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Commentary on the Lutheran Book of Worship: Lutheran Liturgy in Its Ecumenical Context

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Balance of Texts from the Gospels: The Revised Common Lectionary and The Lutheran Book of Worship," *Currents in Theology and Mission*, June, 1993); (3) use of it will harmonize Lutherans with Anglicans and the many Protestant churches now using the Common Lectionary.

Disconcerting for Lutherans and Roman Catholics will be the disappearance of "Sundays after Pentecost" and "Sundays in Ordinary Time" respectively, in favor of "Proper 4" through "Proper 28".

CSS's edition of the Cycle B lections is laid out in a large, 8.5 x 11 inch, plastic-spiral-bound volume that lies flat when opened. The lections for any given Sunday or Festival are printed on two facing pages, so that one need not turn a page but can peruse First Lesson, Second Lesson, Gospel, and Psalm in one glance and in that order (exceptions are Passion/Palm Sunday, and Good Friday). It is thus an excellent study edition. Generous margins are also a study convenience.

I emphasize that this is a *study* edition. Though the lay-out is ideal for nervous lectors, in worship the lections should be read from a large Bible. It is imperative that the preacher always recover the full context of a lection by reading it in the Bible (See Eugene L. Lowry, *Living With the Lectionary: Preaching Through the Revised Common Lectionary*, Abingdon, 1992). Besides, this edition is drab and uninspired in design. Hopefully, as the Revised Common Lectionary becomes acceptable, some publisher will create a truly handsome volume, containing all three cycles.

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Commentary on the Lutheran Book of Worship

Philip H. Pfatteicher

Minneapolis: Augsburg/Fortress Press, 1990

558 + xvii pp. \$41.95

The first question to ask yourself is this: do you need this book at this price? Maybe you don't. It is a book about the LBW. And, if you think that the LBW at 17 is approaching old age, then Pfatteicher's commentary will be of historical interest only. On the other hand...

This book follows on Pfatteicher's other LBW-generated volumes: *Manual on the Liturgy* (1979), *Festivals and Commemorations* (1980), and *Commentary on the Occasional Services* (1983).

Its structure parallels the LBW rites. After a brief historical introduction to Lutheran worship books, and some technical information on publication and sources, he takes us in detail through Baptism, Holy Communion, the propers of the Church Year, Daily Prayer, the shorter prayers and liturgies, Service of the Word, the Athanasian Creed, Marriage, and the Burial of the Dead.

Although highly technical and detailed, the book really tenders no startling surprises. He points to the traditional nature of all Lutheran worship, and details our amazingly close dependence on Anglican, Roman, and Orthodox sources. He observes that the only contemporary material found in the LBW is the *Contemporary Worship* series produced by the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship. For those who see themselves as "evangelical catholics" this will be reassuring. For protestant "denominational Lutherans", Pfatteicher will confirm their worst suspicions! But it is clear that, liturgically at least, our primary partners ecumenically and traditionally are surely the Anglicans, Romans, and Orthodox.

This book is about the LBW. But it is also about Pfatteicher. He vacillates rubrically between two poles. On the one hand, in the variety of practises he describes, he encourages us to see the LBW rubrics not as rigid law but as interpretations for our times.

On the other hand, from time to time he offers strangely specific directives which go beyond the rubrics of the LBW. Thus (144) in Holy Communion the choir is "virtually required". And only the ordained should read the Gospel (452).

Part of the fun of a book like this is in the trivia. Some of it answers questions you might have asked; some of it is fairly irrelevant; some is simply fascinating. We learn (133) that the multiple-year lectionary was not new in 1962: two and three year Lutheran lectionary cycles go back as far as 1896. We learn that the LBW has consistently replaced "only-begotten" with "only son" in its prayers (209). We discover that among the liturgical churches only the Lutherans of LBW proscribe Holy Communion on Good Friday (256).

We find out (270) that the practise of fixing grains of incense into the paschal candle at the Easter Vigil is a mistake perpetuated through the misinterpretation of certain medieval Latin rubrics. We are told that the celebration of Reformation Day as a festival (321) died out soon after the Reformation, and was resurrected later during the Thirty Years' War to enflame religious fervour. We find that, while the Pew Edition of the LBW contains only 122 Psalms, the Ministers' Desk Edition has all 150. And we are told (467-468) the reason why a wedding ring is placed on the fourth finger.

Pfatteicher reserves his most extensive theological remarks for the Rite of Holy Baptism, the theology of sin in the Brief Order for Confession, the Triduum liturgies, the ecumenical background to the LBW, and the new theological orientation of the Rite of Burial (which he employs to justify prayers for the dead).

In a well-summarized Epilogue, he makes 18 points in which he outlines his vision of the "unfinished business" which lies ahead. Among these are the following: the controversial nature of the Brief Order; inclusive language; the inculturation of the liturgy; revival of the catechumenate; communion of the baptized; reform of the lectionary; legitimate use of the Apocrypha; the encouragement of Daily Prayer; the development of new

hymns. In this Epilogue he tips his hand ecumenically by wishing that "... the LBW will be the last North American Lutheran liturgical book" (512).

Who is this man whose writings have so influenced the theology and practise of Lutheran worship in our generation? In the first chapter, he identifies his bias as "ecumenical and traditional". He also claims to be to Lutheranism what Josef Jungmann was to the Romans. One wonders how his influence on our worship will be evaluated in retrospect a century from now.

For the present, at any rate, this influence continues to be normative among us. And this book is Pfatteicher's most comprehensive demonstration of authority to date. It incorporates a phenomenal and profound level of research and synthesis, reflecting a lifetime dedicated to the study of Lutheran and ecumenical liturgy. Do you really need this book? If you are a serious student of Lutheran liturgy, the answer is yes!

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The Eternal Triangle—Pastor, Spouse, & Congregation

Robert L. Randall
Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992
182 pp. \$12.00 paperback

There is ready recognition these days of the paradox that, potentially, parish ministry is both richly fulfilling for a vocation and hazardous to one's health and well-being. What I remember of my seminary days some 30 years ago resembles a romantic fascination with ministry. As students we couldn't wait to get to our first church and we envisioned how together we "would live happily ever after". In my present involvement at the seminary I am aware that, beyond the excitement, there is anxiety among students as they prepare themselves for the congregation. There is apprehension about the frequency of conflicts leading to separation and divorce in current pastoral relationships. There is a sense of being at personal risk in the parish.

As such the metaphor of the intimate but volatile nature of marital interactions in connection with parish ministry, as proposed in the book *The Eternal Triangle* by pastoral psychotherapist Robert Randall, represents a pointed and provocative image. For Randall, however, it is more than a metaphor. Following recent theories in psychoanalytic developmental psychology he believes that relational needs from early infancy are resurrected and given a "second chance" for fulfillment both in marital and pastoral interactions. These relational demands gain dominance especially in those areas where serious deficits mark prior primary care relationships.