1980s have given way to a desire for greater rootedness. They are choosing to send their older kids to public school and their younger to the city-owned community center for preschool. They know full well that the schools in Portland rank very low nationally and that their kids may receive less than if they sent them to a private school or charter school, but they also realize that their children are an extension of their family and leaving their kids in public schools helps them to stay engaged and serve their neighborhood.

Clint and Kelli love their neighborhood. In fact, when they say "neighborhood" they mean the walking village, which extends just eight blocks in either direction. They live,

shop, entertain and recreate in this comparatively small space (at least for an American, educated, middle class, urban family). They love the fact that there are six restaurants and four coffee-shops within a five minute walk, all of which are literally owned by their neighbors. There is only one limitation to their local lifestyle, the closest decent grocery store is twenty blocks away on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. They buy as much as they can at the local food co-op (preferably organic and locally grown), but unfortunately they still need to take at least one trip each week to a “chain grocery.” For the most part their money stays in the community. Clint is always quick to say, “The average dollar spent in a local business will circulate within that local economy an average of five times, while money in a big-box store is lucky to circulate twice before it gets siphoned away.”

Religiously, both Clint and Kelli were raised in Christian homes. They attended church all their developmental years, both attending free-church, evangelical modeled gatherings. Their memories of church are mixed, but they would both say that they strongly value their religious roots. Clint puts it simply as, “no matter how much I struggle with institutional belief, my soul was just made for religion. I can’t help myself.” In college and after, both Clint and Kelli only attended church when some additional motivation prevailed: a popular author/speaker was in town, a friend was involved in a service or they had a moment of church-nostalgia. Their attendance was sporadic at best.

After they got married though, they felt like they needed to give church “commitment” another chance. They began to attend a young but growing emergent¹ church in their area. The pastor was smart and funny and the music was hip, integrating secular tunes with rearranged historical hymns. They were encouraged (and surprised) by the repeated return to themes of justice and social-care, and they found themselves often discussing how those themes could be spiritually applied to their neighborhood. They also enjoyed the regular references to “sister” churches in India and Mexico. Kelli’s big thing was the integration of art into the service, including the presence of Orthodox icons and locally-made pottery for communion. Church was enjoyable again. The pastor was talented and entertaining. The music was inspiring.

But it didn’t last. Even though they had gotten involved in a home-group and volunteered in child-care, a couple of years ago they just stopped attending. They still loved the church. The pastor was still inspiring and hysterical. The music had actually become more and more professional. And the breadth of social outreach and artistic expressions had only grown. To put it in their words, “It just sort of lost its meaning.” So, after six years of loyal (though waning) commitment, they said good-bye to what they call “institutional” church. Their weekends are now full of hiking and trips to the beach. Even when in town, they spend their time as a family, walking to the local park or just playing at home.

¹ Emergent is a Christian movement of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century that crosses a number of theological boundaries and envelops people from a number of traditions. I discuss the Emergent movement in more detail in Chapter 5.

When friends come over for dinner, the conversation occasionally drifts to religious themes. Clint likes to talk about his interest in Russian Orthodoxy. Kelli's faith is stronger than ever, but defined more by daily rhythms and neighborhood relationships than by any specific Christian tradition. They say that they believe they will go back to church again someday. When will that day come? No one is sure. They simply believe that "they will know it when they feel it."

Context

Clint and Kelli are a very typical young couple living in an urban center of the Pacific Northwest. The only atypical thing about them is that they articulate a longing to attend a Christian church (we will get to that later). However, if one were to create, say for literary purposes, a quintessential young Northwestern family in the city center, they would look very much like Clint and Kelli's, except one might remove the adult church attendance part of their story and replace it with the family having dabbled in a more self-construed faith lifestyle, one that might incorporate some personal meditation, qi-gong studies and justice activism.

Acts 1 says that Jesus "presented Himself alive, after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days, and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God."² And in that context he spoke these words:

It is not for you to know the times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;

² Acts 1:3 (NASB).

and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.³

As Jesus spoke these words, if he could have risen up, in his mind's eye, above the earth and imagined the story of humanity playing out as he spoke, beginning in Jerusalem, and across Judea and Samaria and like ripples on a pond, when he said the words "remotest part of the earth," his gaze could have very easily soared across a vastly unexplored Ocean, to an "undiscovered"⁴ continent, casting across its mountains and plains to its far side and rested on what is now, the Pacific Northwest.

Two thousand years later, the Pacific Northwest is a unique and fascinating cultural phenomenon. In the story of Western civilization, the Northwest represents the last dissipating ripple of expansion. It is for Jesus, "the remotest part of the earth."

Native Peoples (First Nations) have been in the area for centuries, if not millennia. They gathered along the coast and in the fertile valleys. "Mild climate, heavy rainfall, lush forests, an abundance of food and leisure time, a rich and varied material culture, and home sites on sheltered bays and harbors characterized their habitat. Physically isolated by mountain ranges from other native peoples, their orientation was toward the sea."⁵ These words by the great historian of Western North America, Carlos Schwantes, express tenacious attributes born far before American frontierism: rich food, lush nature,

³ Acts 1:7-8 (NASB).

⁴ At least as far as "Western" history plays out, though at Jesus' time there had long been peoples from Asian tribal migrations on the North American continent.

⁵ Carlos A. Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1989).

leisure time, varied material culture, and geographic isolation. These same attributes made it a fascination for later explorers and pioneers, and eventually urban hipsters.

Though many explorers, pirates and adventurers had come before, Lewis and Clark are remembered as the most influential image of the birthing of what was then called The Oregon Territory. "Pacific Northwesterners honor the names of Lewis and Clark above all others. Cities and counties, rivers and peaks, streets and schools, all testify to the importance of the two explorers who have long symbolized the westering impulse of American life."⁶ And this westering impulse led to the great migration of the pioneer generations along the Oregon/California Trails.

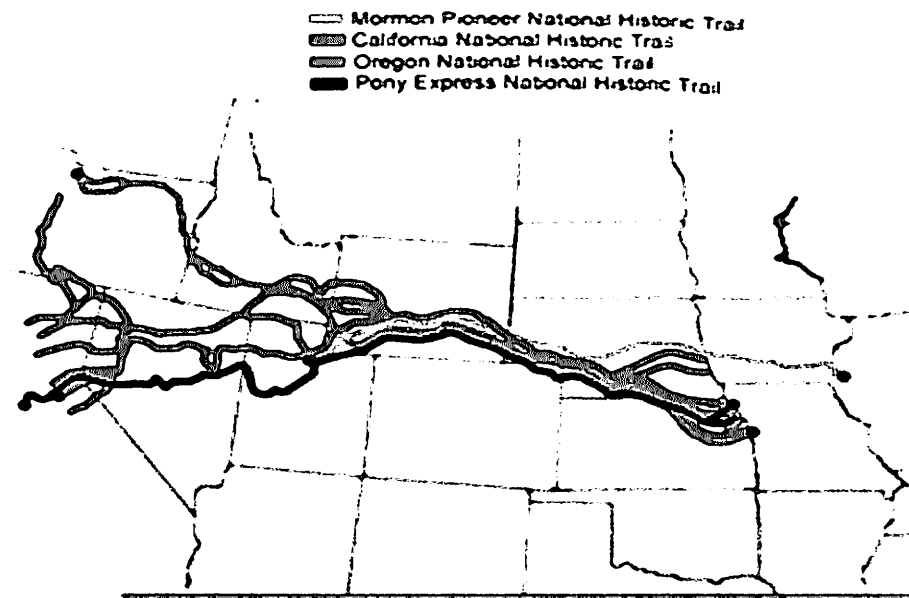


FIGURE 1. Routes of the Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer, & Pony Express National Historic Trails. Source: Map from National Parks Service. National Trails System Program. <http://www.nps.gov/oreg/parkmgmt/nts.htm> (accessed October 10, 2010).

Pioneers, and the pioneer spirit, are the seedbed of Northwest culture. It attracted independent adventurers, some of them running from the law or their past and many

⁶ Ibid., 53.

running in search of a dream, be it land or wealth (most dramatically, gold in terms of the California Trail). But whatever the draw, these strong-willed, independently minded, often people-of-the-land, were the first generations, and they laid a cultural pattern that still reigns today. The immigration illustrated in figure 1 indicates why, in many ways, a city like San Francisco is more accurately related to Portland and Seattle (culturally speaking) than to Los Angeles and San Diego. Northern California is not geographically connected to the Pacific Northwest, but it does share a cultural affinity.

In addition to the pioneer spirit, the Pacific Northwest has been marked by unprecedented isolation. Figure 2 and 3 show population density of the United States in 1890 and 2007. While on both maps there is a “dark spot” of population around Seattle and Portland, one must travel a significant distance to find similar regions of density (let your eyes wander east, starting from the Northwest seaboard, and notice how far they travel before finding a comparable color concentration). This isolation is shocking and, however amusingly, you get the feeling that Northwesters like it that way.

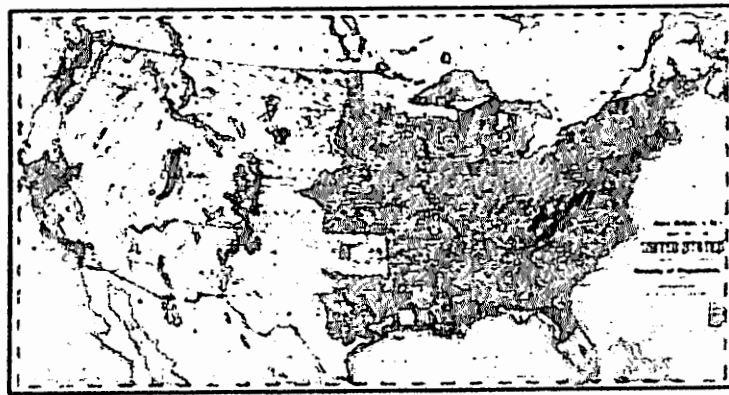


FIGURE 2. United States Population Density 1890. Source: Map from David Rumsey Map Collection. <http://www.davidrumsey.com/maps4338.html> (accessed October 10, 2010).

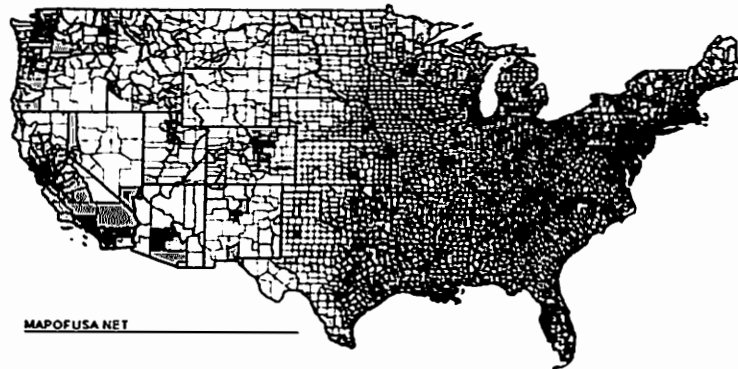


FIGURE 3. United States Population Density 2007. Source: Map from mapofus.net.
<http://www.mapofusa.net/us-population-density-map.htm> (accessed October 10, 2010).

Certainly, with the travel advances of the last couple of generations this geographical gap does not feel so insurmountable, but to those formative generations, they must have felt like they were alone in Eden.

These themes have led the Northwest region to writing a story all its own. Today, the cities of the Pacific Northwest are among the most distinctive and dramatic in the country. To illustrate this distinctiveness, I will highlight my hometown, Portland, Oregon, which will also be the primary location for applying the conclusions of this dissertation.

It is easy to itemize the unique and lovely things about Portland, and as a passionate Portland apologist I often do just that. However, it is also important to remember that Portland is America's most "unhappy" city according to a recent study by *Bloomberg Businessweek*.⁷ Economically there is an ongoing struggle. Oregon is one of only seven

⁷ Prashant Gopal, "America's Unhappiest Cities," *Bloomberg Businessweek*.
http://images.businessweek.com/ss/09/02/0226_miserable_cities/1.htm (accessed October 10, 2010). This study of fifty US cities by *Bloomberg Businessweek* was based on a compilation of factors including depression rates, suicide rates, divorce rates, crime, unemployment, population loss, job loss, weather, and

states with unemployment at 10 percent or higher⁸ (which is saying something even in these challenging economic times.)⁹ However, even while struggling in these ways, Portland is also consistently ranked as America's "Greenest City" considering factors like: clean air and clean water, renewable energy, reliable city buses, trams, streetcars and subways, a growing number of parks and greenbelts, farmer's markets and, very important, opportunities for community involvement.¹⁰ Portland is also America's second "Safest City" according to *Forbes*.¹¹ It is America's best city of summer travel according to *Travel and Leisure*.¹² It is the second best "Bike City" in America according to *Bicycling Magazine*¹³ and the "Best Running City" according to *Runner's World*.¹⁴

green space. Portland received the highest composite score including first in Depression rank, twelfth in Suicide rank and fourth in Divorce rate.

⁸ Based on 2010 Statistics.

⁹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Economic News Release: Regional and State Employment and Unemployment Summary," United States Department of Labor, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/laus.nr0.htm> (accessed October 13, 2010).

¹⁰ Nicki Kipen, "The Top Ten Greenest Cities," Move, <http://www.move.com/home-finance/real-estate/general/top-greenest-cities-in-us.aspx> (accessed October 13, 2010).

¹¹ Francesca Levy, "America's Safest Cities," *Forbes*, <http://www.forbes.com/2010/10/11/safest-cities-america-crime-accidents-lifestyle-real-estate-danger.html> (accessed October 15, 2010).

¹² Joshua Pramis, "America's Best Cities for Summer Travel," Travel + Leisure by American Express Publishing Corporation, <http://www.travelandleisure.com/articles/americas-best-cities-for-summer-travel/31> (accessed October 15, 2010).

¹³ Bicycling, "America's Top 50 Bike-Friendly Cities," Bicycling, <http://www.bicycling.com/news/advocacy/2-portland-or> (accessed October 15, 2010).

¹⁴ Peter Flax, "The Best of Running," *Runner's World*, <http://www.runnersworld.com/article/0,7120,s6-239-281--13339-6-1X2X3X4X5-6,00.html> (accessed October 15, 2010).

Portland can boast America's "Best Street Food"¹⁵ and multiple sources declare it the best beer town in America¹⁶ if not the world.

Environment, recreation, safety, leisure, rich food, identification with nature, these are factors that mark Northwest culture, in both her rich history and in her diverse present.

Politically and culturally, the Pacific Northwest is known as one of the most liberal and progressive areas of the United States and in light of its independent and isolated history, that is hardly surprising. In recent history, Oregon was the first state to legalize doctor-assisted suicide. A friend of mine recently came into town and made the comment, "I knew I was in Oregon because I saw an advertisement for Medical Marijuana." Another city, San Francisco, is infamous for its progressive politics including gay marriage and social care. It is worth noting that while a state like Oregon is considered so politically progressive that Presidential campaigns hardly focus election energy on this assumed Democratic voting-block, the democratic (red) counties are by far the minority:

¹⁵ Marisa Robertson-Textor, "The World's Best Street Food," Budget Travel, <http://www.budgettravel.com/bt-dyn/content/article/2010/05/10/AR2010051004077.html> (accessed October 15, 2010).

¹⁶ Nino Marchetti, "DRAFT Beer Town: Portland," DRAFT Magazine, <http://www.draftmag.com/beertowns/detail/Portland> (accessed October 15, 2010).

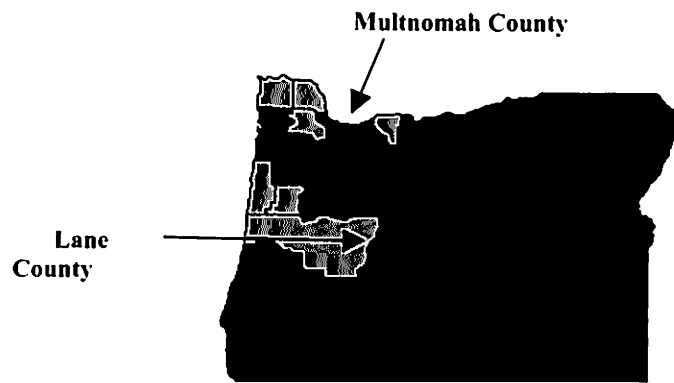


FIGURE 4. Source: *US Election Atlas Online*. 2004 Presidential General Election Results – Oregon <http://www.uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/state.php?f=0&year=2004&fips=41>. Note: the author added the arrows and county labels. (accessed October 15, 2010)

This map represents the 2004 presidential voting results for the state of Oregon, based on counties. It is a bit abnormal, but “red” represents democratic voting counties and “blue” is for republican. The one and only dark-red county (representing a 70-plus percent democratic vote) in Oregon is Multnomah county, which is the heart of Portland (It also is the county in which much of the specific analysis and application of this dissertation will be based.) If we could zoom into a block-by-block analysis of the city/state, we would discover concentric circles of color, with the darkest of red at the center of Portland inner-Eastside (Multnomah County) and slowly transitioning to lighter shades of red and then to blues as the city gives way to suburbs and eventually flowing across the farmlands (a dynamic you can imagine even in this rudimentary political map.)

To further evidence this phenomenon, consider this map of the voting results of the 2010 gubernatorial race in the city of Portland’s urban and suburban populations. The voting is illustrated here precinct by precinct (as opposed to county by county like the map above). Blue on this map represents votes for the democratic candidate and red for the republican, the darker the color the more concentrated the voting. For instance, the

These maps and analysis are used here, not to make a political observation primarily, but to illustrate cultural and sociological trends (using political data) and the reality of the distinctness of the urban phenomenon. It will also help explain my contrasting discoveries compared to the data juggernaut, the *Barna Group* in the following section.

Faith and Spirituality

The distinctness of the urban phenomenon helps explain some of the demographic data that exists about the spiritual dynamics of the cities of the Pacific Northwest. The *Barna Group*, one of America's most prolific, most quoted and most respected polling organizations, has just released its impressive report, *Barna Reports: Markets 2011*,¹⁷ in which many significant and well documented statistics are listed regarding US cities. The *Barna Group* refers to themselves as "a visionary research and resource company located in Ventura, California. The firm is widely considered to be the leading research organization focused on the intersection of faith and culture."¹⁸ According to *Markets 2011* in their research on "Christian identity," they found the cities of the US with the lowest share of self-identified Christians to be: "San Francisco (68%), Portland, Oregon (71%), Portland, Maine (72%), Seattle (73%), and Sacramento (73%)."¹⁹ As you can see, only one of the top five is not found on the West Coast and all four of the major population centers of the Pacific Northwest/Northern California make the top five.

¹⁷ Barna Group, "Barna Report: Markets 2011 and States 2011," Barna Group, <http://www.barna.org/research/barna-reports/reports-markets-and-states-2011> (accessed October 17, 2010).

¹⁸ Barna Group, "About Barna Group," Barna Group, <http://www.barna.org/about> (accessed October 17, 2010).

¹⁹ Barna Group, "New Barna Report Examines Diversity of Faith in Various U.S. Cities," Barna Group, <http://www.barna.org/faith-spirituality/435-diversity-of-faith-in-various-us-cities> (accessed October 17, 2010).

Similarly, when compiling data about markets that tend toward skepticism about religion in general, the top five are: “Portland, Maine (19% of the population identify as being atheist or agnostic), Seattle (19%), Portland, Oregon (16%), Sacramento (16%), and Spokane (16%).”²⁰ And finally, while not as Northwest-centric but still noteworthy, the cities with the highest proportion of faiths other than Christianity are: “New York (12%), San Francisco (11%), West Palm Beach (10%), Baltimore (8%), Denver (8%), Los Angeles (8%), and Portland, Oregon (8%).”²¹

The rankings listed in the *Barna* article are stark and say something of great importance about the distinctiveness of the Pacific Northwest/Northern California region all by themselves; however, I am still surprised by one aspect of their conclusions. According to these numbers, 71 percent of Portlanders self-identify as Christians and only 16 percent see themselves as agnostic or atheist, and finally, only 8 percent identify with faith traditions other than Christianity. These numbers are a far cry from my daily experience in my neighborhood. It seems like I rarely encounter a self-declared Christian in my neighborhood. This brings back the “concentric circles” dynamic from earlier in our discussion. I do not doubt that Portland is among the “least Christian” cities in America. I do, however, doubt that my neighborhood reflects these 71%, 16% and 8% statistics.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

The Research

The religious statistics for the Pacific Northwest are widely chronicled. They are regionally based, state based and in the case of Barna's *Markets* 2011,²² even city based. My intent is to dial the discussion of religious identification, church attendance and perceptions of the Christian church into tight focus. Here is my research, focused on a single zip code.

I live in the 97217 zip code in the inner-Eastside of Portland. These addresses are technically "North" Portland but the cultural dynamics are more defined by which side of the river you live on and how far your home is from the downtown water front. To determine how well the *Barna* numbers above (71%, 16% and 8%) apply to my neighborhood, I decided to gather specific data. I initiated an independent survey of residents of the 97217 zip code.²³ For those with familiarity of Portland, this zip code covers the Overlook neighborhood to the south, to the Kenton Neighborhood to the North. It traverses Interstate Five, north of the Rose Quarter, from Williams Avenue to the East, and past Denver Avenue to the West.

²² Barna Group, "Barna Report: Markets 2011 and States 2011."

²³ According to my research, there is nothing currently in existence, which identifies statistics to this tight a focus and on a population as small and specified as a single zip code. These numbers are a unique contribution to the understanding of Urban Northwest culture and the emerging reality of a post-Christian nation.

Study Area with Zip Codes

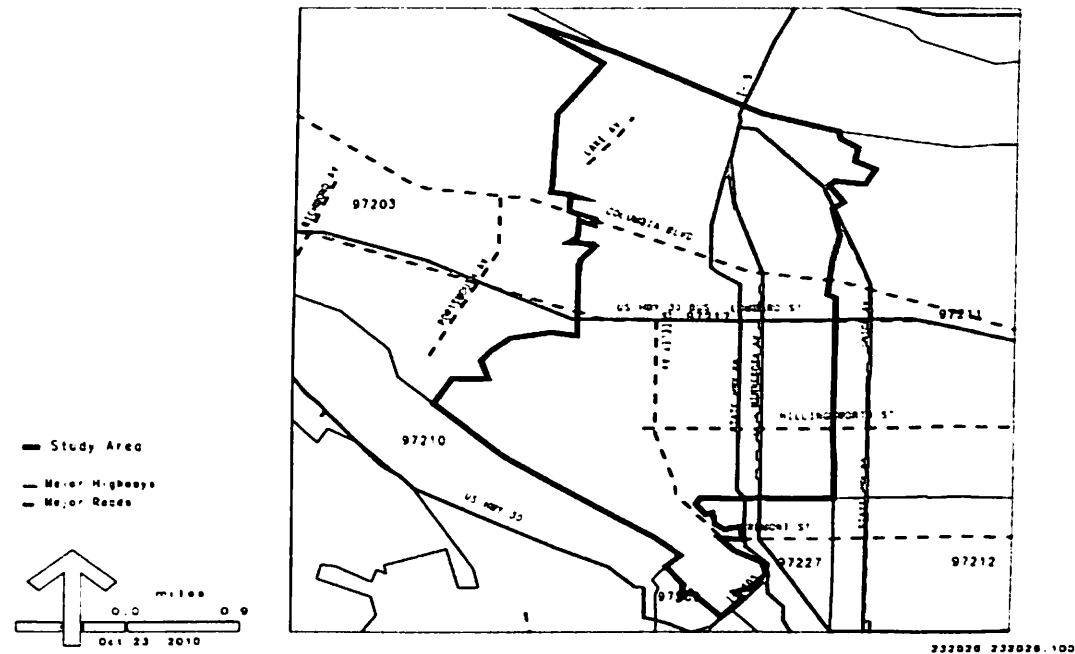


FIGURE 6. Source: First View 2010 Prepared for Anglican Mission in America. Study Area Definition: Zip Code 97217.

One hundred and ninety-three individuals were surveyed within zip code 97217. Every short interview was delivered face to face. Each volunteer interviewer was specifically trained in how to administer an objective interview, including such polling rules as: read the survey explanation and each question in a neutral way, read each question in the same tone, avoiding inserting personal emphasis or import, let the questions stand for themselves and avoid “explaining further” as each interviewer risks inserting biased interpretations. (For instance, interviewers are coached not to define “spiritual” in the question, “Do you consider yourself a spiritual person?”) Zip code 97217 has a total

population of 31,000. One hundred and ninety-three surveys represent a plus/minus 7 percent confidence interval with a 95 percent confidence level.²⁴

Individuals were surveyed on three important topics. The first topic deals with how the respondent religiously self identifies. (For example: “What, if any, religion or spiritual tradition do you currently claim or practice?) The second topic deals with further understanding if the respondent has ever attended a Christian church (worship) service. (For example: “Have you attended a Christian church in the last 6 months?) The third topic deals with discovering whether the respondent has negative or positive perceptions of a selection of Christian traditions and was measured using the following scale and list:

This study is collecting observations and critiques of contemporary Christian traditions. In this last section, I will name several religious denominations/traditions and ask you to respond in the following way:

On a scale of 1-5 how positive or negative are your impressions of each denomination/tradition?

1. strongly negative impressions
2. moderately negative impressions
3. equal number of negative and positive impressions
4. moderately positive impressions
5. strongly positive impressions

OR: no real impressions one way or the other.

²⁴ Creative Research Systems, “Sample Size Calculator,” Creative Research Systems, <http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm#two> (accessed 2010, October 13). According to CRS Confidence Interval and Confidence Level are defined as:

The confidence level (also called margin of error) is the plus-or-minus figure usually reported in newspaper or television opinion poll results. For example, if you use a confidence interval of 4 and 47% percent of your sample picks an answer you can be “sure” that if you had asked the question of the entire relevant population between 43% (47-4) and 51% (47+4) would have picked that answer.

The confidence level tells you how sure you can be. It is expressed as a percentage and represents how often the true percentage of the population who would pick an answer lies within the confidence interval. The 95% confidence level means you can be 95% certain; the 99% confidence level means you can be 99% certain. Most researchers use the 95% confidence level.

The full survey and results can be found in Appendix 1

Reminder: this list is only a sampling.

Roman Catholicism	1	2	3	4	5	No impression
Charismatic Churches						
“Emergent” churches						
Lutheran						
Evangelical						
Anglican						
Baptist						
Methodist						
Eastern Orthodoxy (Russian, Greek, etc.)						
Pentecostal						
Latter Day Saints (Mormons)						
Presbyterian						

Results of the survey are printed in full in Appendix 1 of this dissertation, as well as referenced throughout this work. Here are a few of the discoveries appropriate for this place in our discussion.

According to our results, only 24.8% consider themselves “religious,” while 74.6% self-identify as “spiritual.” When asked to rate the importance of the “spiritual dimension of life on a scale of one to ten,²⁵” the responses show an average of 6.6%.

²⁵ Actual responses ranged from zero to ten.

Now, this is where the numbers get really fascinating. When asked, “What, if any, religion or spiritual tradition do you currently claim or practice?” only 25.8% claimed “Christian” of any sort or flavor (shattering *Barna’s* 71% rating). Only 19.2% of whites identify as “Christians,” in contrast to 78.6% of blacks. Conversely, only 5.7% self identify as “atheist” or “agnostic” (compared to *Barna’s* 16%) and 12.4% identify with religious systems other than Christianity (compared to 8%). And most shockingly, eighty respondents said “none” and nineteen others defined their faith in such individualistic terms as to not fall under any faith category²⁶. That equals an alarming 51.3% as simply non-religious (Gallup says that Oregon is the most “Non-religious” state with 18 percent identifying as such statewide.²⁷) Over 50 percent when asked simply say they have no religious tradition or claim!

When asked about Christian church attendance, only thirty-eight respondents (19.7%) claim to attend church,²⁸ which is not a surprising number, especially after reading the religious affiliation numbers listed above (Note: within that number, Blacks and Latinos attend church at a rate of about 65 percent according to this survey.) However, when those same thirty-eight respondents were asked if they attend regularly (defined as “once a month”), all thirty-eight said they attend at least that often. Why is this important?

²⁶ “Atheists” and “agnostics” were not included here, nor were any responses that included any references to a “deity” of any sort.

²⁷ Jeffrey M. Jones, “Tracking Religious Affiliation, State by State,” Gallup, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/12091/tracking-religious-affiliation-state-state.aspx> (accessed December 27, 2010). Gallup is another highly regarded polling organization showing 18 percent as “Non-Religious” is a 2004 statistic.

²⁸ Thirteen percent of those were of faiths other than “Christian.” Therefore seemingly those attending a “Christian church” is closer to 17 percent.

There is one reason that jumps out at me. It appears there is no cultural pull to “pretend” like one is a “good Christian.” There is zero sense of obligation to claim something is true that is not. If there was, it seems there would have been at least a few people who would claim to attend church and then when asked to clarify would say “no not that often,” or “I know I should go more often,” or just admit their attendance is irregular, however, every church attendee, even though the number is small, is devout. I would not have predicted this. Of the 80.4% who said they do not attend church, 66 percent of those said they had attended regularly at some point in their life (usually childhood²⁹). This number was higher than I would have predicted.

To summarize, in addition to being free-thinking, independent, isolated, pioneering, recreational, tied-to-the-land, and liberal, these urban Northwesters (specifically those in zip code 97217,) are religiously independent, non-Christian and non-Church attending (though most people have attended church at one time but now, it appears, feel little to no use for it.)

Definitions

It is important to define a few terms as we begin our study.

Liturgical

The word **liturgical** means being done “according to the liturgy.” Liturgy is defined as a particular “form of public worship, a ritual, a collection of formularies for public

²⁹ This observation is anecdotal, based on how people responded to the question, “If ‘no,’ have you ever regularly attended a Christian church? Many people said something like “Yes, back when I was a kid.”

worship” or “a particular form or type of Eucharistic service.”³⁰ A liturgy is an ordered form of worship (usually written down and static), which guides a group in a shared, predictable and participatory religious experience. Many different religious movements and traditions have established and vetted liturgies that are distinct to their tradition. Among historical Christian liturgies there are many common and shared elements, some examples of which are: the regular and planned reading of biblical scriptures, written prayers, and the taking of Holy Communion.

Anglican liturgy, which is also known as the Eucharist, clearly has roots in the Roman Catholic Mass, but when it was written six hundred years ago, there were some passionate distinctions that set it apart at its inception, and continues to do so today. Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) “loomed large”³¹ in the Anglican early liturgical formation. “Cranmer’s main aims were: a wholly vernacular liturgy, a simplification of ceremonies, participation by the people (including receiving communion regularly)... and elimination of transubstantiation, mass-sacrifice, and other unreformed doctrines. His purpose was far more to write a liturgy embodying receptionism ...”³²

Eucharist or Holy Eucharist

Eucharist or “**Holy Eucharist**” is the Anglican name for its liturgical worship service. The word Eucharist is in many contexts synonymous with “communion,” as the

³⁰ Dictionary.com, “Liturgy,” Dictionary.com, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/liturgy> (accessed October 18, 2010).

³¹ Urban Tigner Holmes, *What is Anglicanism?* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow Co., 1982).

³² J. G. Davies, *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, 1st American ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1986), 322.

name for the holy supper, when Christian people come together at the table to break bread, to share the cup and to answer Jesus' call to "remember Me," but in Anglicanism it refers to the entire liturgy culminating in Holy Communion. (See the step by step description of Holy Eucharist below.) It is the ongoing echo, instituted by Christ in the upper-room where His disciples were specifically exhorted to "do this in remembrance of Me"³³ and to do it "until He comes,"³⁴ a reference to His future return.

This paper will be pointing specifically toward the Anglican expression of liturgical worship. Here are the basic elements of an Anglican service³⁵ Keep in mind that each of these elements has specific liturgical wording in the *Book of Common Prayer*:³⁶

Salutation begins the conversation between God and his worshiping people. "The Salutation begins the service by drawing priest and people into a dialogue and establishing our reason for being here." Example: "Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen."

Gloria, Kyrie, or Trisagion is the opening movement of the worship service in praise. "Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy."

The Collect is the "theme prayer of the day... and is intended to *collect* (hence the name) the prayers of the congregation around a single subject."³⁷

Lessons (Old Testament, Psalm, and Epistle) are the scriptural readings assigned to each Sunday on a three year rotation. This insures a thorough community review from the entire Bible every three years and it is from these readings that the sermon is most often themed.

³³ Luke 22:19.

³⁴ 1 Cor. 11:26.

³⁵ Christopher Webber, *The Holy Eucharist, Rites I and II* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Pub., 1997). This section was taken from the Rite II organization. Note: Appendix 2 will express each of these elements in greater detail and with some Post-Christian cultural commentary.

³⁶ For the purpose of this content, this section was taken from *The Holy Eucharist, Rite II*.

³⁷ Webber, *The Holy Eucharist, Rites I and II*, 20.

Gospel Reading, the same as “Lessons” above only it is the weekly reading from the gospels. This reading “is given the highest honor”³⁸ of the *lessons*, it is intended to be read by an ordained person and often read from within the congregation.

Sermon: While the unmistakable climax of the Anglican service is the communion, the sermon still holds an important role. It is located in this first part of the liturgy and is intended to “bring the Word of God to bear on our lives.”³⁹

The Creed is recited as our response to the Word that has been read and proclaimed. It affirms in common voice the belief that we have. Most often the Nicene Creed is read and it begins with the words, “We Believe.”⁴⁰

In the **Prayers of the People**, usually a deacon or lay person will lead this prayer and is often based upon some system of collecting the actual prayer needs of the gathered community.

Confession of Sin is a confession most often read together as a community. There are several historic examples. One of the most widely used includes, “Most merciful God, we confess what we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.” It is followed by a spoken absolution.

The Peace: Now, “freed from sin, we are brought together in unity.”⁴¹ It is a ritual of exchange and often includes blessing one another with the words, “Peace be with you.”

Holy Communion (Great Thanksgiving, Breaking of Bread and The Communion) is the unapologetic climax of the service. This section of the service begins with prayers that lead up to the breaking of the bread. These prayers include Eucharist

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., 21.

⁴⁰ Nicene Creed: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

⁴¹ Webber, *The Holy Eucharist, Rites I and II*, 25.

prayers and the Lord's Prayer, which is recited by all. The Breaking of the Bread is marked primarily by silence. Then, "as God came to us in flesh and blood in Jesus of Nazareth, so now God comes to us here in the bread and wine."⁴² The congregation comes forward to be served the bread and the wine.

The Blessing and Dismissal is a closing blessing on the congregation and a sending out for the community to return to the world out of the renewal and sustenance of the Holy Eucharist.

Anglican

"The Latin term 'Ecclesia Anglicana' was used from the earliest days simply to describe the English Church"⁴³

Anglicanism, in its structures, theology, and forms of worship, is commonly understood as a distinct Christian tradition representing a middle ground between what are perceived to be the extremes of the claims of sixteenth-century Roman Catholicism and the Calvinism of that era and its contemporary offshoots, and as such, is often called *via media* (or middle way) between these traditions. The faith of Anglicans is founded in the Scriptures and the Gospels, the traditions of the apostolic Church, the historic episcopate, the first seven ecumenical councils, and the early Church Fathers.⁴⁴

Today, the Anglican Communion (established in 1867) is a truly global expression of faith. In fact, most Anglicans live in the Southern Hemisphere with the largest concentration residing in Africa where much of the Anglican leadership can be found.

Churches for the Sake of Others (C4SO)

C4SO is "led" by Bishop Todd Hunter. As an initiative of *The Anglican Mission in the Americas* (The AM), C4SO is launching a church planting movement designed to

⁴² Ibid., 30.

⁴³ Mark D. Chapman, *Anglicanism: A Very Short Introduction*, Very Short Introductions (Oxford; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁴⁴ Wikipedia, "Anglican," Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglican> (accessed October 21, 2010).

develop leaders committed to planting kingdom-based, missional churches located primarily, but not exclusively, on the West Coast of the United States.”⁴⁵ C4SO is the specific missionary network of the Anglican Mission that is seeking to reach the post-Christian communities to which this dissertation is focused.

Post-Christian Culture

It is worth noting that reputable dictionaries like Webster’s have no entry for Post-Christianity. Wikipedia offers this: “a post-Christian world is one where Christianity is no longer the dominant civil religion, but one that has, gradually over extended periods, assumed values, culture, and worldviews that are not necessarily Christian (and further may not necessarily reflect any world religion's standpoint). This situation applies to much of Europe, in particular Central and Northern Europe where no more than half of the residents in those lands profess belief in a transcendent, personal and monotheistically-conceived deity.”⁴⁶ The statistics from the 97217 survey shows that East Portland (or at least the representative zip-code 97217) has joined Central and Northern Europe among the areas that have moved past a Christian-cultural orientation. Post-Christianity is primarily defined by a broad societal shift, where that shift leads in each context creates a unique cultural-personality. For this reason, we will be focusing our comments to the particular post-Christian reality of the Pacific Northwest, more

⁴⁵ Churches for the Sake of Others, “Hear the Story and See the Vision,” C4SO, <http://www.C4SO.org> (accessed October 21, 2010).

⁴⁶ Wikipedia, “Postchristianity,” Wikipedia, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post-Christianity> (accessed October 21, 2010).

specifically the city of Portland, Oregon, and more specifically still, the urban center of Portland, even as specific as a single zip code.

Throughout this work post-Christian culture will also be called “post-Christianity” and “post-Christendom.”

Post-Christian culture, in its broadest terms, is related to **postmodernity**, which “signifies the quest to move beyond modernism.”⁴⁷ Specifically, it involves a rejection of the modern mind-set.”⁴⁸ One implication from Richard Rorty claims that “we should simply give up the search for truth and be content with interpretation. He proposes replacing classic ‘systematic philosophy’ with ‘edifying philosophy,’ which ‘aims at continuing a conversation rather than at discovering truth.’”⁴⁹ It is also related to **pluralism**, which Lesslie Newbigin describes as “a society in which there is no officially approved pattern of belief or conduct. It is therefore also conceived to be a free society, a society not controlled by accepted dogma but characterized rather by the critical spirit which is ready to subject all dogmas to critical (or even skeptical) examination.”⁵⁰ To put the concept in more common terms, post-Christianity is a society (or region), wherein at

⁴⁷ “Moving beyond modernism” is a complicated and multidimensional issue. One honest expression of this process is offered by Leonard Sweet who says the process involves reorienting the: Intellectual problem, Moral problem, Cultural problem, Spiritual problem, Ecclesiastical problem, and Authority problem. Each of these will be addressed throughout this dissertation.

Leonard I. Sweet and Andy Crouch, *The Church in Emerging Culture: Five Perspectives* (El Cajon, CA: Youth Specialties, 2003), 21-2.

⁴⁸ Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 2.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 6. Quoting from: Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 393.

⁵⁰ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 1.

one point would have been characterized by having a dominant Christian presence, but can no longer be defined as such. In fact, there is no assumption, within common culture, that Christianity is a dominant or even influential player in the process. To be even more dramatic, if you imagine society as a chess board, within a “Christian Society,”

Christianity is viewed as an influential piece on the board of civil and societal life, most likely she is even the most influential player, in this illustration, Christianity might be the Queen. In a post-Christian society, Christianity is no longer thought of as a player on the board. It is not that she doesn’t exist; it is just that her structures and belief systems are relegated to a minority sub-culture and not a real player in society at large.

There are many implications of this marginalizing process, going from “majority culture” to “minority culture.” One sociological implication is this: any “majority culture” (be it national, genetic, religious or ideological in nature) faces extra critique, which leads to heightened emotions and often distain. However, when a population eases out of Christian dominance and into post-Christian culture, the societal anger is often softened and even dissipates.⁵¹ That is to say, much ink has been spilt in recent decades about how society in general “hates” the church. However, nowadays, when I identify myself as a “Christian” in my post-Christian city (Portland, OR), the other person does not cringe or question or distance relationally in any sense. In fact, they often lean in.

⁵¹ David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *Unchristian: What A New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity — And Why It Matters* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), 45. “The hypocritical perception is most acute not when a religion is on the fringes of society, but when it has become a dominant part of the culture.”

Their energy could be described as intrigued or surprised as if to say, “I didn’t know you guys were still around. How amusing to meet one of you.”

Many argue that Post-Christianity is a good thing. Stuart Murray refers to Post-Christianity as Post-Christendom and in his book, *Post-Christendom*,⁵² he purports a vision of the church freed from Christendom’s attempts to impose Christian faith by coercion. He argues that the last 1500 years (since the time of Emperor Constantine) the church has pursued its mission from a false and domineering paradigm.

Urban

Urban is a term that typically exists in contrast to the terms “rural” (farm lands or extremely low population areas outside and between cities) and “suburban” (newer communities, sub-divisions, neighboring towns and bedroom communities, which exist on the periphery or in close approximation to a historical city center. They are most usually related to large city centers and tend to be designed to create separation from the complications, crime and poverty of inner-city life.) In other contexts “urban” is used euphemistically to refer to areas of a city that have a minority concentration of a certain race (most often African-American neighborhoods) and assumes a concentration of violence, drugs and poverty. Here, in the context of this dissertation, it is simply in reference to the non-suburban, non-periphery city centers of the Pacific Northwest. While it is true that Post-Christian themes exist throughout Northwest culture, they have a particular concentration in the centers of cities like Portland, Seattle and San Francisco.

⁵² Stuart Murray, *Post-Christendom: Church and Mission in a Strange New World* (Carlisle, United Kingdom: Paternoster, 2004).

The concentric circles begin in these areas closest to the city centers and in these inner circles there is the greatest concentration of Post-Christian, un-churched and de-churched peoples.

Proposing a Solution

Phyllis Tickle states that every five hundred years the people of God need to go through the birth-pangs of a major cultural transition. It happened five hundred years ago with the Reformation. It happened 1000 years ago with the Great Schism⁵³ separating the Church, East from West. It happened 1500 years ago when “the Apostolic Church... gave way to an organized monasticism as the true keeper and promulgator of the faith.”⁵⁴ It happened 2000 years ago with the life, words and ministry of Christ Himself. It also happened 2500 years ago with the Babylonian captivity and destruction of Solomon’s Temple and 3000 years ago with the end of the Age of Judges.⁵⁵

Today is another one of those transitions. Parts of Europe have already experienced the distancing from Christianity and it is now transforming North America. Not so

⁵³ Wikipedia, “Great Schism,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Schism (accessed October 13, 2010). “The East–West Schism, sometimes known as the Great Schism,[1] formally divided medieval Christianity into Eastern (Greek) and Western (Latin) branches, which later became known as the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church, respectively. Relations between East and West had long been embittered by political and ecclesiastical differences and theological disputes. Prominent among these were the issues of “filioque,” whether leavened or unleavened bread should be used in the eucharist, the Pope’s claim to universal jurisdiction, and the place of Constantinople in relation to the Pentarchy. Pope Leo IX and Patriarch of Constantinople Michael Cerularius heightened the conflict by suppressing Greek and Latin in their respective domains. In 1054, Roman legates traveled to Cerularius to deny him the title Ecumenical Patriarch and to insist that he recognize the Church of Rome’s claim to be the head and mother of the churches.”

⁵⁴ Phyllis Tickle, *The Great Emergence: How Christianity Is Changing and Why* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2008), 27.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 26-31.

noticeably in places like the South and Midwest, but it is glaringly evident in the urban centers of cities like Portland, Oregon.

As has already been shown, the presence and influence of the Christian Church is waning at best and at worst has already become obsolete. This is a time of incredible opportunity. Change rarely happens in a timely, evolutionary and incremental way. It happens out of necessity, often because crisis has forced the hand of circumstance (e.g. The Reformation, fall of the “wall” in the Eastern Block, end of slavery in the United States.) We are in a time of necessary transition if we believe that Christ and His Church are for service and salvation of this time and place.

Throughout this work, we will evidence and suggest a highly constructive solution, even in the face of cataclysmic cultural change, which has left some with little hope (I, for one, am not among them.) We hope to illumine the very real need at hand and suggest some conclusions as to how to approach post-Christian culture in an effective, Christ-centered and historically consistent way.

Chapter Two will examine the context of Holy Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments. It will build a biblical case for historical liturgical worship, showing that liturgical themes have always marked the worship life of the people of Jehovah. As followers of Jesus it would be utterly inappropriate to suggest a missional quest that is not in line with the Scriptures, which are God’s breath.⁵⁶ We will see that there has been, since ancient times, within the people of Jehovah, a draw to a worshiping structure and specifically a ceremonial invitation to the table of fellowship with God.

⁵⁶ 2 Tim. 3:16

Chapter Three shows the overwhelming trend in Church history for liturgical and structured worship expressions, which culminate in the Lord's Table. This chapter walks through many influential historical seasons of Christian gathering and expression and shows that the worship systems are thematically harmonious with the Anglican Holy Eucharist. It is tempting to think that "progressive" forms are always the dominant solution regarding culture (a reality that is defended by incarnational theology.) It is, however, impossible to deny that throughout church history, and the vast cultural spectrum in which it has grown, lived and transformed, that there has been an ever-gravitation to liturgy and Eucharist. It would be arrogant to assume that suddenly in the twenty-first century we would discover some new adaptive form of Christian worship. Even more so, I would argue that the stillness, structure and transcendence of a liturgical and Eucharist service encases many of the creation longings of the human soul and that humanity is being ever drawn back to her like a migrating salmon, back to those historical and nourishing waters.

Chapter Four makes an argument for the absolute necessity of a contextualized and incarnational mindset regarding Christ's mandate and the church's calling. This chapter also shows how this ever-localized necessity (incarnational mission) is not in conflict with a liturgical orientation.

Chapter Five explores many of church philosophies that have tried to "solve" the post-Christian problem and honestly state their strengths and weaknesses within a post-Christian culture like Portland's inner-Eastside. No single "solution" can reach the entirety of our rapidly de-churching society. This is a fact that the Christian church must

accept. Honest and open evaluation and critique, in a spirit of shared mission and collaboration (something the people of Jesus have been shamefully poor at during most of her history,) are necessary for the continuation of the Great Commission.⁵⁷

Finally, Chapter Six argues that the Anglican Eucharistic liturgy offers a constructive and attractive church offering in a post-Christian setting like Portland, Oregon. We will illustrate the power of liturgy, but in that show the unique opportunity of the Anglican voice in our culture today. We will share how this church-planting mission has been born out of tested virtue and profound passion. Finally, we will show that the Anglican Eucharistic liturgy can speak specifically and meaningfully to the post-Christian encounter with truth to the post-Christian experience of community and to post-Christian spirituality.

Appendix 1 contains the survey used to examine the religious trends and perceptions of zip code 97217 in Portland's inner-eastside. It also shows the raw data from that survey (compiled for easy observation) and an itemization of the facts and trends acquired from the 193 respondents. Appendix 2 lists some suggestions about the factors and elements of the Anglican Eucharist for post-Christian culture.

⁵⁷ Matt. 28:19-20.

CHAPTER 2: THE CONTEXT OF SCRIPTURE AND LITURGICAL WORSHIP

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42

The purpose of this chapter is to explore what Scripture has to say about the breadth and focus of this dissertation. I argue that liturgical worship, such as the Anglican form of worship described in Chapter One, is consistent with the teachings and the encouragements of the Holy Scriptures, Old Testament and New Testament. We will explore four core questions to explore the Bible's position on worship as it pertains to the major governing parameters of the Anglican Eucharist.

- Do the scriptures support the idea of gathering for worship of Jehovah?
- Do the scriptures support the idea of structured worship with consistent and repeatable patterns?
- Do the scriptures support and model written prayers and are those prayers to be shared within the worship gathering?
- Do the scriptures defend a coming to the Table of Worship to commemorate the sacrifice for sin and is that Table the center place of that worship experience?

The Old Testament

Do the Scriptures support the idea of gathering for worship of Jehovah?

The Hebrew Scriptures accumulated over hundreds of years, reflect rather haphazardly the practices of worship from various localities and from the successive forms of the society. While, upon review, the expression and example of public worship is not as consistent as I was originally led to believe, it is clear from its earliest pages that Jehovah

called for and longed for his people to be a worshipping people and much of that worshipful calling was in the collective.

The making and carrying of the Tabernacle¹ and the later building of the Temple (first by Solomon) brought “place” to the expression of worship in the Old Testament, not only place but the assumed and obeyed rhythm of public gathering. From here came the regular practice of feast, festival and sacrifice. It was for the people that they might gather before Jehovah. “And King Solomon and *all the congregation of Israel, who were assembled* to him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing so many sheep and oxen they could not be counted or numbered.”²

“Certainly from the standpoint of those who held the Yahweh faith, the most significant single aspect of worship was Yahweh himself. Ultimately, every word and act of worship was fraught with the reality of his presence, and gained its meaning only from that fact.”³ This place of gathering, sacrifice and worship was so central to the Old Testament that even war, destruction and captivity could not deter the people of Israel from returning to the place of Divine meeting, even at the profound risk of life and personal destruction. Ezra and Nehemiah tell the story of worshipping people rebuilding the Temple.

“The Temple was primarily concerned with sacrifice, which was normally permitted nowhere else; but, because of God’s promise to meet Israel there, it was also the place at

¹ Exod. 25-31.

² 1 Kings 8:5 (*italics mine*).

³ Louis Weil, “The Holy Spirit: The Source of Unity in the Liturgy,” *Anglican Theological Review* 83, 3 (2001): 9.

which... the Jews said their prayers.”⁴ 1 Kings 8:28-30 says, “Yet give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy, O LORD my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day. May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, this place of which you said, ‘My Name shall be there,’ so that you will hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place. Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive.”

While there is such a dominant Temple tradition in the Old Testament concerning the worshiping people and the rhythms of gathering it requires, note that for much of the Old Testament story the Temple lay in ruins. It is in these times for the people of Yahweh that “the sacrificial law was spiritualized”⁵ to maintain its continuity. It is as if the people could not imagine the life of the people without the place of gathering and sacrifice.⁶ To support this spiritualized continuity passages such as Psalms 50:13, 51:16 and Isaiah 66:20 were heralded. This tradition laid the profound and enduring foundation from which sprung the Synagogue and the weekly Passover meal.

Do the scriptures support the idea of structured worship with consistent and repeatable patterns?

“Worship in the Old Testament is inseparable from the matter of how Israel formally acknowledged the Lordship of Yahweh, and how they expressed their response to his

⁴ Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, *The Study of Liturgy* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1978), 41-42.

⁵ Ibid., 41.

⁶ Judah Benzion Segal, *The Hebrew Passover, From the Earliest Times to A.C. 70* (London, New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1963). Segal speaks of how the worship gathering became less about an animal and more about the domestic or family occasion.

Lordship. And this turns out to have been an enormously complex and constantly changing affair. It turns out to be inseparable from the whole pilgrimage through which the people of Yahweh moved during their thousand-year history reflected in the Old Testament.”⁷ At the very least, the early festival system, initially set up in Exodus, sets the pattern of community worship in the Old Testament. These early public festivals included Unleavened Bread, Weeks (or Harvest), and the Ingathering.⁸ In Deuteronomy 16, Passover was added to this list⁹ and became a “centralized public observance.”¹⁰ Passover played an important role as the reliving of the Exodus from Egypt at the hand of the loving God who had not forgotten them and of whom they were not to forget. “Observe the month of Abib and celebrate the Passover to the Lord your God, for in the month of Abib the Lord your God brought you out of Egypt by night. And you shall sacrifice the Passover to the Lord your God from the flock and the herd, in the place where the Lord chooses to establish His name.”¹¹ These festivals are important aspects of the Annual structure in Old Testament worship. The following shows a simple example of a Jewish worshiping year¹² and an Anglican worshiping year.

⁷ James A. Wharton, “Obedience and sacrifice: Some Reflections on Worship from the Old Testament Side,” *Austin Seminary Bulletin (Faculty ed.)* 85, 3 (1969): 7.

⁸ Exod. 23:14-17, 34:18-23.

⁹ The later addition of Passover is assumed by many to be due to the fact that previously Passover had been celebrated in the home, perhaps because the mark of the blood was on the home’s door posts.

¹⁰ Davies, *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, 397.

¹¹ Deut. 16:1-2.

¹² This Jewish calendar includes the extra-biblical Hanukkah.

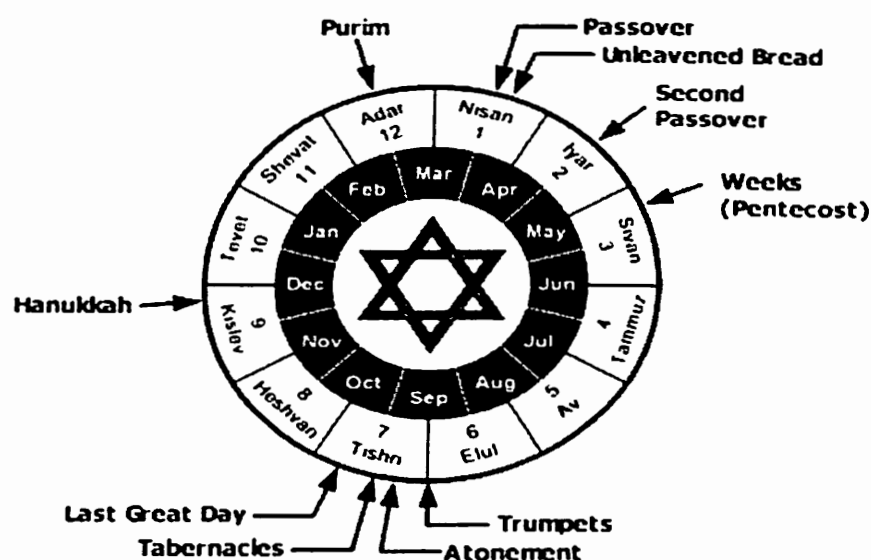


FIGURE 7. Source: Hebrew Holiday Rosh Hashanah. Jewish New Year. Healthy Jewish Recipes <http://hubpages.com/hub/Jewish-Holiday-Rosh-Hashana-Jewish-New-Year-Healthy-Jewish-Recipes> (accessed October 16, 2010).

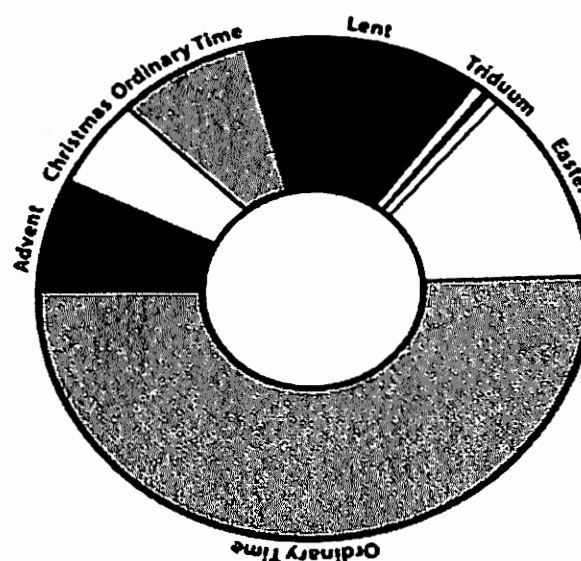


FIGURE 8. Source: Pericopal Politics <http://www.getreligion.org/2008/08/pericopal-politics/> (accessed October 16, 2011).

Weekly worship patterns were typical as well, exemplified in the Sabbath. The Law stated, “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall

not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.”¹³ These people of Yahweh were privileged to unite themselves to God by participating in His rest.¹⁴ “The Sabbath became the primary day of worship for the Jews, especially after the Babylonian exile. It was observed by meetings in the synagogues to read and study the Torah ... It is certain that elements of the Jewish Sabbath were later absorbed into the Christian Lord’s Day, and that Christian worship was also held on the weekly fixed day.”¹⁵

Finally, there was also a daily rhythm of worship in the Old Testament. In fact, there seems to be a specific pattern of praying three times a day. A pattern we observe in both the Psalms and the Prophets. “Evening, morning and noon I cry out in distress, and he hears my voice.”¹⁶ In Daniel we read, “Now when Daniel learned that the decree had been published, he went home to his upstairs room where the windows opened toward Jerusalem. Three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his

¹³ Exod. 20:8-11.

¹⁴ Gen. 2:1-3.

¹⁵ Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997), 20.

¹⁶ Psa. 55:17.

God, just as he had done before.”¹⁷ The three daily hours for saying the *Tefillah*¹⁸ and the two for saying the *Shema*¹⁹ were of course also observed on the Sabbath.

The Old Testament models regular worship in annual, weekly and daily patterns. These patterns have been defended and reflected throughout church history and are expressly practiced in the Anglican Way through the church calendar, weekly Eucharist and daily prayers (as found in the Book of Common Prayer).

Do the Scriptures support and model written prayers and are those prayers to be shared within the worship gathering?

It seems appropriate to begin this answer with *The Shema Israel* originally taken from Deuteronomy 6:4:

Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad

Hear, O Israel: the Lord is our God, the Lord is One

Later expressions of this prayer, which was also a declaration of faith, came from Deuteronomy 6:4–9, 11:13–21, and Numbers 15:37–41. There are varying beliefs as to how early this prayer was integrated into regular and ubiquitous Jewish worship, but by the time of the Synagogue system, one found “the *Shema* at both morning and evening services.”²⁰

The Psalms are a virtual library of written prayers. It is easy to see the Psalms’ place in personal worship as it is often taught in Western churches. However, as Frank Senn

¹⁷ Dan. 6:10–11.

¹⁸ *Tefillah* is the prayer recitations that form part of the observance of Judaism. These prayers, often with instructions and commentary, are found in the *siddur*, the traditional Jewish prayer book.

¹⁹ *The Shema* will be explained in the next section.

²⁰ Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical*, 69.

writes, the “Psalms, which were originally part of the temple liturgy ... are sung at the beginning of the synagogue service and between readings.”²¹ The Psalms were corporate in their application.

“The Old Testament narrative itself reminds us that ritual acts are normally accompanied by vocal reciting. ‘I will offer in his tent sacrifices and shout of joy; I will sing and make melody to the Lord.’²² ‘There shall be heard again ... the voice of those who sing, as they bring thank offerings to the house of the Lord.’”²³

Let’s take one particular sort of written (liturgical) prayer as an example: the prayer of confession. As stated in Chapter One, the prayer of confession is an essential element of the Anglican liturgy. This emphasis is pulled from the scriptures themselves. Psalms 51 is perhaps the most famous example and its first twelve verses go like this:

Have mercy on me, O God,
 according to your unfailing love;
 according to your great compassion
 blot out my transgressions.
 Wash away all my iniquity
 and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions,
 and my sin is always before me.
 Against you, you only, have I sinned
 and done what is evil in your sight,
 so that you are proved right when you speak
 and justified when you judge.
 Surely I was sinful at birth,
 sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

²¹ Ibid., 70.

²² Ps. 27:6.

²³ Also see: Donald P. Hustad, “The Psalms as worship expression: Personal and Congregational,” *Review & Expositor* 81, 3 (1984): 409. The verse quoted is: Jer. 33:10b, 11a.

Surely you desire truth in the inner parts;
you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.

Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.
Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.
Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity.

Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

This calling to embrace prayers of confession exists throughout the Old Testament. Numbers 5:5-8 says, “The LORD said to Moses, ‘Say to the Israelites: When a man or woman wrongs another in any way and so is unfaithful to the LORD, that person is guilty and must confess the sin he has committed. He must make full restitution for his wrong, add one fifth to it and give it all to the person he has wronged.’” And Leviticus 16 shows an example of the community pleading for forgiveness as the Chief Priest prays on behalf of the people. This theme extends into the books of history. Both Ezra, chapter nine, and Nehemiah, chapter one and nine, have prayers of public confession. And finally in the Prophets, possibly the most famous example, is the prayer of Daniel in chapter nine. Here are a couple of excerpts from his long and meaningful communal prayer,

I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed: “O Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with all who love him and obey his commands, we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from your commands and laws. We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who

spoke in your name to our kings, our princes and our fathers, and to all the people of the land... O Lord, listen! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, hear and act! For your sake, O my God, do not delay, because your city and your people bear your Name.”²⁴

Other examples of written prayers include David’s canticle²⁵ in 1 Chronicles 16:9 and Deborah’s canticle in Judges 5. Old Testament books of history, psalms and prophets all model written prayers and utilized them in the public worship.

Do the Scriptures defend a coming to the Table of Worship to commemorate the sacrifice for sin and is that Table the center place of that worship experience?

The prefiguring of the table has the earliest of roots. It can be argued that it begins with the sacrifice of Able, but most assuredly it is linked to Melchizedek, King of Salem who “brought out bread and wine; now he was a priest of God Most High.”²⁶ “The bread and wine offered by Melchisedech were considered from a very ancient date to be a figure of the Eucharist. Clement of Alexandria (late second century) specifically wrote ‘Melchisedec, who offered bread and wine, the consecrated food as a figure of the Eucharist.’”²⁷ And Saint Cyprian (middle third century) wrote:

Also in the priest Melchizedek we see prefigured the sacrament of the sacrifice of the Lord, according to what divine Scripture testifies, and says, ‘And Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine.’ Now he was a priest of the most high God... In Genesis, therefore, that the benediction, in respect of Abraham by Melchizedek the priest, might be duly celebrated, the figure of Christ’s sacrifice precedes, namely, as ordained in bread and wine; which thing the Lord, completing

²⁴ Dan. 9:4-6, 19.

²⁵ A Canticle is a hymn or song primarily used for worship. It is related to psalm in style, but is found apart from the book of Psalms.

²⁶ Gen. 14:18.

²⁷ Jean Daniélou, *The Bible and the Liturgy*, University of Notre Dame. Liturgical Studies (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1956), 143.

and fulfilling, offered bread and the cup mixed with wine, and so He who is the fullness of truth fulfilled the truth of the image prefigured.²⁸

The predominant image that sets the “table” for the sacrificial feast shared by Jehovah and His beloved is found in Genesis 18. This is the same scene from which Andrei Rublev (the fourteenth-century Russian iconographer) drew when he created his most famous icon: *The Icon of The Holy Trinity*. *The Holy Trinity* “constitutes his masterpiece, an unexcelled jewel of iconography. The grace of its line and the delicate finesse of its colors not only portray an intense spiritual beauty, but manifest to us that which the most beautiful theological texts could never convey.”²⁹



FIGURE 9. Rublev's Icon: *The Holy Trinity*. Source: <http://www.newliturgicalmovement.org/2010/05/trinity-sunday-and-hospitality-of.html> (accessed January 6, 2011).

²⁸ Cyprian, “Epistle LXII, section 4,” in *Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 5*, Cyprian, Epistle LXII (Sage Software, 1996), 777-778.

²⁹ Michel Quenot, *The Icon: Window on the Kingdom* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1991), 31.

The three figures seated at the table are from Genesis 18:1-16, the story of the three messengers who appear to Abraham under the oak of Mamre to tell him and Sarah of the forthcoming birth of their son. In response to the second commandment, icons do not depict the unseen, even as they reveal the unseen. Rublev evokes this historical moment in the Old Testament as a symbolic representation of the Divine: Three seated together in eternal and still communion around a table. This table represents the invitation of the Divine, Triune to eat with, initially Abraham at his home, but ultimately through analogical extension, all of Jehovah's people both now and into eternity. Other versions of this icon include Abraham and Sarah at the table, further emphasizing the invitation of the Divine to share the table.



FIGURE 10. Trinity Icon with Abraham and Sarah. Source: <http://www.newliturgicalmovement.org/2010/05/trinity-sunday-and-hospitality-of.html> (accessed January 6, 2011).

The food at the table is also prefigured in the manna in Exodus, chapter sixteen. In reference to manna, Jean Danielou writes, “But this nourishment that you receive, the

Bread descended from heaven, communicates to you the substance of eternal life. It is the Body of Christ. As the light is greater than the shadow, the truth than the figure, so the Body of the Creator is great than the manna from heaven.”³⁰ He is working off the same truth as Jesus when He said:

I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world... I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.³¹

In Exodus 24, we are given the “meal of the Covenant on Mount Sinai” as expounded by John Witvliet.³² “And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord. Then he arose early in the morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain with twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the sons of Israel, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as peace offerings to the Lord.”³³

The next major movement of Eucharistic prefiguring in the Old Testament is in the Passover. “A fair reading of Leviticus emphasizes the spiritual dimension of the act of sacrifice. The word for ‘body’ has multiple references as microcosm for the temple and for God’s universe. We have also to take into account the interchangeability in the Bible of words for spiritual and material food, bread and flesh, wine, blood, life and soul. Even

³⁰ Daniélou, *The Bible and the Liturgy*, 149.

³¹ John 6:32-34, 48-51.

³² John D. Witvliet, “The Former Prophets and the Practice of Christian Worship,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 37, 1 (2002): 88.

³³ Exod. 24:4-5.

the reference to the covenant is the same, as when Jesus said... Compare the wording with the altar of the show bread:"³⁴

Luke 22:17, 20	Lev. 24:8
This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me ... This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood	Every Sabbath day Aaron shall set it in order before the Lord continually on behalf of the people of Israel as a covenant forever

Then, "just as the people of Israel gathered together to renew their covenant with God, so we Christian gather to renew the new covenant God has make with us in Christ."³⁵ One example of this can be found in Joshua 24, when Joshua presses his famous declaration, "Choose for yourselves today whom you will serve."³⁶ And to which the people responded, "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."³⁷

In Proverbs nine, wisdom calls out and invites the reader, "Come, eat of my food, And drink of the wine I have mixed."³⁸ The early church fathers³⁹ referenced the following passages as figuring both the eschatological meal and the Eucharistic banquet: "Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and

³⁴ Mary Douglas, "The Eucharist : Its Continuity with the Bread Sacrifice of Leviticus," *Modern Theology* 15, 2 (1999): 210.

³⁵ Witvliet, "The Former Prophets and the Practice of Christian Worship," 88.

³⁶ Josh. 24:15.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Prov. 9:5.

³⁹ Daniélou, *The Bible and the Liturgy*, 153-154. Danielou draws from the writings of St. Ambrose and the Book of Enoch, when referencing these passages:

eat ... Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance.”⁴⁰ Also, and here we have the additional theme of how *all peoples* are invited to the table of God, “And the Lord of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples, on this mountain; a banquet of aged wine, choice pieces of marrow, and refined, aged wine.”⁴¹

The New Testament

With the incarnation of Jesus the entire map of Jehovah-focused faith and practice went through a massive metamorphosis; a fuller revelation. Having established that the Old Testament does have ample space for the continuity of liturgical worship through its epochs, will Jesus and His renewed Way, redirect or affirm these examples and exhortations of liturgical worship? Here are some New Testament responses to the same four questions we examined from the Old Testament.

Do the Scriptures support the idea of gathering for worship of Jehovah?

It seems that in the specific season of Jesus’ life and ministry that the Jewish habit of gathering was practiced and affirmed. From Jesus’ earliest years, there is clear evidence of worship gathering and the scriptures seem to laud these behaviors. “And when the days for the purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him (Jesus) up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord... and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Law of the Lord.”⁴² In his childhood, “His parents used to go to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He (Jesus) became

⁴⁰ Isa. 60:1-2.

⁴¹ Isa. 25:6.

⁴² Luke 2:22, 24.

twelve, they went up there according to the custom of the Feast.”⁴³ And while Jesus’ family’s dedication seems undeniable, Jesus’ personal dedication exceeded even that: “And when He (Jesus) became twelve, they went up there (Jerusalem) according to the custom of the Feast; and as they (Jesus’ parents) were returning, after spending the full number of days, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. And His parents were unaware of it, but supposed Him to be in the caravan, and went a day’s journey; and they began looking for Him among their relatives and acquaintances. And when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, looking for Him.”⁴⁴ Jesus response when they finally found their AWOL twelve year old, “Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s house (the temple)?”⁴⁵ Jesus dedication to gathering was not just a Jerusalem (temple) based expression either. Luke explains that, “He went to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as *was His custom* (emphasis added) He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath.”⁴⁶

Luke also explains in his gospel how Jesus began His ministry. “He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me...’”⁴⁷

⁴³ Luke 2:41.

⁴⁴ Luke 2:42-45.

⁴⁵ Luke 2:49.

⁴⁶ Luke 4:16.

⁴⁷ Isaiah 61:1 and Luke 4:16-18.

Throughout Jesus' ministry He visited the synagogue. Mark, the writer of the shortest gospel account, tells us that Jesus went to the synagogue in Capernaum to teach in the earliest part of His ministry⁴⁸ He went into a synagogue and preformed healings.⁴⁹ Upon a trip to Nazareth He taught in the synagogue.⁵⁰ Jesus seemed drawn time and again to the temple courts. Mark says that Jesus visited the temple on three different occasions in just one chapter: after His "Triumphal Entry,"⁵¹ before turning over the money changers tables⁵² and when confronted by the chief priests, scribes and elders.⁵³

This pattern of Jesus was observed and echoed by His earliest followers. In the book of Acts, the Apostle Paul, is said to have entered the synagogues of the cities he visited, no less than nine times,⁵⁴ as the scriptures say, "When they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. *As his custom was* (italics mine), Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures."⁵⁵

From the very inception of the church, the people of Jesus were marked by their custom to meet. "So then, those who had received his (Peter) word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they were continually

⁴⁸ Mark 1:21.

⁴⁹ Mark 3:1.

⁵⁰ Mark 6:1-2.

⁵¹ Mark 11:11.

⁵² Mark 11:15.

⁵³ Mark 11:27.

⁵⁴ Acts 13:14f; 14:1f; 17:1f,10f,16f; 18:4f,19f, 26f; 19:8f.

⁵⁵ Acts 17:1-2.

devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."⁵⁶ "And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common... And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house."⁵⁷

The very organization of the New Testament supports a gathering people. Each epistle is a letter written to a gathering community, supposedly to be read before that community. "Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, to the church of God which is at Corinth..., "⁵⁸ "...to the churches of Galatia,"⁵⁹ "...to the saints who are at Ephesus,"⁶⁰ "to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi,"⁶¹ "...to the church of the Thessalonians."⁶²

There are many points in the New Testament where the writers assume the regular gathering of Christians. When the Apostle Paul writes to a church like Corinth (a church that he had particular concern about the ways they conducted themselves in the assembly), his language is telling: "When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus,"⁶³ or "for *your meetings* do more harm than good. In the first place, I hear that

⁵⁶ Acts 2:41-42.

⁵⁷ Acts 2:44, 46.

⁵⁸ 1 Cor. 1:1-2.

⁵⁹ Gal. 1:2b.

⁶⁰ Eph. 1:1b.

⁶¹ Phil. 1:1b.

⁶² 1 Thess. 1:1b.

⁶³ 1 Cor. 5:4.

*when you come together as a church.*⁶⁴ (italics mine) The writer of Hebrews writes, “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing.”⁶⁵

“We must never forget that almost all of St. Paul’s letters are directed to communities of Christians. When, therefore, he spoke of offering prayers, material gifts and sacrifices, he was thinking of communal offerings. Since the great act of communal worship in the early Church was the celebration of the Eucharist, this would be the most propitious time to present these offerings.”⁶⁶

John’s Revelation also reveals the commitment to seeing the people of God as worshiping communities, and not from a perspective that exists solely “under the sun” as the Revelation comes from Jesus Christ and “communicated by His angel.”⁶⁷ The Revelation reads, “Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”⁶⁸

Do the Scriptures support the idea of structured worship with consistent and repeatable patterns?

The New Testament period was a time of discovery for the Christian church. Many of the most important norms of Christian life and worship were just finding their first voice amongst the church leadership and within the assembly. For instance, the full equality of Jews and Gentiles within the Christian family was still being debated at least into the mid

⁶⁴ 1 Cor. 11:17b-18a.

⁶⁵ Heb. 10:25a.

⁶⁶ Joseph A. Grassi, “St. Paul the Apostle, Liturgist,” *Worship* 34, 10 (1960): 612-613.

⁶⁷ Rev. 1:1b.

⁶⁸ Rev. 1:11.

first century.⁶⁹ Likewise, it is not surprising that many of the worship norms were still finding their structure and system.

We have already made note of those first chronicled worship norms from the earliest paragraphs in the Acts of the Apostles, “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”⁷⁰ And while this is not equivalent to full-fledged liturgical worship order, it is indicative of the early normative behavior within Jesus’ church.

So much of the church’s early life was an extension/transition of the Jewish worship system. As listed above, visiting the temple and synagogues maintained a place in Christian practice. So Christian worship “would have been shaped to some extent by the Jewish lectionary,”⁷¹ and would therefore have been liturgical in nature. It has even been suggested that Jesus’ teachings are linked to the Synagogue lectionary.⁷²

In this same heart, there has been suggestion that much of the New Testament itself was lectionary in organization. “G.D Kilpatrick suggested that Matthew was intended for public reading at worship...Michael Goulder went further, and regarded all three Gospels

⁶⁹ The Epistles to the Galatians and the Ephesians offer commentary on the ongoing tension integrating Gentiles into the Christian church.

⁷⁰ Acts 2:42.

⁷¹ Paul F. Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship: Sources and Methods for the Study of Early Liturgy* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1992), 30.

⁷² R. G. Finch, *The Synagogue Lectionary and the New Testament: A Study of the Three-year Cycle of Readings from the Law and the Prophets as a Contribution to New Testament Chronology* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1939).

as lectionary books—Mark for half a year, Matthew for a full year following the festal cycle, and Luke for a full year following the Sabbath cycle.”⁷³

The use of the Lord’s Supper in worship was a normative, structured and regular expression of worship. It was used from the earliest days of the Christian church and expressed in the New Testament. For more on this read ahead in the section titled, “*Do the scriptures defend a coming to the Table of Worship to commemorate the sacrifice for sin and is that Table the center place of that worship experience?*”

“In Romans 15:16, St. Paul describes himself as a *leitourgos*, literally, one who performs service at the altar.”⁷⁴ This priestly role, mentioned in numerous places in the New Testament, is reflective of both the continuity with the priestly office, but according to Joseph Grassi’s work, cited here, in the case of Paul, he also sees himself as one who performs the “service.”

Do the Scriptures support and model written prayers and are those prayers to be shared within the worship gathering?

The single most famous written prayer in the Christian tradition is found in Matthew, chapter 6 and is often called the “Lord’s Prayer.” Jesus commands His followers,

⁷³ Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, 31. Here Paul Bradshaw is referencing work by from:

⁷⁴ Grassi, “St. Paul the Apostle, Liturgist,” 611.

Pray, then, in this way:

‘Our Father who is in heaven,,

Hallowed be Your name.

‘Your kingdom come.

Your will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

[For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.]’⁷⁵

Jesus’ command to “Pray in this way” has been taken to heart and adopted in public and private worship for two thousand years.

There are other examples of “actual liturgical texts, and especially hymns, within the New Testament books themselves.”⁷⁶ Here are some of the more obvious examples:⁷⁷

My soul glorifies the Lord

and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

for he has been mindful

of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.

His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.

He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.

He has filled the hungry with good things

⁷⁵ Matt. 6:9-13 (NASB). Form is from the *New American Standard Bible*.

⁷⁶ Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, 42.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 42-43. This particular list of written prayers and hymns was taken from Paul Bradshaw’s text. Bradshaw is compiling his arguments from: Raymond Edward Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in Matthew and Luke*, 1st ed. (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977). In addition, he also uses: Ralph P. Martin, *Carmen Christi: Philippians ii 5-11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship*, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983). And finally, Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John* (New York, NY: Seabury Press, 1980).

but has sent the rich away empty.
 He has helped his servant Israel,
 remembering to be merciful
 to Abraham and his descendants forever,
 even as he said to our fathers.⁷⁸

Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
 because he has come and has redeemed his people.
 He has raised up a horn of salvation for us
 in the house of his servant David
 (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),
 salvation from our enemies
 and from the hand of all who hate us—
 to show mercy to our fathers
 and to remember his holy covenant,
 the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
 to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,
 and to enable us to serve him without fear
 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
 And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;
 for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,
 to give his people the knowledge of salvation
 through the forgiveness of their sins,
 because of the tender mercy of our God,
 by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
 to shine on those living in darkness
 and in the shadow of death,
 to guide our feet into the path of peace.⁷⁹

Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
 you now dismiss your servant in peace.
 For my eyes have seen your salvation,
 which you have prepared in the sight of all people,
 a light for revelation to the Gentiles
 and for glory to your people Israel.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Luke 1:46-55.

⁷⁹ Luke 1:68-79.

⁸⁰ Luke 2:29-32.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it. There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John testifies concerning him. He cries out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'" From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another.⁸¹

Who, being in very nature God,
 did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
 but made himself nothing,
 taking the very nature of a servant,
 being made in human likeness.
 And being found in appearance as a man,
 he humbled himself
 and became obedient to death- even death on a cross!
 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
 and gave him the name that is above every name,
 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
 in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
 to the glory of God the Father.⁸²

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead,

⁸¹ John 1:1-16.

⁸² Phil 2:6-11.

so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.⁸³

Do the Scriptures defend a coming to the Table of Worship to commemorate the sacrifice for sin and is that Table the center place of that worship experience?

The absolute centrality of the Eucharistic is based unapologetically on the direct example and exhortation of Jesus. The gospel writers, Matthew, Mark and Luke, each recall the story of Jesus in the upper room with his disciples the night before His crucifixion and sharing the bread and wine.⁸⁴ The setting is more than simply another transcendent moment between Jesus and His followers and its uniqueness is betrayed by Jesus' own words. Here is the quote from Luke's account (*italics mine*). According to Paul Bradshaw, "Of the four versions, Luke 22:7-38 provides the most fully developed form."⁸⁵

And when the hour had come He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him. And He said to them, "I have *earnestly desired* to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, *I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.*" And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes." And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; *do this in remembrance of Me.*" And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is *the new covenant in My blood.*"⁸⁶

Jesus seemed to have a unique anticipation for this particular moment in His ministry with His closest friend and followers. Jesus said that He "earnestly desired" for this

⁸³ Col 1:15-20.

⁸⁴ Matt. 26:20-29, Mark 14:17-25, and Luke 22:14-20.

⁸⁵ Paul F. Bradshaw, *Eucharistic Origins* (Oxford; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2004), 7.

⁸⁶ Luke 22:14-20.

moment. He spoke of its eschatological implication, “I shall never again eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” And He even dares to interpret and edit the understanding of “covenant,” which now appears located within Jesus’ own blood.⁸⁷ All of these observations begin the conversation for this passages uniqueness in Jesus’ ministry and in the story of His people/church.

This uniqueness is picked up on by the earliest expressions of the Christian church. There is an allusion to it as early as Acts, chapter two, “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”⁸⁸ And there is undeniable normalization of the Supper by the time of Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, in chapter eleven:

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.⁸⁹

This passage, written within a generation of the original event, faithfully maintains the language and foci of the original meal, but even more interesting are Paul’s words leading up to the restatement of the Eucharistic liturgy (*italics mine*):

In the following directives I have no praise for you, for *your meetings* do more harm than good. In the first place, I hear that when you *come together as a church*, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God’s approval. *When* you

⁸⁷ Luke 22.20.

⁸⁸ Acts 2:42.

⁸⁹ 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

come together, it is not the *Lord's Supper* you eat, for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk. Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not!⁹⁰

If we can look past the pejorative language in this introductory paragraph, we can see some very significant themes; themes that strongly evidence the central liturgical space afforded the Eucharist. Not only does Paul seem to express the normalized (liturgical) language, reflective of the upper-room experience of Jesus and His disciples, but he also evidences the central place the meal has inhabited. The community is having “meetings” where they “come together as a church” showing the normative practice of gathering. Furthermore, Paul says, “when” these meeting occur, the “Lord’s Supper” is practiced. And to press even deeper into the evolution of communal norms, this upper-room experience had been so important to warrant a community shared (branded) name: “Lord’s Supper.” This name maintained its place in the church’s vernacular right into the Patristic period with the likes of Hippolytus⁹¹ and even into contemporary times.

Summary

Old Testament and New Testament agree. The Judeo-Christian model is gathering for worship. It is practicing structured worship according to consistent patterns or regular gathering and predictability worship patterns. There is evidence that written liturgy, particularly written prayers, populate those worship experiences. And the Table of sacrifice is the center piece of the worship gathering.

⁹⁰ 1 Cor. 11:17-22.

⁹¹ Davies, *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, 340.

In biblical times, this was the reality. Will this reality continue and experience greater definition in the post-biblical age of the church?

CHAPTER 3: THE CONTEXT OF CHRISTIAN HISTORY AND LITURGICAL WORSHIP

This chapter examines church history and the consistent embrace of liturgical/Eucharistic worship throughout the first two millennia of the Christian church. However, before we jump into Christian thought ...

The First-Century Jewish Bridge

As we enter this section of Christian history and thought, I will pause for just a few moments to bridge the era of biblical history (dominated by Jewish life, thought and worship) and the era of Christian (church) history. To do this, we will spend a few moments in extra-biblical Jewish practices that existed in the first century and beyond.

This link is essential. According to my studies, scholars focus on either the biblical data (as I have in Chapter Two) or the evidences from church history, mistakenly missing the very waters out of which the church originally sprung to life. This bridge not only shows that the liturgy is a Judeo-Christian reality, it also demonstrated the unbroken story of the liturgical life as the very stage of the worship gathering.

Synagogue Liturgy

Here is a short reflection on the synagogue liturgy as it surfaced and crystallized in the common era of the first century. First, let's observe the synagogue liturgy (as listed by

Frank Senn)¹ alongside the Anglican liturgy.² (See Chapter One for further descriptions of the Anglican liturgical categories in Table 1.)

Synagogue Liturgy	Anglican Liturgy
<p>Invocation- “Bless the Lord who is to be blessed.”</p> <p>The Shema Israel- “Hear, O Israel” and its blessings.</p> <p>The Eighteen Benedictions- also known as the Amidah (Standing Prayer) or simply Tefillah (The Prayer). The first three blessings are called “praises,” and the last three are called “thanksgivings” including the <i>Shalom</i> or prayer for peace.</p> <p>The Priestly Blessing- The Great Prayer and the Aaronic Benediction were viewed as a single liturgical unit, and that the Prayer was regarded as <i>a substitute for the material sacrifice</i>.</p> <p>Readings from the Torah and the Prophets- scholarly opinion held that it specified a three year lectionary cycle.</p> <p>Psalms- which were originally apart of the Temple liturgy. Sung at the beginning and between readings.</p> <p>Homily delivered often by a visiting rabbi.</p> <p>Concluded with “Alenu leshabeah”- “We must praise the ruler of all.” A prayer, which anticipates God’s rulership over all.</p>	<p>Salutation begins the conversation between God and His worshiping people.</p> <p>The Gloria, Kyrie, or Trisagion- Opening movement of praise, e.g. “Lord, have mercy...”</p> <p>The Collect- “The theme prayer of the day.”</p> <p>The Lessons- Read from the Old Testament, Epistles and Psalms.</p> <p>The Gospel Reading</p> <p>The Sermon- Usually delivered by clergy.</p> <p>The Creed</p> <p>Prayers of the People</p> <p>Confession of Sin</p> <p>The Peace</p> <p>Holy Communion- which includes the Great Thanksgiving, Breaking of Bread and the Communion.</p> <p>Concluded with the Blessing and Dismissal- The sending of the congregation into the world in the renewal and sustenance of the Holy Eucharist.</p>

TABLE 1

While there are obvious variances in the worship order, it only takes a moment to see the numerous overlaps between the two liturgical practices. No doubt, some elements like the Gospel reading and the Prayers of the People are unique to the Anglican liturgy, however, other apparent discrepancies are not as divergent as one might initially think.

¹ Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical*, 68-71.

² Webber, *The Holy Eucharist, Rites I and II*, 18-31.

For instance, the Anglican emphasis on “Creed” echoes the Jewish use of the *Shema*, and the Holy Communion is enveloped in the sacrificial harkening in the “Priestly Blessing.”

Shabbat Liturgy

The other dominant liturgical practice in first century Jewish worshipful expression and into the centuries that followed was the Sabbath (Shabbat) liturgy. That Shabbat meal was shared at the family table on Friday evening (the beginning of the Shabbat, which ran from sunset on Friday through sunset Saturday.) The meal was as formal a gathering as a family could afford and constituted a weekly, repeated liturgy of worship. This liturgy included written prayers, blessings, Scripture reading, and “congregational” prayers. The most striking portion of the Shabbat liturgy (for a twenty-first century Eucharist Christ-follower like me) are the blessings for the wine (Kiddush) and for the bread, which seem so prefiguring of Jesus’ own words in the upper-room (and consequently the words of His church throughout the centuries): “And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.’”³

The following is an English translation of some of that Shabbat liturgy as translated by the Bat Kol Institute,⁴ a community of scholars that exist to teach, train and help contemporary believers integrate Jewish practices and thought. It is a simplified

³ Luke 22:19-20.

⁴ Bat Kol Institute, “Home Page,” Bat Kol Institute, <http://www.batkol.info/> (accessed November 30, 2010).

adaptation of the Shabbat liturgy, but for our purposes here, it does illustrate some of the many themes shared by Christian liturgical worship and this long held Jewish sacred tradition.

A SABBATH EVENING TABLE CELEBRATION⁵

1. Gathering Hymn
2. One participant reads:
Thus, the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude.
And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done,
and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done.
So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all
the work that he had done in creation.⁶
3. Another leads in lighting the Sabbath table candles:
Blessed are you Lord God, Sovereign of the Universe,
who has sanctified us with your commandments,
and ordained that we kindle the Sabbath lights.
4. All of the participants read:
The week has ended. The Sabbath with its peace has come. Together let us pause
and allow its meaning to enlarge our lives: Be praised, O YHWH, our God, who
has blessed us with the gift of Sabbath. May the light of these Sabbath candles
reflect the love and devotion that brightens our lives. May this light inspire us
toward the fulfillment of our sacred aspirations. May we be guided by your law of
love, and love one another as we have been commanded. Bless us, YHWH, with
Sabbath joy, with Sabbath holiness, and with Sabbath peace.
5. The Presider or Host introduces the blessing of the table companions, or you may
use Aaron's Blessing.
6. A participant leads in the **blessing of the wine**:
...Blessed are you Lord God, Sovereign of the Universe,
who creates the fruit of the vine...
7. Another leads in the **blessing of the bread**:
...Blessed are you Lord God, Sovereign of the Universe,
who brings forth bread from the earth...
8. All then enjoy the Sabbath dinner.

⁵ Bat Kol Institute, "A Sabbath Evening Table Celebration," Bat Kol Institute,
http://www.batkol.info/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/BK_Sabbath_Meal_2_0.pdf (accessed October 13,
2010).

⁶ Gen. 2: 1-3.

I am not arguing that Christian liturgy is a direct adaptation of these two forms of Jewish liturgy. Nor am I arguing that the Christian Eucharist is an evolution of the Shabbat and synagogue service and language (though I am sure they were profound influences, at least culturally if not ecclesiastically). What I do want to affirm and argue is that throughout the history of the people of Jehovah (Old Testament, inter-testamental period, New Testament and beyond), these people of faith have found a meaningful worship-home in the secure walls of liturgical forms and around the sacred meal. Through these times of massive change, cultural breadth and theological transformation and upheaval, time and time again the rhythm and lyrics of the liturgical life has consistently provided the soundtrack to the communal life of faith. That is to say, Christian liturgical and Eucharistic worship stands on a very thick foundation. This foundation has been poured over many centuries and its footers were being dug by her Jewish ancestors even before the invention of the Christian church with her unique and shared practices of life, gathering and worship.

Christian History

In this section we will be surveying formative high points of liturgical and Eucharistic practice and scholarship. Our goal is to show that from the earliest days of the church, structured and patterned worship, which climaxed in the sharing of the Lord's Supper, has been the consistent and ubiquitous practice and dedication of the gathered followers of Jesus Christ.

“A group of churches which identifies and unifies itself around an authorized liturgy expresses a conviction that worship holds a central place in the Christian community. The church is not primarily a forum for thought and reflection; it is not primarily a league for mutual help, charitable works or social action. It may be all of those things rightly if, before and with all else, it is a community of acknowledgment, doxology and prayer.”⁷

Once again, in lieu of our study of scripture, we are looking for consistent liturgical practices from church history. Liturgical practice in this space contains the themes of: regular (rhythmic) gathering, structure (even regiment) in the worship gathering, use of written prayers and blessings and the commitment to the Lord’s Supper (Eucharistic). However, we will also observe the solidifying of not just these themes but also the specific forms, schedule and wordings of Christian liturgy and that those specifics have been consistently affirmed and reaffirmed across times, cultures and traditions.

On some levels, this feels like the “No Duh” chapter of this dissertation. Catholic Mass, Eastern Orthodox Eucharist, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox have all been liturgical and so have their traditions. Certainly since the legalization of Christianity, following the conversion of Constantine in 312AD, the Christian Mass has dominated Christian worship and communal practice. Later, liturgies modified and refocused, but maintained, a liturgical center. In fact, it is the “free-church” model that is the stark minority report in Church history.

⁷ William J. Wolf, *Anglican Spirituality* (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow Co., 1982), 105.

I will be focusing most of my studies on the first centuries of Church history to construct a bridge from the biblical and first century practices (chapter two) and the more well known realities of post-Constantinian Christendom (a time, at least regarding liturgy(s), which is little known by most Christians.) Let's begin about as early in Church history as one can go.

The Didache

The *Didache* was a very early church document; “estimates of its date have varied widely. Some place it in the second century, others assign it to the first century, and some argue that it antedates many of the New Testament writings.”⁸ It is widely accepted as a document from Syria. It is one of the earliest existing testaments to the life of the Christian church and worship in a time just a few generations removed from events and personalities of the New Testament period. The *Didache* is a wonderful and fascinating document both because of its ancient roots and also because of the clarity of commentary it makes about church life.

In the *Didache*, there are many very specific practices of Christian life and community worship. These specific practices have noteworthy overlaps with Christian liturgical worship, and specifically, for this context, with Anglican liturgical worship as outlined in the *Book of Common Prayer*. The latter sections of the *Didache* deal specifically with Christian life and worship, for example: the practices of twice-weekly fasting (Wednesdays and Fridays) and thrice-daily prayer (chapter 8), forms of prayer for use in

⁸ Bradshaw, *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*, 85-86.

either an agape or a Eucharist (chapters 9-10), and the celebration of the Eucharist on the Lord's Day (chapter 14).

Here is a sample of the text from the *Didache*, as the language is continuing to evolve from the New Testament period. This early chapter of church history is undeniably liturgical and Eucharistic:

Chapter IX

1. And concerning the Eucharist, hold Eucharist thus:
2. First concerning the Cup, "We give thanks to thee, our Father, for the Holy Vine of David thy child, which, thou didst make known to us through Jesus thy Child; to thee be glory forever."
3. And concerning the broken Bread: "We give thee thanks, our Father, for the life and knowledge which thou didst make known to us through Jesus thy Child. To thee be glory forever."
4. As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into thy kingdom, for thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever."
5. But let none eat or drink of your Eucharist except those who have been baptised in the Lord's Name. For concerning this also did the Lord say, "Give not that which is holy to the dogs."

Chapter X

1. But after you are satisfied with food, thus give thanks:
2. "We give thanks to thee, O Holy Father, for thy Holy Name which thou didst make to tabernacle in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality which thou didst make known to us through Jesus thy Child. To thee be glory forever."
3. Thou, Lord Almighty, didst create all things for thy Name's sake, and didst give food and drink to men for their enjoyment, that they might give thanks to thee, but us hast thou blessed with spiritual food and drink and eternal light through thy Child.
4. Above all we give thanks to thee for that thou art mighty. To thee be glory forever."
5. Remember, Lord, thy Church, to deliver it from all evil and to make it perfect in thy love, and gather it together in its holiness from the four winds to thy kingdom which thou hast prepared for it. For thine is the power and the glory forever."

6. Let grace come and let this world pass away. Hosannah to the God of David. If any man be holy, let him come! if any man be not, let him repent: Maranatha ("Our Lord! Come!"), Amen."

7. But suffer the prophets to hold Eucharist as they will.⁹

The *Didache* was not alone in this very early period of church history in its liturgical voice; Bradshaw says that the early liturgy is "most clearly demonstrated in the *Didache* but with possible parallels in first-century Corinth and in the material in the *Apostolic Tradition*, as well as Papias."¹⁰ Without listing the specific content of each, it is important for this context to note that while the "most clearly demonstrated" material of this time may be found in the *Didache*, these themes have not been preserved by the *Didache* alone.

Justin Martyr (103-165)

Martyr is another significant early voice in Christian history. His *First Apology* was written in Rome around 150 AD. Most of what is known about the life of Justin Martyr comes from his own writings. He was born at Flavia Neapolis in Judea/Palestine. He called himself a Samaritan. According to the traditional accounts of the church, Justin Martyr suffered martyrdom at Rome under the Emperor Marcus Aurelius between 162 and 168. He was brought up as a pagan, but later converted to Christianity, and devoted the rest of his life to teaching the true philosophy, still wearing his philosopher's gown to

⁹ Henry Scowcroft Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, World's Classics. Galaxy Edition (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1947), 90.

¹⁰ Bradshaw, *Eucharistic Origins*, 59.

indicate that he had attained the truth. He probably traveled widely and ultimately settled in Rome as a Christian teacher.¹¹

Martyr wrote to some length on Christian gathering and practice, here are a few sections:

Chapter 65 (bold mine)

But we, after we have thus washed him who has been convinced and has assented to our teaching, bring him to the place where those who are called brethren are assembled, in order that we **may offer hearty prayers** in common for ourselves and for the baptized [illuminated] person, and for all others in every place, that we may be counted worthy, now that we have learned the truth, by our works also to be found good citizens and keepers of the commandments, so that we may be saved with an everlasting salvation. Having **ended the prayers**, we **salute one another** with a kiss. There is then brought to the president of **the brethren bread and a cup of wine mixed with water**; and he taking them, **gives praise** and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His hands. And when he has concluded **the prayers and thanksgivings**, all the people present express their assent by saying Amen. This word Amen answers in the Hebrew language to [so be it]. And when the president has given thanks, and all the people have expressed their assent, those who are called by us deacons give to each of those present **to partake of the bread and wine mixed with water** over which the thanksgiving was pronounced, and to those who are absent they carry away a portion.¹²

Chapter 66 (excerpt)

Of the Eucharist

And this food is called among us Eujcariatia [the Eucharist] ... For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them; that Jesus took bread, and when He had given thanks, said, "This do ye in remembrance of Me, this is My body;" and that,

¹¹ Alexander Roberts and others, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers. Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325* (Buffalo, NY: The Christian Literature Publishing Company, 1885), 295f., Bradshaw, *Eucharistic Origins*, 61f., and Wikipedia, "Justin Martyr," Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Justin_Martyr (accessed October 13, 2010).

¹² Roberts and others, *The Ante-Nicene Fathers. Translations of the Writings of the Fathers Down to A.D. 325*, 353-354.

after the same manner, having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, “This is My blood;” and gave it to them alone.¹³

Chapter 67 (bold mine)

Weekly Worship of the Christians

And we afterwards continually remind each other of these things. And the wealthy among us help the needy; and we always keep together; and for all things wherewith we are supplied, we bless the Maker of all through His Son Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Ghost. And **on the day called Sunday**, all who live in cities or in the country **gather together** to one place, **and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read**, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president **verbally instructs**, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we **all rise together and pray**, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, **bread and wine and water are brought**, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, **saying Amen**; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons. And they who are well to do, and willing, give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succors the orphans and widows and those who, through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds and the strangers sojourning among us, and in a word takes care of all who are in need. But **Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly**, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead. For He was crucified on the day before that of Saturn (Saturday); and on the day after that of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, having appeared to His apostles and disciples, He taught them these things, which we have submitted to you also for your consideration.¹⁴

In these passages we not only have many liturgical practices in a worship gathering including prayers, blessings, reading from the apostles, “verbal instructions” (homily), congregational greetings, here called “salute one another with a kiss” (and in Anglican language might be called “Passing the Peace”), all of which is articulated at such an early

¹³ Ibid., 354-355.

¹⁴ Ibid., 355-356.

date (150 AD). We also have other significant declarations. There is the repeatedly emphasized breaking of bread and wine (mixed with water) and this practice is specifically tied to the witness of the Gospels. It is also worth noting that the norm is a regular gathering on Sunday (Chapter 67). Justin Martyr has provided what appears to be full-form liturgical and Eucharistic life of the church, as performed in the church's earliest days.

St. Hippolytus of Rome

The first and second centuries provide some simple and thematic renderings of church worship order and centrality of the Eucharist, but in the third century we can begin to see liturgical specifics more and more clearly. "For the first time we learn the actual wording of the Eucharistic prayer; for the first time we are given a full description of the daily devotions of the faithful and of the discipline of the sacraments, especially Baptism and Holy Orders."¹⁵

Hippolytus was a presbyter in the Roman church at the beginning of the third century. He died a martyr. He is believed to have been a disciple of St. Irenaeus. He was an influential writer. His most famous work on the teachings for the church is most often called *The Apostolic Tradition* (written in 217 or even a few years earlier¹⁶). This work was so influential that over time it has been found translated in several corners of the Roman world under varying names: The *Egyptian Church Order* (called thus because it

¹⁵ Josef A. Jungmann, *The Early Liturgy to the Time of Gregory the Great*. Translated by Francis A. Brunner (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1959), 52.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 57.

was written in languages connected to Egypt), *The Canons of Hippolytus* (Arabic and Ethiopic), *The Apostolic Constitutions* (Syrian origin), *The Epitome* (in Greek), *Testamentum Domini* (Syriac). This apparent widespread dispersal of Hippolytus' writings is important because it is evidence of the universalizing norms that the church was already developing here at the beginning of the third century, not just universalized practices, but also universalized specific wording and liturgical order.

The details in Hippolytus' writings are profound and cover a wide range of topics. There are instructions for ordination and widow care. There are details for caring for catechumen and a liturgy for baptism. There are numerous written prayers for ministries such as electing elders and giving of offerings. There are even specifics about how a bishop is to "lay hands" (with a wise and amusing assertion that "hands are not laid on a virgin").

Here are some of Hippolytus' instructions for Sunday gathering and the worship.

Chapter 22

On the first day of the week the bishop, if possible, shall deliver the oblation to all the people with his own hand, while the deacons break the bread. 2When the deacon brings it to the elder, the deacon shall present his platter, and the elder shall take it himself and distribute it to the people by his own hand.¹⁷

¹⁷ Hippolytus, "The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus of Rome," www.bombaxo.com, <http://www.bombaxo.com/hippolytus.html> (accessed October 13, 2010). These excerpts were taken from the translation by Kevin P. Edgecomb of Berkeley, CA. It can be found at his website where he offers his translations for public use.

Chapter 25

The Bishop: The Lord be with you.

People: And with thy spirit.

B.: Lift up your hearts.

P.: We lift them up unto the Lord.

B.: Let us give thanks unto the Lord.

P.: It is meet and right.

B.: We give thee thanks, O God, through thy beloved son Jesus Christ, who thou didst send to us in the last times to be a savior and redeemer and the messenger of thy will; who is thy inseparable Word, through whom thou madest all things, and in whom thou was well pleased. Thou didst send him from Heaven into the Virgin's womb; he was conceived and was incarnate, and was shown to be thy Son, born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin; Who, fulfilling thy will and preparing for thee a holy people, stretched out his hands in suffering, that he might free from suffering them that believed on thee.

Who when he was being betrayed to his voluntary suffering, that he might destroy death, break the chains of the devil, tread Hell underfoot, bring forth the righteous and set a bound, and that he might manifest his Resurrection, took bread and gave thanks to thee and said: TAKE, EAT: THIS IS MY BODY WHICH IS BROKEN FOR YOU. Likewise also the cup, saying: THIS IS MY BLOOD WHICH IS SHED FOR YOU. AS OFT AS YE DO THIS YE SHALL DO IT IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

Wherefore we, being mindful of his death and resurrection, do offer unto thee this bread and this cup, giving thanks unto thee for that thou hast deemed us worthy to stand before thee and minister as they priest. And we beseech thee that thou wouldst send thy Holy Spirit upon the oblation of thy holy Church; and that thou wouldst grant it to all the saints who partake, making them one, for fulfillment of the Holy Spirit and for the

confirmation of their faith in truth; that we may praise and glorify thee through thy Son Jesus Christ, through whom be glory and honor to thee, to the Father and to the Son with the Holy Spirit in thy Holy Church, both now and forever. Amen.¹⁸

These liturgical instructions are specific. They include written prayers and congregational responses. There can be found all the elements for our definition of liturgy: regular and structured gathering, written prayers, and centrality of the Lord's Table.

Take a look at this short excerpt and its comparison to the equivalent liturgical discourse from a contemporary Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*:¹⁹

Apostolic Tradition by Hippolytus	Anglican Book of Common Prayer
The Bishop: The Lord be with you.	Priest: The Lord be with you
People: And with thy spirit.	People: And with your spirit.
B.: Lift up your hearts.	Priest: Lift up your hearts.
P.: We lift them up unto the Lord.	People: We lift them to the Lord.
B.: Let us give thanks unto the Lord.	Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
P.: It is meet and right.	People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

TABLE 2

These liturgical themes and even the very wordings have lasted the test of time, across continents, and through innumerable cultures and have been reaffirmed time and time

¹⁸ Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, 106-107.

¹⁹ The Anglican Mission in the Americas, *An Anglican Prayer Book* (Philadelphia, PA: Preservation Press of the Prayer Book Society of the U.S.A., 2008), 54.

again as meaningful. The continuity, universalizing and tenacity of these literary elements extend to the most important parts of the worship service and as Theodor Klauser asserts about Hippolytus, “In fact the Eucharistic prayer, as those who read it will have sensed, was, in essence, then exactly what it is today.”²⁰ The structure underlying the Eucharist prayers to come are found in this passage: “the initial dialogue; an introductory formula expressing thanksgiving and an anamnesis of the work of salvation accomplished by Christ, ending with the narrative of the eucharistic institution; a formula of offering, introduced by a paschal anamnesis and followed by a second formula of thanksgiving; an epiclesis of the Holy Spirit on the offerings of the assembly, with the mention of praise; a trinitarian doxology.”²¹

Latin Mass

The fourth century brought about a time of radical change for the church of Jesus Christ. Christians were no longer subject to persecution, but were now followers of a legitimate and respectable religion. They had gained the status of *cultus publicus* and with it brought great opportunity.

The end of the third century had been a time of destruction for the church. Eusebius of Caesarea (265-340) wrote of this era, “...the houses of prayer, because of which, not being satisfied any longer with the ancient buildings, they built, from the foundations up, spacious churches... We saw with our own eyes the houses of prayer cast down to the

²⁰ Theodor Klauser, *A Short History of the Western Liturgy: An Account and Some Reflections*, 2d ed. (Oxford; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1979), 17.

²¹ Marcel Metzger, *History of the Liturgy: The Major Stages* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1997), 43.

very foundations from top to bottom, and the inspired and sacred Scriptures given over to flames in the midst of the market places.”²² And so with the church’s newly found legitimacy, from the standpoint of public face and institutional structure, everything solidified. “Its number grew, as so it occupied larger and grander buildings than before, and consequently its worship became more formal in style and incorporated ritual ...”²³

With this new found freedom, most of the existent writings of this era, focus on points of theology, debate and anti-heretical arguments. What we do know is that “Latin Christianity arose in North Africa at the close of the second century and gradually attained pre-eminence over the West, informing the liturgy.”²⁴ We also know that the Roman Rite, which dominated most of Western Church history, almost immediately split into two streams. “The Roman type, which was used in the Eternal City and perhaps in North Africa; and the Gallic type, which prevailed in Milan and beyond the Alps.”²⁵ “The need of the period... (from the fourth century to the eighth) was to adapt the old pre-Nicene tradition of Christian worship to its new ‘public’ conditions and function. But this need was felt by different churches with a different intensity and at different times. And the practical break-up of the Christian empire in the fifth century—it still continued as a

²² Ibid., 39-40. Metzger is quoting from: Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* (New York, NY: Fathers of the Church, 1953), 37-38.

²³ Bradshaw, *Eucharistic Origins*, 139.

²⁴ Bard Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church*, 1st Fortress Press ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1980), 27.

²⁵ Ibid.

theory, so mightily had the universal dominion of Rome impressed the imagination of the world.”²⁶

“There is reason to believe that the Roman rite evolved in Rome itself... Its appearance coincided with the gradual transition of that community from Greek to Latin, which was underway by the pontificate of Cornelius (251-3) The core of the Roman Mass must have been fixed at the beginning of the fifth century... the liturgy no longer countenanced the primitive freedom of extempore prayer and unfixed forms, but presented a very definite shape and text... (and) elements to accommodate the Church Year.”²⁷

Once solidified, this Latin Mass was sanctified. It is shocking for me to read that the earliest copies of the full Mass available to us are from the seventh century, but as stated above, the church has long assumed that it was established much earlier. An excellent side by side translation into English can be found in *The Missal in Latin and English*,²⁸ which derives its text from the *Missale Romanum*, fully printed from pages 676 through 720.

The Gallic type is less known to most. Though it could not withstand the tide of history and in an attempt to bring the entire church in closer communion with Rome was eventually overtaken by the Roman rite. In summary, I would like to lay out the basic

²⁶ Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (New York, NY: Seabury Press, 1982), 435.

²⁷ Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church*, 32.

²⁸ Catholic Church, John Berthram O'Connell, and H. P. R. Finberg, *The Missal in Latin and English Being the text of the Missale Romanum with English Rubrics and a New Translation* (New York, NY: Sheed & Ward, 1949).

schedule of worship of the Gallic type. I will be summarizing from the writings of Bard

Thompson in *Liturgies of the Western Church*:²⁹

- Commenced with the antiphon, also called the *Ingressa* or the *Officium*, which accompanied the entrance of the clergy.
- Bishop greeted the people.
- Three canticles followed: the Trisagion, the Kyrie eleison and the Benedictus.
- Bishop prayer.
- Three lessons read:
 - Old Testament
 - Epistles or Acts
 - The Gospels accompanied by the Benedictus es, a responsorial chant, the bringing of the Gospel book by solemn procession led by seven torch-bearers.
- The Trisagion chanted again.
- Homily
- The Church Prayers by the Deacons, after each the congregation says “Lord, have mercy.”
- The Collect
- Catechumens dismissed.
- Procession of Eucharistic gifts (*Sonus* chanted by choir)
- Sacred Song
- Opening address called *praefatio missae* to explain the holy meaning.
- The Collect *post nomina*
- The giving of the Kiss of Peace
- The Communion
 - Preface which focused upon thanksgiving for the life and work of the Savior
 - *Sanctus* and collect *post Sanctus*
 - Words of Institution
 - Prayer of Consecration
 - The Fraction (breaking of bread)
 - Particles of bread arranged elaborately on the altar, often in cruciform (showing the Gallic tendency toward symbolic action.)
 - Congregational reciting of the *Pater Noster*.
 - “The high moment of the Mass”³⁰
 - People invited to bow their heads for the Benediction, given by the bishop or priest.
 - Blessing most often as: “Peace, faith, and love, and the communication of the Body and Blood of Christ be with you always.”
 - Communion accompanied by the antiphon based on Psalms 33.

²⁹ Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church*, 30-32.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 31.

- Thanksgiving given and dismissal, “*Missa acta est—in pace.*” Eastern Church

Eastern Orthodoxy (earlier simply known as the Eastern Church) has maintained its own commitment to liturgical life. From the earliest centuries, “the East was inclined toward a type of worship that was timeless and changeless, transfixed in holiness, and celebrated at the threshold of heaven ... (it) was given to resplendent ceremonial and embellished speech.”³¹

“In the Holy Eucharist we offer to God the substance of our life and receive it back as the body and Blood of Christ for the sanctification of our soul and bodies and as the mystery of the Church’s unity in Christ.”³²

More than any of the major branches of Christendom, Eastern Orthodoxy has endured a horrifying history. The Balkans, Asia Minor and Eastern Mediterranean housed much of her history. These lands are also a “highway” for every war wielding Empire in European (and beyond) history. “Actually its position was often a terrible one, and it is impossible to describe all the suffering, humiliation, and outright persecution the Church was obliged to undergo in this age, which was dark indeed.”³³ And yet, they have maintained an uncompromised liturgical tradition.

“When an Anglican cleric asked patriarch Aleksii of Moscow to define the Russian Orthodox Church in a phrase, he received the answer, ‘It is the church which celebrates

³¹ Ibid., 27.

³² Clark Carlton and Dmitri Royster, *The Faith: Understanding Orthodox Christianity (an Orthodox Catechism)*, The faith series (Salisbury, MA: Regina Orthodox Press, 1997), 203.

³³ Alexander Schmemmann, *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy*, [1st ed. (New York, NY: Holt, 1963), 273. An excerpt specifically about the life under the Ottoman Empire, but indicative of Orthodox history more broadly.

the divine liturgy.”³⁴ This statement points to the reality that “the centrality of worship, above all of Eucharistic worship, in the life of the Orthodox Church. For it is in the eucharist that she most fully confirms her identity, integrity and her vocation.”³⁵ And this liturgy is not transient in its form or expression. “Indeed, the order of this church’s elaborate services has remained exceptionally constant over the last millennium or more.”³⁶

“The Byzantine rite itself, clearly of Antiochene-Syrian derivation, continued to develop along its own lines down to the seventh century and did not become absolutely rigid until the ninth century... before that date (seventh century) the East had shewn more tendency to innovate in the liturgy than the West.”³⁷ Why did this Eastern liturgy solidify so profoundly from the seventh century onward? Dix insists that it was not because of “‘arrested development’ ...It is only a case of completed development.”³⁸

There are distinctive elements to the Eastern Church including a more multi-sensory worship experience including icons and incense. In addition to this, “actions are expressed in words (liturgy). These words are usually sung or chanted Services involve a dialogue between the people and the celebrant ... (they) have distinct and well-established roles to play.”³⁹

³⁴ Davies, *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, 421.

³⁵ Ibid., 422.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 547-548.

³⁸ Ibid., 548.

³⁹ Davies, *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*.

Most of us in the West have little to no connection to the Eastern Church. It is ironic that this second largest tradition in Church history should continue to be so ignored. I can remember taking a seminary class on church history. This attempt to survey the breadth of church history dedicated no readings to the Eastern Church and only a small portion of one class lecture. Though the Orthodox Church has lasted along an independent historical narrative (often isolated from the West), they have independently affirmed and defended the absolute centrality of a liturgical model of worship and the celebration of the Eucharist.

The Mediaeval Ages

The Roman Catholic Mass reigns all through the Mediaeval ages. Liturgy scholars understandably focus the vast majority of their commentary on liturgical events from the eighth century and before and the sixteenth century and later. The Mediaeval times offer far less data and distinction (which may explain why this era is simply called “Middle.”) However, that is not to say that liturgical life was static. Throughout these times their continued the on-going liturgical practice of local adaptation while maintaining historical continuity. Here are some of the contextualized adaptations that marked this historical era.

There were local *Italian Rites* that sprung up between the sixth and ninth centuries and the *Gelasian Sacramentary* rite, which can be pieced together from primarily seventh century manuscripts discovered in France.

There was a unique *Western Synthesis* (as it is referred to by Dix),⁴⁰ which appears to be a synthesis of the *Missale Gallicaum* (or the Gallic Rite as discussed above under the section of the Latin Mass) and prayers of the Gregorian church. “The result is not merely a ‘Gelasianised Gregorian’ book, less austere and sober in tone than Gregorian as S. Gregory had left it. It can only be described as an ingenious combination of French taste and feeling with the old Roman sense of form.”

At the beginning of the ninth century the emperor Charlemagne as a way of consolidating his power and aligning his reign with the imperial legend of Rome, reinstituted the Latin Rite with a few fresh reforms, following his crowning as Roman emperor by the Pope in St. Peter’s on Christmas Day in the year 800 AD. This adaptation was an example of liturgical adaptation and universalizing as an instrument of political power, under which many contextualized liturgies were squashed for the sake of imperial continuity. “One immediate result was the end of the Gallican rite as a rite wherever it still survived. Charlemagne peremptorily forbade its use ... followed by the slower decline of the sister Mozarabit rite in Spain.”⁴¹

The Mediaeval Ages are dramatically illustrative of the greatest battle within a liturgical worship framework. There is an even pull, on the one side to allow the liturgy to breathe within each context, to find a freshness of voice while hopefully maintaining its abiding connection and submission to the church, global and historical. On the other side is the seduction of power to use the ways of worship to control people and

⁴⁰ Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, 573-575.

⁴¹ Ibid., 581.

consolidate authority. When this happens, the liturgy loses its true-spirit and becomes a weapon and an abuse. This is a tragic theme of human history, to take something so consistently meaningful and life-giving and bastardize it for institutional gain.

The Reformation and Beyond

Christianity entered the liturgical laboratory in the sixteenth century. It is in this century that the Reformation and Counter-Reformation were birthed and overflowed with creative energy. From this creative laboratory, many liturgies were first penned. Each liturgy reflected the personality of the new traditions they represented, while also affirming the historic congruence of structured liturgical life.

The Protestant Reformation was a move away from the authority of Rome, and the establishment of many new (and lasting) Christian traditions, each of which took the best of the Roman Catholic Mass and added/adapted unto the local theological and cultural distinctiveness. The influential names from this era of catalytic change and unprecedented theological escalation and communication⁴² are well known: Luther, Zwingli, Bucer, Calvin, and Knox. And each of these has a liturgy, which bears his name or influence.

Martin Luther

Martin Luther's liturgical works were first published in December, 1523 under the title, *Formula Missae*. He had been hesitant in making such a liturgy. "But now the time was ripe for a revision—not that he intended to deal severely with the liturgy, but merely

⁴² One profound example of the change in communication came from the invention of the printing press in 1440. It forever changed the pace and volume of idea exchange and mass education. By the sixteenth century the press was in mass use and the Protestant Reformers were the first generation of Christian leaders to utilize its unending channels of influence.

to purge it of its' abominable additions.'"⁴³ Luther "did not lose sight of the historical character and religious values of the Latin rite... he chose to purge and reinterpret rather than destroy. Three of his own contributions were of the highest order: the recovery of the sermon, the introduction of German hymns, and the triumphant restoration of the Communion of the people."⁴⁴ In addition to a vernacular liturgy, "Luther advocated the addition of vernacular hymnody."⁴⁵ It is also worthy of note that Martin Luther himself was aware of the liturgy's import but also the missional mandate of the Church of Jesus Christ. Luther wrote in his introduction to *The German Mass and Order of Service* (1526), "Above all things, I most affectionately and for God's sake beseech all, who see or desire to observe this our Order of Divine Service, on no account to make of it a compulsory law, or to ensnare or make captive thereby any man's conscience; but to use it agreeably to Christian liberty at their good pleasure as, where, when and so long as circumstances favour and demand it. Moreover, we would not have our meaning taken to be that we desire to rule, or by law to compel, any one."⁴⁶

Zwingli

Liturgical adaptation was not always prescribed with such a positive bent. **Zwingli's** first liturgical work was titled, *An Attack on the Canon of the Mass*. However, his policy of revision was conservatism. "He kept the first part of the Mass intact, except to simplify

⁴³ Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church*, 99.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 104.,

⁴⁵ James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 3rd ed. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2000), 245.

⁴⁶ B. J. Kidd, *Documents Illustrative of the Continental Reformation* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1911), 193.

the lectionary, remove the Propers for saints' days, and to insist that the lessons and sermon must be given in the vernacular."⁴⁷ Zwingli's other, and perhaps most profound contribution was found in the delivery of the elements. "After the assistant had read the Words of Institution (1 Cor. 11), there was no more speaking, and a profound stillness settled over the church. When the clergy had communicated, the assistants carried the elements to the people in wooden utensils. No Words of Delivery were spoken, no music sung or played; but the silence prevailed."⁴⁸ It is also worth noting that it appears, from the 1525 liturgy that the assistants take the elements to the people and then the people serve themselves, by tearing a "mouthful with his own hand"⁴⁹ as well as apparently taking the cup themselves to drink. "Thus by a powerful, communal symbol, the congregation realized itself as the Body of Christ."⁵⁰

Martin Bucer

Diabald Schwarz began reading his own liturgy on February 16, 1524 in Strassburg, this began the Strassburg liturgical tradition. By 1539, eighteen editions of the liturgy were produced each with varying changes. **Martin Bucer**, whose name is better known than Schwarz, influenced this tradition greatly. "In the course of time, the word "Mass" gave way to "Lord's Supper." The "altar" became the "altar-table" or simply "table." The celebrant was no longer described as "priest" but as "parson," and more often as "minister." He stood behind the table, facing the people... Finally vestments

⁴⁷ Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church*, 141.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 145.

⁴⁹ Ibid. This entire liturgical text *Action and Use of the Lord's Supper, Easter, 1525* in Thompson's *Liturgies*. The exact quote is found on page 154.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 145.

disappeared.”⁵¹ Strassburg was known for elevating the congregational confession and pardon. While these changes were radical by sixteenth century standards, Bucer was adamant that the church remain unified in its worship and that her ways be always liturgical. “By 1534 he began to plead for uniformity. While he still maintained that “the Spirit of Christ inspires the churches,” he was now dismayed by “deplorable differences” of practice and “detestable changes” made upon an unfounded notion of freedom.”⁵² I am struck by the simultaneous leveling of humanity by limiting the distinctions between clergy and laity (changing titles, vestments, placement during communion,) while still insisting that structure and continuity rule the worship life of the church; tradition and adaptation living hand-in-hand.

John Calvin

John Calvin seemed to have the most passionate desire to condemn the Mass. “Of all the idols, he knew none so grotesque as that in which the priest called down Christ into his hands by ‘magical mumblings’ and offering him anew on the sacrificial altar, while the people looked on in ‘stupid amazement.’”⁵³ However, he held to and defended much of the Mass’ forms. When he wrote about his early proposal for the Lord’s Supper, in his 1536 *Institutes*, he spoke of all these elements: offered at least once a week, common prayers, sermon, bread and wine on table, recite the Institution of the Supper, excommunicate those excluded from the Supper, the Thanksgiving, psalms sung,

⁵¹ Ibid., 160.

⁵² Ibid., 163.

⁵³ Ibid., 185.

breaking of bread and giving of cup, exhortation of sincere faith, and final thanks and dismissal.⁵⁴

Calvin brought possibly the strongest emphasis on sermon and the Word proclaimed (bread and wine were not brought out until the Word was read. “Calvin did not think it appropriate to expose the elements until the Word could be added to validate the sacrament...apart from the Word, he said, the Lord’s Supper has no power, but remains ‘a lifeless and bare phantom.’”⁵⁵) He also placed a unique emphasis on excommunication (regarding the Supper,) and on the regular reading of the Ten Commandments in order to stimulate the very real guilt of the gathered.

Of what use, then, were the erection in churches of so many crosses of wood and stone, silver and gold, if this doctrine were faithfully and honestly preached, viz., Christ died that he might bear our curse upon the tree, that he might expiate our sins by the sacrifice of his body, wash them in his blood, and, in short, reconcile us to God the Father? From this one doctrine, the people would learn more than from a thousand crosses of wood and stone.⁵⁶

John Knox

John Knox wrote his *The Forme of Prayers* liturgy in 1556. His conceptualization birthed from the 1552 English *Book of Common Prayer*⁵⁷ but adapted along Knox’s particular values. Knox infused thoughts taken from Calvin including the emphasis on the

⁵⁴ For the sake of space, I have summarized the elements listed in a large section of Chapter 4 of Calvin’s 1536 *Institutes*.

⁵⁵ Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church*, 192.

⁵⁶ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Albany, OR: Sage Software, 1996), 133.

⁵⁷ English *Book of Common Prayer* will be discussed in the later section titled, “English Rite.”

Word and so believing that it speaks authoritatively that he removed the “consecration of the elements” from his liturgy. One of the most important contributions that Knox brought to the Eucharist was that after the communicants were invited to the table, and the minister delivered the Eucharistic prayer of thanks,⁵⁸ he then delivered the bread to the people who divided it among themselves. “By sitting down together and by serving the elements to one another, the people were able to realize their fellowship and mutual priesthood in the Body of Christ.”⁵⁹

The Reformers certainly initiated and participated in an era of creative transformation. They were contextually driven, focusing much energy on translating the scriptures and liturgy into the local vernacular. They restarted the necessity of meaning, through accurate and thorough explanation of the worshiping acts. They brought their congregants into greater participation in the worship gathering, even encouraging them to participate in the very distribution of the Eucharist elements (Zwingli and Knox.) They even localized some elements, as Zwingli did with his wooden utensils. All the while, those changes swam in deep liturgical waters. As Calvin spoke of above, the major elements of the historical liturgical service were maintained and defended. Even some, like Luther, seemed to fight to defend as much ongoing tradition as possible or, like Bucer, stood strongly against too much freedom in church.

⁵⁸ “...using an original prayer that was truly Eucharistic in its scope; it included adoration, thanksgiving for creation and redemption, a brief anamnesis, and a doxology.”Thompson, *Liturgies of the Western Church*, 293.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 294.

These brilliant men and women of the reformation and their liturgical adaptations have been the lyrics of the church's ecclesial song for five hundred years at least for much of Protestantism (particularly those denominations that are called "Mainline.") Today's liturgies remain true to those sixteenth century reforms. For instance, you can hear Calvin's ethos in the introduction to the Lord's Day service from the Presbyterian *Book of Common Worship* of today. "With its focus upon scripture and sacrament, the main body of the service moves broadly from hearing to doing, from proclamation to thanksgiving, and from Word to table."⁶⁰

Thank you, ancient friends, for your labor, your courage and your Christ-devoted thoughts in words.

English Rite

Out of this same period came the English Rite. "Neither Cranmer nor Somerset cherished a drastic breach with tradition (the Latin Rite.) The initial steps were rather designed to encourage sound preaching and to establish men in the English Bible." In fact the 1549 *The Booke of the Common Prayer* kept the structure of the Latin rite, but all agreed that the service ought to be in English. More than possibly any other Protestant church that birthed in this era, there was a great desire to maintain the traditions of their Catholic heritage, all the while making no concessions for the papists. For instance, in the Canon (the part of the early liturgy containing the venerable prayers surrounding the Consecration,) a portion of the Mass that Luther called a "heap of filth," the English

⁶⁰ Theology and Worship Ministry Unit for the Presbyterian Church, *Book of Common Worship: Pastoral Edition* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 33.

reformers chose, instead of abolishing the Canon, to carefully purify it of its sacrificial doctrine. This spirit is what gave birth to the popular Anglican slogan, *via media* or “middle way.” “This phrase was popularized in the nineteenth century by John Henry Newman, to refer to Anglicanism’s position between Roman Catholicism on the one hand and Protestantism on the other. We have often said, somewhat smugly, that we are ‘fully catholic and fully reformed.’”⁶¹

“The principles (of the English rite) were set out in the 1549 BCP⁶² in the preface and in the tract entitled *Of Ceremonies* ... First...a single ‘use’ for the whole country... Second, all services were to be in English instead of Latin... Third, there was an emphasis on edification, particularly through scripture... Fourth, the central act of public worship was to be the eucharist⁶³... Finally, the liturgy was to be loyal to scripture and loyal to tradition.”⁶⁴ Even these principles evolved over time as the “Church of England” spread, missionally, to touch other parts of the world. In time, the English language was replaced by the principle of primacy of the vernacular and thus furthered this commitment: “it is now recognized that worship cannot be static; it is affected not only by developments in theology but also by the changing pattern of life in the world... (it) cannot be committed to the precise positions of ... (the) sixteenth and seventeenth

⁶¹ Richard H. Schmidt, *Glorious Companions: Five Centuries of Anglican Spirituality* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), xii-xiii.

⁶² Theology and Worship Ministry Unit for the Presbyterian Church, *Book of Common Worship: Pastoral Edition*.

⁶³ For a fuller discussion of the structure of Anglican worship, see Chapter One, under the sub-heading, “Eucharist.” And for a further critique, visit Appendix 2.

⁶⁴ Davies, *The New Westminster Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, 21. To see how scripture and tradition have been maintained, see Chapter One, under the subheading, “Eucharist.”

centuries... it must take into account fresh and contemporary understanding of the gospel.”⁶⁵ This process of Anglican cultural evolution and adaptation is illustrated in greater detail in Chapter Four.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Ibid., 22.

⁶⁶ For a commentary on how the Anglican Eucharist might be specifically adapted and applied to Post-Christian Northwest culture, while maintaining its commitment to the sign, symbol, scriptures and tradition, see Appendix 2.

LITURGY COMPARED ACROSS TRADITIONS

ROMAN MISSAL 1949	LUTHERAN BOOK OF WORSHIP 1978	ANGLICAN BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER 1979	THE METHODIST HYMNAL 1989	PRESBYTERIAN BOOK OF COMMON WORSHIP 1993
<i>The Order of Mass</i>	<i>The Holy Communion</i>	<i>The Holy Eucharist</i>	<i>Service of Word and Table</i>	<i>Service for the Lord's Day</i>
Entrance Psalm	(Brief Order of Confession)	(Hymn, Psalm, or Anthem)	Gathering	Call to Worship
Invocation and Greeting	Entrance Hymn	(Penitential Rite)	Greeting	Prayer of the Day
Penitential Rite	Apostolic Greeting	(Hymn, Psalm, or Anthem)	Hymn of Praise	Hymn of Praise
(Kyrie)	(Kyrie)	Greeting and Collect	Opening Prayer	Confession and Pardon
(Gloria)	(Gloria or Worthy is Christ or Hymn)	(Gloria or Kyrie or Trisagion)	(Act of Praise)	(The Peace)
Salutation and Collect of the Day	Salutation and Prayer of the Day	Salutation and Collect for the Day	Prayer for Illumination	Canticle: Psalm, Hymn, or Spiritual
First Lesson	First Lesson	First Lesson	Scripture Lesson	Prayer for Illumination
Psalmody	Psalmody	(Hymn, Psalm, or Anthem)	(Psalm)	First Reading
Second Lesson	Second Lesson	Second Lesson	(Scripture Lesson)	Psalm
Alleluia Verse	Alleluia Verse	(Hymn, Psalm, or Anthem)	Hymn or Song	Second Reading
Gospel	Gospel	Gospel	Gospel Lesson	(Anthem, Hymn, Psalm, Canticle, or Spiritual)
Homily	Sermon	Sermon	Sermon	Gospel Reading
Nicene Creed	Nicene or Apostle's Creed	Nicene Creed	(Occasional Service)	Sermon
Intercessions	Prayers of the Church (Confession of Sin)	Prayers of the People (Confession of Sin)	The Apostle's Creed	Affirmation of Faith
Offering	Greeting of Peace	The Peace	Concerns and Prayers	(Pastoral Rule of the Church)
Offertory Song	Offering	Offertory Sentence	Invitation to the Table	Prayers of the People
Offertory Prayers	Offertory Verse	Offertory Procession	Confession and Pardon	(The Peace)
Preface and Sanctus	Offertory Prayer	Preface and Sanctus	The Peace	Offering
Canon (9 options)	Preface and Sanctus	Great Thanksgiving (4 options)	Offering (Hymn, Psalm, or Anthem)	Invitation to the Table
Lord's Prayer	Great Thanksgiving (5 Options)	Lord's Prayer	Great Thanksgiving	Great Thanksgiving
Peace of the Lord	Of Words of Institution	Breaking of the Bread	The Lord's Prayer	Lord's Prayer
Lamb of God	Lord's Prayer	Communion	Breaking of Bread	Breaking of Bread
Communion (Communion songs)	Communion	(Hymn, Psalm, or Anthem)	Giving the Bread and Cup	Communion of the People
Silent Reflection	Lamb of God or other hymns	Post-Communion Prayer	Post-Communion Prayer	Hymn, Spiritual, Canticle, or Psalm
Post-communion Prayer	Post-Communion Song	Benediction and Dismissal	Hymn or Song	Charge and Blessing
Benediction and Dismissal	Post-Communion Prayer		Dismissal with Blessing	
	Silent Reflection		Going Forth	
	Benediction and Dismissal			

FIGURE 11. Liturgy Compared Across Traditions. Source: Mark Galli, *Beyond Smells & Bells* (Brewster, Massachusetts: Paraclete Press, 2008), Appendix B.

Free Church

I want to take just a few moments to acknowledge the Free Church paradigm. There are two primary definitions of Free Church, which influence and inform one another. At its birth, it was related to churches, which were not directly associated with a national government (national church) or at least a national endorsement (as the Roman church crossed many national boundaries.) “(They) began with a radical break from... regional territorial pattern of state-church.”⁶⁷ In England, such churches were called Dissenting or Nonconformist. Because of this rejection of national control or influence, these Free Church movements were, well... *free*, free to pursue their own forms and patterns. In light of this, these movements transcended the stasis associated with most denominations. These early movements included the Donatists, Waldensians, Lollards and Anabaptists.⁶⁸

The second definition of Free⁶⁹ Church, which is more applicable to the American experience specifically,⁷⁰ is a philosophy of church where her forms, particularly corporate worship forms, are creative, free-flow and determinable by the local communities’ desires and tastes. It was initially associated with “Baptists, Quakers, Pentecostals and a variety of other evangelical and congregational groups.”⁷¹ Five traits

⁶⁷ Franklin H. Littell, “The Historical Free Church Defined,” *Brethren Life and Thought* 50, 3-4 (2005).

⁶⁸ These movements are cited as early examples by two authors: First, Murray, *Post-Christendom: Church and Mission in a Strange New World*. Second, in the article by Ian M. Randall, “Mission in Post-Christendom: Anabaptist and Free Church Perspectives,” *Evangelical Quarterly* 79, 3 (2007).

⁶⁹ Or “Free-Form” or “Free Worship.”

⁷⁰ These movements have flourished in America, because of the simple fact that the United States was founded without a National Church and a foundational commitment to separate church and state.

⁷¹ Curtis W. Freeman, “Where Two or Three Are Gathered: Communion Ecclesiology in the Free Church,” *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 31, 3 (2004): 259.

that define it are: “1) freedom of governance (non-hierarchical order/congregational polity), 2) freedom of worship (non-prescribed liturgy/spiritual worship), 3) freedom of faith (non-binding confession...), 4) freedom of conscience (non-coercive authority/soul liberty), and 5) freedom of religion.”⁷² This form of church-worship gained its greatest influence in the latter twentieth century. It was linked most often to evangelicalism and more specifically to the “church-growth movement.”⁷³ Within “church growth,” marketing philosophy is shrewdly grafted into church organization to make the entrance into church as “easy” as possible. Often this means making church like other societal forms (e.g. entertainment forms) and historical church forms are most often antithetical to this philosophy. “We do best when we make evangelism less difficult and recognize that we all naturally share the good things that happen to us best with those we know the best,”⁷⁴ those who are most *like* us.

This short discussion of “free church” is important in this context because it has saturated most of the missional conversation over the last forty years. And it is within this sort of free-flow, entertainment oriented and worship de-jour context that our post-Christian world has thrived and accelerated.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Also called “seeker-sensitive” or “attractional church.”

⁷⁴ C. Wayne Zunkel, “Countering Critics of the Church Growth Movement,” *Christian Century* 98, 31 (1981): 998.

CHAPTER 4: CONTEXTUALIZATION

The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood.

John 1:14 (The Message)

Through the first three chapters, this work has made an argument for the biblical, historical and theological integrity of a consistent, structured and traditional worship structure. However, inherent to our argument, a case must also be made for the cultural imperative of biblical Christianity. Or, to put it another way, the missional heart of Jesus' invitation to go to "Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth"¹ demands a theology of cultural integration, meaning that while the expression of Christian life and worship must never submit to the local cultural forms (being "of the world"²), they must at the same time be deeply embedded within each unique cultural context (being "into the world"³).

Missionaries and church-planters, at least the good ones, have been doing contextualization since the beginning. This can be seen in the Old Testament where God comes to people in ways and forms that they can understand. The New Testament itself bears witness to this process.

"It provides 'stories of contextualization'—particularly in the Gospels and Acts—in which Jesus and the apostles tailor the gospel message to address different groups of

¹ Acts 1:8 (NASB).

² John 17:16.

³ John 17:18.

people. The journey of the church from its beginnings as a Jewish sect to becoming a largely Gentile body that proclaimed a universal faith required the gospel to engage new cultural groups and circumstances at each point along the way.”⁴

Contextualization is more than just “good marketing.” This is about more than just presenting the gospel in such a way so that it sells more and more copies. “The idea that one can or could at any time separate out by some process of distillation a pure gospel unadulterated by any cultural accretions is an illusion.”⁵ It cannot be separated from culture. And with equal strength it can never be equated to any individual cultural expression. “The word of God is to be spoken in every tongue, but it can never be domesticated in any.”⁶

Jesus is our ultimate model of contextualization. He is the Word “who became flesh and dwelt among us.”⁷ From a theology of culture, this simple phrase is more than just a travelogue. This is a foundational truth of Orthodox Christianity throughout all time and space. The Word, co-equal with the Father, over and beyond creation, the very Creator (John 1:1), the One who in whom all things are held together,⁸ took on human flesh. This does not *simply* mean that Christ became human: simply some sort of generic über-

⁴ Dean E. Flemming, *Contextualization in the New Testament: Patterns for Theology and Mission* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 15.

⁵ Lesslie Newbigin, *Foolishness to the Greeks: The Gospel and Western Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 4.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁷ John 1:14 (NASB).

⁸ Col 1:15-17: He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

human. Jesus became a human, yes. Jesus also became a man, a first-century man, a Palestinian man, a peasant man, a Jewish man, a resident of the Roman Empire, etc. Jesus' incarnation was particular! It was particular to a very specific time, a very specific geography, a very specific societal dynamic *and a very specific culture*.

Dr. Paul Metzger writes in his extensive response (and affirmation) to Karl Barth's theology of culture:

One thing that is required is a model of the Word that is truly incarnational: contextual, affirming the Word's embodiment in culture, and yet, at the same time, dialectical, safeguarding against the syncretistic union of gospel and culture. On the whole, Barth's doctrine of the Word provides such a model of Christ and culture, one that affirms the incarnation of the Word while guarding against the domestication of the gospel, and also against the cultural imperialism that so easily results from such syncretism when the church of one culture offers its supposedly unadulterated gospel to another people. Barth's theology of the Word...enable(s) him to affirm the incarnation of the divine Word in human history, and to protect the distinction between the divine and human natures in the incarnate life. The Word becomes incarnate as a human, as a Jewish male, in history. However, the Word is not exhausted by that enculturation. For the divine nature ever remains distinct from the human in their union in the person of the Word.⁹

In the Book of Acts, we witness the first leaders of the church, as extensions of the ministry of Jesus, wrestling with and ultimately incorporating the themes of contextualization within their formative ministries. They did this as dedicated followers of the Holy Spirit. It can be argued that the "father" of church multi-culturalism is the Spirit Himself. It was the Spirit who demonstrated that the church could not be domesticated under any single cultural expression, time or language and thus, splintered and multiplied the church's cultural expressions on the very day of its birth, Pentecost:

⁹ Paul Louis Metzger, *The Word of Christ and the World of Culture: Sacred and Secular Through the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 153.

Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked: “Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then, how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome(both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!”¹⁰

As the apostles followed the Spirit’s leading and example, they experienced an incredible transformation in the realm of contextualization. They went on a profound journey from their faith embodied as a “Jewish sect to becoming a largely Gentile body.”¹¹ The gentile Cornelius was used, in cooperation with a holy vision from heaven, to convert the Apostle Peter to the multi-cultural realities of God’s plan. Paul grew to master non-Jewish cultural forms to communicate the Gospel. In his famous speech on Mars Hill, the Apostle used locally valued poets, philosophers and even religious symbols to missionally woo and confound his audience in Athens.

¹⁰ Acts 2:2-11.

¹¹ Flemming, *Contextualization in the New Testament*, 15.

If we believe the Scriptures, the destiny of the church has been revealed. The angel of Jesus Christ appeared to the Apostle John in his Revelation and showed him a vision, which John described, “I looked, and behold, a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’”¹² This picture of heaven is both inspiring and convicting. There are few examples of God’s expansive creativity broader and more diverse than human culture(s) and heaven will be populated by the very expanse of its rainbow-expressions. And this revelation begs a central question to the people of Christ: Will we choose to practice for heaven now or will we rebuff the way of heaven and culturally homogenize the expression of Christ’s church?

Darrell Whiteman, in his article, “Contextualization: The Theory, The Gap, The Challenge,” echoes this perspective saying, “the concern of contextualization is ancient—going back to the early church as it struggled to break loose from its Jewish cultural trappings and enter the Greco-Roman world of the Gentiles.”¹³ Noting the evolution of the concept, or at least terminology, he sees it a part of an evolving stream of thought that relates the Gospel and church to a local context. In the past we have used words such as “adaptation,” “accommodation,” and “indigenization” to describe this relationship between Gospel, church, and culture, but “contextualization,” introduced in 1971, and a

¹² Rev. 7:9-10 (NASB).

¹³ Darrell L. Whiteman, “Contextualization: The Theory, the Gap, the Challenge,” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 21, 1 (1997): 2.

companion term, “inculturation” that emerged in the literature in 1974, are deeper, more dynamic, and more adequate terms to describe what we are about in mission today.¹⁴

Essentially, contextualization addresses the challenge of communicating the gospel message in ways and terms that unbelievers understand. Its challenge is avoiding the foreignness of a gospel dressed in Western clothes that characterized the era of non-contextualization. It seeks to overcome the ethnocentrism of a monocultural approach by taking cultural differences seriously, and by affirming the good in all cultures.¹⁵

Critical contextualization leads us to see contextualization as an ongoing process.¹⁶ Critical contextualization allows us to trust the Holy Spirit to direct us in this process. Here, old beliefs and customs are neither rejected nor accepted without careful examination in light of Biblical truth.¹⁷

Colonialism and Insecure Traditionalism

There are two counter trends, which compete with biblical contextualization. One is “religious colonialism,” which is born out of power and fueled by a culturally entrenched view of a religious expression. With religious colonialism, a dominant and more-powerful culture uses the systems of power to spiritually subjugate a population under their, as of yet, external and foreign religious structure and ultimately the demand is made to either castrate or totally eliminate the cultural values and means of the pre-existent

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985), 108.

¹⁶ Ibid., 92.

¹⁷ Ibid., 186.

culture and people. Religious colonialism is most often associated with Imperial expansion, but it has applications over and beyond mere global-political empire building.¹⁸ African scholar, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, in *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*, describes this reality from his point of view, the colonized. Thiong'o sees the way that control was introduced and managed was to deconstruct the people's sense of self and replace it with that of the colonizer.

Colonialism imposed its control of the social production of wealth through military conquest and subsequent political dictatorship. But its most important area of domination was the mental universe of the colonized, the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world. To control a people's culture is to control their tools of self-definition in relationship to others. For colonialism this involved two aspects of the same process: the destruction or the deliberate undervaluing of a people's culture, their art, dances, religions, history, geography, education, orature and literature, and the conscious elevation of the language of the colonizer. The domination of a people's language by the languages of the colonizing nations was crucial to the domination of the mental universe of the colonized.¹⁹

The other counter trend is more of an insecure traditionalism. In this stream, there is most often a geographically embedded historical community (communities) of faith,

¹⁸ Robert Webber, *God Still Speaks: A Biblical View of Christian Communication* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1980), 65. Robert Webber is softer in his description stating, "we tend to communicate our own culturalized view of Christianity. In the case of faith, Western Christians have filtered the notions through a cultural grid. Three more common grids are rationalism, romanticism, and existentialism."

¹⁹ Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, *Decolonizing the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (Oxford, England: James Currey Publishers, 2009), 16.

which cannot let go of the way that they have “always” expressed their faith. This becomes particularly sad and counterproductive as the historical religious population moves from majority-culture to minority-culture, and though they have lost their “deciding vote” within society, they continue to exist as if they still have it. I sometimes refer to this as the “if you don’t want to play by our rules then we will just take our ball and go home” response. The sad thing is that in these times of religious decline, the remnant religious community often does not even realize that someone else now owns the court where the game is played. In the most extreme examples, at least within the American story, it has led to the creation of geographically isolated, parallel societies (Amish, commune-cults), but it is more often manifested through subtle religious sub-cultures where all aspects of cultural expressions are populated by those of similar ideological/religious paradigms.²⁰ Within Christendom this necessitates the creation of sub-culture serving education, social and entertainment structures.

Religious colonialism is most powerful and rears its head when a new (powerful) Christian-religious system exerts itself upon a previously pre-Christian culture. The latter phenomenon (insecure traditionalism) most usually happens as a population transitions from a “Christian culture”²¹ into a post-Christian culture.

²⁰ Kathy Black, *Culturally-Conscious Worship* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000). For a conversation on the place and means of multiculturalism within a worshipping body consider this work.

²¹ Just a reminder, “Christian culture” here is in quotes because it is not referring primarily to a religious or spiritual state of a culture. What it is referring to is more of a societal and sociological reality in which the church is a strong and recognized player on the societal stage and wherein the majority of persons within that society freely recognize the church’s voice as such.

Good Contextualization

Darrell Whiteman had identified two distinct characteristics of good contextualization. First, “contextualization attempts to communicate the Gospel in word and deed and to establish the church in ways that makes sense to people within their local cultural context, presenting Christianity in such a way that it meets people’s deepest needs and penetrates their worldview, thus allowing them to follow Christ and remain within their own culture.”²² Whitman also insisted that...

“...another function of contextualization in mission is *to offend—but only for the right reasons, not the wrong ones*. Good contextualization offends people for the right reasons. Bad contextualization, or the lack of it altogether, offends them for the wrong reasons.... Unfortunately, when Christianity is not contextualized or is contextualized poorly, then people are culturally offended, turned off to inquiring more about who Jesus is, or view missionaries and their small band of converts with suspicion as cultural misfits and aliens. When people are offended for the wrong reason, the garment of Christianity gets stamped with the label ‘Made in America [or in another generation] and Proud of It.’”²³ (italics mine)

This second function is particularly important, because some assume that the contextualizing-missionary is just “watering down” the gospel. In fact, the well contextualized gospel actively proclaims Jesus, who is a stumbling stone, but labors to desperately limit any and all additional stumbling stones to the missional story.

Additionally, “When the Gospel is presented in word and deed, and the fellowship of believers we call the church is organized along appropriate cultural patters, then people will more likely be confronted with the offense of the Gospel, exposing their own sinfulness and the tendency toward evil, oppressive structures and behavior patterns

²² Whiteman, “Contextualization,” 2.

²³ Ibid.: 3-4.

within their culture.”²⁴ Thus, contextualization is not the same as syncretism. In fact, it can be argued that it is just the opposite. Ultimately, contextualization, biblically practiced and spiritually discerned, provides the ultimate cultural critique because the contextualized people and voice of the gospel of the kingdom are able to speak freely within the cultural context, unfettered by the additional offenses of religiously clothed cultural dissonance.

This is the same idea that Richard Niebuhr was attempting to discuss back in 1951 in his classic book, *Christ and Culture*.²⁵ In its pages Niebuhr considers several models of cultural engagement: Christ against culture, The Christ of culture, Christ above culture, Christ and culture in paradox. The final model that he introduces is: Christ the transformer of culture. “The transformationist view rests on a positive doctrine of creation and incarnation, while yet admitting the radical corruption of humanity. Corruption is the perversion of the good, not intrinsic evil. Conversion and rebirth are needed.”²⁶ Niebuhr spoke of F.D. Maurice, an Anglican scholar, as a strong example of the “transformer” view. He said, “In Maurice the conversionist idea is more clearly expressed than in any other modern Christian thinker and leader. His attitude toward culture is affirmative throughout, because he takes most seriously the conviction that nothing exists without the Word. It is thoroughly conversionist and never accommodating, because his is most sensitive to the perversion of human culture...” Now, Niebuhr was not necessary

²⁴ Ibid.: 2.

²⁵ H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Harper, 1951).

²⁶ Cheslyn Jones, Geoffrey Wainwright, and Edward Yarnold, *The Study of Spirituality* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1986), 603. See Wainwright’s discussion of Niebuhr’s work from Part III, “Pastoral Spirituality” and Section II “Types of Spirituality”.

advocating any one of the models over against the others in his work. In summation he said, “To make our decisions in faith is to make them in view of the fact that no single man or group or historical time is the church; but that there is a church of faith in which we do our partial, relative work and ...in view of the fact that Christ is risen from the dead, and is not only the head of the church but the redeemer of the world... in view of the fact that the world of culture—man’s achievement-- exists within the world of grace—God’s kingdom.”²⁷

Contextualization Illustrated

Here are a couple of examples of contextualization from the history of Christ’s missional church.

James Hudson Taylor (May 21, 1832 – June 3, 1905)

When I was a young missionary living in Albania, it was the story of Hudson Taylor that inspired me to embrace a contextualized missiology. “Hudson Taylor was a British Protestant missionary to China, and founder of the China Inland Mission (CIM, now OMF International). Taylor spent fifty-one years in China. The society that he began was responsible for bringing over 800 missionaries to the country who began 125 schools and directly resulted in 18,000 Christian conversions, as well as the establishment of more than 300 stations of work with more than 500 local helpers in all eighteen provinces.”²⁸ Taylor’s transformational epiphany was to take the very structure of missions in China away from the missionary-ghettos along the affluent eastern seaboard and into the very

²⁷ Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 256.

²⁸ Wikipedia, “Hudson Taylo,” Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hudson_Taylor (accessed November 16, 2010).

heart of the Asian continent. Not only was he willing to leave the physical comfort of the Westernized colonial populations, he also left the philosophical comfort of his peers and training. Taylor's contextual brilliance and courage led him to grow his hair, dress in local garb, fluently speak in local language and dialect and to adopt every local custom to speak more completely to the Chinese people, both peasant and aristocrat.²⁹ He was ridiculed by his peers, but the incarnational mission of Jesus compelled him to do what, here to for, had not been attempted. Ruth Tucker wrote, "No other missionary in the nineteen centuries since the Apostle Paul has had a wider vision and has carried out a more systematized plan of evangelizing a broad geographical area than Hudson Taylor."³⁰

Saints Cyril and Methodius (Ninth Century)

Another example from a bit further back in the church's story is two Byzantine Greek brothers born in the ninth century in Thessaloniki.

Saints Cyril and Methodius (Greek: Κύριλλος καὶ Μεθόδιος, Old Church Slavonic: Кѡриллѣ и Меѡдїи) were ... missionaries of Christianity among the Slavic peoples of Great Moravia and Pannonia. Through their work they influenced the cultural development of all Slavs, for which they received the title 'Apostles to the Slavs'. They are credited with devising the Glagolitic alphabet, the first alphabet used to transcribe the Old Church Slavonic language. Both brothers are venerated in the Eastern Orthodox Church as saints with the title of "Equals to the Apostles."³¹

²⁹ For more of Hudson Taylor's unprecedented life, consider the biography written by his son see: Howard Taylor, Geraldine Taylor, and Gregg Lewis, *Hudson Taylor's Spiritual Secret* (Grand Rapids, MI: Discovery House Publishers, 1990).

³⁰ Ruth Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1983), 73.

³¹ Wikipedia, "Saints Cyril and Methodius," Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyril_and_Methodius (accessed November, 16, 2010).

In their day, the Greek language was considered sacred, and from their monastery in Northern Greece they became scholars of the highest level, masters of theology and language. However, as they looked north, into the tribal lands of the Balkans and into what is now Eastern Europe, they saw a land without the gospel of Jesus Christ. From a missionary passion they pressed out into the north, as strangers in a strange land. They lived among the Slavic peoples and as the quote above states, they created the Glagolitic alphabet (the predecessor of the Cyrillic alphabet) in order to translate the scriptures into the local tongue and to give the “nations” a chance to read the sacred words in their own language. These brilliant scholars saw the need to take the gospel to the nations, but they also saw the reality that to love another is to also love their culture and to give to that culture their unique “language” of worship and truth.³²

Anglicanism and Contextualization

The critic could look at this work, up to this point, and contend that my argument thus far is conflicted at best, if not contradictory. Through chapters two and three, I made an argument for the stasis of worship. To put it another way, I have shown that worship historically has been liturgical and that liturgy, at its very definition, is fixed and repeated; and those fixed forms on some level transcend the human experience across time and space. And then, here in chapter four, I have made another argument for the absolute centrality of contextualization in the history and heart of the Jesus-way:

³² For more of their story and their unequalled influence in the histories of Slavic peoples from Macedonia to Russia, consider: Anthony-Emil N. Tachiaos, *Cyril and Methodius of Thessalonica: The Acculturation of the Slavs* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001).

embodied by Christ, embraced and defended by the Holy Spirit and manifested through God's holy apostles and saints through the centuries. So, is this a contradiction?

The history of the church, biblical and post-biblical, shows a continuity within liturgical worship. East and West, ancient and modern times, again and again, the people of God have found meaning in liturgical worship. This is a statement of description, NOT prescription. Old Testament, New Testament, first century, church history; the people of God have found meaning in written prayers, structured worship and the Lord's Table. We can only guess why that might be. Maybe it is the reality that these prayers and practices have been affirmed again and again and again, in echoing ovation across generations, cultures and times, and so we cannot deny their meaningfulness. Maybe there is a necessary solidarity that the human spirit is looking for, to feel unified with universal humanity in the experience of God³³ (as if we intrinsically long to pull ourselves toward the scene in Revelation 7:9-10, or maybe, more accurately, we are being pulled toward it.)³⁴ Maybe there is a rhythmic, almost meditative sensation, in something clear and repeated, which centers the human soul and/or soothes mind, heart and body, much like the singing of the same lullaby every night to my boys leads them from chaos to stillness. And finally, maybe sign and symbol is simply the language of the soul.³⁵

³³ Louis Weil, *A Theology of Worship*, The New Church's Teaching Series v. 12 (Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 2002), 4-8.

³⁴ Simon Chan, *Liturgical theology: The Church as Worshiping Community* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2006), 46. "Worship not only distinguishes the church as church, *it also makes or realizes the church* ... In the liturgical tradition, what is realized in the worship is the church as an ontological rather than sociological reality."

³⁵ Mark Galli, *Beyond Smells and Bells: The Wonder and Power of Christian Liturgy* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2008), 47-54.

Whatever it is (and make no mistake, it *is*) the Anglican way has found surprising tenacity over six hundred years. Its liturgy, first penned by Thomas Cranmer, but clearly built on the shared worship experiences of church history (see chapter three), has found a resonance of meaning across cultural expressions.

However, and to this I want to be very clear, the rhythms of sign and symbol and the comfort and wisdom of structured readings, prayers and worship, are not to be superimposed upon each local cultural context. No, they must be nestled in among the local culture with its unique forms, structures and aesthetic. It was Thomas Cranmer himself, who wrote in the Preface to the 1549 Book of Common Prayer, these words:

Though it be appointed in the afore written preface, that al thinges shalbe read and song in the churche, in the Englishe tongue, to thende yt the congregacion maie be therby edified: yet it is not meant, but when men saye Matins and Evensong privatelye, they maye saie the same in any language that they themselves do understande. Neither that anye man shalbe bound to the saying of them, but suche as from tyme to tyme, in Cathedrall and Collegiate Churches, Parishe Churches, and Chapelles to the same annexed, shall serve the congregacion.³⁶

Cranmer launched his lauded book, a book that was specifically written to unify the people of England under a common church experience and specifically, as stated elsewhere in the Preface, to free them from the tyranny of the Latin tongue as the language of the church.³⁷ Here in the Preface's last line, Cranmer reminds that the use of language is ultimately for one reason, that it "shall serve the congregacion," so much so

³⁶ A. A. Prins, *The Booke of the Common Prayer, 1549* (Amsterdam: M. J. Portielje, 1933).

³⁷ Ibid., Preface. "whereas s. Paule would have suche language spoken to the people in the churche, as they mighte understande and have profite by hearyng the same; the service in this Churche of England (these many yeares) hath been read in Latin to the people, whiche they understoode not; so that they have heard with theyr eares onely; and their hartes, spirite, and minde, have not been edified thereby."

that he releases the local congregation from the danger that one form of cultural tyranny (Latin and Rome) might be replaced by another.

Perhaps it is for this very reason that Anglicanism has spread so deftly into the cultures of the world.³⁸ It is the commitment to the declaration of the Father, in Christ. “And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.”³⁹ In *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, Schmemmann wrote of the dependence on the Father in this essential though tenuous dynamic,

In the early Christian understanding, prayer was not opposed to life or the occupations of life. Prayer penetrated life and consisted above all in a new understanding of life and its occupations, in relating them to the central object of faith – to the kingdom of God and the Church... Work was controlled, enlightened and judged by prayer, it was not opposed to prayer... Prayer in the spirit meant above all a constant recollection of the relatedness and subordination of everything in life to the reality of the kingdom manifested in this world.⁴⁰

Saturated in this Fatherly dependence and in lieu of Cranmer’s directives, I am convinced that the culturally conscious reality of the Anglican Eucharistic liturgy will continue to bring meaning. Even in places where the culture is leaving behind Christian heritage, the drama of her words and Table has a unique opportunity to declare the Kingdom.

³⁸ “Thomas Cranmer’s prayer book—in whatever version—is no longer the glue holding the identity of the Anglican Communion together.”

³⁹ Col. 17.

⁴⁰ Alexander Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, Library of Orthodox theology no. 4 (London, Portland, MA: Faith Press; American Orthodox Press, 1966), 105f.

It would be foolish to claim that there are no dark chapters in the missional story of the Anglican church,⁴¹ wherein cultures were invalidated and even crimes committed. The British Empire fueled much of the early growth of the Anglican Communion and with that colonial impetus came much “religious colonialism” (as discussed and defined above.) This was particularly evident in the global South.⁴² There have been “crimes” committed in the global North as well. It was Lesslie Newbigin, a clergyman who left England as a missionary to India, and upon his return to Britain in the 1970s, after forty years of international work in pluralistic lands, found the church of his homeland, existing as if England was still a Christian land, when the British culture had long become post-Christian in expression.⁴³ And, in this blindness and arrogance the true spiritual needs and dynamics of the UK were no longer being met (or even considered?) by the clergy. His observations could be defined as a church burdened by “insecure traditionalism.”

Despite these realities (and many more), Anglicanism has had a striking ability to adapt and invite other cultures, particularly cultures of the global South into true ecclesial

⁴¹ Alan W. Jones, *Common Prayer on Common Ground: A Vision of Anglican Orthodoxy* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publications, 2006). Part 1, of Alan Jones' book *Common Prayer on Common Ground* is titled, “A Plague on Both Your Houses.”

⁴² Wikipedia, “North-South Divide,” Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Global_south (accessed November 23, 2010). The North-South Divide is a socio-economic and political division that exists between the wealthy developed countries, known collectively as “the North,” and the poorer developing countries (least developed countries), or “the South.” Although most nations comprising the “North” are in fact located in the Northern Hemisphere (with the notable exceptions of Australia and New Zealand), the divide is not wholly defined by geography. The North is home to four of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and all members of the G8. “The North” mostly covers the West and the First World, with much of the Second World.

⁴³ Lesslie Newbigin's story can be found in his autobiography: Lesslie Newbigin, *Unfinished Agenda: An Autobiography* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985).

fellowship (non hierarchical partnership,) so much so that today there are more Anglicans in the global South than in the North AND the leaders of those southern expressions are exercising significant, if not majority, authority over all of the Anglican Communion.

The British Broadcasting Company (BBC) did a study in 2008 on the Anglican Communion to understand its statistical foundation and numbers distribution. The following is a map that the BBC created to show only the largest national churches globally within Anglicanism:

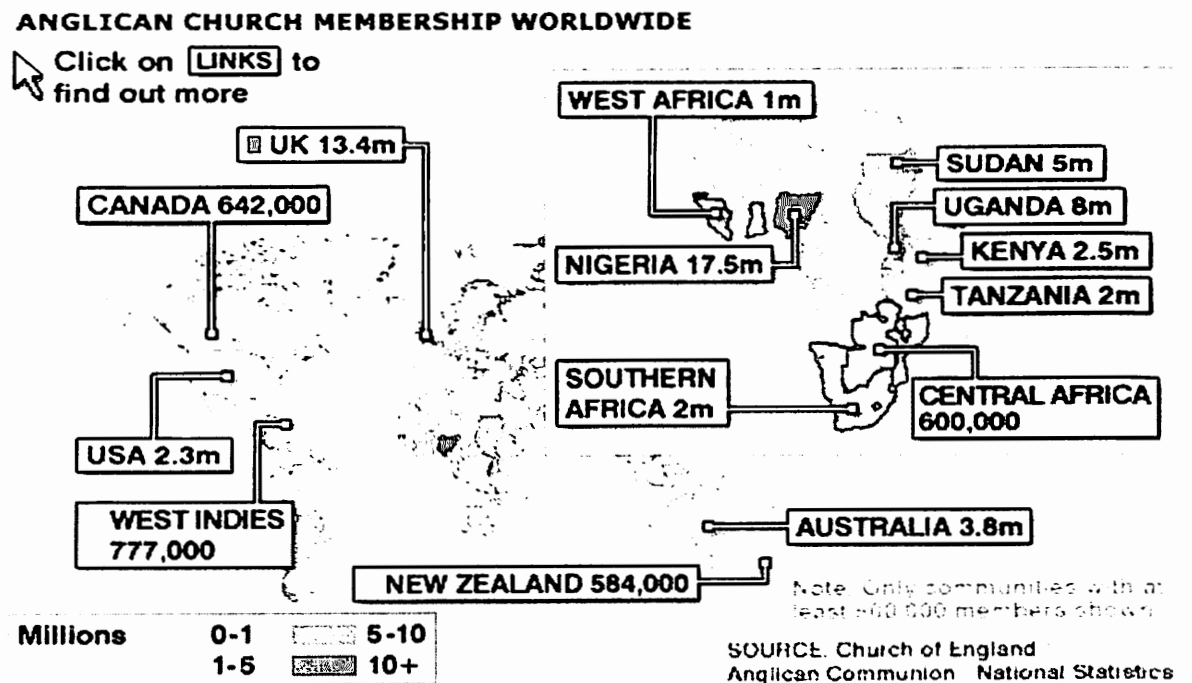


FIGURE 11. Source: Church of England / Anglican Communion / National Statistics

The most striking observation is that today there are 13.4 million Anglicans in the UK and just counting the eight African countries listed here, Africa's numbers exceed 38 million.

But what is the state of those African national churches. Are they just colonized extensions of British culture? Esther Mombo writes, “The establishment of Anglicanism in the colonies of eastern Africa had as one of its main resources the 1662 Book of Common Prayer. Written in the context of English tradition, imported and translated for use by the colonized ...”⁴⁴ But it seems that the Anglican church was served by the loss of Britain’s imperial dominance. As nationalistic movements “freed” the countries of places like Africa, is also infused creative and contextualized movements of worship and spirituality. That process of contextualization led Grant LeMarquand to write about the Kenyan liturgy (called “Our Modern Services”)

Our Modern Services is clearly an African book which encourages an African style of language, African prayer, and musical traditions within worship, and seeks to meet the needs of Kenyan realities. Yet it is also a book which in its forms and much of its theological content is clearly a descendant of the Book of Common Prayer.⁴⁵

LeMarquand has expressed a wonderful example of contextualization, where the traditions (which have been affirmed across cultures and generations) are not rejected but are held with one hand while the other hand is grasping fully the voice and cultural ways of the local, contemporary reality. This breaking from colonialism and embracing contextualized liturgical worship is the norm of the African continent within the Anglican Communion. This balanced evolution harmonizes with Cranmer’s words (bold mine):

⁴⁴ Charles C. Hefling and Cynthia L. Shattuck, *The Oxford Guide to the Book of Common Prayer: A Worldwide Survey* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2006), 277. See: Esther Mombo, “Rites and Books in Africa, Anglican Liturgies in Eastern Africa

⁴⁵ Ibid., 287. See: Grant LeMarquand, “The Anglican Church of Kenya.”

It is a most invaluable part of that blessed “liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,” that in his worship different forms and usages may without offence be allowed, provided the substance of the Faith be kept entire; and that, in every Church, what cannot be clearly determined to belong to Doctrine must be referred to Discipline; and therefore, **by common consent and authority, may be altered, abridged, enlarged, amended, or otherwise disposed of, as may seem most convenient for the edification of the people, “according to the various exigency of times and occasions.”**⁴⁶

This two-handed commitment to tradition and context in worship has not been universally applied throughout Anglican history, but it has been so embedded in its DNA that contextualized movements of faith are thriving, growing and even leading Anglican growth and mission around the world today. So much so that the Province of the Anglican Church of Rwanda, for example, is leading a significant and inspired church planting effort in North America, which is fueled by a commitment to doctrinal tradition and a heart for contextualization. Bishop Todd Hunter writes on his website for *Churches for the Sake of Others* (C4SO.org):

The Most Rev. Emmanuel M. Kolini of the Province of the Anglican Church of Rwanda was inspired to create the Anglican Mission (TheAM) which serves as a missionary outreach of the Province of Rwanda. For decades the church in the West has been sending missionaries to places like Rwanda, but with this shift to an increasingly post-Christian culture in America, kingdom-minded communities like the Anglican Church of Rwanda are now sending missionaries our way ... The Anglican Mission in the Americas has launched Churches for the Sake of Others ... or C4SO. We're growing churches from the mission field backward. Which

⁴⁶ The Book of Common Prayer, “The Book of Common Prayer,” [anglican.org, http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/formatted_1979.htm](http://justus.anglican.org/resources/bcp/formatted_1979.htm) (accessed November 20, 2010). From the Preface.

means...we recognize that mission fields have unique populations and varying contexts.⁴⁷

This epic story, which crosses two millennia, is inspiring. Now, it seems, the missionary story has come full circle. Just like in the church's first chapter, when a subjugated and colonized, people (Jews) were the first missionaries, with many of them going from the geographical margins of an Empire-dominated world to bring the Word of redemption and freedom, the Gospel of the kingdom, into their version of our diverse and broken world, full of cultures, languages and spiritual expressions.

⁴⁷ Churches for the Sake of Others, "Hear the Story and See the Vision."

CHAPTER 5: CRITIQUE OF OTHER CONTEMPORARY CHURCH SOLUTIONS TO POST-CHRISTIAN NORTHWEST CULTURE

And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. Colossians 4:3-6

We are in trouble. I just came out of a pastors' roundtable meeting for four hours. I just sat there, listening to the problems that pastors are facing. I was looking around the room and one of the most striking things is that I am the youngest guy in the room. I am 42 years old. The rest of the room is still worrying about problems like "worship wars" and accommodating worship to keep the big donors happy. We are missing the point, believing, "if we could change our worship style it would save the church ... should we add an electric guitar?" The really sad thing is that they are missing the rich opportunities all around them.¹

This opening paragraph came from an interview with Jim Wicks, an influential pastor in the Nazarene Denomination. His church, called Adsideo, is located in the Sellwood neighborhood of Portland's inner-eastside. In their own words, "We are a community who seeks to minister to an emerging, postmodern neighborhood. We live and gather in the Sellwood neighborhood here in Southeast Portland. We are dedicated to the journey of discovering the fullness of God's redemptive vision for this world."² Adsideo has been around for four years and cares for around 150 parishioners and more importantly, their neighborhood. Pastor Jim has one of the few thriving and growing young churches in the

¹ Jim Wicks, interviewed by author, Portland, OR, November 11, 2010.

² The Community of Asideo, "Welcome to Asideo," The Community of Asideo, <http://www.communityofadsideo.com/Adsideo/Home.html> (accessed November 29, 2010).

Nazarene tribe. In light of this, his denomination is looking to him (and a small handful of others) to solve the challenge of raising up next-generation leaders.

According to Jim,

We are experiencing a 17 percent decline annually in the Northwest within our denomination. To better understand that number, you need to understand that it incorporates the rate of population growth and comparing it to church attendance decline. So based on that, I am assuming that our actual interior decline of over 20 percent.³ The numbers that I am hearing is 15 percent; we are closing around 15 percent of our churches annually within the US.⁴

So the question is: what is the church's plan for moving into the future? To put it another way: What is our plan to reach and resource our ever increasing post-Christian culture? How will we point the way to Jesus?

There are several strategies currently in play for accomplishing these essential missional questions. It would be impossible to be exhaustive in examining and evaluating all such strategies. I will choose a selection of such strategies that are current in the mainstream Christian world. I will focus my comments to strategies that are currently active in Portland's urban center (as opposed to those focusing on the more culturally "Christian" suburbs or rural areas.) I will be grouping those strategies under a number of headings for the purpose of streamlined and effective communication. I will also be evaluating each one from an often, admittedly, subjective position. I am asking an *effectiveness* question. In what ways does (or doesn't) each strategy actually draw the

³ To clarify, Pastor Wicks is stating that the 15 percent assumes a static population number, however when that same 15 percent is related to the growing population, the actual impact (or loss of market share) is even greater (over 20 percent.)

⁴ Jim Wicks, interviewed by author, Portland, OR, November 11, 2010.

citizens in our post-Christian society⁵ into faith in Christ and church life? The purpose is not to criticize. In fact, many of my comments will be very complimentary. While this dissertation is moving towards a proposed solution (Chapter Six), that solution is not exclusive or absolute. Bishop Todd Hunter of the Anglican Mission has often stated, “Moving into the future will require dozens of models of church.” Our world is becoming increasingly globalized, pluralized and diverse. Creativity and courage will be required as we explore and chart these expansive new cultural-waters.

Emergent Networks

The “Emergent” phenomenon is not so simple to tie down. It includes the Emergent Village, which is most closely associated with Bryan McLaren. “Emergent Village is a growing, generative friendship among missional Christians seeking to love our world in the Spirit of Jesus Christ.”⁶ However, the emergent movement more broadly has been defined as:

A Christian movement of the late 20th and early 21st century that crosses a number of theological boundaries: participants can be described as evangelical, protestant, roman catholic, post-evangelical, anabaptist, adventist, liberal, post-liberal, reformed, charismatic, neocharismatic, post-charismatic, conservative, and post-conservative. Proponents, however, believe the movement transcends such “modernist” labels of “conservative” and “liberal,” calling the movement a “conversation” to emphasize its developing and decentralized nature, its vast range of standpoints, and its commitment to dialogue. Participants seek to live their faith in what they believe to be a “postmodern” society. What those involved in the conversation mostly agree on is their disillusionment with the organized and institutional church and their support for the deconstruction of modern Christian worship, modern evangelism, and the nature of modern Christian community. The

⁵ As opposed to simply more effectively consolidating the remaining vestiges of “Christian culture.”

⁶ Emergent Village, “A Growing, Generative Friendship,” Emergent Village, <http://www.emergentvillage.com/> (accessed November 29, 2010).

emerging church favors the use of simple story and narrative. Members of the movement often place a high value on good works or social activism, including missional living. While some Evangelicals emphasize eternal salvation, many in the emerging church emphasize the here and now. Key themes of the emerging church are couched in the language of reform, Praxis-oriented lifestyles, Post-evangelical thought, and incorporation or acknowledgment of political and Postmodern elements. Many of the movement's participants use terminology that originates from postmodern literary theory, social network theory, narrative theology, and other related fields.⁷

Emergent networks exist in loose relationship to denominations or totally independent of denominations. One network, which could be lumped into the broadest category of “emergent,” which is actively at work in Portland (and other urban centers of the Pacific Northwest) is the Acts 29 Network. “The Mission of Acts 29 is to band together Christian, Evangelical, Missional & Reformed churches, who, for the sake of Jesus and the gospel, plant churches across the United States and the world.”⁸ In the Portland urban center, Acts 29 was instrumental in planting churches such as Imago Dei Community,⁹ Red Sea,¹⁰ Bread and Wine,¹¹ and The Table.¹² I was a leader and contributor to Imago Dei’s first ten years of existence and have played an advisor or close observer to each of the other plants listed here. There are several other smaller networks of churches that

⁷ Wikipedia, “Emerging Church,” Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emerging_church (accessed November 30, 2010).

⁸ Mark Driscoll, “Vision of Acts 29,” Acts 29 Network, <http://www.acts29network.org/about/vision/> (accessed November 30, 2010).

⁹ Imago Dei Community, “Home Page,” Imago Dei Community, <http://www.imagodeicommunity.com> (accessed November 30, 2010).

¹⁰ Red Sea, “Home Page,” Red Sea, <http://www.redseachurch.org/> (accessed November 30, 2010).

¹¹ Bread & Wine, “Home Page,” Bread & Wine, <http://www.breadandwine.org> (accessed November 30, 2010).

¹² The Table, “Home Page,” Wikipedia, <http://www.thetablepdx.com> (accessed November 30, 2010).

¹³ Note: Imago Dei Community and The Table are no longer affiliated with Acts 29.

could be included here, including the church planting efforts of Mosaic Church/Northwest Church Planting¹⁴ and the Evergreen Church.¹⁵

The goal of these networks is to manifest viable forms of Church expression that will continue and thrive into the postmodern world. Naturally, there is a need to critique the modernist forms of church (many of which have been held onto as “sacred cows”), and try to re-envision the church’s voice and, to some extent, her structure. While many elements remain the same (as common evangelical church formation of the second half of the twentieth century), there are some distinctive and laudable changes:

- Gospel is perceived as more holistic. As the motto of Imago Dei Community states, “The whole gospel, to the whole person, to the whole world.”¹⁶ The gospel is about more than just assuring one’s eternal destiny. It is defined by more than a handful of doctrinal propositions. Instead, the gospel has something to say about every aspect of existence and particularly every part of the human experience. The gospel is for the “whole person” and thus ought to transform us more than just spiritually but also psychologically, socially, relationally, communally, economically and mentally. The gospel is not just about the unseen realms (as Western dualism has been syncretized with the church’s view of the “gospel”) but affects all aspects of this “whole world” and therefore has, among other things, social and justice implications.
- Teaching is formed and delivered in narrative. Simply put, ideas are shaped so that the meaning is primary, as opposed to the information being primary. This is not to say that narrative thought and delivery are anti-information. Quite on the contrary. The hope is to free the conceptualization of the gospel and the kingdom of God from a post-enlightenment, cognitive domination. It is necessary to not just deconstruct Western paradigms, but, more importantly, reconstruct through the mentorship of both global and historical voices. For the congregation, the primary question is not “what?” or even “why?” but instead “So what? So what for my life? So what for my family? So what for my community? So what for my

¹⁴ Mosaic, “Church Planting,” Mosaic, <http://www.mosaicportland.org/mission/church-planting/> (accessed November 30, 2010).

¹⁵ The Evergreen Community, “Home Page,” The Evergreen Community, <http://www.evergreenlife.org/> (accessed November 30, 2010).

¹⁶ Imago Dei Community, “About: What We Believe: Mission and Values,” Imago Dei Community, <http://www.imagodeicommunity.com/about/mission-and-values/> (accessed November 30, 2010).

world?” To accomplish this task, pastors need to implement the use of personally impacting story (testimony or personal encounter) and when it is at its best, limit the use of triumphalism (the illusion that the person speaking “has it all figured out.”) Thus, communication often includes self deprecating humor, the centrality of the journey (over arrival), and even, at times, personal struggle and doubt.

- Worship (in its public and corporate, often Sunday morning, manifestation¹⁷) takes on at least two evolutions within emergent movements. The first is the freedom to create (or adapt) forms, musically and otherwise. There is a refusal to “baptize” certain worship styles (for instance, “we only use hymns” OR “we never use hymns.”) The “worship wars” of the latter twentieth century have no value or concern. The church worship experience can integrate “secular” songs or musical styles and can use anything from a keyboard to a didgeridoo. Another distinction is that worship can draw from a far broader pallet. It is typical within an emergent community to see icons, sacred symbols, the centrality of Communion, creeds recited, painting performed, prayer stations or even kinetic and tactile worship using clay or other mediums.
- Social justice is another priority in every emergent church I have witnessed. Significant time, money and energy are put towards working with those who live outside (homeless), those inside struggling schools or assisting community development initiatives. There is a reaction against the purely proclamational focus of the church, whose end is propagating intellectual assent to a Christian creed or where the work of the church is merely about getting more and more people to come to church. The belief is that the people of God are to manifest goodness, truth and beauty in all places and part of that is taking on the care, creation, healing and provision of Christ in their neighborhoods and world.

In light of the distinctives listed above, emergent churches and movements have provided a profound and important home to thousands of Christians in the urban centers of the Pacific Northwest. The de-churching trend in America did not start in 1990 and the church exodus, which we have been dramatically witnessing over the last 40 years, has been populated by twenty and thirty-somethings who were tired of their parents’ (or grandparents’) worship styles, a purely proclamational gospel, aesthetic reductionism and

¹⁷ The author acknowledges that “worship” is far broader and all-encompassing, far beyond the singing and actions of a Sunday service. However, for this short section, the author is focusing on the popular use of the term “worship” as a corporate act usually performed during a Sunday morning church service.

dualistic faith application. In light of this reality, these churches have actually grown. This would explain why the only category of church that David Olsen says has grown between 2000 and 2005 in Oregon is “non-Baptist, non-Pentecostal evangelical churches.”¹⁸

The main criticism made of many emergent churches is that while they have been an effective way-station of faith; they have been little more than the last gasp of the attractional model¹⁹ of church, which so dominated the seeker-sensitive movements of the latter twentieth century. Yes, it was a brilliant move to integrate arts, justice and broader worship forms into church life. Yes, it was culturally contextualized to see that the old rhetorical philosophy, which churches had artificially held onto, needed to be replaced by more image and narrative driven models, which are more consistent with our postmodern world. However, were these changes little more than effective marketing to the already churched? As one pastor of a large and successful suburban Presbyterian mega-church lamented to me, “we have all but closed down our adult singles ministry because all our people are now attending Imago Dei.” Another influential congregant of a large emergent church in Portland said, “sometimes I sit back and wonder if at the end of the day our community is little more than a ‘mega-church that paints.’”

A related critique is that the “tools” of worship and practice are implemented for purely utilitarian reasons. For instance, a Celtic-cross might be the symbol of the church

¹⁸ David T. Olson, *The American Church in Crisis: Groundbreaking Research Based on a National Database of over 200,000 Churches* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 112.

¹⁹ “Attractional model” is another way of labeling the “seeker sensitive” church model, also known as the “church growth” movement. The main idea is that marketing philosophy is used to determine why the church does what it does. The goal is to get people in the door.

(it might even be tattooed on the pastor's shoulder,) but it is used primarily because it looks cool and gives the appearance of history and mysticism. However, only a cursory examination will reveal that the church itself is not submitted to the Celtic tradition in any way, nor has it given particular place to Celtic thought or spirituality. In fact, none of its leadership is even Irish or studied in Celtic schools or under Celtic scholars. Can you see how this can unintentionally communicate an insincere spirituality? This post-Christian generation is very intuitive and suspicious of this sort of pragmatism. To give another example, a similar observation can be made about the utilization of icons. While they make interesting and even inspiring ornaments of worship, any Eastern Orthodox believer would be horrified by their vulgar application. In this sense the very tradition (of icons in this case), which the church is co-opting, is being more plundered than honored.

There is a real question whether or not these churches are reaching the post-Christian city. While their brick and mortar expression may exist in the heart of the city and their mission states its purpose as "reaching the city," the reality is a vast majority of its congregants and leaders²⁰ commute to and from the suburbs. This concept has been echoed by many suburban pastors who now feel the challenge of filling their own over-leveraged properties, and yet their congregations are now traveling into the city for church. Some contend that the church of the city has not grown at all, the cards have just

²⁰ I know of one church that passionately proclaimed its commitment to the city, so much so that they would only consider properties for worship that were within a short distance from the city's center. However when I surveyed the two pastors and six elders, only one elder lived within the "city boundaries" and he was 60 blocks from the center.

been shuffled and re-dealt to new hands, all the while many of the cards are slipping off the table.

Finally, these emergent churches (again, using a fairly broad definition of “emergent”), have received a significant amount of press and recognition in the American Christian systems. In fact, large “emergent” churches in Portland and Seattle have received an incongruent percentage of press, even while existing within some of the most challenging post-Christian locations in the country. Here is the challenge: is the real formula that created these large new churches truly reproducible? As one smart, committed and tattooed church planter in Portland recently said to me, “I was sent to Portland by my denomination to plant the next Imago Dei, however I have come to realize that I can’t. Rick McKinley²¹ is the funniest guy on the planet.”²² These impressive and wonderful churches are led by exceptional people and, because of this, may not be reproducible.²³ All-world personalities are painfully few (which is why they are so significant when they come along.) These multi-talented servants of God are a gift to their congregations, but until we can clone them, their work is not reproducible.

Next Generation Add-Ons

“Next Generation Add-Ons” is a term that is unique to this dissertation. The idea that it intends to communicate is more or less an adaption of the Emergent strategy above.

²¹ Lead pastor of Imago Dei Community in Portland, Oregon.

²² Clyde Vernon Hartline III, pastor of Vibrant Covenant Church in Portland, Oregon.

²³ Mars Hill in Seattle, led by Marc Driscoll, is another example of a large and impressive church of the “emergent” stream that has received significant national press. The press that Mars Hill, the church, receives though is far less than the press focused on its leader, Mark Driscoll.

The difference is that these strategies exist, deeply embedded within a pre-existing historical denomination or tradition, which is seeking to evolve its ecclesial strategy and create a sub-movement within an existing construct. The goal is to reach the “next generation” and secondarily, so that the denomination does not die.

The Nazarene tribe is a good example of this strategy.²⁴ It is a fairly moderate evangelical denomination, which also has the unique fact that one of its first congregations was located in Portland’s inner-eastside. As stated above, this tribe is in decline. Jason Robertson said about his denomination, “I believe we are already closing churches faster than adding them.”

Jason Robertson had been for six years, a successful pastor of a next-generation service embedded in a large and growing Nazarene church in Ohio. He was strongly recruited²⁵ to join the faculty at Olivet Nazarene University as a professor of theology and ministry development. I contacted and interviewed Professor Robertson about the future plans of his denomination.²⁶ “They were looking for someone of the emergent/emerging persuasion who had maintained commitment to a denominational identity. Olivet was particularly drawn to the fact that I had done it in the confines of a traditional, middle-class and established church context.” Olivet spoke of the importance

²⁴ I have fairly extensive firsthand experience in the Nazarene denomination’s attempts to navigate the changing culture. I have served as a keynote speaker at the last two Nazarene *Emergentia* pastors training conferences. I have been a friend and advisor to one the denomination’s flagship next-generation churches, Adsideo. And I have been a friend and mentor to two influential Nazarene leaders.

²⁵ Professor Robertson insisted that he was not looking to teach. He said multiple times, “They called me” and even suggested that no one else was being considered and that they would wait for him to finish up his ministry practice.

²⁶ Professor Jason Robertson, Associate Professor of Theology of Olivet Nazarene University, phone interview by author, November 9,-2010.

that Professor Robertson was able to build an emergent-like movement inside an existing church, “allowing both to exist within the same building.” This appears to be a large part of their leadership and educational strategy.

Pastor Jim Wicks agrees that developing leaders is the hope for his denomination. However, he has real doubts about the viability of institutionally based education, especially from where he sits, deeply entrenched in Portland’s post-Christian Eastside. “We all recognize that their modern education system is on the decline. We used to boast about it. Today, there is an entire populous of leaders that are rejecting the idea of the old model of education. Part of that is affordability. NNU²⁷ is one of our cheaper colleges at \$25k per year. Here is another issue: there are few students coming from West Oregon. Youth groups are not sending kids to NNU. This plan is losing the next-generation leaders. Three percent of every church’s income goes to the college, but the churches are not sending their kids.”

Pastor Wicks is an influential leader as his denomination is moving forward. When I pressed him for how he (along with others) is leading the way into the future, Jim shared that they are fast-tracking two strategies (as least as fast as denominational evolution will allow.) The first is the *Emergentia* program, “We have to find next-generational leaders within this tribe that goes beyond permission given by the super-structure. We don’t need permission to create. We need to create a filter that is respectful and consistent with values.” The vision is regionally based conversations around the pressing issues of

²⁷ Northwest Nazarene University is located in Nampa, Idaho. It is the designated Nazarene education and training institution for the churches of the Pacific Northwest.

today's culture (and moving briskly away from issues that are just about maintaining denominational structures of comfort or dead tradition.) "*Emergentia* is the future. We need many of them. We are bringing in outside voices: stirring the pot; creating tensions; having original thoughts so that we don't have just patched thinking from the past and so we can stop trying to institute Midwest thinking into the Pacific Northwest. Help people to be relevant inside their context."²⁸ The second strategy is to bring education out of slow moving and overhead burdened institutions and into the local context through mobile and courageous education modules. It is called *Suma Dialogue*.

It is a new educational paradigm. *Suma Dialogue* has proctors come to the local context. Grades will be based on how they defend their position and interact around major theological issues. We are unleashing a conversation and observing how they exchange and interact.²⁹

It utilizes educational modules and Pastor Wicks and his think-tank have added ten modules specifically to unleash leaders into the new cultural realities.

Trying to build a next generation Add-On movement on top of a denominational structure (I use the word "structure" intentionally, as opposed to "tradition" or "spirituality") is like trying to turn a tank into a sports car. While the idea has virtual inspiration (and would make for a great video game), in reality the tank chassis would eventually crush the project. As Pastor Wicks laments:

We are facing a crisis if we don't have next level leadership that is willing to confess a problem. How can we be right for the kingdom? How can we plant as many churches as possible for kingdom? How can we infuse our DNA into

²⁸ Jim Wicks, interview by author, Portland, OR, November 29, 2010.

²⁹ Jim Wicks, interview by author, Portland, OR, November 11, 2010

something else, some new movement? I don't know how we will survive. The super-structure does not provide for that sort of open air thinking.³⁰

This is an unfortunate reality and pragmatically speaking, this is why Bishop Todd Hunter has quipped on more than one occasion, "It is easier to give birth, than raise the dead."

Parish Orientation

This past Tuesday (December 1, 2010) at the Lents Commons in Southeast Portland, there was a gathering of sixty leaders from small faith-communities around the city, most of which practice some form of hyper-local, communally based church-life. It was the semi-monthly story-telling round-table for Parish Collective, Portland. The group was quite varied in its church expressions: There were "communities" of no more than four people living in neighborhood homes. There was one twenty five year veteran of communal-living from North Portland. There were even a few pastors from more attractional-based Portland churches that came because, "I am alone in my church and it is so refreshing to be with people who think like all of you do."³¹

"Parish Collective is a growing group of churches, missional communities, and faith-based organizations which are rooted in neighborhoods and linked across cities: Edmonton, Vancouver, Seattle, Tacoma, Portland...Bellingham, Sacramento, San

³⁰ Jim Wicks, interview by author, Portland, OR, November 29, 2010.

³¹ Parish Collective, "Home Page," Parish Collective, <http://www.parishcollective.org/> (accessed December 5, 2010). Quote from James Worley of Powell Valley Covenant Church's Lifechurch.tv contemporary service (located in Gresham, OR) on December 1, 2010 at the Parish Collective-Portland gathering at Lents Commons.

Francisco.”³² The organizing principle is a geographically based ecclesiology. It is a pressing passion that the hope of the mission of Jesus Christ may very much be found in getting a “smaller” vision: a clearly defined neighborhood, a walking-world, a parish. The fact of the matter is: a mission that is too large (“we want to reach the world,” “reach a generation” or even “reach our city”) actually leads to impotence and inaction. It is little more than a virtual-mission in an increasingly rootless virtual-world. However, with a clearly defined parish, the community of faith knows what to be responsible for and where the bounds of that responsibility begin and end. As I wrote in a blog post for Parish Collective:

For a guy like me, my soul is simply too small to wrap itself around the whole world. I am indebted to religious leaders who delegate the world out in consideration of my limited soul-space. But even a goal like, ‘Love Portland’, is more than my mind can handle. A city like Portland is a divine circus of communities, dreams, economic forces, injustices, cultures, policies, sorrows, histories and, most importantly, stories. Just thinking about it all but crashes my spiritual operating system ... I want to be a part of the stories of my time, be they found on a front-porch, in a dog park, at a neighborhood association meeting, in my kid’s cafeteria, at a political rally, or simply across the table from a beautiful someone who, apart from intention, I would never otherwise know.³³

The Parish Collective is a “reaching backwards” to the parish-realities of old, when a city was divided into objective units (parishes) and each unit contained one church (parish church) and that church was *responsible*. That community (clergy and lay alike) was responsible for the joys and injustices, the worshiping and caring, in fact all parts of the meaningful human life (christening, educating, marrying, burying, etc.).

³² Ibid.

³³ Tony Kriz, “A Village Conspiracy,” Parish Collective, <http://parishcollective.ning.com/profiles/blogs/tony-kriz-a-village> (accessed November 23, 2010).

Tim Soerens, one of the founders of the Parish Collective, a now three year old network, says:

Within the context of the neighborhood we can work out the three pillars of the compassionate and justice-practicing church. Those three pillars are 'community' based in a theology of the Trinity, 'mission' based in participation in the *Misio Dei* and finally, a grounded personal and communal 'identity' based in the *Imago Christi*.³⁴

Once again, this network is defined more by an organizing principle than by any sort of unique theology.³⁵ It is the antithesis of "mega-church" or "church-growth" philosophies which reached their climax in the late twentieth century. The focus is not to grow as large as possible, nor is it to attract people from distances, which are only defined by the time consumers are willing to spend sitting in their car (as one parish leader said to me, "Everything changes when you get in your car."³⁶) The focus is to serve a very given place (clearly geographically defined) and that from that bounded space, the community of faith will experience a truly multi-dimensional and integrated wholeness, as all aspects of life are communally shared, from worship to neighborhood association meetings, from chance meetings in a local business to shared walks to and from children's schools.

This organizational style is gaining momentum in post-Christian urban centers. At last, Tuesdays *Parish Collective-Portland* meeting, two dozen communities were represented

³⁴ Tim Soerens and Paul Sparks, the founders of Parish Collective, interview by author, Portland, OR, November 23, 2010.

³⁵ Mainline, Charismatic, Evangelical, non-Protestant and emergent communities all participate equally in the life and leadership of the *Parish Collective*.

³⁶ Quote from Eric Shreves, leader of the "People of Praise," a Roman Catholic founded intentional community rooted in the Kenton Neighborhood, Portland, OR.

and most of those had existed less than four years. Here is a map of Portland's Eastside with some of those communities marked:

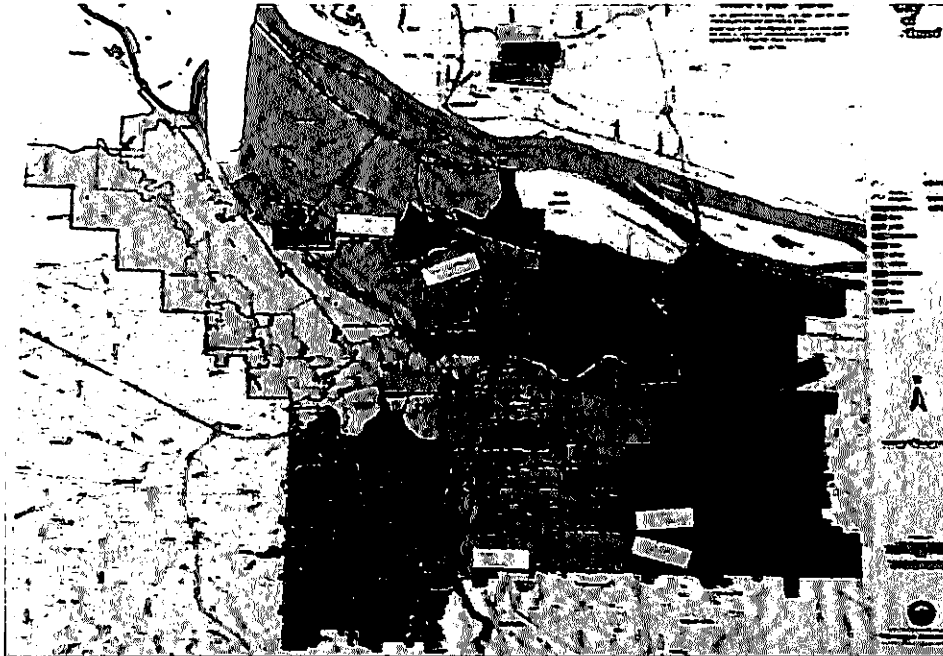


FIGURE 13. Source: Photo taken at the event.

The church is burdened today with a meaning deficit. One way of addressing this deficit is with the sort of integrated life that a parish philosophy presents (sustainable, service, shared life, simplicity), which is infusing meaning where previously many feel none existed.

This return to a parish-orientation is birthing in harmony with many trends in secular society. In the urban center of Portland, there is a growing presence of sustainability values and urban-homesteading.³⁷ Young families are increasingly localizing their lives.

³⁷ Urban Homesteading, "Urban Homestead Definition," Urban Homesteading, <http://urbanhomestead.org/urban-homestead-definition> (accessed December 6, 2010).

1. a suburban or city home in which residents practice self-sufficiency through home food production and storage.

They are selling their cars, using bikes and metro services, they are buying local and patronizing neighborhood establishments (even when they cost “more”³⁸ than a suburban “big-box store”³⁹.) My neighborhood, in Portland’s urban center, has three urban-homesteading oriented stores with garden supplies, urban livestock, canning and food preservation resources, rain water collection, and sustainable cooking services. Oxford University Press’ 2007 word of the year was “locavore.”⁴⁰ “The ‘locavore’ movement encourages consumers to buy from farmers’ markets or even to grow or pick their own food, arguing that fresh, local products are more nutritious and taste better. Locavores also shun supermarket offerings as an environmentally friendly measure, since shipping food over long distances often requires more fuel for transportation.”⁴¹ Because of these shifting passions (and I mean “passions” as whole communities are reorienting the very way they live, spend, work, serve and schedule), one’s local coffee-shop, local pub or local shopping hub have become subjectively meaningful; which begs the assumption

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2. the home and garden of a person or family engaging in sustainable small-scale agriculture and related activities designed to reduce environmental impact and increase self-sufficiency.
 3. a name describing the home of a person or family living by principals of low-impact, sustainable self-sufficiency through activities such as gardening for food production, cottage industry, extensive recycling, and generally simple living.

³⁸ There are strong arguments that local shopping ultimately does not cost more since it requires less gas, wear and tear on vehicles and less time that allows for other forms of productivity. These arguments are purely economic and do not even take into account quality of life, relationally driven commerce or non-economically driven forms of life-investment (family, neighbor, volunteerism, church, etc.).

³⁹ “Big Box Store” is a euphemism for high-volume mega stores. The name is derived from the fact that most of these stores are found on huge lots and the store itself looks like a “big box.” Many stores meet the criteria of “big box” from Ikea to Home Depot. Walmart is the most notorious. This conglomerate system of product distribution is critiqued for at least three reasons: destruction of local economies, unjust product acquisition (including slavery and ecological destruction) and poor employee care.

⁴⁰ Oxford University Press Blog, “Oxford Word Of The Year: Locavore,” Oxford University Press Blog, <http://blog.oup.com/2007/11/locavore/> (accessed December 6, 2010).

⁴¹ Ibid.

that soon one's "local church" could follow in queue as a locus of subjective and integrated meaning. It is hard to explain the phenomenon of self-identification, but much of the population of post-Christian Portland identify themselves most passionately with their "village" (another term used for a walking neighborhood), as opposed to the city as a whole.

Pastor Paul Sparks of *Zoe Church* in Tacoma and a founder of the *Parish Collective* says:

the big thing I am proud of is not anything regarding numbers. Zoe members have started seven different small businesses that are their kingdom vocational callings. You can imagine the kind of social fabric that can create. It creates such amazing collaborative possibilities and irreplaceably significant to have the face of the church before the world (for bad or good): how we treat one another, social, governmental. Our best moments are beautiful moments, but our ugliness is also good for us... it is a mirror to our lives and shows the part of our lives that are untested and where our faith in Christ needs work.⁴²

Tim Soerens' Cascade Neighborhood Church, uncompromisingly rooted in Seattle's South Lake Union, has never grown to more than twenty five members. But of those attendees, over ninety percent are deeply involved in multiple justice and service missions in the neighborhood. Cascade Neighborhood Church has started three non-profits.⁴³ Many of their Sunday gatherings appear more like community-action non-profits than a church. Pastor Soerens insists that this is not a model of condescension,

Popular terms like "contextual," "missional," and even "incarnational" can easily be "colonial." In my experience, there is not a lot of language about how we (the worshiping community) are going to be shaped and transformed by the world

⁴² Paul Sparks, interview by author, Portland, OR, November 23, 2010.

⁴³ Cascade Neighborhood Church has also planted two other neighborhood based churches in their three and a half years of existence.

around us. In order to become truly ‘incarnational’, then you must be reshaped by your context.⁴⁴

As you have probably already guessed, this sort of church life is in many ways the most difficult. It is very difficult to maintain and takes a tenacity of conviction and propensity for risk. Many churches begin with the rhetoric of parish, but quickly betray that vision for streamlined growth and emotionalized worship services. One local Portland church named after the specific neighborhood they wish to reach, “The Pearl,” seeks to reach their post-Christian downtown neighborhood. It is a wonderful church with a great heart for the city. I once asked a table of the church’s leadership and committed congregants, “what percentage of your church attendants actually live in the Pearl.” The group stared at one another until one person said, “Probably five percent.” He was quickly corrected by an administrative staff member who said, “The percentage is much smaller than that.”

Pastor Sparks’ Zoe church in downtown Tacoma was founded in 1989 and by the year 2000 had grown to over four hundred congregants. Then, in the year 2000, Pastor Sparks, out of his growing conviction for a kingdom-mission that is shaped by its context and geographically defined, began to change the vision and rhetoric of his church to embrace these parish-ways. Within two years Pastor Sparks’ church shrunk from 400 to fifteen.⁴⁵

This is a story that I have heard time and again, as pastors commit to convictions that infiltrate their congregants’ freedom, comfort, pocket-book, and autonomy. In a world

⁴⁴ Tim Soerens, interview by author, Portland, OR, November 23, 2010.

⁴⁵ Paul Sparks, interview by author, Portland, OR, November 23, 2010. These statistics were received directly from Pastor Sparks.

where the consumer is king and the appetites and declarations of that king are fed without temperance, the self-sacrifice and “smallness” of a parish philosophy swims against a very brisk cultural current.

Neo-Monasticism

The close cousin of the Parish Orientation is the recent resurgence of monastic themes in what is often called “Neo-Monasticism.” Nationally, the movement is linked to names like Shane Clayborne and Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove. Locally, in Portland and in the Pacific Northwest more broadly, there are no names of note, apart from their tireless and selfless, often anonymous commitment to their small and devout communities of faith.

“New Monasticism” is one actual network of these intentional communities across the landscape of North America. They are based on the ancient ways of the monastic life, found in sources like the *Rule of St. Benedict*,⁴⁶ a way of “self discipline, and discipline always took the form of order—an ordered day, an ordered community, and ordered life.”⁴⁷ They are small, intentional, geographically if not “one-house,” communities built on radical and often vow-based commitments. Those vows may include ancient themes like stability,⁴⁸ obedience,⁴⁹ relocation⁵⁰ or hospitality.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Benedict and Timothy Fry, *The Rule of St. Benedict in English*, 1st ed., Vintage Spiritual Classics (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1998).

⁴⁷“Ivan J. Kauffman, *Follow Me: A History of Christian Intentionality*, New Monastic Library (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2009), 19.

⁴⁸ Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, *The Wisdom of Stability: Rooting Faith in a Mobile Culture* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press).

⁴⁹ Jon Stock, *Inhabiting the Church* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2007), 57-86.

⁵⁰ John Perkins, *With Justice for All: A Strategy for Community Development*, 3rd ed. (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2007), 60-105.

This is a revolutionary movement. "... we are constantly tempted to form a church that will simply undergird the civil order. A new monasticism refuses that temptation. Given our fragmented world, the church is constantly tempted to import that fragmentation into its life. A new monasticism seeks to heal that fragmentation by rediscovering the *telos* of human life revealed in the gospel The new monasticism envisioned here is the form by which the church will recover its *telos*, the living tradition of the gospel, the practices and virtues that sustain that faithfulness, and the community marked by faithful living in a fragmented world."⁵²

As stated before, these communities tend to be quite small and must remain so because of the high relational commitment and inter-dependency that they foster. They also require an extremely narrow door of entry. Often such communities have a novitiate period of two years or longer, during which the proposed member explores and experiences the communities intense vows and the group has adequate time to discern the place (if any) within the community's long-term life.

Church of the Servant King is the most famous such church on Portland's inner Eastside. Pastored by Michael and Hilda Munk, they have faithfully practiced monastic living for two decades. In that time, their community has grown to five community houses of varying sizes. They focus on two core vows: stability and obedience. The community has several shared practices and insists upon communal living.

⁵¹ Joan Chittister, *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily: Living the Rule of St. Benedict Today*, 1st HarperCollins pbk. ed. (San Francisco, CA: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991). See Chapter 10

⁵² Jonathan R. Wilson, *Living Faithfully in a Fragmented World: Lessons for the Church from MacIntyre's After Virtue*, Christian Mission and Modern Culture (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 78.

The monastic way stands as an anchor in a fragmented world. Its goal is not to “participate” in culture, but to stand against it like a rock in the shifting surf. The critiques are obvious, the expectations are so high, the way of entry so narrow and the lifestyle so sequestered, that there is little impact on the society as a whole. That is not to say that such communities do not seek and participate with the kingdom of God in the world. Never. It is a simple truth though, that society at large, along with the neighborhood all around, usually have no idea that such communities even exist.

Free Faith (No “Brick and Mortar” Expression)

As communicated in the introduction, people are quitting church. There is no mystery here and really no argument to the contrary. Churches are closing. Religious structures are resourcing a smaller and smaller percentage of the population.

Dave Olson, a researcher for the Evangelical Covenant Church says that in recent years a significantly smaller number of Americans are “participating in the most basic Christian practices: the weekly gathering for worship, teaching, prayer and fellowship.”⁵³

Julia Duin, in her book *Quitting Church*, consolidates several studies and states:

Because the U.S. population is expanding, evangelical pollster George Barna estimates the number of unchurched Americans is growing by about one million each year. The fraction of Americans with no religious preference doubled during the 1990s from 8 to 14 percent, according to a 2001 City University of New York “American Religious Identification Survey.” However, of that 14 percent, less than half (40 percent) were atheists; the other 60 percent were merely “religious” or

⁵³ Bob Smietana, “Statistical Illusion,” *Christianity Today* April, 2006, 86.

“spiritual.” In other words, plenty of people in this country are interested in spiritual matters. They are simply not going to church to feed this interest.⁵⁴

These statements are indicative of an almost paradoxical dynamic. The unchurched are increasing. However, it appears that many people are not rejecting faith at all. What they are rejecting are the institutional constructs that have defined (or at least represented the primary stage of) the life of faith for much of religious history.

There are several movements in contemporary society that are nurturing faith and networking the spiritually committed, and doing so outside traditional religious-institutional structures. There are leadership development networks, bible-study systems and even on-line expressions.

By way of illustration, I will site one particularly infamous network, which is most prominently known as “The Fellowship.” This particular “network of friends” is so non-institutional that there is hardly a leadership structure. The only publicized expression (event) is the *National Prayer Breakfast*, which The Fellowship (also known as “The Family”) has been overseeing for decades. Jeff Sharlet, in his critical and sensational expose in Harper’s Magazine said,

The Family's only publicized gathering is the National Prayer Breakfast, which it established in 1953 and which, with congressional sponsorship, it continues to organize every February in Washington, D.C. Each year 3,000 dignitaries, representing scores of nations, pay \$425 each to attend. Steadfastly ecumenical, too bland most years to merit much press, the breakfast is regarded by the Family as merely a tool in a larger purpose: to recruit the powerful attendees into smaller, more frequent prayer meetings, where they can “meet Jesus man to man.”⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Julia Duin, *Quitting Church: Why the Faithful are Fleeing and What To Do About It* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2008), 13.

⁵⁵ Jeff Sharlet, “Jesus Plus Nothing: Undercover Among America’s Secret Theocrats,” *Harper’s Magazine* March, 2003.

The vast majority of the network, which is loosely called The Fellowship, is to arrange and encourage small groups of authentic life, encouragement and mutual faith-mentoring. In contrast to Sharlet's commentary above, most of these groups are filled with the most unexceptional of folks, coming from any and every dimension of society. While it is true that there is, at times, an emphasis on societal leaders or business people, even those categories are misunderstood. Jim Eney, an Oregon minister affiliated with The Fellowship, serves, among other priorities, the State Capital Building as a resource and prayer partner. Jim's two days a week in Salem are spent as much with little-known aids and staff members as it is sitting with those who have a "vote" in the Capital's hallowed halls. "I am just there to pray with people and talk about the love of Jesus."⁵⁶

The Fellowship believes most strongly in the small group as the instrument of personal change. While there is no all-encompassing critique of more structured religious institutions (churches), there is a steadfast commitment to these small and organic gatherings, which meet, usually weekly, in coffee shops, homes or even work places. These groups are attractive because they are relationally driven and because there is a greater freedom given to leave religious pretense behind. In 1946, the founder of The Fellowship, Abraham Vereide, wrote:

Man craves fellowship. Most of us want an opportunity to make our feelings known, to relate our personal experiences, to compare notes with others, and, in unity of spirit to receive renewal, inspiration, guidance, and strength from God. Such groups as we are thinking of have characterized every spiritual awakening. Jesus began with Peter and James and John. He had the twelve and the Seventy. At Bethany he established a cell ... there you have the formula ... faith embodied the

⁵⁶ Jim Eney, interview by author, Portland, OR, December 7, 2010.

same close informal fellowship ... one common practice — gathering together in the name of Jesus.⁵⁷

“The goal is to become One-Man (Woman)” as opposed to playing games for the sake of appearance. One of the mottos of The Fellowship is, “Jesus plus nothing,” meaning the goal is to remove the additional religious layers, which are often superimposed on top of simply following Jesus. They believe those additional layers have a shameful habit of becoming preeminent to the actual teachings of Jesus as taken from the Gospels.

An organization like The Fellowship provides an effective and life changing work in the life of many individuals. I can say, from personal experience, that I have never found a better source of personal mentorship and spiritual development (apart from programs) than from individuals associated with The Fellowship, at least in its Oregon expressions.

The critiques of The Fellowship are many and Sharlet’s previously listed quote is indicative of those critiques: “It is an elitist organization.” “It exists to consolidate power.” And from the religious, it is accused of overly simplifying the Christian message and even hedging toward universalism.

My main concern for such systems is not that they are insignificant or ineffective (or heretical for that matter.) My concern is that they exist in very tight veins of society. In truth, there is a secretiveness to them, as Sharlet claims. However, it is not in some malicious or “Illuminati”⁵⁸ sort of way. Instead, the secretiveness is to keep the

⁵⁷ Wikipedia, “The Fellowship,” Wikipedia, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Fellowship_%28Christian_organization%29 (accessed October 13, 2010). Original source is a now out of print: Vereide and John Magee (chaplain to President Harry Truman) called “Together” (Abingdon Cokesbury), 1946.

⁵⁸ A term assigned to an often imagined secret society which exists to rule the world.

introductions relationally driven and intimate. It is also to help foster a place of trust, so that even the dirty and shameful mistakes and addictions of life can be shared, prayed for and ultimately forgiven and corrected. Unfortunately, because of this secretiveness, a group like *The Fellowship* (as an organization or association) has essentially zero visible presence in my neighborhood (or really any neighborhood on Portland's Inner Eastside.) That is not to say that there are not Fellowship-people there. There are, but one could not find them if one searched. Furthermore, because it resources, through relational networks, the church, or more accurately the de-churched or disillusioned church, interested non-Christians have no pathway to engage.

Going Ancient (Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy)

One of the unpredictable backlashes of postmodernity, which is primarily a reaction against the post-Enlightenment cognitive construct often called "modernity," has been the loss of *reliable truth*. Or, to put it another way, with the surfacing of a more subjective orientation toward truth (or the loss of "absolute truth" as many theo-philosophers have framed it), many are seeking a new construct for personal and psychological assurance. Western culture has taught its children, over the last couple of centuries, that we can trust our minds: *cogito ergo sum* ("I think, therefore I am."), but with the rise of cognitive relativism and the deconstruction of propositionally driven ideologies/theologies, much of society longs for a new existential anchor. One place that some have gone to is objective church authority. Inspired by beliefs like "the one true Church" (and its close cousin, "the original and purest Church"), "unbroken apostolic succession," and

“absolute ecclesial authority” some are finding solace and comfort in submission to an ancient way. It is for this reason that books like “Why I am still a Catholic”⁵⁹ and Gillquist’s “Becoming Orthodox”⁶⁰ have been so widely read.

Having watched several friends and spiritual confidants “convert” from free-church evangelicalism (emergent and otherwise) to one of these two traditions, the major drive is ultimately, as suggested above, need for authoritative assurance. This assurance is inevitably based in a historically argued, ecclesial-hierarchical, and absolute church construct. To over-simplify for clarity, the question is: “Why is it true?” The answer is: “Because *the Church* says it is true.” This authoritative appeal certainly works for the macro-questions: Is there a God? Is the Christian way true? Is there salvation and forgiveness? It also appeals in the far more nuanced questions of theological detail: What is the process of experiencing existential forgiveness? Can grace take on ontological forms? What is the means of soteriological assurance? This longing for clarity comes from a spiritual fatigue generated by philosophical inconsistencies they may have received from evangelical authorities or answers that hinge on subjective confirmation (“you will just know when it is right.”) A portion of society is screaming, “Will someone just tell me what is right and what to believe?!”⁶¹

⁵⁹ Kevin Ryan and Marilyn Ryan, *Why I Am Still a Catholic*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Riverhead Books, 1998).

⁶⁰ Peter E. Gillquist, *Becoming Orthodox: A Journey to the Ancient Christian Faith*, 1st ed. (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, 1989).

⁶¹ This same longing, this assurance-deficit has also led to the occasional exceptional influence of theologically precise and authoritatively delivered philosophies of church. The most prevalent example currently would be the Hyper-Reformed movement that has surfaced anew in recent years. To appeal to this psychological phenomenon, these ecclesiologies are conveyed in absolutes and defend a distinctly hierarchical authority structure.

The other motivation for this ancient attraction is the longing for the unique sort of meaning that comes from the sign and symbol of historical forms. The simple reality that the system of faith and worship has been around so long and because its processes (wording, liturgy, symbolism, structure, etc.) have been repeated and affirmed over so many centuries, these forms therefore “feel” meaningful. This motivation is one that I can relate to and why I have understood those who have come across my path who desire history (and maybe why I have known so many who have either converted or wrestled with conversion.) So to find these assurances and meanings, they convert, and in my experience they convert in equal measure to Roman Catholicism or Eastern Orthodoxy.

The reality is that the group that actually embraces a conversion such as this is very small. It is small for a variety of reasons. First, it is small because this sort of conversion appeals to the sort of person who gets “stuck in their head.” I am not talking about academic people necessarily (though they are found in this group.) I am talking about the sort of folks who get internally handcuffed to questions and doubts. Their internal dialogue creates a sense of crisis that leads them to make a radical step of this kind. This step is radical because it requires a philosophical reprogramming. The same mind that can’t let go of questions and doubts now must “agree” to surrender its “vote” and give over decision making to a tradition. That may just sound like historical Christianity, but understand that this is a group that is ironically ruled by their cognitive processes. Second, to make this conversion, the individual must be willing to risk “losing their past.” These converts were for the most part evangelical and mostly conservative evangelical. They risk alienating parents, friends, and former social and spiritual

communities. It is my experience that this group, once the decision is made to convert, experience at least three years of painful arguing to “prove” their decision to loved ones. And in the end they often establish a new social fabric with only their closest friends and confidants remaining close. They often come out of professional ministry positions in free-church models (or para-church models⁶²) or at the least, were leaders in whatever tradition they left, because of their natural religious fervor.

The main critique I would offer is the limited viability this trend has to affect the broader population. For the most part, it happens in anonymous corners of Christendom. This is not Christian “conversion” in the ultimate sense. In fact, I don’t know of anyone who has made such a conversion from a truly non-churched or non-Christian background. Also, Roman Catholic, and especially Eastern Orthodoxy have little emphasis (and certainly nothing comprehensive) on mission/evangelism to the greater culture. Roman Catholicism has a larger marketing problem as they carry a generally negative stereotype within the culture at large. Our study in North Portland revealed that Catholicism has the largest credibility gap with a 44.6% negative impression rating and among those who offered some sort of impression, only 12.4% had a positive rating.⁶³ This was among the worst impressions among the traditions we researched. Eastern Orthodoxy on the other hand has a predominantly neutral rating, neither positive nor negative. This fact does offer tremendous opportunity to the Orthodox Church, in its varying nationalistic manifestations, however it is also indicative of Orthodoxy’s core issue. They have hidden

⁶² As Gillquist, *Becoming Orthodox*. As Gillquist testifies.

⁶³ Evangelicals and Mormons rated the worst in our study of zip code 97217. To see the complete results of our study, reference Appendix 1.

themselves from the greater culture. In Portland, Orthodox churches exist in sequestered corners of the city. Their small congregations are mostly made up of recent emigrants and social recluses. Their services are often not in English (totally or in part). Father George of St. Nicolas' church in Southwest Portland admits that his tradition has little to no emphasis on intentional-mission to the city.⁶⁴ In fact, when I surveyed the content and "index of subjects" of Bishop Kallistos Ware's book, *The Orthodox Way*,⁶⁵ a highly regarded summary of the Orthodox faith, there are no entries or references to: "mission," "evangelism," "outreach," "justice," "proclamation," "Great Commission" or any other missional term I can think of.

Summary

In conclusion, I would like to restate what I stated in this chapter's first pages, "It would be impossible to be exhaustive in examining and evaluating all such strategies. I will choose a selection of such strategies that are current in the mainstream Christian world. I will focus my comments to strategies that are currently active in Portland's urban center ... I am asking an *effectiveness* question. In what ways does (or doesn't) each strategy actually draw the citizens in our post-Christian society⁶⁶ into faith in Christ and church life? The purpose is not to criticize. In fact, many of my comments will be very complimentary."

⁶⁴ I interviewed Father George in the February of 2010 for a group project on Eastern Orthodoxy for Dr. Carole Spencer's class at George Fox University: DMIN 541, Historical Models of Spiritual Formation.

⁶⁵ Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Way* (Yonkers, New York: St. Vladimirs Seminary Press, 1995), 10, 157-9.

⁶⁶ As opposed to simply more effectively consolidating the remaining vestiges of "Christian culture."

I am proud of my brothers and sisters in the faith from each of the traditions and strategies listed here. I have walked with many of them as they compassionately labor for God's kingdom. Of that fact, I have little doubt.

As we examine the map of the church's work, it reveals the reality of our limited *real* influence on the society at large, particularly the inner-city post-Christian society of a city like Portland, Oregon. Many of these strategies exist in what are effectively anonymous pockets. And those that do offer a more public or proclamational quality are mostly consolidating the last vestiges of suburban Christendom.

We live in a new world. No one strategy will be a cure-all.

I would like to suggest one movement that might help the church take a huge step in the right direction: Anglican liturgical churches, which exist for the sake of others.

CHAPTER 6: SOLUTION

*As long as you notice, and have to count the steps, you are not yet dancing but only learning to dance. A good shoe is a shoe you don't notice. Good reading becomes possible when you need not consciously think about eyes, or light, or print, or spelling. The perfect church service would be the one we were almost unaware of; our attention would have been on God.*¹ C.S Lewis

Introduction

There is an old joke. It goes like this:

A group of friends are hiking through the woods. They come upon a bear a ways up the path. The bear starts to charge and all the friends turn to run; all of them that is, except one. One man drops to the ground and starts to put on his running shoes.

The man closest to him, grabs him by the sleeve and says, "What are you doing? You will never outrun that bear!"

The man on the ground calmly responds, "I don't need to outrun the bear. I only need to outrun you."

This joke is about survival and it illustrates one definition of success. It also illustrates the philosophy of the church's mission in America for some time. Granted, that is a cynical interpretation. However, the statistics do not lie. Some churches are growing; but they are filling their pews with the diaspora of their church neighbors: mainline to evangelical, evangelical to mega-church, mega-church to emergent church, on and on it goes. And each time we reshuffle and re-deal the congregational deck, many more of those precious cards simply slip off the table.

Maybe it is time to stop trying to outrun our friends.

¹ C. S. Lewis, *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*, 1st American ed. (New York, NY: Harcourt, 1964), 4-5.

Maybe it is time to face the bear.

The bear is our increasingly post-Christian world, with its post-Christian perspectives and post-Christian values. The bear is not evil. Let me say that again. *The bear is not evil.* It is a daunting, strong, resourceful, determined and ultimately beautiful creation of the Most High. “God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.”² The bear is on a quest and it is the same quest whether we (the Church) stumble along its path or not. He wants to be fed. And he wants his meal to be satisfying; a meal that was made for his appetites, that nourishes his particular physiology and not a meal, which was made for some other sort of creature.

Preliminary Thoughts

Clarifying the Context

This dissertation’s purpose is to provide an essential dimension into the conversation about the Christian church and post-Christian culture. It is accomplishing that precious goal by dialing the conversation tightly onto a small and distinct population. It is taking the sociological and ecclesiological discussion to a single zip-code. From that vantage point, the goal is to offer one missing element, a particular structure and tradition, which will help woo many post-Christian people back to intimate and integrated worship and obedience of God in Christ. Also, while the implications of these conclusions are no doubt farther reaching, my specific concern and construct here is only the particular of post-Christendom context we are currently living amongst in the urban centers of the

² Gen. 1:31a.

Pacific Northwest, most specifically, Portland, Oregon. From this point forward though, to provide simplicity for the reader and sanity for the writer, I will simply use the phrase, “post-Christian culture” in place of “central-urban, Pacific Northwest, post-Christian culture, most specifically, Portland, Oregon.” I am sure you can see the wisdom in this choice.

Continuity

One reality has already been consistently argued throughout this work, particularly in Chapter Two and Chapter Three. That reality is this: Liturgical worship has tenaciously lasted the test of time, space and culture. Its use in the ancient church is so clear and widespread that it would seem as if the liturgy has always been there. It has walked as the near constant companion of the church through her diverse and tumultuous history. It has thrived from periods of mass persecution to Imperial mandate. It has thrived through the transitions from ancient to pre-modern to modern times. During the Middle Ages, Reformation, Renaissance and Industrial Revolution, it thrived. It thrived through the expanse of the Western Church and the Eastern Church. It has thrived from global-north to global-south. It has withstood communism and thrived within the Soviet block. It has survived innumerable wars (sometimes between Christian traditions,) thirteen-hundred years of near constant conflict with Islam, crossing centuries and continents, planting and birthing within innumerable cultures and languages. So the question is: How could we possibly believe that we are in some new frontier, so unique in all of the multi-dimensional streams of human expression, that we will inexplicably find these ancient ways meaningless? Is it now, that after the cultures and generations of the human story

have voted time and time again that the liturgy is meaningful and life-giving, that suddenly post-Christian humanity simply woke up, made of some new metal? At the very least, thinking people ought to begin their pursuit with what has most often been true.

Anonymity Is Opportunity

I will be making suggestions and arguments for new liturgical churches in post-Christian cultures. I will be making these arguments from an Anglican perspective. One could wisely ask, Why Anglicanism? Why not the Presbyterian liturgy, or the Lutheran, etc.? Well, many of the unique features of Anglican structure and worship will be illuminated throughout this final chapter. However, one preliminary idea will answer that important question. Anglicanism has a unique opportunity that other liturgical denominations do not: a chance to write their own press release. Anglicans are generally a mystery (anonymity) to the general public and that provides a great opportunity. To demonstrate this anonymity, I will draw once again on our research here in zip code 97217³. The final section of our survey asked respondents their impression of a selection of Christian denominations/traditions. Each of the 193 residents was asked to rate twelve traditions⁴ on a scale of 1-5 (one being strongly negative impressions, five being strongly

³ See Appendix 1.

⁴ There is bound to be questions as to why these particular “traditions” were chosen. They were chosen for a number of reasons. First of all, as the survey indicates, it would be impossible to be exhaustive or even truly representative of the breadth of Christian traditions, so these are simply a “sample” of Christian traditions. They are listed in no particular order.

There are some “traditions” included that some might question. “Charismatic” and “Pentecostal” were both included because I did not know which term those outside of Christendom were more familiar with and I learned that they have more familiarity with Pentecostalism. I chose “Emergent” because it is a recurring topic in this dissertation and though I assumed that it is more of an insiders term and would be little known outside of Christendom, which most respondents were (as the survey confirmed), it also made for a good control case in our experiment. “Roman Catholic” and “Eastern Orthodox (Russian, Greek,

positive impression and three being an equal number of positive and negative impressions) the other option was “no impression” if the respondent hadn’t had any real contact with the tradition (personally or publicly.) For the twelve traditions, here is the number of “no impressions” logged:

Number of “No Impressions”	
Roman Catholic	28
Charismatic	96
Emergent	138
Lutheran	50
Evangelical.....	29
Anglican.....	92
Baptist	25
Methodist	50
Eastern Orthodox	65
Pentecostal	57
Mormon.....	20
Presbyterian.....	48

Of those that did have some specified impression (meaning they did not claim “no impression), expressed on our one-to-five scale (one strongly negative and five strongly positive,) here is the average numerical response:

Average 1-5 score	
Roman Catholic	2.4
Charismatic	2.2
Emergent.....	2.5
Lutheran	2.9
Evangelical.....	2.0

etc.)” were included because they represent such a massive percentage of Christians globally and because they are referenced in this dissertation. “Church of Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints (Mormons)” was included because I wanted to test and see if they are perceived as poorly outside of Christendom as it has been within Christendom. It is also worth noting that there were no reports of respondents questioning “why were Mormons included in a list of Christian denominations?” We Christians need to accept that the Mormons are perceived as our brethren.

One possible criticism of this list is that it does not include “Episcopalians.” After considerable thought, this was an intentional decision. I wanted to get an uncluttered impression of the term “Anglican” and I thought that would be best accomplished if it was not juxtaposed near the term “Episcopalian.”

Anglican.....	2.8
Baptist.....	2.5
Methodist	2.9
Orthodox	2.8
Pentecostal	2.2
Mormon.....	2.0
Presbyterian.....	2.9

There are some conclusions that can be made from this data. One application (forgive me this one side discussion) is that Christians in post-Christian contexts need, for the sake of mission, to avoid associating with the term “evangelical.”⁵ Most everyone has an opinion of the term “evangelical” (only twenty-nine “no impressions,” which equals 15 percent); it also records the second largest percentage⁶ of “negative impressions” of any tradition (57.5% of respondents) and the lowest average ranking among those with impressions (2.0). It is clear, at least in 97217, that “evangelical” is not a well regarded term.⁷

It is worth noting that among the one-to-five ratings, all the best regarded denominations/traditions are liturgical traditions (with the exception of Roman Catholic): Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, Eastern Orthodox and Anglican.

⁵ Dave Tomlinson, *The Post Evangelical*, Rev. North American ed. (El Cajon, CA: Emergent YS/Zondervan, 2003), 16. “The post-evangelical impulse does not necessarily imply a move away from Christian orthodoxy or evangelical faith. Rather it demonstrates that to remain true to a tradition, we must come to terms with its changing cultural context in order to find an authentic expression of that tradition—‘you have to change to stay the same.’”

⁶ Only “Mormons” recorded more negative perceptions. 118 of 193 or 61 percent negative impression.

⁷ One could speculate and comment as to why the word “evangelical” has become so poorly regarded. America’s recent political history has contributed to this decline. Whatever the reasons, the word does not translate into our post-Christian culture. The word “evangelical” is not a Bible word. It did not come from Jesus. In fact it is a fairly new term. From a church-insider point of view, I understand that the word is filled with wonderful connotations. However, a word is only valuable for what it “communicates.” Anyone who continues to use a word like “Evangelical” in the public sphere (assuming it is received poorly and for that matter inconsistently with the speaker intent), is doing so for self-serving reasons, even if the intent in positive and honest.

There is another fact that separates Anglicanism from the other traditions, liturgical and non-liturgical. Let's look at the number of "no impressions" recorded for "Anglican." As you can see, there were ninety-two "no impression" responses, the most of any tradition with exception to "emergent" and "charismatic," which are more Christian insider-terms. Those ninety-two responses represent 47.4%. Also Anglican received only 16.6% negative impressions (compare that to: Roman Catholic 44.6%, Evangelical 61.1%, Baptist 42.0%, Lutheran 23.3%.) All of this adds up to fact that the Anglican tradition can move through the post-Christian world with relatively little baggage. It has the ability to be both ancient and established⁸ (something that will be important in post-Christendom as we will discuss later) and functionally mysterious to the average person. Therefore, Anglican churches have a chance to define themselves in the public sphere in a way that is relatively free of societal bias.

Anglicanism has an opportunity that other denominations (liturgical or not) do not.⁹

A Limited Window

It is only responsible to point out that this bias-free window will have a limited lifespan. As the presence of Anglicanism grows, both through more and more Anglican churches being planted and because of news stories related to the Anglican Church, this currently clean canvas will be cluttered with images, impression and opinions (both

⁸ A movement could label itself something new (like "emergent") and also have a relatively mysterious stigma. However, it is unique to be ancient and established and also enough of an unknown commodity to be able to write your own press release. The other tradition that could potentially claim the same is the Eastern Orthodox Church (if only they had a missional orientation and entrepreneurial structure.)

⁹ This is important not just because Anglicanism is more anonymous than other denominations. Yes

positive and negative.) The plot line, which offers the most potential drama, is the on-going relationship and comparisons between Anglicanism and Episcopalianism. We are witnessing a season of separation between these historical ecclesial brothers. With separation comes pain. So far, most of the press has been on a local level, as historically Episcopalian churches chose as a local-community to leave the Episcopal family and submit instead to Anglican leadership structures. These exits involve large amounts of money (especially when you consider large, historical properties and loss of annual dues,) and relational severing with its correlated emotions (shame, anger, betrayal, etc.) One Episcopal Church, found on Portland's periphery, St. Matthew's, chose to leave their Episcopal heritage in May of 2010. A series of stories followed the split in the state newspaper, *The Oregonian*, throughout that month. Nancy Haught, a religion features writer for the paper wrote, "With a reputation as a conservative congregation, St. Matthew's had for sixty-six years included people who read the Bible almost literally and others who interpreted it from more liberal points of view. But over time, that range grew problematic. On March 21, a majority of St. Matthew's members voted to leave the church."¹⁰ The issues listed were generally a divide between "liberal" and "conservative" theology, with divergent views of biblical authority and homosexuality as the most prevalent. This story came and went with little fanfare, but with the entrenchment of the

¹⁰ Nancy Haught, "Anglican Parish Splits from Episcopal Congregation in Northeast Portland," OregonLive.com, http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2010/05/anglican_parish_splits_from_ep.html (accessed January 3, 2011).

Episcopal Church in America's story,¹¹ the prevalence and power of this national narrative will only grow. It is also responsible to note that this Episcopal/Anglican divide is helping set the pieces in place for a national (even international) debate on a theology of homosexuality. The conversation is escalating with the release of numerous books including *A Church at War: Anglicans and Homosexuality* by Stephen Bates¹², *Church in Crisis: The Gay Controversy and the Anglican Communion* by Oliver O'Donovan¹³, and *Homosexuality and the Crisis of Anglicanism* by William L. Sachs¹⁴. Suffice it to say, regardless of whether one feels this debate is important, the collateral damage will include more negative impressions of the Christian church, and specifically this burgeoning Anglican work in North America.¹⁵

¹¹ It has been called our unofficial national church, since so many of the founding fathers were Episcopalians, resulting in, among other national distinctives, The United States National Cathedral is under the Episcopal church.

¹² Stephen Bates, *A Church at War: Anglicans and Homosexuality* (London: I. B. Tauris and Co. Ltd, 2006).

¹³ Oliver O'Donovan, *Church in crisis: The Gay Controversy and the Anglican Communion* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2008).

¹⁴ William L. Sachs, *Homosexuality and the Crisis of Anglicanism* (Cambridge, UK ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009). It is important to note that this debate is being chummed from both sides of the table. The books listed above are looking for both a more progressive Anthropology (which includes sexuality and identity) and maintaining a conservative view. I would add to this list: Miranda Katherine Hassett, *Anglican Communion in crisis: How Episcopal Dissidents and their African Allies are Reshaping Anglicanism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

¹⁵ Susan Brown Snook, "Reaching New People Through Church Planting," *Anglican Theological Review* 92, 1: 112. The tension between Anglicanism and Episcopalianism will most likely also receive additional fuel from the fact that Anglicanism is planting churches and growing in North America while, according to Susan Brown Snook, "Churchwide, the Episcopal church has not kept pace with population growth. New generations of young people are not finding their way to our church: the Episcopal Church is significantly older than the population at large, losing 19,000 member per year by virtue of our age structure alone. Overall our average Sunday attendance fell 10.5% from 2003-2007."

Mission in Motion

Anglicanism is here. *The Anglican Mission*¹⁶ to the United States and particularly its post-Christian urban centers has already arrived and is trekking forward. It has vision, leadership and determination. However, its arrival came along a difficult road, a road through Rwanda. The Rt. Rev. John Kabango Rucyahana wrote in the introduction to his book, *The Bishop of Rwanda*:

In 1994, at least 1,117,000 innocent people were massacred in a horrible genocide in Rwanda, my homeland in central Africa. We are still finding bodies—buried in pits, dumped in rivers, chopped in pieces. Besides providing the details of the very sad story, my goal with this book is to tell an amazing, uplifting story. It is the story of the new Rwanda, a country that has turned to God, and which God is blessing.¹⁷

And which God is using to bless the world.

His book goes on to tell the tale of Rwanda's healing from one of the greatest atrocities in human history: in one hundred days, over a million souls were killed by soldier and neighbor, by bullet and machete, in hut, hospital and school. Into the wake of this great pain, church leaders, born in Rwanda but living outside its borders, returned out of divine obedience, to love and serve their devastated land. Men like Rev. John Rucyahana and Rev. Emmanuel Kolini. They began by listening. And through a prayer-saturated story like few the world has ever known, they watched a movement of forgiveness and reconciliation.

"There is no barrier that cannot be overcome and no division that cannot be healed. What could be worse than the violence that happened in Rwanda? If the Rwandan

¹⁶ Also called the Anglican Mission in America (AMIA).

¹⁷ John Rucyahana, *The Bishop of Rwanda* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007), xv.

situation can be amended by repentance and forgiveness, and the people here can be reconciled enough to live together again, it can happen anywhere in the world.”¹⁸ Later, Rev. Rucyahana said,

There cannot be any cruelty greater than the cruelty that was in Rwanda, and therefore there is no grace greater than the grace that is in Rwanda. It is a grace that frees people from great cruelty and allows them to share life. And that grace comes from the cross of Jesus Christ.¹⁹

This belief and passion for what “can happen anywhere in the world,” turned the eyes of these Rwandan saints to other spiritual famines around the world. In 1997, “John Rucyahana stepped off the plane in Myrtle Beach. We did not know that day—none of us did—that the arrival of this Anglican bishop from the global South would mark the beginning of a massive correction in the United States.”²⁰ And by the year 2000 the *Anglican Mission* had begun. Thaddeus Barnum records Rucyahana’s declaration to *The Mission*:

Go and do the work: preach the gospel, evangelize, start new churches, bring existing churches into the world and send them into mission. Start with humility You have all the tools you need for this Anglican witness in Jesus Christ to grow ... now go and preach the Gospel everywhere. Grow the church. We are part of you.²¹

This *Anglican Mission* has grown. “Established in 2000 as a missionary outreach of the Anglican Church of Rwanda, the *Anglican Mission* has focused on planting churches throughout North America, adding on average one new congregation every three

¹⁸ Ibid., 221.

¹⁹ Ibid., 222.

²⁰ Thaddeus Barnum, *Never Silent: How Third World Missionaries Are Now Bringing the Gospel to the U.S.*, 1st ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: Eleison Publications, 2008), 66.

²¹ Ibid., 223.

weeks.”²² In January, 2009, a fresh initiative was launched to focus specifically on urban centers of the West Coast. This initiative, called *Churches for the Sake of Others (C4SO)* is being led by church planting expert, Todd Hunter, who was supernaturally called to serve the Mission and now functions as a missionary bishop.²³ Bishop Hunter’s mandate is to plant churches, and particularly:

C4SO sees Jesus Christ as a transformer of culture and holds to an incarnational theology. We uphold the ancient creeds of the church with a strong missional emphasis upon the poor and needy. Missional engagement begins with church planters living within their context and listening to the people in their communities. In turn, the C4SO leadership will be listening to the individual churches that emerge. The overall purpose is to inspire followers of Jesus for the sake of others. My team is committed to engaging the post-modern, post-Christian culture and drawing the unchurched and dechurched to Christ by going where they are.²⁴

This Anglican story answers any doubts about the organizational viability of Anglican church-planting in post-Christian urban centers. It has vision, support, leadership and authority. It also, in consideration of post-Christendom’s critique, has credibility, for it is led by men who “have the right to speak.”

Anglican Liturgy and Post-Christian Encounter with Truth

I was at a gathering with Michael, a Masai warrior from Kenya, who has recently received his PhD from Asbury College in indigenous theology. “I am a follower of Jesus,” he said, “I call myself a nomadic-Christian.” One highly educated man present asked him “Michael, have you killed the lion?” He asked this because he had some

²² The Anglican Mission, “Identity,” The Anglican Mission, <http://www.theamia.org/identity/> (accessed January 3, 2011).

²³ Bishop Hunter’s tells his story in his book: Todd D. Hunter, *The Accidental Anglican: The Surprising Appeal of the Liturgical Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Books).

²⁴ Churches for the Sake of Others, “Hear the Story and See the Vision.”

knowledge of the Masai right of passage, when boys are sent out to kill a lion. Michael responded, “There are too few lions today and our land depends too much upon the lion for us to kill them.” Later, in the same gathering, Michael gave a traditional blessing to a Lacota²⁵ brother named Richard. In his blessing, Michael exhorted Richard “to kill the lion.” I was confused as to what Michael meant. Then he continued, “Richard, kill the lion, and the lion that we must kill is the lion of Modernity.”

Scriptures

In early Christendom, the Bible was viewed as a mystical text, something to be uncompromisingly revered. It came from the “Church” and that is really all that needed to be said.

In later Christendom, particularly post-Enlightenment Modernity, the bible was viewed as a source of factual “truth.” Now to what extent it sources truth; that was the main topic of debate. Were the scriptures reliable only on the topics of faith and morality? Or did they also speak universally to the topics of science, history and society? And finally the dominant argument, Is the Bible a perfect book? And by “perfect” theologians meant was it error free. In the times of latter Christendom, these debates were fueled by secular materialism (or the absence of the spiritual dimension of reality) to textual criticism with initiatives like *The Jesus Seminar*. *The Jesus Seminar* was a group of New Testament scholars (led by Marcus Borg of Portland along with others) who came together to judge the words and actions of Jesus in the Gospels and to determine

²⁵ The Lacota are members of the Sioux nation, originally from, what is now called, the American upper Midwest.

how historically authentic those items were. They voted on a four step scale signified by colored beads: black for not authentic, grey for most likely not authentic, pink for possibly authentic and red for most likely authentic. I give this brief description here of *The Jesus Seminar*, because it is an excellent parable of the greater cultural phenomena of this era. The primary purpose of the individual in response to the Bible was to vote. Vote their opinion and ultimately that opinion was about if and how much to validate or invalidate the text. This is an important point, because I find that many people think that forces like *The Jesus Seminar* (and the popular voting that happens in general society) are “post-Christian” expressions, but they are not. In these moments, the Bible (Christianity) is still reacted to as a strong player in society and its cognitive constructs. The Bible is still an anxious document. No matter what part of the “Bible as Truth” spectrum one might land on, the general tone is an anxious tone. As Edwin Friedman says, “Differentiation is the lifelong process of striving to keep one’s being in balance through the reciprocal external and internal processes of self-definition and self-regulation...with the minimum reactivity to the positions and reactivity of others.”²⁶ When one is not differentiated, they respond as an “anxious presence.” Emotions spike, becoming incongruent with the circumstances at hand. “Anxiety’s major tone is seriousness, often an affliction in itself. It is always content-oriented.”²⁷

²⁶ Edwin H. Friedman, Edward W. Beal, and Margaret W. Treadwell, *A Failure of Nerve: Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix: An Edited Manuscript* (Bethesda, MD: Edwin Friedman Estate/Trust, 1999).

²⁷ Edwin H. Friedman, *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*, The Guilford Family Therapy Series (New York, NY: Guilford Press, 1985), 209.

In Post-Christendom, the anxiousness toward the scriptures evaporates. Allow me to explain:

I served as a volunteer chaplain at Reed College from 2000 through 2003. If Post-Christian culture (in its North American form) could be distilled into its purest form, what would be left over might just be in the shape and smell of Reed College. Why is that? Princeton Review²⁸ each year compiles approximately 122,000 survey results from students at the 373 schools surveyed. An average of 325 students commented from each school. One popular category upon which these 373 schools are ranked is titled "Most Religious." Routinely, and expectedly, schools like Brigham Young, Wheaton and Notre Dame²⁹ find themselves at the top of this list. At the list's bottom can routinely be found schools like Lewis and Clark College (also in Portland, Oregon,) Vassar, Emerson and yes, every year, Reed College is among the very last. 2011 is a banner year for Reed as it has climbed to the unprecedented height of fifth from the last³⁰. Additionally, Reed is one of the most academically stringent and robust campuses in the country. Loren Pope, former education editor for *The New York Times*, writes about Reed in *Colleges That Change Lives*, saying, "If you're a genuine intellectual, live the life of the mind, and want to learn for the sake of learning, the place most likely to empower you is not Harvard,

²⁸ Princeton Review, "Home Page," [princetonreview.com/](http://www.princetonreview.com/), <http://www.princetonreview.com/> (accessed November 23, 2010).

²⁹ Ibid. The top five schools on the 2011 Princeton Review survey were: Brigham Young University (Utah), Thomas Aquinas College (Calif.), Wheaton College (Ill.), Hillsdale College (Mich.), and the University of Dallas (Texas).

³⁰ Ibid. The bottom five schools on the 2011 Princeton Review survey were: Sarah Lawrence College (N.Y.), Bennington College (Vt.), Vassar College (N.Y.), Eugene Lang College- The New School (N.Y.), and Reed College (Ore.).

Yale, Princeton, Chicago, or Stanford. It is the most intellectual college in the country—Reed in Portland, Oregon.”³¹ There may not be a better place in North America to both experience post-Christianity in all its integrated expressions and also to be able to have thoughtful discussions, both impassioned and objective, about its personal and societal implications.

At Reed College, every incoming student must take Humanities 110, *Introduction to Western Humanities*. In this course students read a library’s worth of the formative texts of Western society from the Ancient Mediterranean up through the Rise of the Roman Empire, including Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato and Petronius (I audited Humanities 110 one year and I assure you, it was even more daunting than you could ever imagine.) Along with these other great texts, each student reads close to one fourth of the Bible, lectures are given on the profound contribution of the Judeo-Christian texts and each student argues in conference³² the necessary place of the Bible in society, in history and in a complete intellectual construct. These students are non-anxious in their response to scripture. It is not a threatening book. Nor is it a source of validation. It is a profound piece of history, philosophy, religion and society, co-equal with the other greatest texts of human history. It is to be honored and revered as such.

From the post-Christian cultural perspective, the Bible is an ancient, foundational and transcendent book, which, for a thoughtful and complete life, *needs* to be read (as

³¹Loren Pope, *Colleges That Change Lives: 40 Schools That Will Change the Way You Think About Colleges*, 2nd rev. ed. (New York, NY.: Penguin Books, 2006), 354.

³² “Conference” is a learning structure consistent throughout Reed’s educational culture, where in addition to sitting in larger lecture halls, learning from learned scholars, each student also meets with a small group of fellow students to argue and apply the texts within the peer on peer dialectic.

opposed to *ought* to be read.) Therefore, a spiritual paradigm that simply reads the scriptures, regularly and consistently, makes sense. What's more, people standing, honoring, declaring the ancient text,³³ often without "contemporary editorializing" will actually have more import than it could have in Modernity. The Anglican liturgy, with its weekly declarative readings and daily offices is positioned perfectly to fulfill this cultural priority.

Post-Christendom is not anxious about religion³⁴, but also does not want to be manipulated by an organizational agenda. In light of this it is important to ask: who chooses which biblical passages are read at a given service? In the educational model of the free-church, it is a leader ("Can I trust him?") or a committee of people (Secret committee? What is their agenda?) These people choose the sermon topics and passages to be read, as well as the pace and focus of those readings, and within Christian culture that is a reasonable process, since the pastor is revered as a benevolent CEO, in charge of

³³ There is not space here, but in Appendix 2, I will make suggestions and commentary about scripture declaration for the post-Christian context. Specifically, I will add here, the Anglican tradition of walking to the center of the room to read the Gospel Reading and standing under a lamp to do so has transcendent beauty.

³⁴ Christine Wicker, *The Fall of the Evangelical Nation: The Surprising Crisis Inside the Church*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2008), 209. To further support this idea of post-Christendom being far less "anxious" about religion than her modernist predecessors, when we conducted our independent survey of zip code 97217, most everyone we stopped was more than content to give a few moments to answer questions about faith and religious perceptions. Those who did refuse always refused to answer ANY questions and always because of a time excuse: "I don't have time right now." The only time someone refused (this happened twice) to answer only a portion of the questions was in the "perceptions of Christian denominations/traditions" section and their reasoning was a desire for "peace among people" and "no desire to judge others." These people were more than happy, however, to comment about their own practices and beliefs.

In contrast to this, according to Christine Wicker, 5 percent of the people approached in 2001 to take the American Religious Identification Survey "refused to answer the religion question." According to Wicker, 5 percent refused to discuss their own religious beliefs/affiliation, while our survey revealed no one with similar hesitations.

our spiritual development and product distribution. In contrast, a liturgical sacred experience appeals to a larger narrative. The passages being read were not decided by the pastor, they were not chosen because there is a “building fund” to stimulate; the passages read each week were chosen in ancient times and affirmed again and again by innumerable cultures over generations. They are simultaneously shared across time and space by the people of God. These passages, read in a regular cycle, are the meta-narrative of the sacred.

Symbol

Clifford Geertz, in his essay *Ethos, World View, and the Analysis of Sacred Symbols*, comments on the unique role of sacred symbols. He says they “relate an ontology and a cosmology to an aesthetics and a morality, their peculiar power comes from their presumed ability to identify fact with value at the most fundamental level, to give to what is otherwise merely actual a comprehensive normative import.... The tendency to synthesize worldview and ethos...if it is not philosophically justified, it is at least pragmatically universal.”³⁵ As Geertz goes on to say, sacred symbols both validate belief and motivate action. How do they do that? Their power “is made intellectually reasonable by being shown to represent a way of life by the actual state of affairs that the worldview describes, and the worldview is made emotionally acceptable by being presented as an image of an actual state of which such a way of life is an authentic expression.”³⁶ The

³⁵ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1973).

³⁶ Ibid.

symbol's sacramental reality, embodied in its very real, meaning-filled presence, both affirms and inspires.

It has become old hat to say that symbols, such as sacred objects, have a meaning that transcends words. They embody an entire narrative. Think of a national flag, a peace symbol or a wedding ring. A small still object can contain a narrative, which fills volumes.

In the Christendom of Modernity, sacred symbols were often replaced. New churches were given taupe walls and uncluttered stages. The aesthetic was reflective of the performance hall to insure that it remained "multi-use." That is not to say that symbols don't remain. All those utilitarian choices are very important embodied symbols and they most certainly preach (removable chairs, bare walls, stain resistant carpet, large sound-board, projection screens.) Other meaning-filled symbols include the podium, the band, the sound system. Ancient symbols were removed. The Baptist church of my youth, built in 1884, was colorless, outside the cabernet carpet. It had a raised tower of a lectern. The single cross was reductionist in style and we were instructed that you "never leave Jesus on the cross." Communion was celebrated only once a month and only in an evening service, using small plastic cups (like cough syrup) and chalky pellets of bread (like aspirin.) This symbolism taught this young boy a lasting narrative: the communion is a hassle (minimally practiced and relegated to an unimportant moment in the week,) it was individual (taken alone in one's seat,) disposable (using the most inexpensive and pragmatic of elements,) and it existed to catalyze my sensation of moral guilt toward healing, for the message was to "get your heart right before you partake" and the

elements looked and tasted like medicine. This anti-aesthetic reductionism leaves little for the post-Christian culture to embrace and from which to be inspired. A.W. Tozer warns us of the tendency of man. “Left to ourselves we tend immediately to reduce God to manageable terms. We want to get Him where we can use Him, or at least know where He is when we need Him. We want a God we can in some measure control.”³⁷ Mark Galli reacts to this desire to control God, with an understanding of worship beyond words, “Worship that doesn’t in some way leave a large space for transcendence and mystery is not fully worship of the God of the Bible, who when asked to name himself—to explain his essence—said rather truculently, “I am who I am.” The liturgy shines in the shadowy place called mystery.”³⁸

One reasonable, but waning, strategy of the twentieth century American church was to provide religious alternatives to the trends of our times. For a time, this communications arms-race “succeeded.” There was enough money and momentum within Christendom to build more impressive concert-halls and call them sanctuaries, to buy competitive sound systems and utilize technology to graphically present the drama of worship. Within this era, Christian congregants were willing to give the church the benefit of the doubt, even though the technology and presentation was only a fraction of what they could find on MTV (as an example.) They gave this benefit of the doubt because the soul of the congregant still needed the church to work. This is simply not so with post-Christendom. There is no need to give the church the benefit of the doubt and as a result much of

³⁷ Aiden Wilson Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy. The Attributes of God: Their Meaning in the Christian Life*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: Harper, 1961), 8.

³⁸ Galli, *Beyond Smells and Bells*, 50.

churches' attempts at technology seem like a hallow shell. As if that was not enough, today's technological and entertainment culture has out-paced any hope the church might have had to compete.³⁹ The technology/entertainment arms-race is over and the church has lost. And this fact, I believe, is a great gift.

Now we can get back to the priestly work of the church, we can get back to the transcendent. "We call this moment in the liturgy a sacrament, an outward sign of an invisible reality ... the sharing of the bread and wine at the climax of the service—not only recalls something that happened, but re-presents it in a way that makes it a present reality."⁴⁰

This brings a warning to faith-leaders hoping to live and speak into this post-Christian reality. The worship curriculum must support the sacred symbols. The system itself must be presented as congruent with reality. The age of emotionalized half-truths and authoritatively dictated contradictions are coming to an end. The age of sacred symbols, congruently anchored, has come.

Sermon

Related to the discussion of the Bible above, the sermon has a different impact and meaning in post-Christendom.

³⁹ For just a sample of what I mean consider this footage of some of the natal technology which is just getting off the ground. Keep in mind that these videos are already well over a year old. YouTube, "Project Matal xBox 360 Announcemet," YouTube, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2qlhoxpiom> (accessed January 8, 2011). See also: YouTube, "Lionhead, "Project Natal: Meet Milo," YouTube, (accessed January 8, 2011). Not only is the technology baffling and eye-popping, it is interactive, communal, communicative, emotive, and adrenaline inducing.

⁴⁰ Galli, *Beyond Smells and Bells*, 51-52.

In the ancient world, the center of sacred space and focus of the congregation's gaze was the altar. In modernity, particularly post-Enlightenment modernity, the altar is replaced by the lectern at the church's center. The sermon became the climax of the service. It was given the most important place and often the largest percentage of time of any element of the sacred gathering.⁴¹

Post-Christian culture does not need an iconic-someone to tell them what to believe and how to believe it. They are not particularly offended if someone does. They just don't need it. They feel what I call a "personality-fatigue."⁴² What they are looking for is an authentic friend who will walk along side them, express their own spiritual processes and explain how the sacred might integrate with the world beyond the sacred gathering. Anglican liturgy gives the sermon an important place in the gathering, but not the most important. That is reserved for the Eucharist table (see "symbol" above). The altar has returned. The transcendent and the ancient have been restored and given primacy. The sermon is an interlude amidst a greater narrative. The sermon is to translate this declared-truth (declared by the entire liturgy: Word, symbol, confession, sacrament, Table,)

⁴¹ It is worthy of note that in latter evangelicalism the lectern was also removed and the band was moved to the stage's center. From church to lecture hall to performance hall.

⁴² We live in a world where personalities are elevated over content. Oprah is a personality. Katie Couric is a personality. Barak Obama is a personality. Tim Tebow is a personality. Rush Limbaugh is a personality. Advice, information and entertainment (these three things are now impossible to separate from one another) are all delivered in the shape of a personality. And while we accept and daily participate in this reality, the church has an opportunity to provide the culture with a break from this personality inundation.

revealing how everyone present may live sacredly in every niche of life and view of the world.⁴³ As Webber says, “it brings the Word of God to bear on our lives.”⁴⁴

It is noteworthy that we do not have a theological treatise from Jesus. He never wrote a theological text. Though he lived in a significant philosophical age, the ancient Greek culture, he never penned a philosophical tome. Instead we have four narratives. Jesus’ life and teaching are delivered within a narrative. The liturgical orientation pulls us back to narrative: the narrative of the story read week by week over a three year period, the narrative of the church calendar cycling through the spiritual seasons, the narrative of the Eucharist service with its lovely literary arc.

Assurance

Phyllis Tickle, in her book *The Great Emergence*, states that one of the core questions, which is as of yet unanswered, is where “the new Christianity of the Great Emergence (will) discover some authority base.”⁴⁵ And to cut to the chase, that answer will be “something other than Luther’s *sola scriptura*.”⁴⁶

⁴³ Robert Webber and Rodney Clapp, *People of the Truth: The Power of the Worshiping Community in the Modern World*, 1st ed. (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1988), 123. “The church, by focusing on its distinctive identity and vision, can be a depth-political presence of great consequence to society. The church’s calling, we believe, is not to change society as such, but to be a steady and true witness of Christ’s inauguration of the kingdom and his victory over the powers. The greatest service the church can do society—always, but certainly in an era of fragmentation—is to live out its distinctive story, to be a diacritical community, to present the promising contradiction personified by Jesus the Nazarene. If grace is real, if the gospel is truth, that is enough and more than enough.”

⁴⁴ Webber, *The Holy Eucharist, Rites I and II*, 21. See Chapter Five, section “Parish Orientation,” to learn how post-Christian, Northwest culture is becoming far more localized (local living, local economy, urban homesteading, locavore) and looking to live and serve in their time and place. The sermon, as Webber says here, is the time to put some asphalt on the liturgical experience.

⁴⁵ Tickle, *The Great Emergence*, 150.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 150-151.

As much as the church might love to think that she exists in a congruent state throughout time or that her ways are not reflective of greater cultural modes, it is simply not true. In the sixth century, Gregory the Great created a church that was run by monasteries, which was reflective of the fiefdom organization of the Dark Ages. In the eleventh century, after the Great Schism, the Roman church placed authority in a single person, the Pope and his throne-surrounding council of cardinals, reflective of an age of kings and lords. The Reformation's authority was in *sola scriptura*, which sounds like a commitment to an ancient text, it ultimately places authority in the individual to interpret apart from priest and church. This same authority of the individual was evidenced in the doctrine of the "priesthood of all believers" and the birth of the democratic congregation and nation-state.

Wherever this "New Christianity," as Phyllis Tickle calls it, finds its authority base remains to be fully realized, but it will most assuredly find that base reflected in today's global realities.

Lesslie Newbigin begins to respond to this question when he calls the congregation the "Hermeneutic of the Gospel."⁴⁷ "How is it possible that the gospel should be credible, that people should come to believe that the power which has the last word in human affairs is represented by a man hanging on a cross? I am suggesting that the only answer, the only hermeneutic of the gospel, is a congregation of men and women who believe it and live by it."⁴⁸ Newbigin later says, "all human thinking takes place within a

⁴⁷ Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 223-233.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 227

‘plausibility structure,’ which determines what beliefs are reasonable and what are not. The reigning plausibility structure can only be effectively challenged by people who are fully integrated inhabitants of one another.” Newbigin is peeling back this new base of assurance and understanding, the source of the explanation. His brilliance is prophetic, but it is also limited by shifting time.

I affirm Newbigin’s words as far as they go. However, these words were published in 1989 and the integrated changes of the last twenty plus years are as vast as the internet and wide as the world. He could not have imagined the nearness of the globe’s other-side. For the first time in human history, widely separated cultures can interact in real time. The hermeneutic is the real time trans-continental critique of the believing community: east to west, south to north, “developing” to “developed,” poor to rich. Falsehoods hide best in closed communities of the same: the same culture, the same race, the same class, the same demographic, the same literature, the same sages, the same education, the same politics, and the same ideology. In a closed community, everyone is working from the same experiences and perspectives, so they tend to have all the same values (worldview) and inevitably the same blind-spots. This is what Tickle is getting at when she says about this emerging conceptualizing of the way of truth, “whatever else such a conceptualizing may be, it is certainly and most notably global, recognizing none of the old, former barriers of nationality, race, social class, or economic status. It is also radical ... and it is predictably our future both in this model as the relational, nonhierarchal, a-democratized

form of Christianity entering into its hegemony and as an organization that will increasingly govern global life during the centuries of the Great Emergence.”⁴⁹

Therefore, one hermeneutical hope for the post-Christian is the integrated globalized life of the believing community. The Anglican Communion, particularly in the current format in North America, is better positioned than any other to facilitate this reality-sensation of truth and authority. No need to create a global network, Anglicanism is a real global network. When I say “real,” I mean shared life, shared worship and shared authority. In fact, it is one of the only functioning power structures on the planet where authority flows freely and unapologetically from south to north. The Anglican Mission is a mission of the Rwandan church and is dialogically integrated with the national Anglican churches of the world: Africa, Asia, Australia, Americas, Europe. Anglicans need to proclaim this actual global reality every chance they get as more and more churches are planted for the sake of post-Christian others.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Tickle, 153

⁵⁰ One of the most important elements that our 97217 research showed (see Appendix 1,) is how post-Christian culture has devout clarity. As discussed in Chapter One, 38 percent of respondents claim to attend church, however, when those same thirty-eight respondents were asked if they attend regularly (defined as “once a month”), all thirty-eight said they attend at least that often. Why is this important? There is one reason that jumps out at me. It appears there is no cultural pull to “pretend” like one is a “good Christian.” There is zero sense of obligation to claim something is true that is not. If there was, it seems there would have been at least a few people who would claim to attend church and then when asked to clarify would say “no not that often,” or “I know I should go more often,” or just admit their attendance is irregular, however, every church attendee, even though the number is small, is devout.

Therefore, as we discuss faith, truth and assurance, we can be reasonably confident that IF post-Christendom finds a meaningful faith expression, as proposed in this dissertation, they will stay and practice devotion.

Anglican Liturgy and Post-Christian Experience of Community

It would only perpetuate the Enlightenment myth of “the universal man” to suppose that the alternative to living the lie begins or ends with the inner life of individuals, regardless of whether we concern ourselves with what constitutes the requisite affections, attitudes, or beliefs. The possibility of life within the truth, with its “existential dimension (returning humanity to its inherent nature),” its “noetic dimension (revealing reality as it is),” and its “moral dimension (setting an example for others),” requires the social practices of a certain type of community, or as Havel refers to it, a parallel *polis*.⁵¹ According to the New Testament, God Assembles persons from every tribe and nation, tongue and people to be just such a community, so that it can display a holy madness in and for the sake of the world by living in the truth.”⁵²

Common Prayer and Common Worship

The scariest words in the English language are “alone” and “lonely.”⁵³

“To affirm our identity with all God’s people everywhere is to recover from historical amnesia and to discover our identity. We belong to a great company of saints... We belong to them and they to us. Together we are one in Jesus Christ, brothers and sisters in the community of faith.”⁵⁴

Practically speaking, Anglican liturgy is a shared experience: Readings are read in common voice, prayers are shared publicly, peace is delivered interpersonally, and Eucharist is approached communally. These experiences of human harmony stand in

⁵¹ Václav Havel and John Keane, *The Power of the Powerless: Citizens Against the State in Central-Eastern Europe* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1985), 56-60.

⁵² Barry Harvey, *Another City: An Ecclesiological Primer for a Post-Christian World*, Christian Mission and Modern Culture (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999), 137.

⁵³ “Your way leads out of isolation, multiplies me and me into us. You call your people to put our heads and hearts together, to listen in concert” Rachel M. Srubas, *Oblation: Meditations on St. Benedict’s Rule* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2006). 5.

⁵⁴ Robert Webber, *Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail : why evangelicals are attracted to the liturgical church* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1985), 66.

stark contrast to individualism experienced both inside the church (worship isolation) and outside the church (“my own thing in my own way.”) It is also contrasts the more entertainment model of the attractional church, where congregants are ushered to their seats and get a chance to watch the artists, readers and leaders perform the worship. This liturgical communality in itself is meaningful but like all behaviors, it flows from and reflects a deeper theology. Zizioulas⁵⁵ shares in his theological treatise, *Being as Communion*, that the worshipping body “is liberated from individualism and egocentricity and becomes a supreme expression of community—the Body of Christ, the body of the Church, the body of the Eucharist. Thus, it is proved experientially that the body is not in itself a negative or exclusive concept, but the reverse: a concept of communion and love.”⁵⁶

This reality of liberated community appears time and again in the Eucharist liturgy. One does not take the Communion alone, but travels with the faith-family to the “table” of the Lord. The elements are not taken in isolation, but received together from the hand and in the spoken-bless of a spiritual-friend. It is also found in the giving and receiving of blessing, most specific in the closing dismissal. “A benediction , given and received in faith, even in the most modest church, starts a river flowing with living water: from God, to his representative, to the people of God and finally to the least, the last and the left out. Benediction finds its deepest fulfillment when blessing is practiced for the sake of

⁵⁵ Jean Zizioulas is an Orthodox scholar. He writes primarily for the Eastern Church and his thoughts here are in the context of an Eastern Liturgical life.

⁵⁶ Jean Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, Contemporary Greek Theologians no. 4 (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985), 64.

others... Therefore, we repractice benediction by letting blessing—divine favor and power—flow through us to others.”⁵⁷

Shared Belief

Another aspect of the shared worship is the common declaration of faith. This is most clearly seen in the reciting of the Creed. There will be few practices more challenging to many post-Christian people than to state aloud an exclusive statement of faith. However, there are a couple of aspects of the liturgical service that will serve the post-Christian believer well. First of all, the Creed is ancient, *Apostles* or *Nicene*, and therefore will be given the benefit of the doubt. The Creed is a simple Trinitarian declaration (mystical and God-centered) and it is devoid of denominational specifics and theological dogmatics more typical of a “theological statement of faith.” Finally, there is a story in the life of Jesus (Mark 2 and Luke 5) when Jesus heals a paralytic because of the faith of the paralytic’s friends. As we consider the “experience of community,” we need to increasingly consider the communal reality of faith (as opposed to an exclusively individualistic view.) Jesus forgives sin and extends healing communally. The act of standing shoulder to shoulder and declaring the faith: “I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth: And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,” may very well infuse faith and healing.

⁵⁷ Todd D. Hunter, *Giving Church Another Chance: Finding New Meaning in Spiritual Practices* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Books), 157-158.

Sharing Needs/Hurts

One way to describe urban, Northwest culture is to liken the person to an onion, made up of concentric layers, each layer deeper than the one before. The layers, which lay at the center of our personal onion, tend to be the most tender and the most tied to our identity, which is made up of our precious affections and our lasting wounds. Now, if you were to describe your average middle-class American southerner as an onion, you could say, the top few layers are just as open and free as can be. You can walk down the street of a southern town and total strangers will greet you with the most pleasant of smiles and respond just as quickly when you greet them. Once you get below those first few layers though, the onion gets a little tougher and less responsive. So, what can we say about the urban Northwesterner? Well, those first few layers are much, much crustier than the southerners'. As you walk down the street in Portland, no one says "hello" and if you did the response would most likely come with a sideways stare and a furrowed brow. However, and here is the real beauty, if you manage to break through those first couple of layers (and they are surprisingly thin,) you get the whole onion. I cannot tell you the number of times I have been sitting in a coffee shop and for whatever reason turned to make conversation with the isolated person at the adjacent table. They might ask me about what I am reading or I might comment on their pastry choice, and suddenly there is an epiphany-of-trust. Then it starts to flow: pain, spirituality, needs, passions, dreams, wounds, as if we had been friends all of our lives.

Bishop Todd Hunter, of Holy Trinity Church in Costa Mesa, California, confessed to me recently that the most difficult part of the Eucharist service for his congregation is the

“prayers of the people.”⁵⁸ He said that it is hard to get people to talk about their real needs and so they tend to speak of safer subjects, like a prayer for their great-aunt’s illness. Bishop Hunter is not alone in this challenge.⁵⁹ We attend a small, dying Presbyterian church on Sunday mornings. It is populated by a handful of aging Presbyterians and we often wonder how much longer it will exist. Each week, the “Prayers of the People” is a pretty painful part of the service. The same four people speak up every week and the requests are inevitably about people far away and events to which the rest of the congregation has little contact.

I have a profound suspicion that post-Christian, urban Northwesterners are uniquely prepared to participate in this sort of life exchange. Even though it will not be easy to break through those first crusty-layers, once a congregation has the epiphany-of-trust, real soulful requests and hurts will be shared and that sharing will confirm the transcendence of the Jesus-community.

Making Peace

As we approached people to complete the 193 surveys of zip code 97217, we were surprised by the almost universal willingness to volunteer a few minutes to offer their beliefs and perceptions. In fact, only a few people ever said “no” and those that did always did so because of an urgent time constraint, insisting that they were sorry that they did not have a few minutes to spare. The one area where we did get some push-back, and

⁵⁸ In the Prayers of the People, usually a deacon or lay person will lead this prayer and is often based upon some system of collecting the actual prayer needs of the gathered community.

⁵⁹ Ruth Meyers speaks to both the historical challenge of the Prayers of the People and some contemporary ramification. Ruth A. Meyers, *A Prayer Book for the 21st Century*, Liturgical Studies, vol. Three (New York, NY: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1996), 57-8.

this was only by a few people, was in the surveys last section.⁶⁰ In this section, they were asked to offer perceptions of several Christian denominations/traditions. A few people were simply unable, as it felt to them, to pass judgment on another person.

Post-Christian people desire peace. They desire to live consistently as people of peace. They want to be more than peace-lovers; they want to be peace-makers.

Historically, the parish worship service was one of the places, if not the only place, where the entire community came together, side by side, on an equal footing. It is an old saying that the ground is always level at the foot of the cross.⁶¹ In the Eucharist, the whole of society share life. This sharing crystallizes in two moments. The final is the common sharing of Communion. However the first is the "Passing of the Peace."⁶² It is here when the congregants parade around the worship space, look one another in the eye and say, "Peace be with you." In these moments of sacred human encounter, the spiritual family must release all wrongs and abuses and say, "all is well between us."

Participating in an Actual Global and Historical Community

There is a famous African saying, "I am because we are, we are because I am."

"After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their

⁶⁰ See Appendix 1.

⁶¹ This term is most often used in regards to the universality of our sinfulness, however it also has profound implications societally in regards to class, generation, gender, race and culture.

⁶² The Passing of the Peace: Now, "freed from sin, we are brought together in unity." It is a ritual of exchange and often includes blessing one another with the words, "Peace be with you."

hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."⁶³ This vision compels Marva Dawn to say, "How glorious is this picture of all these people gathered together, from every ethnic group, all countries, every sort of culture, every tongue brought together in the unity of God's reign! This promised future unity of everyone, forces us to ask now, How can we provide a foretaste of this gathering of all the people?"⁶⁴ Even more poignantly, if heaven is what is most real ("we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."⁶⁵) how can we not provide, through worship an actual experience of that which is "most real" as a part of the rhythm of life? "Those who enter this particular earthly temple to worship God, ideally a diverse company, are a sign and promise of the gathering of the nations, of people of all ranks and races and lands to share in the unity that lies ahead of us in the culmination of the kingdom."⁶⁶

Our newly globalized world has *virtually* given us the sensation of a universally connected humanity. The Anglican Liturgical Community *actually* provides an ontological integration with the ancient and the global. It is a profound gift to submit to the ecclesial and liturgical fathers of old (Chapters 2 and 3) and to submit to the global

⁶³ Revelation 7:9-10 (NIV)

⁶⁴ Marva J. Dawn, *A Royal Waste of Time: The Splendor of Worshiping God and Being Church for the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 270.

⁶⁵ 2 Corinthians 4:18 (NASB)

⁶⁶ Philip H. Pfatteicher, *Liturgical spirituality* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1997), 185.

brethren, most specifically through the tested saints of the church of Rwanda (Mission in Motion.)

Anglican Liturgy and Post-Christian Spirituality

According to our 97217 research results,⁶⁷ only 24.8% consider themselves “religious,” while 74.6% self-identify as “spiritual.” When asked to rate the importance of the “spiritual dimension of life on a scale of one to ten, responses ranged from zero to ten,” with an average of 6.6. These statistics show a general to strong orientation toward a spiritual life. One fact that was quite surprising is that only 5.7% self identify as “atheist” or “agnostic” (compared to *Barna’s* 16%.⁶⁸) In almost every category our research showed that residents of 97217 are less religious than *Barna’s* data (e.g. fewer percentage of self-identifying “Christians,” fewer church-goers etc,) however, when it comes to those who claim to have no spiritual/supernatural/transcendent beliefs at all (atheists and agnostics) the percentage here was a third of *Barna’s* conclusions for the Portland area as a whole.⁶⁹ Post-Christians are “spiritual” and they are not non-religious, in the broadest sense of the term. They desire a spiritual life and one can only assume they would embrace meaningful outlets for those spiritual desires.

⁶⁷ See Appendix 1.

⁶⁸ Barna Group, “New Barna Report Examines Diversity of Faith in Various U.S. Cities,” Barna Group, <http://www.barna.org/faith-spirituality/435-diversity-of-faith-in-various-us-cities> (accessed October 17, 2010).

⁶⁹ Christine Wicker claims the number to be 14% nationally: Wicker, *The Fall of the Evangelical Nation*, 53.

Practice

“Practice,” in relation to spirituality, is an ancient term. It was used by early monastics to talk about the modes and habits of the truly devout life. It referred to regular and repeatable (if not constant) shared behaviors exercised by the people of faith. I love the term “practice.” I love it in part because, for whatever reason, it feels far less shackling than the word “disciplines,” a term I was given by my religious education. “Discipline,” how could it not have a pejorative connotation? And no matter how much discipline I did or how many hours I spent disciplining, I was sure to discover that I could be doing the disciplines better and more. I love “practices” because it assumes that I am not performing the act perfectly (be it prayer, or service, or simplicity.) In fact, it seems to indicate that perfection is not even the goal: “Did you say I’m not doing it perfectly? That’s okay. I was only practicing.”

Post-Christian people are seeking out “practices” as an integral part of life. For instance, they are searching for regular and practicable means to be sustainable: gardening, keeping chickens, riding the bus and shopping locally.⁷⁰ When cornered, and asked about the great crashing wave of consumption and waste in this world⁷¹, most post-Christian people will admit that their efforts are having little to no impact on the actual state of the environment. However, the very act of integrating sustainable patterns into

⁷⁰ Note: The Lenten season is an excellent and historical opportunity to infuse and practice simplicity and sustainability as an extension of the communal spiritual life.

⁷¹ I have heard that today, if the entire planet lived at the consumption rate of the average American, it would take four and a half earths to sustain the population.

their lives fills them with a sense of meaning, connectedness to the earth and their community and makes them, for lack of a better term, a “better” person.

Stanley Hauerwas says in his book *After Christendom?*, “Christianity is not beliefs about God plus behaviors. We are not Christians because of what we believe, but because we have been called to be disciples of Jesus. To become a disciple is not a matter of a new or changed self-understanding, but rather to become part of a different community with a different set of practices.”⁷² It has become almost cliché within the church’s postmodern discussion to say, “In the postmodern world, participation will precede conversion.” This phrase is still true. However, what we need to understand is that, participation *is* conversion, conversion in process. Participation is the spiritual-practices.

Anglicanism has a profound opportunity to welcome people into this participatory life and the historically established Eucharist liturgy provides both the stage and the story for that participation. Hauerwas says, “I am sometimes confronted by people who are not Christians but who say they want to know about Christianity... After many years of vain attempts to ‘explain’ God as trinity, I now say, ‘Well, to begin with we Christians have been taught to pray, ‘Our Father, who art in heaven...’ I then suggest that a good place to begin to understand what we Christians are about is to join me in that prayer.”⁷³

Come join us as we pray.

⁷² Stanley Hauerwas, *After Christendom?: How the Church Is to Behave If Freedom, Justice, and a Christian Nation Are Bad Ideas* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991), 107.

⁷³ Ibid., 107-8. See also: Bryan P. Stone, *Evangelism After Christendom: The Theology and Practice of Christian Witness* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2007), 24. “Nothing is more important for evangelism... than situating it both imaginatively and practically within an ecclesial bios, or form of life... (an) ecclesially grounded evangelism.”

“Liturgy is soul food. It nourishes our souls just as breakfast strengthens our bodies. It’s sort of like family dinner... family dinner is about family, love, community... Liturgical theologian Aidan Kavanaugh says it well: ‘The liturgy, like the feast, exists not to educate but to seduce people into participating in common activity of the highest order, where one is freed to learn things which cannot be taught.’”⁷⁴

The liturgy provides not just a random practice, but practice according to a code. It is a spiritual code (based in humanity’s history), and like all great codes, it does not originate with the individual but is received from and amongst those who have walked before.

Confession

It was a warm, spring afternoon. I was working, hammer in hand, with a small band of friends on the lawn, just off the great courtyard on the Reed College campus. We were building a renaissance style confession booth, complete with dark interior, cramped quarters and separation screen (as well as some fleur-de-lis for decoration.) Originally the plan had been to have the students confess their sins to us inside the booth, as a mock-drama of religion expression, but then we formed another plan. It was Reed’s Renn Faire, an annual festival of ecstasy, experimentation and raw experience, which ends each school year. This year was like any other: streaking students, rampant chemical use and a bug eating contest, just what a college student needs.

We were a small community of the Jesus-way on campus and we wanted to play along with the campus. There were certainly many activities that we were not willing to partake in. However, the great thing about Renn Faire is it makes space for others. And we had an idea. We wanted to be fully Christians and fully participants. Not an easy task. There are

⁷⁴ Shane Claiborne, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, and Enuma Okoro, *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 11.

plenty of ways to just be religious and out of harmony with the energy of an event like this, but we wanted to be religious and harmonious. In the end, the plan was to try to act like Jesus. So we built a booth. I climbed inside a monk's cowl and climbed inside the booth's clergy-side. When the first person entered, giggling and adventurous, I nervously said:

Welcome to the confession booth. This is where confessions are heard. With your permission I would like to begin. I would like to ask your forgiveness for the church. Would you forgive us for the Inquisition and the Crusades, for wars fought in history and today in God's name, for our role in racism and slavery? Would you forgive me, a foolish Christian, who claims to follow Jesus and yet my life looks little like his? Would you please forgive me?

What followed was nothing short of miraculous.

There is magic in a confession.⁷⁵ There was honor, sobriety and joy in those Reed students' eyes when they got the chance to say, "I forgive you." Then there was the reciprocal dance of spiritual humility. Their pain, addiction and experiences of abuse flowed, as free as their tears. We would sit in a sacred moment together. We would talk about pain. We would talk about forgiveness. We would talk about Jesus. Throughout the weekend that seat was never empty and every single student participated in the magic of confession and absolution.

The liturgy offers such magic. Each week the congregation stands together and in sacredness confesses:

⁷⁵ I believe this magic is self evident. It is certainly evident in this story of confession to and with post-Christian Reed students. If that is not enough, this story of confession is the most quoted section of the bestselling book, *Blue Like Jazz*, by Donald Miller, and was also part of the inspiration for the book, *Lord, Save Us From Your Followers* and the feature film by the same name. See: Dan Merchant, *Lord, Save Us From Your Followers: Why is the Gospel of Love Dividing America?* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2008), 161-186. See also: Donald Miller, *Blue Like Jazz: Nonreligious Thoughts on Christian Spirituality* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2003).

Most merciful God,
 we confess that we have sinned against you
 in thought, word, and deed,
 by what we have done,
 and by what we have left undone.
 We have not loved you with our whole heart;
 we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
 We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
 For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
 have mercy on us and forgive us;
 that we may delight in your will,
 and walk in your ways,
 To the glory of your Name. Amen.⁷⁶

And then they get to hear those glorious words, “You are forgiven.”

We have a small group that meets in our home, called the *Jesus Dojo*.⁷⁷ It is a group of sojourners who want to take Jesus at his words and experiment accordingly. This past fall, we shared a month-long experiment in courageous confession⁷⁸, meeting with the key people in our lives, asking them to answer probing questions about our manipulations, short-falls and blind-spots. We then trained together in how to ask for forgiveness, ending in, “would you please forgive me?” The conversations were often gut-wrenching, but in the end the euphoric stories of hearing those words, “I forgive you,” were the stuff of fairy tales. Rob asked the repentance questions to his ex-wife and she gave him over three hours of angry feedback. Then he asked her to forgive him,

⁷⁶ Webber, *The Holy Eucharist, Rites I and II*, 360.

⁷⁷ Reimagine, “The Jesus Dojo,” Reimagine, <http://www.reimagine.org/node/32> (accessed January 9, 2011).

⁷⁸ We called it the “Be @ Peace Project.” To learn more: Tony Kirz, “B @ Peace Project,” Tony Kriz, <http://tonykriz.com/?p=360> (accessed January 9, 2011).

listing each of his failings, one by one. She did and followed up with, “Rob, you have set me free.” When she said “I forgive you,” Rob said his life was changed forever.

Confession also exists as more than an individual experience. Both in taking responsibility and living in solidarity with the universal condition, post-Christian people will long to confess on behalf of the world at large. Their natural activism, coupled with a less individualistic view of identity, will insure this. “Contrition is also necessary to our world. The present escalating competition for the remaining, dwindling resources of planet earth—to name but one of the greatest crises we face and shall face for the foreseeable future— will surely lead to war and such destruction as can hardly be imagined unless the nations and those that inhabit them adopt different attitudes from those that now preoccupy them.”⁷⁹ There is tremendous freedom to be found in acknowledging these imbalances and leaning into God to make things aright.

Where else will people go to experience magic like this? The liturgy provides a chance to experience confession and absolution as a rhythm of life.⁸⁰ And who better to initiate this confessional revolution than a movement born out of and led by the people of Rwanda.

Freedom to Journey

Stephen Sykes wrote in his essay, *The Genius of Anglicanism*, these words:

When Anglicans reflect upon the history of the Church of England and of the Anglican Communion instinctively they find many things to regret and repent of,

⁷⁹ Wolf, *Anglican Spirituality*, 44. See John E. Booty, “Contrition in Anglican Spirituality: Hooker, Donne and Herbert.”

⁸⁰ The Lenten season also offers an annual opportunity to explore and practice confession.

and some things which are more encouraging. This both-and at the heart of their corporate sense reflects, I would judge, the ecclesiology.... Its natural mode is to allow debate, disagreement, and conflict as a normal part of its life... and that structure will be appropriate to differing patterns of authority in different cultures at various times.⁸¹

It is both ironic and appropriate that in an article titled, "The Genius of Anglicanism," that such a sincere and almost boastful emphasis would be placed on the traditions' shortcomings (things to regret and repent of.) The commitment to open dialogue and free exchange, often called the *via media*, is based in the church's birth when she carefully navigated in the uncharted waters between historical Catholicism and new-wave Protestantism. The *via media* remains as a defining characteristic of Anglicanism and her liturgy to this day.

This same idea is what Bishop Todd Hunter refers to as a "sweet reasonableness" within Anglicanism. "Historically, Anglicanism does not bully but simply sets itself forth. It invites participation, contemplation and conversation.... This spirit is important to me because I have become weary of the increasingly dogmatic, angry, unkind, un-Christlike, argumentative and dishonest spirit in much of the religious debate in America."⁸²

Liturgically, this openness saturates all of Anglican worship expression. On an annual basis, the church twice practices "Ordinary Time." Joan Chittister reminds us that the church has intentionally cleansed the calendar on at least three occasions "purging them

⁸¹ Essay by Stephen Sykes, "The Genius of Anglicanism." Geoffrey Rowell, *The English Religious Tradition and the Genius of Anglicanism* (Wantage: Ikon, 1992), 240.

⁸² Hunter, *The Accidental Anglican*, 109.

of various popular or cultural feast days.”⁸³ She says, “The Liturgical year is designed to take us into deep contemplation. It is about immersion in the mysteries of the faith. It is about the life of Jesus as it intersects with our own.”⁸⁴ About the two seasons of “Ordinary Time” she specifically reminds, “These two periods of time in the liturgical year, then, are contemplative times. They take us apart to think about what we have just seen of the faith (Advent and Lent) ... It is an awesome context in which to begin the contemplation of the divine and the adventure of the spiritual development.”⁸⁵

Citizens of a post-Christian culture will ultimately find their spiritual bearing through participation (see “practices” above) and belonging (see “post-Christian community” above,) but that does not mean that they will not need a forum to freely and honestly express their questions and explore their evolving convictions. Remember, and I feel a bit foolish in saying this, but post-Christian people are “post-Christian,” they do not have much experience with religious constructs and education.⁸⁶ Increasingly they are going to desire (and even demand) the space and opportunity to explore these as of yet uncharted

⁸³ Joan Chittister, *The Liturgical Year*, The Ancient Practices Series (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2009), 96.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 97.

⁸⁶ For so long, American Christianity has been built on the assumption that everyone, whether they are devout Christians or not, has a basic understanding of Christianity. Therefore, the core issue was simply, “Will they choose to embrace or continue to ignore that which they already have an understanding of?” Here, the basic metaphor of the mission of the church was a “light switch,” which existed in the heart of each person; the goal is get the convert to “turn-on” their switch. Today, when many do not have basic Christian education AND have been raised in a globalized world of religious options, we need to change our metaphor from the light-switch to something far more explorative and nuanced, like canoeing an uncharted river. An open and participation filled liturgy offers wonderful space to contemplate and explore.

ideological waters. An open and participation-filled liturgy offers wonderful space for the collective to contemplate and explore.

The Gift of Time

“Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.”⁸⁷

The invitation of the liturgical church is a simple echo of Jesus invitation. “Come,” “Get away,” “take a real rest,” “Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.” This happens through the sacred pause of the Eucharist service. It happens through the soulful cadence of the prayers and reading. It happens through the quiet of confession and encounter. It happens in the invitation to “Take, eat...”

The Almanac is a spiritual book. It is based as much in the rhythm of humanity as the passing of the seasons. As an urban raised child of the modern world, I have never had to open an Almanac. I have never had to plan for planting or prepare for harvest. My father however, he grew up on a ranch and my mom, while living in town, worked every summer picking strawberries for Smuckers™ outside of Newberg, Oregon to help pay the bills. This human connection to time and season has been taken from me by the patterns of the modern age.

The liturgical year, with its great traversal from life to death to life again, carries us from one pole of time to the other with a sense of purpose and progress. It makes us aware of the presence of the kind of time that is not time, that is not our

⁸⁷ Matt. 11: 28b-29 (The Message)

understanding of time, that is beyond time. The liturgical year wraps us in a kind of dual consciousness—of this early life and the life beyond. It reminds us that there is more to us than one kind of life alone, more than one dimension of time, more than one purpose in life.⁸⁸

Encounter with God

A minster says words and performs actions, but at a deeper level, it is Christ who is presiding. We share in bread and wine, but the reality is that we are taking Christ into us. It looks like this is all occurring in time and space, when in fact the boundaries of time and space are being shattered, when for a few moments “heaven and earth are full of [God’s] glory.”⁸⁹

In all my years in church growing up, I never once had the sense that Christ was presiding. It was clearly the pastor who was in charge and who we came to receive from. It was the choir or the band that offered us our spiritual experience. Sure, God was the object of our activities, but He was rarely the subject.

In a brilliant rhetorical moment, Frank Schaeffer, while being interviewed by Terry Gross on National Public Radio’s popular show *Fresh Air*, is asked why he doesn’t leave faith altogether. Frank’s response, “I’m stuck, because faith is just part of my life.”⁹⁰ No longer do people feel “stuck.” There is however the human hunger for the transcendent. “At the altar we are invited into what Jesus called heaven.”⁹¹ Ultimately, that hunger is to meet with God.

⁸⁸ Chittister, *The Liturgical Year*, 39-40.

⁸⁹ Galli, *Beyond Smells and Bells*, 52. Frank Schaeffer

⁹⁰ Frank Schaeffer, “Pro-Life -- And In Favor Of Keeping Abortion Legal: An Interview with Frank Schaeffer,” npr.com, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyid=97998654> (accessed January 9, 2011).

⁹¹ Nora Gallagher, *The Sacred Meal*, The Ancient Practices Series (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2009), 48.

The Eucharist service begins with this sacred meeting, "Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord, Amen." Frank Schaeffer in that same interview went on to say, "I found refuge in a liturgical tradition which is not centered around a guru. Our priests are interchangeable. They face the altar not the people. They lead the people in a liturgy."⁹²

The Eucharist service ends with the Dismissal. "The Dismissal is a blessing. In worship, we actually bless God when we offer praise and worship... we bless God by doing what is pleasing to God—acknowledging and serving God. In contrast, when God blesses us, God confers on us a power to fulfill our calling in righteousness and holiness in Jesus Christ."⁹³ Where else will the people post-Christendom be able to go to experience this holy exchange?

Both Advent/Christmas and Pentecost in the liturgical calendar offer additional emphasis on God's initiation to be with us.⁹⁴ It is worth noting that immediately

⁹² Schaeffer, "Pro-Life -- And In Favor Of Keeping Abortion Legal: An Interview with Frank Schaeffer." James Giffiss expresses a similar experience: "The Eucharistic prayer of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer we used then taught me much about God and myself: 'And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.'

⁹³ Robert Webber, *Planning Blended Worship: The Creative Mixture of Old and New* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998), 184.

⁹⁴ The Church calendar also celebrates the dynamic and diverse life of Christ. It welcomes the worshipper to explore different dimensions of Christ's life, ministry and means of affection, as opposed to feeling like church (and our relationship with God) is always the same. This is but another impact of the calendar on post-Christian person's encounter with God. "Enacting Christ in the Services of the Christian

following both of these seasons of divine-coming (Christ in Advent and Holy Spirit in Pentecost) is followed by the seasons of contemplation and rest called “Ordinary Time.” It is as if the experience of God’s particular presence requires a sabbatical.

Conclusion

“This paradox marks every Christian Eucharist. Gathered around the altar, our community is a sign of the Kingdom. We are the friends of God. But this same Eucharist challenges us to break down the walls around our little community and welcome in those who are excluded. Every Eucharist is the sacrament of our home in the Lord, and yet breaks down the walls that we build to keep out strangers. This is the necessary paradox of being... both a particular historical community and the sacrament of a community which transcends us and stretches out to embrace all of humanity.”⁹⁵

It is a significant thing to look soberly into the current life of the church and say, “This is not working.” It is even more shocking to say, “It is true that we (the missional body of Christ) have not made the best decisions of late. There is hope. There is a profound hope.”

In many ways it is counter-intuitive to say that one of the most fruitful strategies the church can implement for the future is to reach to the ancient past. Just saying that makes me feel like some disheveled old guy, lost in a room of books, draped in a tweed jacket

Year”: Robert E. Webber, *The Worship Phenomenon* (Nashville, Tennessee: Abbott Martyn, 1994), 99-115.

⁹⁵ Timothy Radcliffe, “The Sacramentality of the Word,” Keith F. Pecklers, *Liturgy in a Postmodern World* (London; New York, NY: Continuum, 2003), 143.

with patched elbows, fingering an unlit pipe and staring at the world over a pair of wire spectacles. Even so, I am compelled to say it all the same.

I have been an innovator all of my life. I have created new missional models in some of the most extreme emerging cultures around the world. I am also the sort of person who, in many ways, is more comfortable outside a church than inside. And it is my innovator's heart that is screaming, "follow the ancient ways." I know that I am not the first to suggest such things. Robert Webber and Phyllis Tickle and others have been saying these things for years. The difference is that I am a post-Christian person. I was raised in a post-Christian culture, while all along the way maintaining a relationship with Christian churches and practicing Christian devotion. Today, in fact everyday, I am living deeply rooted and in love with my post-Christian neighborhood and with my post-Christian neighbors. I am convinced that the Anglican Eucharistic liturgy provides a unique hope for my culture, for my people, for my cultural family.

This work was soulfully and compassionately compiled as evidence to that truth. We have researched (including original and revealing survey data) and the evidence is strong. The way of the worshipping people of Jehovah from ages past has been liturgical and Eucharistic, across cultures and generations and epochs. Time and time again the people of God have voted and their vote has been, "meaningful." Today's post-Christian people are spiritual and more so than even the most recent generations, they are looking for substance, clarity and reverence, all encased in a much larger spiritual narrative. They, like all of humanity, want their lives to be marked by meaning. Anglican Eucharist

liturgy provides just that. I pray that this generation will accept Jesus Christ's generous invitation to meet Him at the Holy Table. Amen.

APPENDIX 1: INDEPENDENT RESEARCH OF ZIP CODE 97217

Introduction

The religious statistics for the Pacific Northwest are widely chronicled.¹ They are regionally based, state based and in the case of Barna's *Markets 2011*,² even city based. My intent is to dial the discussion of religious identification, church attendance and perceptions of the Christian church into tight focus. Here is my research, focused on a single zip code.³

I live in the 97217 zip code in the inner-Eastside of Portland. These addresses are technically "North" Portland but the cultural dynamics are more defined by which side of the river you live on and how far your home is from the downtown water front. To determine how well the *Barna* numbers above (71%, 16% and 8%)⁴ apply to my neighborhood, I decided to gather specific data. I initiated an independent survey of residents of the 97217 zip code. For those with familiarity of Portland, this zip code covers the Overlook neighborhood to the south, to the Kenton Neighborhood to the

¹ Kinnaman and Lyons, *Unchristian.*, Wicker, *The Fall of the Evangelical Nation.*, Duin, *Quitting Church.*, Olson, *The American Church in Crisis.*

² Barna Group, "Barna Report: Markets 2011 and States 2011."

³ Having spent quite some time researching, there is nothing currently in existence, that I have found, which takes research to this tight a focus and on a population as small and specified as a single zip code. These numbers are a unique contribution to the understanding of Urban Northwest culture and the emerging reality of a post-Christian nation.

⁴ In Chapter One, we discuss at length how *Barna's* statistics for Portland determine a 71 percent affiliation to Christianity, 17 percent as skeptics of religion, and 8 percent identifying with other religious traditions. This report seeks to derive specific numbers for zip code 97217.

North. It traverses Interstate Five, north of the Rose Quarter, from Williams Avenue to the East, and past Denver Avenue to the West.

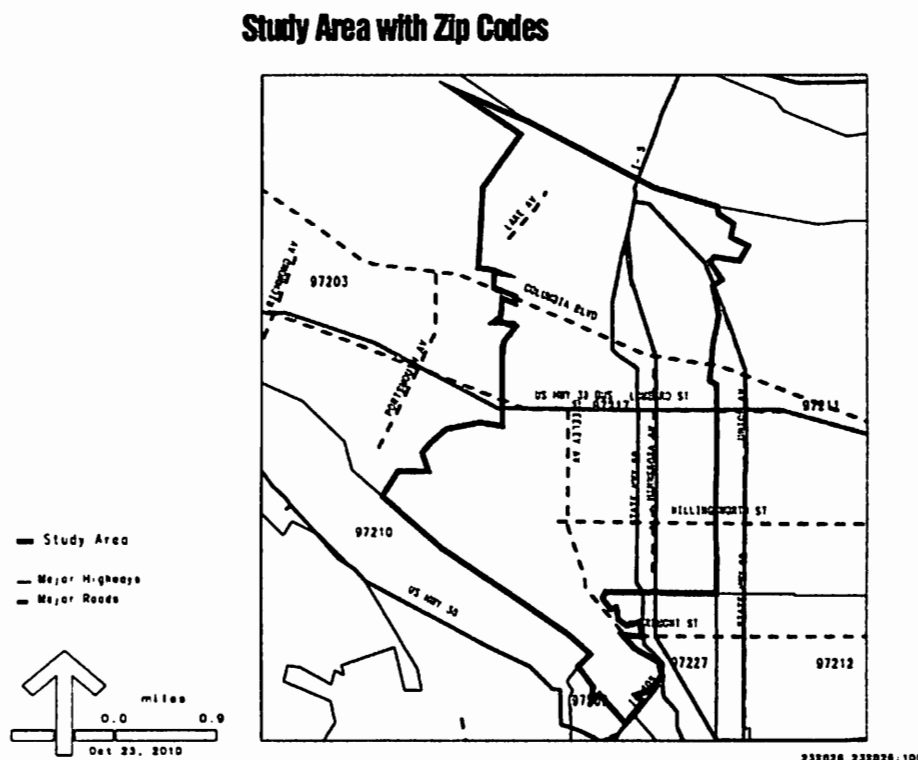


FIGURE 14. Source: First View 2010 Prepared for Anglican Mission in America, Study Area Definition: Zip Code 97217.

There were 193 individuals surveyed within zip code 97217. Every short interview was delivered face to face. Each volunteer interviewer was specifically trained in how to administer an objective interview, including such polling rules as: read the survey explanation and each question in a neutral way, read each question in the same tone, avoiding inserting personal emphasis or import, let the questions stand for themselves and avoid “explaining further” as each interviewer risks inserting biased interpretations.

(For instance, interviewers are coached not to define “spiritual” in the question, “Do you consider yourself a spiritual person?”) Zip code 97217 has a total population of 31,000. 193 surveys represent a plus/minus 7% confidence interval with a 95 % confidence level.⁵

There was also almost no one who refused to participate when approached. Most everyone we stopped was more than content to give a few moments to answer questions about faith and religious perceptions. Those who did refuse, always refused to answer all questions and always because of a time excuse: “I don’t have time right now.” The only time someone refused (this happened twice) to answer only a portion of the questions was in the “perceptions of Christian denominations/traditions” section and their reasoning was a desire for “peace among people” or having “no desire to judge others.” These same individuals were more than happy, however, to comment about their own practices and beliefs. No one who had time to take the survey refused to discuss their own religious beliefs and practice. This is significant because according to Christine Wicker, in her

⁵ Creative Research Systems, “Sample Size Calculator.” Confidence Interval and Confidence Level are defined as:

The confidence level (also called margin of error) is the plus-or-minus figure usually reported in newspaper or television opinion poll results. For example, if you use a confidence interval of 4 and 47% percent of your sample picks an answer you can be "sure" that if you had asked the question of the entire relevant population between 43% (47-4) and 51% (47+4) would have picked that answer.

The confidence level tells you how sure you can be. It is expressed as a percentage and represents how often the true percentage of the population who would pick an answer lies within the confidence interval. The 95% confidence level means you can be 95% certain; the 99% confidence level means you can be 99% certain. Most researchers use the 95% confidence level. Full survey and results can be found in Appendix 1

book, *The Fall of the Evangelical Nation*, 5% of the people approached in 2001 to take the American Religious Identification Survey “refused to answer the religion question.”⁶

Individuals were surveyed on three important topics. The first topic dealt with how the respondent religiously self identifies.

Do you consider yourself a “religious” person?	Yes	No								
Do you consider yourself a “spiritual” person?	Yes	No								
On a scale of 1-10 (10 being high and 1 being low), how important is the spiritual dimension of life?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
What, if any, religion or spiritual tradition do you currently claim or practice?	_____									

The second section dealt with further understanding if the respondent has ever attended a Christian church (worship) service.

The next few questions are asking about attendance of a Christian church (any Christian tradition or denomination.)

Do you currently regularly attend a Christian church?	Yes	No
If “yes”, do you attend at least once a month on average?	Yes	No
If “no”, have you ever regularly attended a Christian church?	Yes	No
Have you attended a Christian church in the last 6 months?	Yes	No

The third section dealt with discovering whether the respondent has negative or positive perceptions of a selection of Christian traditions and was measured using the following scale and list:

⁶ Wicker, *The Fall of the Evangelical Nation*, 209.

This study is collecting observations and critiques of contemporary Christian traditions. In this last section, I will name a number of religious denominations/traditions and ask you to respond in the following way:

On a scale of 1-5 how positive or negative are your impressions of each denomination/tradition?

- 1 -strongly negative impressions
- 2 -moderately negative impressions
- 3 -equal number of negative and positive impressions
- 4- moderately positive impressions
- 5- strongly positive impressions
- OR- no real impressions one way or the other.

Reminder: this list is only a sampling.

Roman Catholicism
 Charismatic Churches
 "Emergent" churches-----
 Lutheran
 Evangelical
 Anglican-----
 Baptist
 Methodist
 Eastern Orthodoxy (Russian, Greek, etc.)
 Pentecostal
 Latter Day Saints (Mormons) -----
 Presbyterian

1	2	3	4	5	No Impression

There is bound to be questions as to why these particular "traditions" were chosen.

They were chosen for many reasons. First of all, as the survey indicates, it would be impossible to be exhaustive or even truly representative of the breadth of Christian traditions, so these are simply a "sample" of Christian traditions. They are listed in no particular order.

There are some "traditions" included that some might question. "Charismatic" and "Pentecostal" were both included because I did not know which term those outside Christendom were more familiar with and I learned that they have more familiarity with Pentecostalism. I chose "Emergent" because it is a recurring topic in this dissertation and though I assumed that it is more of an insiders-term and would be little known outside

Christendom, which most respondents were (as the survey confirmed), it also made for a good control-case in our experiment. “Roman Catholic” and “Eastern Orthodox (Russian, Greek, etc.)” were included because they represent such a massive percentage of Christians globally and because they are referenced in this dissertation. “Church of Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints (Mormons)” was included because I wanted to test and see if they are perceived as poorly outside Christendom as it has been within Christendom. It is also worth noting that there were no reports of respondents questioning “why were Mormons included in a list of Christian denominations?” We Christians may need to accept that the Mormons are perceived as our brethren.

One possible criticism of this list is that it does not include “Episcopalians.” After considerable thought, this was an intentional subtraction. I wanted to get an uncluttered impression of the term “Anglican” and I thought that would be best accomplished if it was not juxtaposed near the term “Episcopalian.”

Each person surveyed was categorized by a series of demographic categories. Those categories include: Gender (male or female,) approximate age (18-25, 26-45 or 46+,) and race (Black, White, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Other.) These demographics were determined by the “eye-test” of the surveying volunteer.

Survey

Here is the full survey for zip code 97217:

Survey

This survey is collecting research for a study of religious orientation and church attendance in urban contexts of the Pacific Northwest. This particular survey is focusing on zip code 97217.

Questions:

Do you live (or have you lived recently) in 97217 (show map)? Yes No Near

Do you consider yourself a "religious" person? Yes No

Do you consider yourself a "spiritual" person? Yes No

On a scale of 1-10 (10 being high and 1 being low), how important is the spiritual dimension of life? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What, if any, religion or spiritual tradition do you currently claim or practice? _____

The next few questions are asking about attendance of a Christian church (any Christian tradition or denomination.)

Do you currently regularly attend a Christian church? Yes No

If "yes", do you attend at least once a month on average? Yes No

If "no", have you ever regularly attended a Christian church? Yes No

Have you attended a Christian church in the last 6 months? Yes No

This study is collecting observations and critiques of contemporary Christian traditions. In this last section, I will name a number of religious denominations/traditions and ask you to respond in the following way:

On a scale of 1-5 how positive or negative are your impressions of each denomination/tradition?

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Reminder: this list is only a sampling.

Roman Catholicism
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"Emergent" churches-----
Lutheran
Evangelical
Anglican-----
Baptist
Methodist
Eastern Orthodoxy (Russian, Greek, etc.)
Pentecostal
Latter Day Saints (Mormons) -----
Presbyterian

1	2	3	4	5	No Impression

F M 18-25 25-45 45+ B W H A O

Selective Summary of Data

According to our results, only 24.8% consider themselves “religious,” while 74.6 self-identify as “spiritual.” When asked to rate the importance of the “spiritual dimension of life on a scale of one to ten,⁷” the responses show an average of 6.6.

Now, this is where the numbers get really fascinating. When asked, “What, if any, religion or spiritual tradition do you currently claim or practice?” only 25.8% claimed “Christian” of any sort or flavor (shattering *Barna’s* 71% rating). Only 19.2% of whites identify as “Christians,” in contrast to 78.6% of blacks. Conversely, only 5.7% self identify as “atheist” or “agnostic” (compared to *Barna’s* 16%) and 12.4% identify with religious systems other than Christianity (compared to 8%.) And most shockingly, 80 respondents said “none” and nineteen others defined their faith in such individualistic terms as to not fall under any faith category⁸. That equals an alarming 51.3% as simply non-religious (Gallup says that Oregon is the most “Non-religious” state with 18% identifying as such statewide.⁹) Over 50 percent when asked simply say they have no religious tradition or claim!

When asked about Christian church attendance, only thirty-eight respondents (19.7%) claim to attend church¹⁰, which is not a surprising number, especially after reading the

⁷ Actual responses ranged from zero to ten.

⁸ “Atheists” and “agnostics” were not included here, nor were any responses that included any references to a “deity” of any sort.

⁹ Gallup is another highly regarded polling organization. 18 percent as “Non-Religious” is a 2004 statistic Jones, “Tracking Religious Affiliation, State by State.”

¹⁰ Thirteen percent of those were of faiths other than “Christian.” Therefore seemingly those attending a “Christian church” is closer to 17 percent

religious affiliation numbers listed above (Note: within that number, Blacks and Latinos attend church at a rate of about 65 percent according to this survey.) However, when those same thirty-eight respondents were asked if they attend regularly (defined as “once a month”), all thirty-eight said they attend at least that often. Why is this important? There is one reason that jumps out at me. It appears there is no cultural pull to “pretend” like one is a “good Christian.” There is zero sense of obligation to claim something is true that is not. If there was, it seems there would have been at least a few people who would claim to attend church and then when asked to clarify would say “no not that often,” or “I know I should go more often,” or just admit their attendance is irregular, however, every church attendee, even though the number is small, is devout. I would not have predicted this. Of the 80.4% who said they do not attend church, 66 percent of those said they had attended regularly at some point in their life (usually childhood¹¹). This number was higher than I would have predicted.

Data Analysis

Data compiled from 193 Surveys

Do you consider yourself a “religious” person?	Answer “YES”	
Religious “yes”:	48/194	24.8%
Age 18-24 “religious”	11/43	25.6%
Age 25-45 “religious”	25/113	22.1%
Age 46+ “religious”	11/32	34.4%
Male	26/92	28.2%
Female	16/92	17.4%

¹¹ This observation is anecdotal, based on how people responded to the question, “If “no,” have you ever regularly attended a Christian church? Many people said something like “Yes, back when I was a kid.”

White	30/164	18.3%
Black	9/14	64.3%
Asian	2/8	25%
Latino/Hispanic	1/6	16.7%

Do you consider yourself a “spiritual” person?		Answer “YES”
Spiritual “yes”:	144/193	74.6%
Age 18-24	32/43	74.4%
Age 25-45	81/113	71.7%
Age 46+	26/32	81.2%
Male	63/92	68.5%
Female	63/92	68.5%
White	126/164	76.8%
Black	12/14	85.7%
Asian	5/8	62.5%
Latino/Hispanic	6/6	100%

On a scale of 1-10 (10 being high and 1 being low), how important is the spiritual dimension of life?

All Respondents

- 0 2
- 1 18
- 2 2
- 3 9
- 4 11
- 5 27
- 6 11
- 7 32
- 8 26
- 9 11
- 10 44

Average: 6.6

Responses from Age Group 25-45 (of 113 respondents)

- 0 0
- 1 12
- 2 2

- 3 5
- 4 6
- 5 17
- 6 7
- 7 16
- 8 11
- 9 9
- 10 27

Average: 6.5

Age Group 18-24	6.3
Age Group 46+	6.8

Male	6.3
Female	6.7
White	6.3
Black	8.4
Asian	5.9
Latino/Hispanic	7.5

What, if any, religion or spiritual tradition do you currently claim or practice?

Note: since there were 193 people surveyed, halving the number of respondents will give a fairly accurate population percentage (e.g. 50 “Christian” responses = 25 percent of population.)

Christian	50/194	25.8%
Catholic	11/50	22% (of “Christians”)

Christian by Sub-Group

Age Group 18-24	7/43	16.3%
Age Group 25-45	31/113	27.4%
Age Group 46+	11/32	34.4%
Male	26/92	28.3%
Female	20/92	21.7%
White	28/146	19.2%
Black	11/14	78.6%
Asian	2/8	25%

Latino/Hispanic 3/6 50%

Total breakdown:

Buddhist	5
Zen	1
Christian	50
Catholic	11
Baptist	2
Bible	1
Congregational	1
Episcopal	2
Evangelical	2
Lutheran	1
Methodist	1
Non-denominational	3
Orthodox	1
Presbyterian	1
United Church of X	1
Atheist	7
Agnostic	4
Mormon	2
JW	1
Taoism	1
Unitarian/Universalist	6
Independent (diverse)	28
“self” defined	19
Jewish	6
Muslim	1
Pagan	2
None	80

Do you currently regularly attend a Christian church?

Answer “Yes”

All	38/193	19.7%
Regularly	38/38	100%
Of those who said “yes,”		
Muslims	1	
Mormons	2	
Unitarian	1	

JW	1	
Therefore: Christian Church is:	17.1%	
Age Group 18-24	7/43	16.3%
Age Group 25-45	21/113	18.6%
Age Group 46+	9/32	28.1%
Male	20/92	21.7%
Female	15/92	16.3%
White	18/146	12.3%
Black	9/14	64.3%
Asian	3/8	37.5%
Latino/Hispanic	4/6	66.7%

Answer "No"

All	156/193	80.4%
Ever?	103/156	66%
Last 6 months	20/156	12.8%

This study is collecting observations and critiques of contemporary Christian traditions. In this last section, I will name several religious denominations/traditions and ask you to respond in the following way:

On a scale of 1-5 how positive or negative are your impressions of each denomination/tradition?

1. strongly negative impressions
2. moderately negative impressions
3. equal number of negative and positive impressions
4. moderately positive impressions
5. strongly positive impressions

OR: no real impressions one way or the other.

A few specific Examples:**Roman Catholic Perceptions**

1. 40
 2. 46
 3. 55
 4. 19
 5. 5
- Negative impression (1+2) 86/193 44.6%

Neutral (3)	55/193	28.5%
Positive impression (4+5)	24/193	12.4%
No impression	28/193	14.5%

Anglican

1.	15		
2.	17		
3.	45		
4.	18		
5.	6		
Negative impression (1+2)	32/193	16.6%	
Neutral (3)	45/193	23.3%	
Positive impression (4+5)	24/193	12.4%	
No impression	92/193	47.4%	

Evangelical

1.	75		
2.	36		
3.	38		
4.	9		
5.	7		
Negative impression (1+2)	111/193	57.5%	
Neutral (3)	38/193	19.7%	
Positive impression (4+5)	16/193	8.3%	
No impression	29/193	15.0%	

Latter Day Saints (Mormons)

1.	73		
2.	45		
3.	38		
4.	10		
5.	7		
Negative impression (1+2)	118/193	61.1%	
Neutral (3)	38/193	19.7%	
Positive impression (4+5)	17/193	8.8%	
No impression	20/193	10.4%	

Baptist

1.	37
2.	46
3.	49

4. 27

5. 8

Negative impression (1+2)	83/193	42.0%
Neutral (3)	49/193	25.4%
Positive impression (4+5)	35/193	18.1%
No impression	24/193	12.4%

Number of "No Impressions"

Roman Catholic	28
Charismatic	96
Emergent	138
Lutheran	50
Evangelical	29
Anglican	92
Baptist	25
Methodist	50
Orthodox	65
Pentecostal	57
Mormon	20
Presbyterian	48
Nazarene	44/78 surveyed

Average 1-5 score

Roman Catholic	2.4
Charismatic	2.2
Emergent	2.5
Lutheran	2.9
Evangelical	2.0
Anglican	2.8
Baptist	2.5
Methodist	2.9
Orthodox	2.8
Pentecostal	2.2
Mormon	2.0
Presbyterian	2.9
Nazarene	2.7

97217 Survey of Religious Perception and Church Attendance**Spreadsheet Key**

- B. Do you live in 97217: Y, N
- C. Gender: M, F
- D. Age: A(18-25), B(25-45), C(45+)
- E. Race: B(Black), W(White), H(Hispanic), A(Asian), O(other)
- F. Religious Person: Y, N
- G. Spiritual Person: Y, N
- H. How important is spiritual dimension: 1-10
- I. What, if any, spiritual tradition, claim, or practice:
 - None
 - Christian: (specific)
 - Buddhist: (specific)
 - Muslim: (specific)
 - Jewish: (specific)
 - Hindu: (specific)
 - Pagan: (specific)
 - New Age: (specific)
 - Independent: (specific)
 - Unitarian-Universalist (UU): (specific)
- J. Do you attend Christian Church: Y, N
- K. If "yes" at least once month: Y, N
- L. If "no" ever regularly attended: Y, N

M. Have you attended a Church in last 6 months: Y, N

How positive or negative: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 (No Impression)

- N. Catholic
- O. Charismatic
- P. Emergent
- Q. Lutheran
- R. Evangelical
- S. Anglican
- T. Baptist
- U. Methodist
- V. Orthodox
- W. Pentecostal
- X. Mormon
- Y. Presbyterian
- Z. Nazarene

Raw Data Spreadsheet

Zip Code 97217 Survey of Religious Perceptions and Church Attendance

Column 1	Live in 97217	Gender	Age	Race	Religious?	Spiritual?	Spiritual Import	Spiritual Tradition	Attend Church	"Yes": once a month	"No": ever attend?	Church in last 6 mths	Roman Catholic	Charismatic	Emergent	Lutheran	Evangelical	Anglican	Baptist	Methodist	Orthodox	Pentecostal	Mormon	Presbyterian	None	
1	Y	M	A	H	N	Y	9	CHR:CHR FOLLOWER	N	Y	N	3	2	1	6	1	4	3	4	4	3	2	3			
2	Y	M	B	W	N	N	1	NOTHING	N	Y	N	4	2	6	6	1	3	3	6	2	1	1	6			
3	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	10	IND:UU	N	Y	N	2	6	6	5	6	6	4	4	3	6	2	2			
4	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N	Y	N	2	6	6	2	2	2	3	6	6	6	4	3			
5	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	7	NONE	N	Y	N	3	1	6	3	1	4	1	3	3	1	1	3			
6	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	10	IND:SKEPTICISM	N	Y	N	3	1	6	3	1	3	3	3	5	3	2	3			
7	Y	F	B	H	Y	Y	10	IND:JW	Y	Y	Y	1	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6			
8	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	7	IND:UU	N	Y	Y	1	6	6	3	2	6	2	3	2	6	1	3			
9	Y	F	B	W	Y	Y	8	CHR:CATHOLIC	Y	Y	Y	4	4	6	4	3	4	3	4	4	3	3	4			
10	Y	F	A	W	N	N	1	CHR:LUTHERAN	N	Y	Y	1	6	6	4	3	6	2	4	6	3	2	3			
11	Y	M	B	W	N	N	1	NONE	N	Y	N	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2			
12	Y	M	B	W	Y	N	6	IND:UU	N	N	N	3	2	6	4	4	3	3	3	3	1	4	3			
13	Y	F	B		N	Y	10	IND:JWS SLOWLY/PEACEFULLY	N	N	N	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1			
14	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N	Y	N	3	3	4	6	3	6	2	6	4	6	4	6			
15	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	6	NONE	N	Y	N	4	6	6	6	2	6	6	6	6	2	3	6			
16	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	9	PAGAN:YOGA	N	N	N	6	6	6	2	2	3	2	6	4	6	2	6			
17	Y	M	C	W	Y	Y	10	CHR	Y	Y	Y	3	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	5	1	5			
18	Y	F	B	W	Y	Y	8	CHR:CONGREGATIONAL	N	Y	N	2	6	2	3	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	2			
19	Y	F	B	W	Y	Y	9	CHR:EVAN	Y	Y	Y	4	5	6	4	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	4			
20	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	9	NONE	N	Y	N	2	6	6	5	6	3	2	2	2	2	3	3			
21	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	8	NONE	N	Y	N	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2			
22	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	8	CHR	N	Y	N	2	1	6	3	1	6	1	4	3	1	1	4			
23	Y	F	C	W	N	N	0	IND:ATHEIST	N	N	N	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	6	1	1	1	2			
24	Y	F	B	W	Y	Y	10	CHR:CATHOLIC/NAT AMER	Y	Y	Y	4	2	2	4	2	4	3	4	4	3	2	4			
25	Y	F	C	H	N	Y	6	CHR:CATHOLIC	Y	Y	Y	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3			
26	Y	F	C	H	N	Y	7	CHR:CATHOLIC	Y	Y	Y	3	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	3	6			
27	Y	M	B	W	N	N	1	NONE	N	N	N	2	1	1	3	1	3	1	2	3	1	1	1			
28	Y	M	C	W	Y	Y	5	IND:PRAY TO MYSELF	N	Y	N	3	6	6	4	3	6	4	4	4	4	4	4			
29	Y	M	B	B	Y	Y	5	CHR	Y	Y	Y	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6			
30	Y	M	B	W	N	N	2	NONE	N	Y	N	3	2	6	3	2	6	2	6	3	2	3	6	6		
31	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	8	CHR:NON-DENOM	N	Y	N	2	6	6	3	1	6	2	3	6	1	2	3	6		
32	Y	M	B	W	Y	Y	10	CHR:CATHOLIC	Y	Y	Y	5	6	6	3	3	6	3	3	3	2	3	3			
33	Y	F	A	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N	N	N	3	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	2	6			

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34	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	10	IND:MEHER BABA	N		N	N	2	6	6	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	4	2
35	Y	F	C	W	N	Y	10	NONE	N		Y	N	3	1	6	4	1	6	2	3	4	4	2	4
36	Y	M	A	W	N	Y	7	IND:AGNOSTIC	N		Y	N	2	1	6	4	1	4	3	5	2	1	2	4
37	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	4	IND:AGNOSTIC	N		N	Y	3	4	6	3	2	6	1	3	3	3	3	6
38	Y	F	A	W	N	Y	10	IND:LOVE	N		Y	Y	2	4	6	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	4	3
39	Y	F	C	W	N	Y	7	CHR:METHODIST	N		N	N	1	2	6	4	1	6	2	4	2	2	2	2
40	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	10	BUD	N		Y	N	2	2	6	3	2	4	3	4	3	6	4	3
41	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	3	NONE	N		Y	N	3	6	6	3	1	6	3	3	3	3	1	3
42	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N		Y	N	4	6	6	3	1	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
43	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	10	IND:UU	N		Y	Y	2	6	4	4	2	3	2	3	6	3	2	4
44	Y	M	B	W	N	N	7	NONE	N		Y	N	2	6	6	4	2	3	6	6	3	2	1	3
45	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	10	CHR	N		Y	Y	3	2	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	1	3
46	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	7	CHR:CATHOLIC	N		Y	Y	2	4	6	3	1	6	3	6	4	6	2	3
47	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	8	CHR	Y	Y		Y	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	5	3	2	3
48	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	7	IND:MY OWN	N		Y	N	1	6	6	6	1	6	3	6	6	6	1	6
49	Y	M	A	A	N	N	6	NONE	N		N	N	6	1	6	2	1	2	2	2	6	1	6	6
50	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N		Y	N	3	1	6	2	1	3	1	2	6	1	1	3
51	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N		Y	N	1	1	6	2	1	1	2	3	6	1	1	3
52	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N		Y	N	1	1	6	6	1	6	1	1	6	1	1	1
53	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	10	IND:TAOISM	N		Y	N	1	2	6	2	1	6	3	6	6	6	5	6
54	Y	M	B	B	Y	Y	8	CHR	N		Y	N	1	5	6	6	3	6	5	2	6	6	5	1
55	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	6	IND:CULTURAL CHR/YOGA	N		Y	N	3	3	6	6	3	6	2	4	6	1	1	6
56	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	9	IND:MEDITATION	N		Y	N	3	6	6	6	6	6	2	6	2	6	2	3
57	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	8	NONE	N		Y	Y	4	6	6	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
58	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	4	NONE	N		Y	Y	2	1	6	2	1	2	2	2	6	6	2	3
59	Y	F	C	W	Y	Y	10	JEWISH	N		N	Y	3	2	6	2	1	2	2	2	1	6	2	2
60	Y	F	A	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N		N	N	2	3	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	6	2	4
61	Y	F	B	W	N	N	3	NONE	N		N	N	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	6	3	2	3
62	Y	M	A	W	Y	Y	10	NONE	N		N	N	4	6	6	6	1	6	6	6	6	6	1	6
63	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	10	BUD	N		Y	N	3	2	2	4	1	5	2	6	6	1	1	3
64	Y	M	C	W	N	Y	10	CHR:CHRIST	Y	Y		Y	1	6	6	3	5	6	5	4	1	5	1	5
65	Y	F	A	W	N	Y	7	BUD	N		N	N	2	6	3	2	1	3	1	2	3	1	1	3
66	Y	F	A	W	Y	Y	10	JEWISH	N		N	N	2	6	6	3	1	3	4	3	2	6	1	2
67	Y	F			N	Y	7	IND:MY OWN MADE UP	N		N	N	2	6	6	6	3	6	4	6	6	6	3	6
68	Y	M	A	W	N	Y	10	IND:BELIEVES IN GOD	N		Y	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
69	Y	M	A	W	N	N	0	IND:ATHIST	N		N	N	1	3	6	2	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	1
70	Y	N	A	W	Y	Y	8	IND:MORMON	Y	Y		Y	3	3	6	6	3	6	6	3	6	6	5	3
71	Y	M	B	W	Y	Y	7	CHR	N		Y	N	2	6	6	2	2	6	2	2	6	2	3	2
72	Y	M	A	W	N	N	5	NONE	N		N	N	1	6	6	2	1	3	3	3	3	1	1	3

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73	Y	F	B	W	N	N	1	IND:ATHIST	N		Y	N	1	6	6	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	6
74	Y	M	C	W	N	N	1	JEWISH	N		N	N	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
75	Y	F	C	O	Y	Y	9	CHR	Y	Y		Y	3	4	4	3	2	6	3	3	5	2	3	2	
76	Y	M	C	W	Y	Y	8	IND:UU	N		Y	N	3	4	6	3	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	6
77	Y	M	B	B	Y	Y	10	CHR:BAPTIST	Y	Y		Y	4	3	6	3	3	3	5	5	4	6	3	6	
78	Y	F	A	W	N	Y	10	IND:PERSONAL	N		Y	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
79	Y	M	B	W	N	N	4	NONE	N		N	N	2	6	6	6	1	6	1	3	6	2	3	4	6
80	Y	F	A	B	N	Y	7	PAGAN:WICKEN	N		Y	N	6	5	6	6	6	6	4	6	6	2	1	6	6
81	Y	F	A	W	N	Y	3	IND:PEACE & LOVE	N		Y	N	1	3	1	1	1	6	1	6	2	6	1	1	4
82	Y	M	A	W	N	Y	4	IND:PEACE & LOVE	N		Y	N	5	3	6	6	1	6	2	6	3	6	6	2	6
83	Y	M	A	B	Y	N	5	CHR:BIBLE	Y	Y		Y	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	6	6	6	6	6	6
84	Y	M	B	W	N	N	7	NONE	N		Y	N	3	1	6	6	1	6	3	3	1	6	2	3	6
85	Y	F	B	W	N	N	1	NONE	N		Y	N	3	2	1	3	2	3	2	3	3	1	2	3	
86	Y		B	O	Y	N	9	CHR:CATHOLIC	N		Y	N	5	3	6	6	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
87	Y	M			Y	Y	7	CHR	Y	Y			6	6	6	6	6	6	4	6	5	6	6	6	
88	Y	M	C	B	Y	Y	10	CHR	Y	Y			3	6	6	3	6	6	3	3	6	3	3	3	
89	Y		A	W	Y	Y	7	CHR	Y	Y			6	6	6	6	6	6	3	6	6	4	6	6	6
90	Y		A	W	Y	Y	7	CHR	Y	Y			6	6	6	6	6	6	4	6	6	4	6	6	3
91	Y		A	W	Y	Y	8	CHR	N		N	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	4	6	6	4	6	6	3
92	Y		B	W	Y	N	9	IND:GOD	N		N	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	4	6	6	3	1	6	3
93	Y	F	A	W	N	Y	8	NONE	N		Y	N	4	6	3	6	3	4	4	4	2	2	3	3	
94	Y	F	A	W	N	Y	10	IND:UU	Y	Y			6	6	3	2	3	4	4	4	2	2	3	3	
95	Y	M	B	A	N	Y	5	NONE	N		Y	N	3	6	6	6	3	6	6	6	3	6	5	4	
96	Y	M	A	W	N	N	4	NONE	N		N	N	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	5	3	3	2	3	
97	Y	M	A	W	N	Y	7	IND:BASIC	N		N	Y	N	2	2	4	5	1	1	3	4	1	1	1	5
98	Y	M	A	W	Y	Y	8	NONE	N		N	N	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
99	Y	M	B	B	Y	Y	10	CHR:NON-DENOM	Y	Y		Y	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
100	Y	M	B	W	Y	Y	10	CHR	N		Y	Y	4	2	6	3	1	3	4	4	4	3	1	4	4
101	Y	F	A	O	Y	Y	10	CHR:EVAN	Y	Y		Y	4	3	6	4	5	3	4	5	1	4	1	4	6
102	Y	M	B	W	N	N	1	IND:ATHIST	N		Y	N	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
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104	Y	F	B	A	N	Y	5	NONE	N		Y	N	2	3	6	2	2	6	1	2	2	2	2	2	2
105	Y	F	B	W	N	N	1	NONE	N		N	N	6	6	6	1	3	6	3	2	6	1	3	2	
106	Y	M	B	W	N	N	4	NONE	N		Y	N	3	6	6	4	2	6	3	3	3	6	3	3	
107	Y	F	A	W	N	Y	7	IND:CHRISTIAN HOLIDAYS	N		Y	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	3	6	6	3	4	6
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110	Y	M	C	W	N	N	4	NONE	N		Y	N	2	1	3	6	3	6	3	6	6	1	3	6	6
111	Y	M	B	B	N	N	10	CHR	Y	Y		Y	4	3	4	3	1	6	4	2	5	1	2	6	6

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112	Y	M	A	A	Y	Y	8	IND:MORMON	Y	Y	Y	Y	3	6	6	3	3	6	4	4	3	3	3	4	6
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114	Y	M	B	W	Y	Y	9	CHR:CATHOLIC	Y	Y	Y	Y	4	1	3	4	3	4	4	4	4	2	2	4	3
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121	Y	F	C	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N	Y	N	N	3	6	6	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
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123	Y	M	B	B	Y	Y	10	CHR:NON-DENOM	Y	Y	Y	Y	3	3	6	3	4	6	4	4	6	3	2	3	
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125	Y	F	C	B	N	Y	10	NONE	N	Y	N	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
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129	Y	M	B	W	N	N	5	IND:ATHIST	N	Y	N	N	6	6	6	6	1	6	6	6	3	3	1	6	
130	Y	M	C	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N	Y	N	N	2	6	6	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	1	3	
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132	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	7	JEWISH	N	N	N	N	6	6	6	6	2	6	6	6	6	6	3	6	
133	Y	M	A	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N	N	N	N	2	6	6	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
134	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	5	JEWISH	N	N	N	N	2	6	6	1	1	3	1	3	6	1	1	3	6
135	Y	F	C	W	N	Y	8	IND:NO NAME	N	N	N	N	2	6	6	3	2	6	6	6	6	6	2	4	6
136	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	10	BUD	N	Y	Y	Y	3	6	6	3	2	6	3	3	4	3	4	4	
137	Y	M	B	W	Y	Y	6	CHR:PRESSB	Y	Y	Y	Y	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	5	3
138	Y	M	B	A	Y	Y	7	CHR:CATHOLIC	Y	Y	Y	Y	4	2	2	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	4
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140	Y	F	C	W	N	Y	7	NONE	N	Y	N	N	3	6	6	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	3
141	Y	M	B	W	N	N	1	NONE	N	N	N	N	1	6	6	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1
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143	Y	F	A	W	Y	Y	5	JEWISH	N	N	N	N	6	6	6	2	6	6	4	4	4	6	4	4	6
144	Y	M	B	W	Y	Y	6	IND:PERSONAL	N	Y	N	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
145	Y	F	B	B	Y	Y	7	CHR	Y	Y	Y	Y	6	6	6	6	6	6	4	4	6	5	6	6	6
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149	Y	M	B	W	N	N	3	IND:RUBEN SANDWICHES	N	Y	N	N	1	1	6	1	1	6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
150	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N	Y	N	N	3	1	1	1	1	6	1	1	3	1	1	1	1

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151	Y	F	B	O	Y	Y	10	CHR:ORTHODOX	Y	Y		Y	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	6	6	6
152	Y	F	B	W	N	N	1	NONE	N		N	N	2	6	6	3	1	6	1	3	3	1	1	2
153	Y	M	B	W	N	N	1	CHR:CATHOLIC	N		Y	Y	3	6	6	3	1	6	3	6	6	6	1	6
154	Y	M	A	A	N	N	5	NONE	N		N	N	3	2	6	4	1	2	2	3	5	1	1	3
155	Y	F	C	W	N	N	3	NONE	N		Y	N	1	2	2	3	2	2	6	3	6	2	2	3
156	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	10	IND:NOT DEFINABLE	N		Y	N	3	6	6	6	1	6	2	3	6	6	6	6
157	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	10	NONE	N		N	N	1	6	6	3	1	6	2	3	3	6	2	4
158	Y	M	A	H	N	Y	6	IND:AGNOSTIC	N		N	N	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
159	Y	M	B	W	N	N	2	IND:BEING A COOK	N		N	N	5	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
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161	Y	F	A	W	N	Y	7	IND:MEDITATION	N		Y	N	6	2	6	2	2	3	1	3	3	1	2	1
162	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	4	IND:ATHIEST	N		Y	N	2	1	6	3	1	3	3	3	2	1	1	2
163	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N		Y	Y	1	3	6	4	2	4	3	4	1	1	1	3
164	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	5	NONE	N		N	N	3	6	6	3	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	1
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170	Y	F	A	W	N	Y	10	IND:MEDITATION	N		N	N	3	6	6	2	2	6	2	2	3	2	1	1
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172	Y	F	B	A	N	N	1	IND:ATHIEST	N		N	N	3	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2
173	Y	M	A		N	Y	8	NONE	N		Y	N	1	6	6	4	1	3	2	3	2	6	1	3
174	Y				N	Y	7	NONE	N		N	N	3	6	6	3	3	3	4	3	3	6	2	6
175	Y	M	A		N	N	1	NONE	N		Y	N	1	1	6	3	1	6	1	6	4	2	1	6
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177	Y	F	A	W	N	Y	8	NONE	N		N	N	2	6	6	6	2	6	2	6	6	6	1	6
178	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	7	NONE	N		Y	N	1	6	6	1	1	4	2	2	4	4	1	4
179	Y				N	Y	7	NONE	N		Y	N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
180	Y				N	Y	7	NONE	N		N	N	2	2	6	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2
181	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	7	IND:BELIEVES IN GOD	N		N	N	4	6	6	4	4	4	4	4	4	6	2	4
182	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	9	IND:ECHARTTOLLE	N		Y	Y	1	6	6	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
183	Y	M	B	O	N	Y	9	BUD:ZEN	N		N	N	2	3	3	6	2	6	6	6	2	6	1	2
184	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	10	IND:CHURCH OF NATURE	N		N	N	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
185	Y	M	C	W	N	Y	8	NONE	N		Y	N	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
186	Y	M	B	W	N	Y	10	IND:ONENESS/LOVE	N		Y	Y	2	1	4	3	3	6	3	3	2	2	3	3
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188	Y	M	B	W	Y	Y	10	CHR	Y	Y		Y	2	3	4	4	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	3
189	Y	F	B	W	N	Y	8	IND	N		N	Y	1	6	6	3	6	6	2	3	6	6	2	3

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190	Y	F	C	W	Y	Y	8	CHR:UNITED CHURCH OF CHR	Y	Y		Y	4	3	6	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	4	
191	Y	F	C	W	Y	Y	8	CHR:EPISC	Y	Y		Y	2	6	6	4	3	5	3	4	4	3	3	5	
192	Y	M	C	W	Y	Y	8	CHR:EPISC	Y	Y		Y	2	3	3	4	3	5	3	4	5	3	3	5	
193	Y	F	B	W	Y	Y	8	CHR	N		Y	Y	3	2	6	4	3	4	4	4	4	2	3	4	

APPENDIX 2: SUGGESTIONS FOR ADMINISTERING THE ANGLICAN EUCCHARISTIC LITURGY IN POST-CHRISTIAN CULTURE

Introduction

This dissertation has provided a case for Anglican Eucharistic Liturgy and its place in post-Christian culture¹, specifically such culture as is manifesting in the urban centers of the Pacific Northwest.

The purpose of this appendix is to make some specific suggestions about how to creatively administer the individual steps and themes of the liturgy in a way that might communicate their greatest meaning within post-Christian culture. Chapter four described the theological and missional necessity of a contextualized expression of the church in every place/time and how this process of contextualization works hand in hand with historical liturgy. This appendix intends to apply that contextualization partnership (historical worship with current context) within my Pacific Northwest home.

This content has been saved for an appendix, as opposed to the main body of this dissertation because it will be fueled primarily by the subjective opinion (as a fully-saturated northwesterner with post-Christian cultural leanings) and missional creativity of the author.

¹ See introduction for definition of this particular sort of post-Christian culture.

By way of review, Eucharist or “Holy Eucharist” is the Anglican name for its liturgical worship service. The word Eucharist is in many contexts synonymous with “Communion,” as the name for the holy supper, when Christian people come together at the table to break bread, to share the cup and to answer Jesus’ call to “remember Me,” but in Anglicanism it refers to the entire liturgy culminating in Holy Communion. (See the step by step description of Holy Eucharist below.) It is the ongoing echo, instituted by Christ in the upper-room where His disciples were specifically exhorted to “do this in remembrance of Me”² and to do it “until He comes,”³ a reference to His future return.

This appendix will provide a short description of each of the liturgical elements of the Holy Eucharist. In some cases, it will reprint an example of the specific liturgical wording of that element. Finally, and this is the primary purpose of this appendix, I will muse creative suggestions for implementation and expression. The goal is to get the creative juices flowing in both the author and the reader.

I freely suspect that some of my suggestions will produce suspicious looks and furrowed brows among many Anglican traditionalists. I apologize to you beforehand. I also want to remind you of Cranmer’s words (bold mine):

It is a most invaluable part of that blessed “liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,” that in his worship different forms and usages may without offence be allowed, provided the substance of the Faith be kept entire; and that, in every Church, what cannot be clearly determined to belong to Doctrine must be referred to Discipline; and therefore, **by common consent and authority, may be altered, abridged, enlarged, amended, or otherwise disposed of, as may seem most**

² Luke 22:19.

³ 1 Cor. 11:26

convenient for the edification of the people, “according to the various exigency of times and occasions.”⁴

I also invite you, both progressive and traditionalist into this process. Bring both your critiques and creativity. Join the drama of improvisation.

Liturgy as Literature: Worship and the Literary Arc

Before we discuss the individual elements of the liturgical drama, it is important that we imagine them not primarily as separate elements but as perichoretic parts of a single piece of literature.

I hearken back to junior high school English class and recall the basic elements of literature:

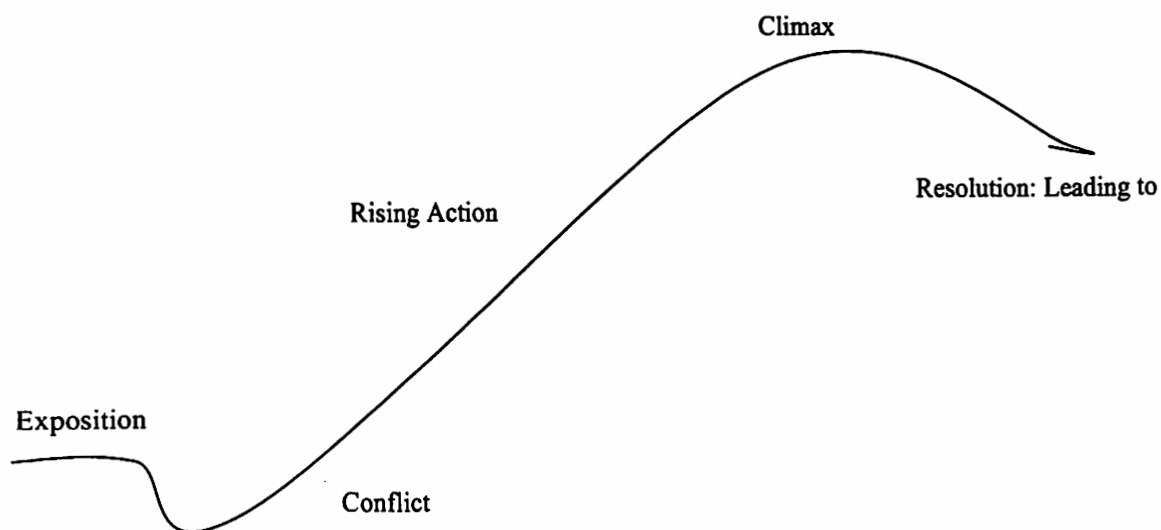


FIGURE 15

“Exposition” sets the stage and introduces the participating audience to the characters and to the setting of the drama that is about to be unleashed. “Conflict” sets the reality that all is not right and seeds hope in all present that something could be different.

⁴ The Book of Common Prayer, “The Book of Common Prayer.”

“Rising Action” speaks to the many coming and going dramatic turns that keep the audience engaged, reinforces the conflict and builds wonder for how this dissonance could be resolved. “Climax” is the moment of answer and elation; it is where the problem and the solution, which have been thus far separated and lost, come together. Resolution is where the dissonance is fully released and the collateral damage of the conflict resolves. It resolves through creating metaphoric “life” (the Shakespearean comedy) or death (the Shakespearean tragedy.)

Not surprisingly all of these elements can be found in the famous introduction to Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, foreshadowing the perfectly orchestrated drama to come:

Two households, alike in dignity,
 In fair Verona, where we lay our scene, (exposition)
 From ancient grudge break to new mutiny, (conflict)
 Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
 From forth the fatal loins of these two foes (rising action)
 A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life; (climax)
 Whose misadventured piteous overthrows
 Do with their death bury their parents' strife.⁵ (resolution, in this case: death.)

Inspiring dramas seem to follow this same arc, or one of her adaptations. One of her closest cousins simply introduces a preliminary climax to capture the crowd but its purpose is to point to the greater climax to come. It looks like this:

⁵ William Shakespeare and Roma Gill, *Romeo and Juliet*, New ed., Oxford School Shakespeare (Oxford; New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), 141-142.

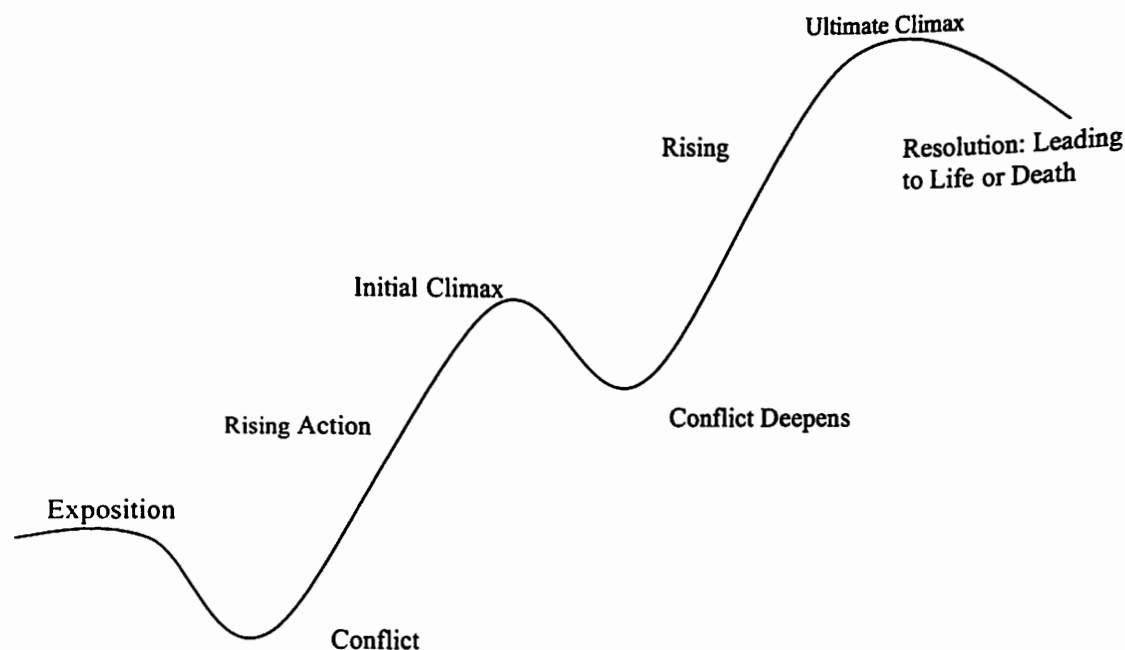


FIGURE 16

These simple diagrams illustrate the supernatural experience of the human heart when it encounters drama that is well expressed. Short story, Shakespearean play or romantic-comedy film, it all remains the same. When this basic literary pattern is skillfully and artfully maintained, the story has a chance to transcendently speak to the human soul. “Truth” is the language of the head, “sign and symbol” are the language of the soul, but “story” is the language of the heart.

The reason this is important is that I believe that our worship “formulas” often miss this basic literary reality.⁶ We often rely more upon the blunt tools of spectacle, personality and entertainment, as opposed to the subtle wooing of the literary arc.

Most of the evangelical, free-worship churches that I have attended over my life have an arc that looks something like this:

⁶ A worship service after all is simply a piece of transcendent literature.

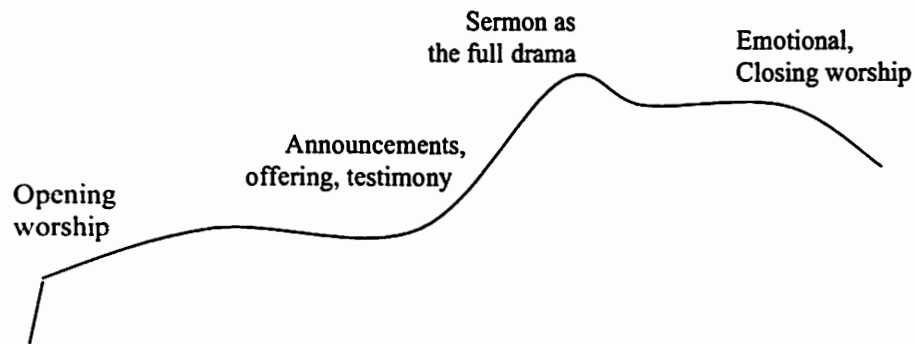


FIGURE 17

I have intentionally not used the traditional categories of literature (exposition, conflict, etc.) because I honestly don't know where they are in this sort of organization. Musically based worship, in this context, is responsible primarily to jump-start the room and to keep the engine revved up in part to set up and support the sermon. In my churches growing up, the sermon was everything and was actually responsible to embody the entire drama. The pastor had to set the scene, illustrate the conflict and take the audience through the drama, climax and call for a "resolution," all from a very limited palate: podium-based, cognitive monologue. Can we hope for something more?

Before I try to reaffirm that the Anglican Eucharistic Liturgy has a real opportunity to return to the influential heart-language of the literary arc, let me make an important disclaimer. One reason the liturgy has fallen out of vogue within much of the broader Christian community and culture is because we have lost the inter-connected reality of the liturgical elements meaningfully conducted through the dramatic arc. Without that intentionality, the liturgical service becomes "dead" and free of heart-inspiration. It can end up feeling more like this:

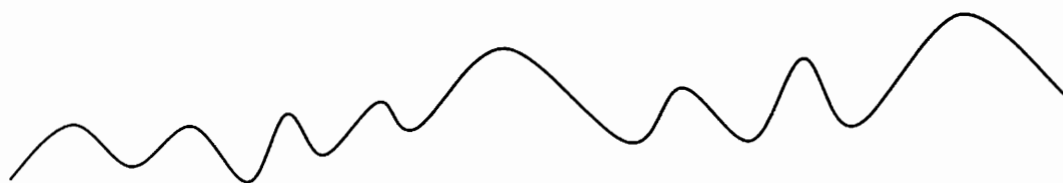


FIGURE 18

It seems to reset a dozen times, there is no integration of elements and then offers no “on-ramp” for the human heart. It is organized more like the music on a Top-40 radio station than like a symphony. How can the human heart connect?

If the worship leaders are able to see the arc (stop treating the worship service as a set of mandatory pieces) and lead the audience into the growing and resolving drama of the full Eucharist, then there is real hope to speak to the human heart. As I see it, such a service would utilize, as illustrated above, an “initial” and “ultimate climax” and might look something like this:

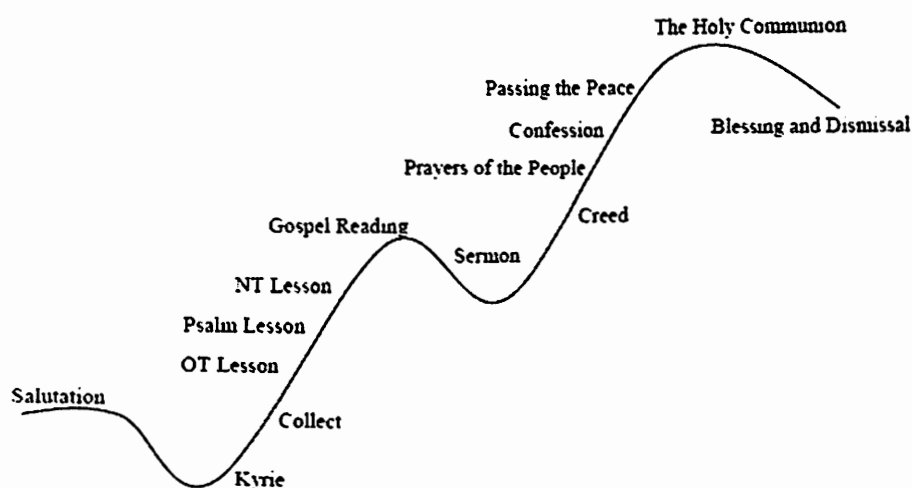


FIGURE 19

Let me take a moment to explain a few elements to this integrated and literary perspective on the Anglican Eucharistic Liturgy.

- The Salutation is exposition. As with a Greek chorus, the audience is invited into the “story” and as one of the characters they declare through their very presence that they are an essential character and then introduce the other characters and setting: “Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And blessed be His Kingdom now and forever. Amen.”
- The Kyrie, as an example, declares to all the conflict—the separation of these core characters. This separation must be healed and crossed: “Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.”
- The Collect reveals the particularity of each week’s drama with its thematic prayer. The Collect is then followed by God getting to tell His story through the reading of the Lessons, climaxing in the “hero” arriving on the scene to speak in his own words: the Gospel lesson (this is why the Gospel lesson needs to be set apart from the others.)
- The sermon provides an intermission. Local and concurrent particularity is brought to the narrative. The rhetor here can tell an entire “mini-narrative” through the sermon (notice on the chart that the sermon exists in a mini curve of its own). However, this mini-narrative exists only in submission to the greater story.
- If “Act One” is God telling His side through the lessons, in “Act Two” the people (His betrothed) get to wrestle through their story. Notice the undeniably “human voice” throughout Act Two: Creed (“We believe...”), prayers of the people, confession and passing of the peace.
- The climax is found in the anticipated coming together of these two epic stories, God’s and man’s, as these thus far separated characters meet at the Table: Holy Communion. Here they fulfill the promise made by the “hero” in the initial climax.
- Now reconciled and renewed the drama resolves with the “flying open of the church’s doors” and the worshipping community stepping out in newness of life.

Post-Christian culture is NOT looking for church—at least not church “just because” or in just any form. Coaxing an audience with religious entertainment or dazzling personalities is a lot like producing a poorly constructed, widely criticized and low-budget action movie. Sure the action-movie-zealot subculture will still buy tickets, but few others will come. However, a low-budget indie-film with a whimsical and profound narrative arc will sneak up on people. These films are not widely circulated, nor do they have large marketing budgets. The hard part is getting people to see them; but once they do, these stories surprise and inspire us.

Creative Suggestions for the Administration of The Elements of Holy Eucharist:

Before we get into the specific elements of the Eucharistic service, I have a couple of reminders. Among post-Christian and non-churched people it is more important than ever to provide a “tour guide” through the worship. Not for every element or throughout every week. However, from time to time we need to take moments to educate about the importance and meaningfulness of the different Eucharistic elements. Bishop Todd Hunter often begins the Holy Communion by putting on his stole and saying, “I put on this stole just as Jesus wrapped a towel around himself in the upper room before the first Lord’s Supper.” Here is another example: in light of the literary discussion in the previous section, the congregation could be reminded before the Creed through the Peace section, “Having heard God’s story just told to us through Holy Scripture, now let us respond by sharing our community’s faith journey.”

Salutation begins the conversation between God and his worshipping people. It draws priest and people into a dialogue and establishes the reason for being there. Example: “Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.”

The importance of the salutation, as stated above, is its role to not only “welcome” the audience but to declare the setting and characters for the drama that is about to unfold. In most churches, at least the ones that I have attended, the opening greeting seems to have two roles: first to set the audience at ease and make them comfortable—especially the visitor; and second to declare the church’s brand. “Welcome to the Church of the Ever-Journeying, here at COEJ we strive to love

people, love our community and find fresher ways to ever-journey.” It is a far different thing to set the people present not “at ease” but inside an epic story and in their proper relationship to the other characters: “Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” Also to place the immediate congregation within its greater context: “Blessed be His kingdom, now and forever.” The words of the opening prayer in the *Book of Common Prayer* even sounds Shakespearian in their cantor: “Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires are known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Creative Suggestions:

- Alternate salutations could be written by members of the congregation. I would encourage these writers/artists to model the tone of a Shakespearian prologue.⁷ I believe that even within such creativity it is essential to keep God and His Kingdom at the center of Eucharistic salutation.
- Whether a historical salutation or a contemporary piece is used, it doesn’t hurt to have a flurry of the dramatic in a salutation. Just be careful. The line between delightful/ inspiring and cheesy is a dangerous tempter.

Gloria, Kyrie, or Trisagion is the opening movement of the worship service in praise. “Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.”

The Gloria, Kyrie and Trisagion all end with an appeal for mercy. They restate the core characters of the unfolding drama and set them in relationship to one another. The tone is worshipful and is a call-out from the audience to the Divine with words like “holy,” “praise,” and “glorify.”

⁷ An amusing example of which can be found toward the end of the film *Shakespeare in Love*.

The Collect is the “theme prayer of the day... and is intended to *collect* (hence the name) the prayers of the congregation around a single subject.”⁸

The *Book of Common Prayer* is of particular aid here as there is a different theme prayer for each week that helps set up each week’s Lessons.

Creative Suggestions:

- Members of the congregation could write their own theme prayers, however there is a specific structure to the Collect that should be honored.
- Remember that the theme-prayer introduces the God-story, where His book is read and His ancient narrative retold. God is quite literally the main character of this “act.” Spatially it would make sense to embody that reality. The Collect could be read from an elevated place. It could be recited with hands raised. Or, for the more daring, a resonating instrument, like a Tibetan gong-bowl, could be lightly struck.
- Depending upon the theme represented in the Collect, it could be helpful to set it up with a short reminder of that theme’s importance. “In light of our world that is so full of pain and loneliness, let’s read the theme prayer for today...”

Lessons (Old Testament, Psalm, and Epistle) are the scriptural readings assigned to each Sunday on a three year rotation. This insures a thorough community review from the entire Bible every three years and it is from these readings that the sermon is most often themed.

These Lessons make up God’s story. Among post-Christian people the Lessons can also be read with a fair level of confidence⁹, as-is, and without editorial, allowing the words to speak for themselves.

Creative Suggestions:

⁸ Webber, *The Holy Eucharist, Rites I and II*, 20.

⁹ See Chapter Six, *Solution*, and read the section on “Appendix 2. Anglican Eucharistic Liturgy and the Post-Christian Encounter with Truth” subsection, “Scripture,” 156-160.

- That being said, there is a limited attention span in the modern culture. There are times when the readings may be edited, though I would encourage reading at least a portion of every Lesson.
- Space is our friend when we read the Lessons. If the Lessons are being read from the same place every week then the leadership is missing opportunities to both infuse spatial creativity and dramatic diversity.
 - Read each lesson from different corners of the room.
 - Read the lessons from within the congregation, with each reader “popping up.”
 - If you have the space, read from a balcony or elevated place.
 - Have the readers stand side by side reading each lesson into the next, like a classical Greek chorus.
- We all know that some people have a “knack” for public reading. Their voices are dramatic, profound, inspiring, etc.; their inflections are perfect and they never make a mistake. However, this can embody an unspoken religious caste system. Post-Christian culture is increasingly looking for non-hierarchical religious orientation.¹⁰ Therefore, having the scriptures read by a child, a recent immigrant or an under-educated adult can have a profound impact. *Remember, God’s story is for all people and that reality ought to be embodied as it is proclaimed.*
- Spontaneously choose readers (or ask for volunteers) in the midst of the Eucharist service. This provides an organic feel and shows that our relation to the Divine is not always pre-packaged and happens in the moment.

Gospel Reading, the same as “Lessons” above only it is the weekly reading from the gospels. This reading “is given the highest honor”¹¹ of the *lessons*, it is intended to be read by an ordained person and often read from within the congregation.

As explained above, I believe that the Gospel Lesson, not the sermon, is the first climax of the service. Historically it was set apart in the liturgy and treated with more dramatic flair. There is a tradition to read the Gospel Lesson from the center of the congregation. Sometimes a candle or lamp is lit above the head of the reader. I could take time to suggest some other ways to demonstrate the importance of the

¹⁰ For more thoughts on authority and hierarchy see Chapter Six, *Solution*, and read the section on “Anglican Eucharistic Liturgy and the Post-Christian Encounter with Truth” 150.

¹¹ Webber, *The Holy Eucharist, Rites I and II*, 20.

Gospel Lesson, but this ancient tradition is so wonderful and meaningful that it hard for me to think of anything else. I would encourage an elevated candle in the center of the room, auditorium or sanctuary and light the candle ceremoniously above the head of the Lesson reader: a literal beacon of the Good News.

Sermon: While the unmistakable climax of the Anglican service is the communion, the sermon still holds an important role. It is located in this first part of the liturgy and is intended to “bring the Word of God to bear on our lives.”¹²

The sermon has a wonderful opportunity within the Anglican liturgy, an opportunity it does not have in many free-worship services. Since the message is embodied in the whole liturgy narrative, there is less weight and responsibility placed on the sermon to get everything “right.” Also, as Webber said above, the sermon is to “bring the Word of God to bear on our lives.”¹³

Post-Christian culture does not need an iconic-someone to tell them what to believe and how to believe it. They are not particularly offended if someone does, they just don’t need it. As stated earlier in this dissertation, they feel what I call a “personality-fatigue.”¹⁴ What they are looking for is an authentic friend who will walk along side them, express their own spiritual processes and explain how the sacred might integrate with the world beyond the sacred gathering. The sermon is an

¹² Ibid., 21.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ We live in a world where personalities are elevated over content. Oprah is a personality. Katie Couric is a personality. Barak Obama is a personality. Tim Tebow is a personality. Rush Limbaugh is a personality. Advice, information and entertainment (these three things are now impossible to separate from one another) are all delivered in the shape of a personality. And while we accept and daily participate in this reality, the church has an opportunity to provide the culture with a break from this personality inundation.

interlude amidst a greater narrative. The sermon is to translate this declared-truth (declared by the entire liturgy: Word, symbol, confession, sacrament, Table) revealing how everyone present may live sacredly in every niche of life and view of the world.¹⁵

Creative suggestions:

- I am new to the Anglican way, but I would hope that this lowered expectation upon the sermon would free up the pastor in many important ways.
 - The pastor can be shockingly honest about his/hers own struggles, journey or doubts.
 - The pastor can use the “sermon” to simply point back to the other elements of the Eucharistic liturgy without needing to dazzle.
 - An entire sermon could be what I call a “thematic-testimony.” Many evangelicals are familiar with the “personal testimony,” which is most often one’s story of salvation. However, there is tremendous power in taking any “theme” or religious-philosophical question and telling one’s life-long journey of discovery. Such a story, well told, can easily fill fifteen minutes and should also follow the basic elements of the literary arc, as all good story-tellers do.
- Instead of a sermon, consider leading a discussion. If the purpose of the sermon is to “bring the word of God to bear on our lives” then it seems clear that the pastor cannot understand all the nuances of life outside the church. The “sermon” is an opportunity to validate and illuminate the experiences of the community in the journey of faith.
- Additionally, it would be powerful for the “pastor” to, instead of preaching, lead small group discussions along the topic of the Sunday liturgy. Encourage the congregation to get in small groups and have a led discussion around the theme topic. Then the room can be harvested for its best thoughts.

¹⁵ “the church, by focusing on its distinctive identity and vision, can be a depth-political presence of great consequence to society. The church’s calling, we believe, is not to change society as such, but to be a steady and true witness of Christ’s inauguration of the kingdom and his victory over the powers. The greatest service the church can do society—always, but certainly in an era of fragmentation—is to live out its distinctive story, to be a diacritical community, to present the promising contradiction personified by Jesus the Nazarene. If grace is real, if the gospel is truth, that is enough and more than enough.” Webber and Clapp, *People of the Truth: The Power of the Worshiping Community in the Modern World*, 123.

The Creed is recited as our response to the Word, which has been read and proclaimed. It affirms in common voice the belief that we have. Most often the Nicene Creed is read and it begins with the words, "We Believe."

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.¹⁶

Even with the growing loss of anxiety within the post-Christian culture toward Christianity and religious beliefs, the Creed could be one of the more challenging sections of the Eucharist. The exclusivity of the Creed, coupled with the tradition of swallowing the entire Creed "in one bite," may ask too much of the post-Christian person who is trying to discover and follow Jesus. Historically there has been real liturgical power in giving a communal oath—of declaring, for all to hear, the worshiping community's shared orthodox belief proclaimed in

¹⁶ Webber, *The Holy Eucharist, Rites I and II*, 358.

unison. This is still true. Let me also suggest some alternate proclamational perspectives.

Creative Suggestions:

- In the story of the healing of the paralytic who is lowered down through the roof (Mark 2:1-12), it says in verse 5, “And Jesus, seeing their faith said to the paralytic, ‘Son, your sins are forgiven.’” Jesus sets a precedent for healing and forgiveness that comes to a man through the faith of the surrounding “community” of love. Therefore, on some occasions the Creed could be recited “for the community” as opposed to “by the community,” allowing those present to enter into the belief-declared through hearing and reflection. It is important to note, post-Christian people will by and large not be offended by a creed being read (even if they would feel awkward personally “taking the stand” and vowing along.) Post-Christian people understand that sacred environments are sacred environments and they will have many specific (and even exclusive) traditions.
 - In light of this, have a “chorus” read the creed in unison from the four corners of the room (representing all of humanity.) Remind the audience to reflect on their own journey with God.
 - The Creed could appear line by line slide-show style with accompanying images illustrating those beliefs.
 - The Creed could be distributed to a dozen heralds who stand on crates around the room and read the creed in unison. The community could then be encouraged to affirm along with the heralds by raising their hands, standing or verbally offering an “amen” or “uh-huh” as their hearts respond.
 - Note: I would be careful with having the Creed read by a chorus of small children. That can give the appearance of cultic manipulation. There are several other places in the liturgy for child participation.
- Have the congregations read it together, but explain beforehand that it is an ancient document, shared over centuries and across cultures. Remind them that the creed is not a document intended to divide but to unify the human experience.
 - Remind the audience that on this very morning these same lines are being read by millions of people in hundreds of languages all across the globe.
 - Remind the audience that as they read it they can imagine the chorus of saints throughout history reading along with them.
 - Point to the eschatological hope as we look forward to this shared reading with humanity, being not “faith” but “sight.”

- Specifically, give the audience permission to not read certain lines or stanzas if they are “just not ready.” This is a powerful thing to say to a congregation of faith; it normalizes the *journey* of discovery and belief. If done with generosity it indirectly tells the room that it is okay if they don’t believe it all, welcoming them to continue their search within the community.
- Try having the audience look over the creed prayerfully, and then have one person read it aloud and encourage each person to “proclaim boldly” along with the reader the two or three phrases that are particularly meaningful to them on this morning. This allows people to declare the specifics of their current faith narrative, and to do so dramatically. It will also anecdotally indicate which creedal ideas one’s particular congregation is drawn to (and which are less inspiring or more challenging¹⁷.)
 - This same concept could be accomplished by having the audience declare phrases from the creed aloud, in no particular order, “pop-corn style.” This would change the normal cadence of the Eucharistic service and give everyone a chance to process their most passionate beliefs.
 - The Creed could also be printed phrase by phrase, but in a non-linear fashion. The phrases would be “scattered” around the page, maybe written in different fonts and styles. This would release a “fresh” encounter with the beliefs.
- Try pausing between lines or sections for an extended meditation. This could be very powerful for post-Christian people who need to ponder the tenants of Jesus-faith. Let the Creed breathe.
- Allow the community to write their own creeds. They could then be shared to the community.
- Instead of using a written creed, a series of images could be shown on a screen and the audience could be asked to vote, which image best illustrates their current dynamic with God. Those images would require some profound fore-thought. Show the images two times. On the third showing ask people to vote with a raised hand or a clap.

In the **Prayers of the People**, usually a deacon or lay person will lead this prayer and is often based upon some system of collecting the actual prayer needs of the gathered community.

¹⁷ Take note of these “less popular” or “challenging ideas” and then look for opportunities in the future to woefully teach on those themes.

Public prayer is something rarely if ever experienced by a post-Christian person. Entering into “prayer-request collection” can be foreign and awkward. One year into the *Holy Trinity- Costa Mesa* church-plant, Bishop Hunter said that the “prayers of the people” was the most challenging portion of the Eucharist for his congregation full of new-practitioners of Anglicanism. Bishop Hunter is not alone in this experience.

Assure the audience that prayer is a way to bless one another and share life. There are several studies that show the great willingness that people have to have others pray for them, even if those individuals are not “religious” or even “theists.” I spent one summer in New York City where I participated with a ministry that simply stands on street corners and offers to pray for anyone’s needs. These prayer stations are almost constantly occupied, and the response of passer-bys go from gratitude to tears. The challenge is to assure the “audience” that it is safe to share.

Creative Suggestions:

- Try beginning the exercise in small groups of four to five asking each to provide something in their life, which could be prayed for. Then, harvest the room, by asking congregants to share significant requests shared in their small group. I would even encourage people that they cannot share their own requests, only a request they heard in their small group. This will open up a greater sampling of the room. It also provides another “filter” as to which requests are shared with the entire room and mediates the tendency for the same people and requests to be shared ever week.
- Similarly, prayer requests could be collected by a group of “request-collectors,” each responsible for a portion of the congregation (they could even begin the prayer collection process as people are taking their seats at the beginning of the service.) At the appropriate time, the actual prayers could be proclaimed by these “request-collectors,” each declaring the needs of their section of the congregation.
- A handful of questions can be asked of the congregation asking for a raised hand if the question applies to the individual. “Who is currently experiencing

illness?" "Who currently has scary financial issues?" "Who has a loved one in some sort of physical danger?" "Who has some sort of crisis of faith in their life today?" With each show of hands, the congregation should be exhorted to take note of those near them while a short one or two-line prayer is led by the worship-guide. (Caring members of the congregation could briefly follow up with those "raised hands" during the Passing of the Peace.)

- Images are a powerful way to help people access and express their needs. There are a few sources of photo collections,¹⁸ which are specifically designed and created to help people share their inner life. These photo collections can be placed on tables along the sides of the room and the congregation invited to go and examine the pictures. State a specific detail of life for which each person can seek a representative photo: a photo that represents their current emotional state, their current relationship with God, their connection to the church, their connection to their own greater community. They should then be encouraged to share their picture with one other person in the room, even a stranger. That person can then pray for them as best as they know how.

Confession of Sin is a confession most often read together as a community. There are several historic examples. One of the most widely used includes, "Most merciful God, we confess what we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone." It is followed by a spoken absolution.

A fair amount of ink has already been spilt in this dissertation discussing the place of confession in a post-Christian context.¹⁹ In summary, here I would like to say that confession has an opportunity for a profound rebirth within public worship. In fact, I believe that people want it, even if they don't know that they do. Confession and absolution are two things that people cannot experience anywhere else in the public

¹⁸ Here are two of those "photo collections":

My Soularium: Includes 50 4x6 images: \$12.50
<http://crupress.campuscrusadeforchrist.com/evangelism/soularium>

Visual Explorer: Includes 216 8x10 images: \$380 <http://www.ccl.org/leadership/inHouse/tools.aspx>

¹⁹ Return and review Chapter Six, section "Anglican Liturgy and Post-Christian Spirituality," subsection, "Confession," pages 179-183.

sphere (and almost never do within the private sphere.) “Ignore and move-on” is the *modus operandi* of our culture and it is a sickness to the soul.

- Post-Christian people will be moved by the return to confessing not only the “things I have done,” but also “the things left undone.” There is a just accusation of American Christianity and its focus on active “dos and don’ts,” while forgetting the equally important passive “undones,” and our culture feels it.
- Confess these done and undone things both as individuals but also communally, as a part of humanity. There is a shift in the culture from a hyper-individualistic view of the world to an understanding of systemic and shared injustice. Post-Christian people (post-evangelical people) are seeing more clearly their solidarity with systems like racism, economic injustice, environmental destruction, consumerism and classism. Where else can they go to declare their guilt aloud? Where else can they go and hear, “Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life, Amen.”²⁰ Or as one priest in a London parish says each week, “The Lord forgives you. Now forgive one another. Forgive yourself.”
- As with other sections, we can talk about a congregation commissioning their own prayers to be written. However, I am often moved by the prayers of confession that exist within the Anglican liturgy.
- The confession can also be utilized to allow each person to reveal their current overall spiritual state (as opposed to listing the points of sin and guilt.)
 - Have everyone present hold up a hand and ask them, “On a scale of one to five, one being distant and five being near, where is your relationship to God.” Then have them turn and share with someone why they chose that number.
 - Use the photos again to find a photo that expresses their relationship with God and then share that image with someone.

The Peace: Now, “freed from sin, we are brought together in unity.”²¹ It is a ritual of exchange and often includes blessing one another with the words, “Peace be with you.”

Freed from sin we are brought together in unity. The Peace is more than a “greet someone near you”; it is an opportunity to practice reconciled Christian community.

²⁰ The Anglican Mission in the Americas, *An Anglican Prayer Book*, 53.

²¹ Webber, *The Holy Eucharist, Rites I and II*, 25.

- Remind the congregation that in history, the church service was the one place where classes met as equals—there are no lords or serfs in the House of the Lord. And when we give and receive the Peace we are declaring that in a world of injustice, “we are right with one another, in Christ.”
- Introduce the Peace by telling a short story of reconciliation. “The best stories of humanity are stories of reconciliation. They are stories of risk and interpersonal courage getting beyond passive to really engage, honoring the humanity in the other, seeking forgiveness.”²²
- Once again, the photos could be used here with the question, “what image best illustrates your current relationship with this worshipping community?” Then share that image with one or two others as a bridge to going into deeper “peace” together.

Holy Communion (Great Thanksgiving, Breaking of Bread and The Communion) is the unapologetic climax of the service. This section of the service begins with prayers, which lead up to the breaking of the bread. These prayers include Eucharist prayers and the Lord’s Prayer, which is recited by all. The Breaking of the Bread is marked primarily by silence. Then, “as God came to us in flesh and blood in Jesus of Nazareth, so now God comes to us here in the bread and wine.”²³ The congregation comes forward to be served the bread and the wine.

Absolutely keep the Holy Communion as the climax of the service. This global-historical, symbol-saturated meeting with Christ and His sacrifice from within the collected Church has maintained its power and significant over the centuries and across cultures for a very important reason. It is simply meaningful; designed before the creation of the world to speak to the human heart.

Creative suggestions:

²² Kirz, “B @ Peace Project.”

²³ Webber, *The Holy Eucharist, Rites I and II*, 30.

- Bring the altar off the “stage” and placed in the middle of the worshipping community, right in the center of the room. This geography would both support its centrality and express the equal footing for all followers.
- There are diverse examples of the types of “bread” that is used in the Eucharistic service. A post-Christian person like me has a hard time connecting with the other-worldly wafers used in many Anglican churches. They are stamped with the super-secret spiritual symbol and their substance most closely resembles Styrofoam in both texture and taste. For the bread and wine to retain meaning within a post-Christian context they should meet one of these two criteria:
 - Congruence with the elements’ original form, which gives the worshipper historical transcendence. In the Jesus tradition, this would mean some sort of unleavened bread
 - OR they should be particularly congruent with the time and place in which they are served. Extreme examples would include cultures where they use rice or even plantains for Christ’s body. In the case of Portland, I would probably recommend some kind of hearty, multi-grain bread from any one of the dozens of local bakeries. Even better, bread that is baked by members of the congregation. This local-orientation brings to the worshipper the importance of *their* time and place while also communicating the incarnational nature of the Gospel.
- Zwingli and Knox both set a tradition for the Eucharistic elements to be distributed by the worshipping community beyond just the ordained. This is still a challenging suggestion in many contexts; however, I am convinced that a greater connection happens when post-Christian people are not only the “consumers”²⁴ of the Eucharist but participants in its administration.
- There is a certain sacredness that is communicated through the use of ornate vessels, like a silver chalice. There is another sort of grounded and incarnational sense that is brought with the use of vessels that have local and artisan roots. Try using locally made wooden plates or pottery. Even better, vessels worshipfully made by congregation members.
- One of the benefits of people coming to a “rail” to receive the elements is the opportunity to linger with Christ in a posture of worship. I would recommend thinking through how to provide congregants with the opportunity to linger with Christ in the elements.

The Blessing and Dismissal is a closing blessing on the congregation and a sending out for the community to return to the world out of the renewal and sustenance of the Holy Eucharist.

²⁴ Isn’t a “consumer-mentality” one of the greatest enemies of the gospel in our current cultural context? Aren’t we also constantly struggling to shatter the perception that Christian life and ministry is not especially for the ordained but instead equally shared by all of God’s people.

Send the congregation into the world with a renewed vision of reconciliation both in their souls and through their lives as they go as conduits of reconciliation.

- Declare the dismissal with either enthusiasm or sobriety based on the theme of the week.
- Allow God to provide the “marking orders.” George Barna wrote this in his book about our changing culture called *Revolution*, “Americans are used to controlling their lives. What makes Revolutionaries so bizarre is that they admit they do not have control of their lives and they are not seeking to attain control. Who else would you want controlling your life besides the God of Creation?”²⁵
- I honestly question the use of a prolonged “coffee hour” as it distracts and dulls the moment of “sending into the world” that is so essential to fulfilling the drama of the Eucharist. Maybe a sending out to communal homes, where a shared meal happens within the “neighborhoods” would accomplish the same without dulling the “sending.”

The conversation has begun. These few ideas are shared here to inspire and release the people of God to communicate well, inspire the heart, and offer the great gift of the sacred encounter with God in Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

²⁵ George Barna, *Revolution* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2005), 82.

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