

EARTHING COMMON WORSHIP:
AN ECOTHEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE OF THE
COMMON WORSHIP TEXTS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis undertakes an interdisciplinary analysis of new Church of England liturgies (*Common Worship*) from an ecotheological point of view: making use of reader response theory, literary analysis, a social scientific survey, liberation theology, environmental and political ethics and liturgical theology. Chapter 1 considers the theological, political and sociological influences on liturgical reform, which include, inculturation, the expression of ethics in the prayer of the Church, liberation theologies, technology, and agrarianism.

Chapter 2 considers methods of liturgical change and the scope for making creation visible in liturgy. Chapter 3 finds justification in reader response theory for determining ecotheological priorities for critiquing liturgy. Analysis of *Common Worship* texts occurs: in Chapter 4, using literary analysis; in Chapter 5 via social scientific survey of clergy using *Common Worship*; Chapter 6 looks in details at Collects and Post Communions and undertakes an ecotheological rewriting of 9 sample texts. Chapter 7 identifies lessons for liturgical revision in general and for eco-liturgical reform in particular, paying particular attention to the dissonant creation theologies unearthed in *Common Worship*, the necessity for future revisions, and the importance and implication of technological change for liturgical writers and commentators.

DEDICATION

In Memoriam Michael Vasey

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ABBREVIATIONS

- ANZPB/HKMOA *A New Zealand prayer book—He Karakia mihinare o Aotearoa* (The Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia 1989)
- ASB *The Alternative Service Book* (The Church of England 1980)
- BCP *The Book of Common Prayer, 1662 Version: Including Appendices from the 1549 Version and other Commemorations* (The Church of England 1999)
- CW The full collection of *Common Worship* texts: i.e. the full series of resources entitled *Common Worship—Services and Prayers for the Church of England* (Church of England 2000–2008)
- CWAC *Common Worship: Additional Collects* (Church of England 2004)
- CWCI *Common Worship: Christian Initiation* (Church of England 2006a)
- CWCPC Collects and Post Communion prayers for Sundays and Principal Holy Days in *Common Worship* (CWME: 376-426) and the Additional Collects (CWAC)
- CWME The Main Edition of the series, *Common Worship—Services and Prayers for the Church of England* (Church of England 2000a)
- LHWE *Lent, Holy Week and Easter* (Church of England 1984)
- NPW *New Patterns for Worship* (Church of England 2002)
- PHG *The Promise of His Glory* (Church of England 1991)
- PW *Patterns for Worship* (Church of England 1995)
- TSAY 'Seasons and Festivals of the Agricultural Year' in *Common Worship: Times and Seasons* (Church of England 2006c: 593-643)

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: WHAT INFLUENCES THE VISIBILITY OF CREATION IN LITURGY?

When training for ministry I found the dynamics of compulsory chapel worship frustrating even though the liturgy was, at times, creative, varied and liberating. I was relieved to escape from this, for the spring term of 1997, to Dublin, where, among other things, exploring environmental issues turned from being a topic of doom and gloom into one of hope and purpose.

I returned to my theological college in Durham, for a final summer term. I shared my newfound eco-enthusiasms with my personal tutor Michael Vasey, but bemoaned the fact that Chapel worship would continue to frustrate me, since we would travel through three weeks of Rogationtide without much more than one nod in the direction of caring for the Creation. Michael invited me to structure prayers of intercession for those leading worship across those weeks and I did. When Michael

died the following year, on the weekend of my priesting, I began to think about what I would like to do to honour his memory. From that reflection this thesis arose.

Before embarking, in subsequent chapters, on a consideration of selected liturgies from *Common Worship* (C of E 2000–2008) and a look at some more widely collated resources, in this introductory chapter the broader reasons for the focus of this study are given. The benefit of paying attention to creation themed *Common Worship* texts is then explained. Following this a fuller examination is made of potential reasons for the development of both older and newer creation themed prayer.

Arising from these topics come suggestions on how this particular study connects with broader questions of liturgical reform, inculturation, cultural change, agrarianism and technology. This leads into a reflection on the interrelatedness of liturgy, doctrine and ethical praxis. The remainder of the chapter is given over to looking at the relative successes of liberationist movements to reform the liturgy. Finally an outline of the contents of the thesis is made in the concluding section of this introduction.

1. *Reasons for this Thesis*

There are seven external influences apart from Michael Vasey that have led me to the writing of this thesis.

a. *The intersection between poetry and faith*

I attended an extra-curricular course in 1989–90 entitled 'Poetry and Faith' at Whitelands College in south west London (led by Nicola Slee and Robert Titley). This awoke a desire in me to participate in speaking about the things of faith in a language that was less to do with the doctrinaire and more to do with art of language. It was clear to me that using a rainbow full palette of colours, timbres and metres to explore the moods, sentiments and mysteries of Christian faith in a written format could offer a much more fruitful expression of belief and theology. That liturgy could be part of such literary forms was, for me, a given.

b. *The work and testimony of Sean McDonagh*

I had barely noticed the name Sean McDonagh SSC on the list of speakers at a study day on environmental issues in Dublin organized by John Bartlett (at the Church of Ireland Theological College in Braemor Park). I was unaware of McDonagh, a missionary priest who had been working in the Philippines and among rainforest communities. Neither did I know of his first three books (McDonagh 1986, 1990 and 1994), which formed the basis of his input. I was inspired by his mission not just to talk of God's kingdom for people, but also of God's passionate desire to sustain and rescue the earth. I was profoundly struck by his impassioned testimony about species extinction. This served as an inspiration to me to 'consider creation, consider it now' (Web of Creation 2010).

c. *The ecotheological imperative*

We now see a shift from a fear that global warming may be a possibility to a conviction that it has already begun, is continuing and needs to be curtailed. Some within the world of environmental campaigning now greet arguments against the realities of environmental destruction in a way that is akin to the response to voices that would want to deny or question the reality of the Holocaust.

Studying holocaust issues, the problems in Jewish-Christian relations, and the legacy of British colonialism on the indigenous aboriginals of Australia, whilst in Dublin, helped me to develop a frame of reference in which to understand the need for the Church to be attentive to contemporary issues. I began to see that the matter of environmental destruction is an important subject for the Church not just to be speaking about but praying about too.

d. *The intrigue of Andrew Linzey's animal rites*

Animal Rites (1999) by Andrew Linzey was an intriguing and perplexing set of liturgies that were full of polemic, wisdom and unexpected biblical theology. It was as a consequence of me writing a letter to Andrew that I began my research under his supervision. His approach to animal rites and animal theology had much to teach me about methodologies in eco-liturgical studies.

e. *Theology arrives with the people via liturgy*

As the work for this thesis began, a slowly dawning comprehension emerged that it is one thing for new theological thinking to arrive in the hands of the people in

printed form but it is another for such thinking to become rapidly embedded by words being owned and uttered by the people of the Church. Liturgy, like nothing else in theology, gets new thinking into the hands of the people faster than learned articles and books. I realized that investigating liturgy was a chance to start thinking about theology in a way that could influence what ordinary people think about God and the Creation.

f. *The new resources of Common Worship*

To begin with, I assumed that *Common Worship* (hereafter *CW*) was an immediate and easy target for proving that there was an absence of ecotheological and eco-liturgical matters in worship in contrast to more radical liturgies being developed all over the world. It came as a real surprise to me that there were a significant number of texts in *CW* that contained creation themes. There was no immediate desire to be soft hearted towards liturgy written by committee and agreed by General Synod.

Two questions motivated the deeper exploration of *CW* resources that discussed the Creation:

- had the C of E genuinely sought to reform itself, in relation to concerns about the environment, in its own worship texts?
- was there any chance that if/when *CW* was superseded by a second edition that a thesis such as this could help to ensure environmental concerns would feature more substantially?

The political influences on C of E liturgical reform that were involved in the development of CW will be considered in more detail during an exploration of Peter Nicholas Davies' *Alien Rites* (2005) in Chapter 2.

g. *Being my father's son*

The new literary criticism was of interest to me in my undergraduate English studies in London. The new literary criticism was of even greater interest in my undergraduate theology and biblical studies in Durham. For me such theories were part and parcel of my intellectual life but also, my life, because of my father (see for example David J. A. Clines 1993, 1998). I did not see what struggle there was to be had with both the freedoms and responsibilities that come from understanding that meaning and authority reside in interpretative communities (see Chapter 3, Section 1).

2. *The Context for this Thesis and the Terminology Used in It*

The analysis of creation themed liturgies is unploughed ground in liturgical studies because there is only a brief history of interest in prayer related to the recent concerns about global environmental crises. The amount of creation themed liturgy being produced is substantial. Because there are a wide variety of texts for different aspects of the liturgy and liturgical year with a creation theme in CW alone, this warrants giving the focus of this study to CW as a way into exploring and analysing

creation theology and the liturgy. The analysis of texts with a concern for the Creation in the prayed theology of CW rites is the main question this thesis is devoted to. It is important, first of all, to define the terms that will be used.

a. *Liberationist liturgical theologies, ecotheology, eco-justice, and eco-liturgy*

Over the last four decades theologies of liberation have been influencing liturgical reform. Not just the theologies that first arose in South America, but feminist, indigenous, womanist and black theologies have begun to influence how liturgy is thought about and written, some examples of which are discussed later in this chapter.

One of the newer types of liberationist theologies is an ecological liberationist theology, sometimes referred to as eco-liberationist theology but more typically known as ecotheology. It is not just scholarship that is raising ecotheological concerns, leading church people are also assessing and developing Christian ecotheological perspectives. For example, Rowan Williams in a speech to the Methodist Conference in 2004 offered this tight summary:

We live in a world of colossally organised selfishness in which the environmental crisis that we all face is again and again deferred, postponed for our thinking and our praying, let alone our action. And when we are addressed as a royal priesthood, we are among other things being called to challenge the world we're in in this respect. Do we make peace with and in our material environment, is our use of material things something which creates peace and justice. Are we acting in a priestly way, expressing gift and thanksgiving in our use of the things of this world. If we are, and very occasionally we may be when we worship particularly. If we are, then there is indeed a kind of restoration of what human beings are most deeply about. If we're not, we are barely existing as church at all. The body of Christ is the place where peace is made, where thanksgiving is sacrificially offered. What sort of body of Christ are we if we can't make that a practical, an economic, a social reality.

Williams speaks in a way that brings questions of ecotheology to the fore. He argues that 'praying' about ecological matters goes alongside 'thinking' and 'action'. Perhaps he makes this a little clearer himself when he says that this is 'a matter of justice for the human as well as the non-human world' (Rowan Williams 2004).

Some examples of ecotheologies are explored in Chapter 3 and in the same chapter ecotheological liturgical texts—or to abbreviate, eco-liturgies—are critiqued. What this study is careful to reserve judgement on is whether all liturgical texts with a creation theme are eco-liturgies, which is discussed later on in this chapter.

b. *The Creation, creation themes, earthing and greening*

Because this study reserves judgement on whether prayers with a creation theme are eco-liberationist, other language is used to describe the flavour or style of the text. 'A creation theme' is one obvious way of describing such texts, or 'prayers that make reference to the Creation' is another way (note only when creation is preceded by a 'the' does creation become a proper noun). This study also allows a definition for creation themed prayers that exhibit a coherence that relates to ecotheological concerns without determining that the text is ecotheologically motivated or judging that it is an example of eco-liturgy: the verb is 'earthed'.

The verb 'earthing' relates to liturgy in three ways. First, theology expressed in liturgical worship is part of the holistic expression of the process of faith that is given shape by the community of believers through both word (including liturgy) and action (that may include liturgy). The words and actions of worship are a corporate

expression in a particular place and at a particular time. Worship happens in a context: hence the verb 'earthing', which can be used in a similar way to 'grounding'.

The second reason is that in words and action of worship God is 're-membered' (see Slee 1996), God is acknowledged as being the central part of all life's substance. There is an intention on behalf of those at Christian worship to celebrate God's incarnated presence on earth, hence, 'earthing'. The third and most important reason for this study is that, when at worship, it is both helpful and contextualized to comprehend not just the divine but also the physicality of one's context. To engage with context, one must be mindful of it and in prayer for it. In this current time the Creation itself is part of the context that the Church is becoming particularly mindful of, hence the verb 'earthing' and also the motivation for this study.

Earthing has many positive advantages, as just explained, but also is more effective a word than 'greening'. 'Green' and 'greening' are both heavily used—noun and verb—to describe political movements and concerns covering a broader range of issues than creation themes and their resonances with ecotheology. The noun 'earth' and the verb 'earthed' do not have the same dynamic relationship and the verb is not over-used, and so, the verb can serve well here—without too many other associations—to speak of the context in which God has placed us.

c. Panentheism, pantheism, transcendence and immanence

The exploration of how God interacts with the Creation as expressed in the CW texts under consideration is central to the analysis. There have been misapprehensions that when God and the Creation are discussed in the same breath that this

amounts to pantheism, God being the very creation itself (or to put in another way, 'that nature and God are identical', Shaw 1983: 423). This has led to anxiety about some of the proposed *CW* texts for the eucharist, as discussed later in this chapter. Panentheism is God's presence and 'indwelling' of the Creation (Moltmann 1985: 14) so that 'all is in God' (Cobb 1983: 423), but not God being the Creation or the Creation being God.

God's presence in the cosmos, defined as panentheism, goes well beyond questions of transcendence and immanence though these terms are useful for unpacking the popularity of panentheism in contemporary Christian theology. Explicitly pantheistic conclusions have arisen from the work of those who have emphasized an immanentist aspect to God's transcendence (for example, Moltmann 1981: 108-11 and 1985: 13-19). These conclusions inform and underpin ecotheology and many creation themed texts in *CW* and in other liturgies written with an ecotheological emphasis. It is important, however, not to create an exaggerated separation between the two concepts. In certain respects immanence is a clarification of the nature of God's transcendence.

A brief discussion, at this point, will hopefully suffice in seeing both transcendence and immanence as terms that relate to the theology of God's role, action and presence in the cosmos. In the brevity of the writing of prayers for liturgy, the false dichotomy between the concepts can be exaggerated. Hymn writing is perhaps the quickest way of clarifying the problem. These three stanzas from two different sources make the point most effectively:

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
 In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
 Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
 Almighty, victorious, Thy great Name we praise
 ('Immortal, Invisible', Walter C Smith 1867).

Not throned afar, remotely high,
 Untouched, unmoved by human pains,
 But daily in the midst of life,
 Our Saviour in the Godhead reigns.

In every insult, rift and war,
 Where colour, scorn or wealth divide,
 Christ suffers still, yet loves the more,
 And lives, where even hope has died
 ('Not Throned Afar', Hymn 20, Brian Wren 1988).

At first sight Walter C Smith's stanza is bound up in a God far removed from earthly matters whereas the second stanza—written over a century later by Brian Wren—in discussing the second person of the Trinity, evokes the immanent sense of God's transcendence. It is not though simply that Wren succeeds where Smith fails: rather it is that Wren, in a post-World War Two context, puts an emphasis on Christ's solidarity with those who suffer. Walter C Smith has a different focus for 'Immortal Invisible', but still explores the immanence of God in the context of transcendence, by going on to observe in third stanza of the hymn that:

To all, life Thou givest, to both great and small;
 In all life Thou livest, the true life of all;
 We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
 And wither and perish—but naught changeth Thee.

God is both in the life of the cosmos, but God's immutability is where the difference lies, Smith observes. This is not ecotheology but an 'earthed' theology, which is achieved by both writers. It shows how a transcendent God is also immanent, and how that immanence is part and parcel of God's transcendence.

This is certainly a tension for theologian and liturgist alike.

Theologians in every era are confronted with the challenge of articulating the Christian understanding of the nature of God in a manner that balances, affirms and holds in creative tension the twin truths of the divine transcendence and the divine immanence. A balanced affirmation of both truths facilitates a proper relation between theology and reason or culture. Where such balance is lacking, serious theological problems readily emerge. Hence an overemphasis on transcendence can lead to a theology that is irrelevant to the cultural context in which it seeks to speak, whereas an overemphasis on immanence can produce a theology held captive to a specific culture (Grenz and Olson 1992: 11-12).

The additional challenge for the liturgist is that striking this balance constructs an ecclesiology (See Chapter 1, Section 6).

d. *Liturgical reform, the Liturgical Movement and inculturation*

Liturgical reform has been going on for as long as the Church as existed. The 'Liturgical Movement' is both a definition of Roman Catholic liturgical reform that had its roots in the nineteenth century (Chandlee 1986: 308) and also a definition that 'has not be confined to the Roman communion' (Chandlee 1986: 312) but includes broader range of activities that has happened across denominations (Chandlee 1986: 312-313). It is not just about one group or activity with a singular focus or purpose, but does cover reforming activity especially since Vatican II. One aspect of the Liturgical Movement is discussed in Section 5 of this chapter, that of the inculturation of the liturgy, a topic that includes: 'cultural issues to do with worship; processes of liturgical change; [and] issues of cultural alienation in worship' (Tovey 2004: 3).

e. *Trinitarian and eschatological cosmologies*

What is of particular interest here is how—through the liturgy—a transcendent God’s immanence is expressed, both in the second and third person as well as the first person of the Trinity. This is because in exploring ecotheological themes in the liturgy it is important to consider the three-fold approach of the tri-une Godhead to the Creation and the three-way dynamic between God, humanity and the Creation.

The way that the three persons of the Godhead are rooted in, not only transcendent above the Creation, is important in its own right. This contributes to the concept of ‘inaugurated eschatology’ (see, for example, Meyers 1993: 170) or ‘realized eschatology’ (see C. H. Dodd 1953: 447), theology that runs counter to certain contemporary Church obsessions with an anticipated eschaton being entirely wrapped up within apocalyptic theology. Realized (or inaugurated) eschatology, pays attention to what has already come to be as a result of the first Advent of Christ. Moltmann, whose eschatological creation theology is discussed in Chapter 3, has explored unrealized and realized eschatology in fuller detail.

The theological framework that underpins God’s interaction not just with humanity and the earth, but also with the whole cosmos can be referred to as a theological cosmology (and in a theological setting ‘cosmology’ can be understood as always referring to a theological cosmology). Theological cosmologies will be considered in more detail as this study develops, and especially in Chapter 3. The work of Gordon Lathrop (1993, 2003) is drawn upon to help shape fuller understandings of what a liturgical cosmology might be.

. Choosing between General and Particular Examples of Eco-liturgy

Considering creation themed liturgy, that comes from 'above' or 'below' is central to the research process for this thesis. Both texts agreed and delivered from 'above' to local congregations by synodical law, and rites created from 'below', by communities wanting to express themselves, more freely, at particular times and in specific settings, have provided the scope for this study. Ultimately, though, among the thousands of ecotheological liturgical texts that have appeared in the last few decades and the thousands of liturgical resources published by the Church of England in the last decade, it is just 316 texts that sit within the *CW* materials—and give some emphasis to the Creation—that receive the fullest consideration here.

The decision to focus substantially on texts from one ecclesial source, all agreed by the same authorities, was guided by four main factors. First, the plethora of materials available (an estimated 3,000 different liturgical texts and prayers with a word count of over a million words were easily traced in the early part of this research) and the speed with which new texts are being published means the sheer weight of material to grapple with disallows any opportunity for substantive analysis within a wider corpus of texts.

The second reason is because the sources from which the wider collections of liturgies come are many, varied and at times unclear and fragmentary. This means any analysis of text and context would have to be highly selective and because many texts were to be found in collated volumes (for example, Geoffrey Duncan 2002) or

secondary locations¹ each text came with a different level of knowledge about its context or embodiment.

Two more reasons for the selection of *CW* texts arise from the reasons above (how a liturgical text is embodied and what number of texts it is possible to meaningfully consider). Thus, the third factor is that in wanting to examine the significance of how a church community's worship can develop its doctrine, concentrating on one context makes it more possible to examine how the doctrinal journey is being shaped by the liturgical innovations that are taking place (and vice versa). Not only can doctrinal development through liturgical innovation be more clearly scoped but also the transverse is far more incomprehensible, in that, if texts were to be selected from multiple contexts—where the dynamic between liturgy and doctrine are vastly different from each other—this would mean it would become impossible to undertake a coherent comparative analysis of texts.

The fourth and final reason for selecting liturgy from a single source is to make a particular assessment of how much the development of creation themed liturgy in one setting has to do with any of the following three factors: a) the influence of theologies of liberation; b) the need for worship texts fashioned in post-Agrarian industrialised settings to enhance or replace rites that were developed by Agrarian societies that were closer in outlook to the Agrarian contexts within which the Hebrew and Christian scriptures arose, and out of which the early rites of the Church immediately developed; and c) what deconstructive and reconstructive force is contained

¹ Many of the liturgies I first gathered came from a resource file (or to be precise a wooden box) cared for by two founding members of Christian Ecology Link.

within the technological (post)industrial context in which creation liturgies are being produced and disseminated.

Although the focus of this study is precise, the earlier broader efforts, to collate creation themed prayers from a wide range of sources, has proved useful in giving a context to the specific texts that are given closer consideration here. Looking widely also allows for some conclusions to be drawn on general trends in this particular strand of liturgical development (see Chapter 3). The broader collection of rites also indicates the breadth of theologies being deployed and this also serves as a comparative tool to be used when fathoming the theological and doctrinal shifts present in the smaller setting of selected CW texts.

4. Church of England Motivations for Eco-liturgical Innovation

As mentioned in the previous section, there are many liturgical texts that are demonstrably about environmental justice. These texts arise from a clearly expressed ecotheology that draws on the development of theologies of liberation in general but in the particular matter of the liberation of the created order rather than a particular human group: an eco-liberationism. Although the C of E has within it those who would advocate an approach that takes cognisance of theologies of liberation, the decision by the C of E General Synod for new liturgical texts with a creation theme to be written and developed by the Liturgical Commission cannot be described as

simply being an expression of a theology of liberation in general or as a consequence of ecotheology in particular.

Some new CW texts with a creation emphasis have appeared as a result of the liturgy being adapted so as to be inclusive of a range of contemporary circumstances and occasions. This does not mean that just because some texts have arisen out of a commitment to include prayers for many different kinds of occasions that all such texts are serving an eco-liberationist purpose. For example, including new canticles, from scripture, that celebrate creation may depend, in part, on the biases of those selecting biblical sources, but mainly the primary control is the biblical material itself, not the level of commitment to eco-justice among liturgists tasked with broadening the range of worship resources available.

There has been, however, a developing sensitivity to questions of eco-justice within the C of E, as commented on by Michael Vasey in his Preface to Andrew Pearson's *Making Creation Visible* (Vasey 1996).

There are various signs in recent work that the Liturgical Commission is sensitive to these concerns, and, in March 1995, an official update identified a need for the new Commission to 'address various issues linked with creation and the liturgy' (Vasey 1996: 3, citing *News of Liturgy*, May 1995: 3).

These additional resources have appeared at a similar time to the establishment of ecotheology as a discipline but in parallel to, not as a consequence of, ecotheology. The more attributable influence on the new liturgical writing comes from the C of E reports *Faith in the City* (Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas 1984) and *Faith in the Countryside* (Archbishops' Commission on Rural Areas 1991), which both identified the need for clearer and more relevant worship resources for a variety of contexts and moments within the rhythm of the liturgical

year (see Sections 5 and 7 of this chapter for further discussion of urban poverty and the liturgy and Chapter 2 for responses to recommendations in *Faith in the Countryside*).

The increased recognition of the need for a Christian concern for the environment, since these reports first appeared, has added to the clamour for new materials. What this does not mean, however, is that a single or coherent set of theologies is at work, but rather a coordinated desire for prayers that are relevant to contemporary mores. The making of such a distinction is important when considering the question of how theologies of liberation *have* and *have not* developed their liturgical contributions within and beyond the authorized texts of established churches, which is discussed below in the subsequent section of this chapter.

Although there was an acceptance, from certain quarters, of the need for an increase in materials on the Creation in *CW*, Andrew Pearson (1996) observes that a number of the proposed new eucharistic prayers that had an environmental emphasis failed to gain approval (by the Synod's House of Laity, Pearson 1996: 15). The eucharistic prayers finally approved and published in the *CW Main Edition* (hereafter *CWME*, C of E 2000a) did not include some of the more obviously panentheistic motifs for fear of pantheism or a misunderstanding of the difference between the two.

The situation more than a decade later is much improved with *New Patterns for Worship* (hereafter *NPW*, C of E 2002). The precursor of *NPW* is *Patterns for Worship* (hereafter *PW*, C of E 1989 and 1995), which does include a modicum of creation

themed material, 25 items in total: a Confession,² an Absolution,³ three Responsive Intercessions,⁴ six 'Prayers after Communion and Service of the Word endings',⁵ two 'Acclamations and Responses',⁶ two 'Longer Acclamations and Responsive Scriptures',⁷ two Proper Prefaces,⁸ five Thanksgivings,⁹ two Scriptural Songs,¹⁰ and one Blessing and Ending.¹¹ *NPW* contains more than three times as many creation themed materials as *PW* (82 texts compared with 25) including: invitations to confession, confessions, responsive forms of intercession, praise responses, thanksgivings (that can be used independently or at a eucharist), short eucharistic prefaces, words of dedication, closing prayers, blessings, and a final acclamation (all of which appear in Appendix 1). The more recently published *Times and Seasons*, including the section 'Seasons and Festivals of the Agricultural Year' (hereafter *TSAY*, C of E 2006c: 593-643), contains a further 64 creation themed texts including: confession materials, gospel acclamations and other eucharistic material. There are also texts for the blessing of the Plough, the seed and the Lammas loaf.

² 'Creation, Harvest' confession, *PW*: 42, 10C6, also appears in *CWME*: 126.

³ *PW*: 51, OD13, also in *NPW*: 95.

⁴ Of the three Responsive Intercessions, *PW*: 75-79, 8H11, 9H14 and 10H15, the first two also appear in *NPW*: 204-05, 206. Some, but not all of the text of the third intercession is also replicated in *NPW*: 191.

⁵ 'Incarnation, Christmas, Annunciation, Mary', *PW*: 93, 2J8, appears in *NPW*: 297; and 'Resurrection, Heaven, Glory, Transfiguration', *PW*: 95, 6J18, appears in *CWME*: 387; 'Creation, Harvest, Bread, Vine', *PW*: 97, 10J27, appears in *NPW*: 292; 'Saints', *PW*: 100, 15J39, appears in *CWME*: 441; 'Love, Peace', *NPW*: 100, 17J40, appears in *NPW*: 296; 'Morning' *PW*: 102, 0J47, appears—with a slight amendment—in *NPW*: 290.

⁶ 'Creation' *PW*: 111, 10L19, appears in *TSAY*: 605; 'Saints', *PW*: 112, 15L20, appears in *NPW*: 225.

⁷ 'Resurrection, Heaven, Glory, Transfiguration, Death, Funerals', *PW*: 119-20, 6M8; 'Creation', *PW*: 121-22, 10M9.

⁸ 'Creation, Harvest', *PW*: 128, 10N19, appears in *NPW*: 258 and *TSAY*: 603; 'Kingdom, Ascension', *PW*: 130, 16N28, appears in *NPW*: 262.

⁹ 'Creation', *PW*: 142-44, 10P15, appears in *NP*: 241-43; 'City, World and Society', *PW*: 144-45, 13P17, appears in *NPW*: 255; 'Saints', *PW*: 146, 15P19, appears in *NPW*: 257; 'Reconciliation' *PW*: 146-47, 16P20, appears in *NPW*: 252-53; 'General' *PW*: 147-49, 0P21, appears in *NPW*: 234-35.

¹⁰ 'A Song of the Wilderness', *PW*: 150, 1Q1, appears in *CWME*: 57 and 786; 'A Canticle of the Sun' (*PW*: 160-61).

The quantity of material that references the Creation does not prove ecotheologies have served as catalysts for the material or that such theologies are expressed within any particular text. Determining so occupies much of chapters 3 and 4. It is also important to identify the biblical sources that have been included or contribute to themes in the collection of earthed liturgical resources in *CW*. This is examined in Chapter 4.

5. *Inculturation, Cultural Change and Technology*

There have been more immediate influences upon liturgical change than either theologies of liberation (which is discussed in Section 7), or different preferences for the use of biblical material (see Chapter 7, Section 4). The most significant pressures are the challenges of rapid changes to global culture, which in turn changes worshipping communities, who in turn seek for new forms of expression in worship. There is a potential disjunction between the sustained liturgical language that has survived across many centuries and new attempts to write prayers for multi-layered and multi-faceted contexts. Comprehending these changes is discussed in this section. The relationship between inculturation, technology and agrarianism will also be returned to in Chapter 7.

¹¹ 'Mothering Sunday, Mary' (*PW*: 179, 2T8); 'Harvest, Creation' (*PW*: 184, 10T27), appears in *NPW* (*NPW*: 304).

a. *Understanding the language of inculturation and using its methods*

The work of Anscar J. Chupungco (for example, Chupungco 1989, 1992) has progressed the reflections contained in paragraphs 37-40 of the Second Vatican Council in relation to the cultural adaptation of the liturgy (Burns 2006: 16-17). The appreciation of issues relating to liturgy, culture, cultural alienation and change (Tovey 2004: 3), has developed across the Liturgical Movement during the twentieth century. The term 'inculturation' of liturgy is used interchangeably (and differently) in a 'fog of incomprehensible terms' (Tovey 1988: 5) alongside 'indigenization' and 'assimilation' (White 1997: 186), Tovey in his more comprehensive definition adds 'adaptation' and 'contextualization' (Tovey 2004: 1).

Chupungco considers an even longer list of options (Chupungco 1992: 13-30), but he stresses that these are simply 'jargons', which 'to the uninitiated [...] are outlandish if not linguistically barbarous' (1992: 13). These linguistic gymnastics can cloud the genuine attempts to speak of the 'relationship between liturgy and culture' (1992: 13). The process of inculturation is the effort of 'inserting the texts and rites of the liturgy into the framework of the local culture' (1992: 30). For Chupungco the result is an 'adaptation' of existing liturgy, though, not free expression or 'creativity' (1992: 32).

The interpretation of unwieldy terms by both Chupungco and Tovey provides a framework in which to describe the task of liturgical inculturation in relation to eco-liberation, a topic that occupies this thesis. In mapping the terrain, Tovey is clear that liberation is an aspect of inculturation (Tovey 2004: 4). This thesis pays substantial attention to such a definition by using a methodology that considers the adaptation

of existing rites (see Chapter 4) and by offering further adaptations, rather than alternatives, as a route for revision (see Chapters 6 and 7).

Methods of 'dynamic equivalence' (Chupungco 1992: 37-44) and 'creative assimilation' (1992: 44-47) are used, but of most interest here (not just for its etymology!) is 'the method of organic progression' (1992: 47-51). This method seeks only to take the role of 'filling in what [earlier texts] lack' (1992: 47). In this thesis the benefits of such a method are considered (in Chapter 2), interpreted (in Chapter 4), and applied (in Chapter 6). The value of such a method is judged upon in Chapter 7.

b. Issues of catholicity and inclusivity for liturgical inculturation

A more general challenge for proponents of inculturation is that in localizing the liturgy—connecting it to 'local culture'—the question of the catholicity of worship arises. In the history of the reforming movement this has been overcome in part since the liturgy has repeatedly, throughout Christian history, been localized. Two immediate examples that evidence this are, first, that the centralization of worship at Rome in the seventh century was not always effective or enforced (Susan White 1997: 187), second, in more recent missionary endeavour, even where free rein was not given it was regularly taken (Susan White 1997: 188).

Attentiveness to local identity has become more essential (in parallel with the change in approach within aid agencies moving from benevolence to empowerment). Probably the best known example of this sea-change in local engagement comes in Vincent Donovan's 1978 work *Christianity Rediscovered: An Epistle from the Masai*,

which considered how far the development of Christian faith and local culture is a symbiotic relationship which transforms existing orthodoxies.

This approach also respects the fact that the forces of cultural change have consequences globally. What is additional to the 'global spread' of Christianity and its worship—which has happened across two millennia—is the more recent change brought about through globalization (Stringer 2005: 203).

Peoples, cultures and discourses meet and interact with each other continuously [...] In terms of Christian worship, the main context for this kind of globalisation has been the debates over inculturation and the realisation that the worship developed and moulded for the Western churches is no longer relevant or applicable to many different parts of the world. The mainstream churches are being forced to take local cultures much more seriously and to see how their worship can be adapted to, or even transformed by them (Stringer 2005: 210).

Local communities are taking existing texts and developing new materials in a process of liturgical and cultural change. There is a meta-narrative to liturgical, cultural and social change, which is about globalization, where innovation is arriving and travelling in many different and alternating directions, very fast. In the context of this thesis, the intention, rather than localizing the liturgy within an ecotheological context, is to see how ecotheology can assist in the construction of liturgy that relates to this globalized context. The circle is completed by considering how new eco-liturgy can relate to the environmental implications of globalization at the macro and micro levels.

c. Recent examples of liturgical inculturation in urban and Anglican settings

It is the notion of inculturation that has informed not just the missionary movement across the world, but those concerned with the urban context too. New immi-

grants to unfamiliar urban settings have felt the need for worship that relates both to their first identity and their new identity, since the balance between assimilation and indigenous identity is an important one to keep (Susan J. White 1997: 189). Beyond the indigenization of worship at a local level, especially in urban contexts there are those, who in leading worship, seek to include liturgies from other places within the world church to show solidarity with the catholicity of the Church (Susan J. White 1997: 189-90).

Although the term 'inculturation' was never used, this concept was a primary driver that led to the *Faith in the City* report (Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas 1985) to argue for patterns of worship more suited to poor urban settings (see Chapter 1, Section 7b). It is important to note the distinction, when speaking of urban liturgy, between poor and deprived Urban Priority Areas (UPAs) in particular and the notion of the 'urban' in general (Stratford 2002: 4).

'Urban' is a very misused word. It conjures up images of grey tower blocks, broken streets, crime, violence, low educational standards, poor health, unemployment and angry youths (Stratford 2002: 4).

The 'middle class English' that 'dominates the Church of England's central structures, and, consequently, its official liturgies' (Stratford 2002: 10) is an urban class, but not one that tends to fully inhabit the Urban Priority Areas in the same way as the urban poor do. This has meant that well intentioned efforts in liturgical reform, have struggled, not just because of the agrarian history of the liturgy, but because of some unhelpful presuppositions about both urbanism itself and urban poverty in particular. What happened, in an implicit way with *Faith in the City* was that the

principle of inculturating the liturgy to a local context was put in place, even if the results did not match the intentions (see Section 7b for further discussion of urban liturgy).

More widely, three years after *Faith in the City*, the Lambeth Conference of 1988 made a specifically Anglican response to the need for local creativity and for the catholicity of worship that related to culturally specific concerns not just in C of E Anglicanism but also across the world communion (see Tovey 2004: 132-34). The conference's 'Magna Carta for Anglican liturgical inculturation' (Tovey 2004: 139) affirmed, in two resolutions, the need to 'encourage a multicultural expression of Anglicanism' (Tovey 2004: 134).

The challenges facing C of E Anglicanism in reforming its liturgy relate directly to the 'common shared concern' (Tovey 2004: 149) facing global Anglicanism, which include: the process of 'becom[ing] more aware of being a global church', 'culture coming to the centre of the discussion of liturgy', 'language complexities (some Provinces work with more than 10 languages)', and the technological challenges of 'printing problems' (Tovey 2004: 139).

The principle challenge for C of E liturgical reform, in particular, was to seek development of both the agrarianism of a Prayer Book theology from four and five centuries ago *and* the multicultural experiences of urban society. These polarities provoked the creation of new structures for the production of worship texts (in *PW* and subsequently in *CW*). These structures have allowed enough room to be inclusive of the breadth of English identities, new and old, while keeping hold of that which is familiar through tradition and that which is familiar through lived reality.

d. *The influence of cultural change on liturgical reform*

Ruth Meyers in her assessment of reasons for the development of the liturgy in the last hundred years looks at the cultural influences on reform. She acknowledges the 'factors' internal to the Church as:

- 'the twentieth-century Liturgical Movement';
- 'liturgical scholarship';
- Gregory Dix's *The Shape of the Liturgy* in establishing 'the pattern for many eucharistic rites';
- the Ecumenical Movement';
- and 'in this ecumenical climate, many Roman Catholic reforms initiated by Vatican II have been adopted in Protestant traditions (Meyers 1993: 155).

Meyers is keen to point out other factors too, since churches

exist in the wider framework of culture and society [...] hence when revision occurs in a number of different worshipping traditions during the same period of time, it is likely that socio-cultural factors have been a crucial stimulus for change (Meyers 1993: 155).

Meyers regards such change as a consequence not only of the most visible factors of 'mass communication' and transport (Meyers 1993: 157), the consequence of global wars and the upheaval of the 1960s (Meyers 1993: 157-59), but also from the rise of a 'secular age' (Meyers 1993: 160-69). The development of access to higher education in the 1960s meant that the educated young 'welcomed innovation in worship' (Meyers 1993: 166), while others, in the over 50s age group, expressed a resistance to change (Meyers 1993: 168, Stark and Glock 1968).

Underlying all of this were changing world-views that led to a shift in Christian thought that emphasized 'a more existential theological perspective and the recovery of a biblical understanding of inaugurated eschatology' (Meyers 1993: 170). This, consequently, led to many 'unofficial' texts that were focussed on the here and now, even to the point that liturgies 'reflected the contemporary jargon of that decade and were highly introspective and verbose' (Meyers 1993: 170). The churches, however, committed to a more substantial process of reform that in many denominations followed parallel pathways of trials, review and further reform, reflecting a new 'underlying assumption of such a process [being] that texts are not fixed entities expressing static truths, but a means of communication with God and an expression of a community worshipping at a particular time and space' (Meyers 1993: 172).

This pattern of change reflects a more consultative and democratic shift, which is clearly argued as being in synthesis with the socio-cultural changes, especially following World War Two. Meyers is keen to point out that although the shift has been substantial and connected to the current realities of the social milieu: 'liturgy that remains truly Christian cannot be totally bound to current perceptions of reality' (Meyers 1993: 175). Consequently it cannot be presumed that the seismic shifts that are occurring in liturgical reform are as a consequence of theological reform *per se* but that all reforms relate to the upheavals in wider social structures that inform and influence the plethora of changes occurring within the Church simultaneously. Neither does it mean such changes are unrelated to one another. It is also worth noting that the connection between 'worship and justice' (James F. White 1990: 37) predates contemporary ecclesial liberationist movements:

ever since indeed the Quaker movement in the seventeenth century, there has been a strong awareness among the Friends that worship must not marginalize anyone because of sex, color, or even servitude. Indeed the Quaker insistence on human equality derives directly from their understanding of what happens in the worshipping community. That means, of course, that women and slaves were expected to speak in worship, hitherto an exclusively white male prerogative. (James F. White: 37)

In considering ecotheological reforms, therefore, the power of cultural change must be regarded as a likely primary driver for change.

e. *The influence of an agrarian legacy and a technological society on liturgy*

Susan J. White in her commitment to relate worship to technology is concerned about where there is no inculturation, since:

our worship tends to rely exclusively on images from an idealized, rural past, where green fields, grazing sheep, and starry skies were commonplace experiences. Should we not think about the ways in which we might inculturate our worship to the technological culture of which we are a part? (Susan White 1997: 190-91)

Her call for a technological inculturation of worship shows quite how far the influence of liturgical assimilation has reached in the development of new rites. It is within this setting that new earthed or creation themed materials are also being devised. They make use of the same palate of methods that are used for other types of liturgical inculturation. It is societal, political and technological change that has a shared responsibility for the transformation of the liturgy.

Earlier in this introduction (Section 3), liturgy produced by a liturgical commission was said to come to the people 'from above'. In White's analysis in *Christian Worship and Technological Change* (Susan White 1994), she argues this is a product not simply of an ancient patriarchal methodology, but of a technological environment that

embeds the process of manufacture into the construction of the liturgy itself, in what she labels the 'bureaucratization of the liturgy' (Susan White 1994: 50ff). Such bureaucratization has not just affected the liturgy commissions of the various denominations, but also, 'by a sort of ecclesiastical "trickle-down" process [...] congregations and individual worshippers as well' (Susan White 1994: 51).

The erosion of agrarian society is one that White notes has resulted in some anthropological researchers of ritualism deliberately looking at non-industrial settings to assess the influence of technology on ritual (Susan White 1993: 185). She also notes that within modernity, technology serves not just as a 'primary shaper' of context, but also contributes to the process of 'faith seeking understanding' (Susan White 1994: 27). This contrasts with the more typical liturgical theological view of technology as something to be 'battled' with via the use of effective liturgy since such forces are 'unalterably opposed to the nature of the religious quest' (Susan White 1994: 31).

As much as the liberationist movements may prove, in the course of this study, to have provided a substantial basis for the new earthed materials in *CW* alongside the agrarian contexts from which the existing rites arose, it will also be vital to ask, in conclusion, how the technology itself—which at times appears as a malign 'power and principality' at work against the liberation of creation—is a third primary force that shapes even the most earthed of liturgies within the *CW* corpus.

6. *Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi, (Lex Agendi / Lex Vivendi)*

Before looking in the subsequent section at how liturgical reform is part of the expression of liberationist or contextualized worship, ethics and the liturgy are considered in what follows here. There is a partly spoken understanding that the words of worship shape the theology of the people and vice versa. The term *lex orandi, lex credendi*—an abbreviation or even ‘misappropriation’ of the fifth century motto ‘*lex supplicandi statuat, lex credendi*’ (Anderson 2003: 25)—is widely used to describe this dynamic, and as Stephen Burns comments, it means somewhat ‘distinctive’ things to different liturgical theologians (Burns 2006: 13).

Some, such as Schmemmann, understand that ‘doctrine is derived from the liturgy’ (Burns 2006: 13):

[f]or others, the Church’s theological traditions possess a greater power of critique in relation to liturgical experience, and are considered to have a more explicit role in the adjustment and evolution of liturgical practice. Typically, an awareness and sympathy with scripturally-grounded Reformation arguments about aspects of medieval liturgical celebration or familiarity with forms of contemporary liberation theologies shape this latter position. (Burns 2006: 13)

Burns observes that liberationist liturgical theologies may ‘in prioritiz[ing] the perspectives of particular oppressed groups’ use those in place of older ‘received tradition[s]’ as the primary tool for developing a critique of the liturgy. This thesis deliberately and explicitly will deploy a methodology that does give precedence to eco-liberationist concerns in its critique. What will also be argued, especially in conclusion, is that by applying one specific critique to CW not only are particular concerns

explored, but that a fulsome analysis is developed about aspects of the process of liturgical reform that have occurred in the creation of new C of E liturgy.

A further justification for introducing a deliberate bias or agenda into a study of liturgy has little novelty to it, since it is common amongst twentieth century liturgical theologians to add the third qualifier '*lex agendi*' the 'rule of "living"' or 'belief enacted' to the motto *lex orandi, lex credendi* (Burns 2006: 14). *Lex vivendi* and *lex agendi*—are used almost interchangeably, both also being defined as expressed practice, though *lex vivendi* emphasises the *outliving* of the law, whereas *lex agendi* 'the law of ethical action' emphasizes the ethical *underpinning* of expressed action (Anderson 2003: 27). Whichever term is used, it is commonly understood that this part joins together with worship and theology in a three-way symbiosis where all shape the other and together make up the meaning of worship, theology and communal Christian life. To say that one of the three has precedence is not the point; rather 'it is pointless to try to rank their importance as if one could some how supersede the others' (Phillips 1993: 97-98).

This three-fold way of shaping the communal life of the Church is precisely what informs the motivation to look, in this thesis, at one particular matter of ethical life and practice in relation to the worship of the Church and the formation of the Church's theology. It would be fair to judge that the motivating factor for the study arises from a question of ethical living, but is also directly connected into both the way ecotheology is explored as an area of theology and how worship is expressing new movements in theology and ethical practice, and how theology and liturgy can influence the adoption of ethical ways of living by its members. The remarkable

power the liturgy has is in being able to provide meaning not just within worship, but to make meaning between justice and prayer by serving as 'one primary and essential connection between worship and ethics, liturgy and daily life' (Lathrop 2003: 51).

7. How Theologies of Liberation Have Been Expressed Liturgically

Within and beyond the rites of established Churches ethically and politically motivated theologies of liberation have been expressed in liturgies. Some argue that the urgent need for new liturgical rites in a post-industrial, post-modern period of shifting ideologies arises because older symbols based in redundant cosmologies need not just to be improved upon but replaced. This is a theme picked up by Gordon Lathrop in *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology* (2003):

... We need the scientific testing of hypotheses, the experimental vulnerability to actual evidence. But we also need the breaking of symbols, the breaking of myths (Lathrop 2003: 37).

There have been a variety of approaches that different liberationist ecclesial and theological movements have taken towards 'breaking' the old symbols and constructing new liturgy to express a new cosmology. It is important to identify some examples across a range of approaches so as to be able to compare these with the new eco-liturgical materials appearing within the CW corpus in particular. The options, which have been taken by different reforming movements in the last five

decades is discussed below, within: feminist theology, political and urban theologies, theologies of disability and children, as well as liberationist theologies.

It is within the scope of this study to consider the efficacy, to date, of different approaches in relation to their influence within *CW* resources, but it is beyond this study's focus to determine which of the routes are *better* ways of influencing liturgical change and effecting theological shifts to the widest number of communities. That is something that can be judged by looking backwards and so much of what is happening, in terms of reform, is very much in the present.

a. *Feminist liturgies*

Liturgical innovation within mainstream denominations is not something that automatically occurs. As I have said, liturgical reform typically comes by a process of ecclesial democracy or through episcopally appointed liturgical commissions, as is the case with *CW*. Feminist liturgical theology would question such an approach, firstly because 'in the mainstream churches today those who feel most keenly the isolating barriers of language, gender and law are the women' (Primavesi and Henderson 1989: 73). Second, since 'feminist ritualizing eliminates the impression that there is an elite group on whom divine power and presence depends' (Walton 2000: 46). It is also, however, Walton's assertion that the construction of feminist liturgy is an 'accountable' and '*collective*' one (her italics, Walton, 2000: 46). This is also the case, in certain ways, in the C of E where, the work of the Liturgical Commission is authorized by a collective vote of the elected houses of Clergy and Laity as well as the appointed House of Bishops.

Although the Commission is subject to the democratic process, it still works as a reforming force by degrees, returning with suggestions for modernizing certain texts, typically offering supplementary resources and occasionally removing the older material altogether and instating new liturgies in their place—all then to be put, at least one more time, to the vote. This is quite different to Walton's definition of liturgical collaboration as one that ensures 'empowered relationships' (Walton, 2000: 46). This has not been the case with *CW*, a route to revision that is fair to understand, therefore, as modern but culturally orthodox: a process of seeking to effect change from within hierarchical constructs, where feminist liturgical development has, by necessity, confronted the *status quo*.

It could be argued that feminist theology has won a modicum of change in *CW* too, though whether there is much significance in making a relatively small number of texts gender-inclusive will be discussed in Chapter 2 where questions of C of E liturgical reform are explored more directly. What is more critical for feminist liturgical theology is whether the full set of metaphors for God, as deployed in *CW* and its precursors, are so confused and patriarchal as to be fundamentally unhelpful ways of expressing God's identity to women and men. Brian Wren puts it this way:

Our knowledge of the Trinity as love-in-relationship is limited by the male metaphor of Father and Son, its patriarchal formation, and by the difficulty of naming the Holy Spirit as a fully coequal center of divine personhood. In worship, the traditional doxology pictures God as an all-male one-parent family with a whoosh of vapour (Brian Wren 1989: 200).

In the instance of feminist theology the methodologies deployed for liturgical change have been in stark contrast with *CW* by being both radical and counter-cultural, seeking to change even the most basic of metaphors, whether about the Church

or God. In the new rites that have been and are being developed, there is a repeated and deliberate rejection of existing rites in preference for entirely new patterns of worship—a remarkably different route from the reform of CW.

Anderson, in drawing some conclusions about feminist liturgical developments—through a discussion of Janet Walton, Mary Collins and Marjorie Proctor Smith—judges that on the one hand feminist liturgical praxis has an objective to be reached by accommodating itself ‘to the present age while remaining both faithful to and critical of Christian tradition’ (Anderson 2003: 55) and yet ‘on the other hand, the critical claims of feminist practice point to a retrieval of the radically egalitarian and inclusive grammar and narratives of Christianity’s originating sources’ (Anderson 2003: 56). It is this tension that forms a continuum upon which feminist liturgical expressions are made, at times falling at one end of the balance or the other, or at a mid-point between the two.

The degree to which liturgical change occurs is, in part, due to the level of confidence in choosing change, it is also though—as the continuum described by Anderson indicates—because there are different approaches to how transformation is made. This is because, as Lathrop observes, ‘liturgy orients its participants in the world’ (Lathrop 2003: 51). Some feminists have shifted their orientation away from the *status quo* more than others.

Barbara Reid identifies a second, more subtle continuum to also be aware of in relation to this, between a) those whose feminism has shifted their worldview enough that they now gladly embrace new liturgy and want to reject that which

came before and b) those for whom grappling with a new outlook let alone new rites is profoundly unsettling:

For many Christian feminists, there is a distressing gap between their theology and their experience in the assembly. For those who are new to the feminist perspective changes in traditional language, symbols, and roles can be confusing and upsetting. A movement to feminist consciousness is actually a conversion process that demands a shift in one's worldview. The translation of feminist insights into liturgical expression must be preceded by education and explanation with sensitivity to the position of people at all points of the continuum (Reid 1991: 133-34).

It is not just the world view that catalyses liturgical innovation but comfortableness with the new world view that overcomes the inertia of discomfort with the unfamiliar. With feminist theology the ideological shift and the requirement for change are symbiotic and imperative, but at the same time the sociological experience of changing a culture and more specifically a rite is not peculiar to the feminist movement.

The feminist liturgical movement is self-consciously aware of the social change that it is making among women, but also seeks to bring social change and justice for many who are marginalized by patriarchy, not women alone. Janet R Walton in considering the words used in feminist liturgy speaks of the need to choose language that rejects:

- 'deception and distortion and violence';
- not 'naming females' since the naming of women as women 'is critical to reversing dishonesty';
- 'color coded language' [is 'another example of inaccuracy that leads to discrimination'];

- 'language that connects able-bodied people to goodness and disabled people to sin;'
- 'words that categorize people dehumanize them as well';
- 'age [as] a stereotypical cause of discrimination' (Walton 2000: 34-35).

What other liberationists may add here would be the rejection of language that marginalizes those from the majority world or of language that is so human-centred it ignores the groaning of creation for liberation.

There is in liturgical reform the power to bring about social change through a change in the words that are used, which models a different cosmology. The act of rejecting existing texts in itself requires, social change too. The social demands of ritual change are explored in Davies' *Alien Rites* (2005, see Chapter 2). Beyond these more obvious sociological challenges to the implementation of ritual change, is the matter of cognitive dissonance between cosmology and liturgy that will be discussed in Section 6 of Chapter 7.

b. *Political and urban liturgies*

'Any discussion presuming a link between liturgy and social justice, suggests, for many, a most unlikely marriage of topics' begins Edward Foley's introductory comments to his chapter 'Liturgy and Economic Justice for All' (Foley 1991: 116-17). Developing an underpinning liturgical theology for rites that engage with justice issues is work that has become particularly well developed in North America. As to steps being taken by the Church to change established liturgy, from a justice point of view, there has been little progress.

Foley's title is a direct reference to the 1986 pastoral letter from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) in the United States, which recognizes the relationship between social action and the worshipping life of a community.

331. The liturgy ... turns our hearts from self-seeking to a spirituality that sees the signs of true Discipleship in our sharing of goods and working for justice. By uniting us in prayer with all the people of God, with the rich and the poor, with those near and dear, and with those in distant lands, liturgy challenges our way of living and refines our values. Together in the community of worship, we are encouraged to use the goods of this earth for the benefit of all. In worship and in deeds for justice, the Church becomes a "sacrament," a visible sign of that unity in justice and peace that God wills for the whole of humanity (National Conference of Catholic Bishops 1986: 59).

The statement is unequivocal in understanding worship to be capable of challenging and changing the worshipping community, but on the practicalities of liturgical reform there is a suitable vagueness here, considering the gap between the liturgical resources that were in use and the ideological understanding of how transformation can occur through worship. Although Foley sees merit in the Bishops' letter being committed to a deeper connection being made, through liturgy, between the world of work and worship (Foley 1991: 119), there is little of substance that arises from the letter.

It was the previous year (1985) that the C of E report *Faith in the City* was published. Some of the concerns about liturgy and social action expressed in it are very similar to those of the U.S. Bishops. The report was wide reaching, critical of government policy on urban poverty, critical of Church engagement with the urban poor and critical of the liturgy's suitability.

6.110 [...] to give people a 1300 page Alternative Service Book is a symptom of the gulf between the Church and ordinary people in the UPAs. We have heard calls for short functional service booklets or cards, prepared by people who always ask 'if all the words are really necessary'. The work of re-forming

the liturgy has really only just begun for the UPA Church, and *we recommend* that the Liturgical Commission pays close attention to the needs of Churches in the UPAs (C of E 1986: 136-37).

Not only was there an understanding that the *Alternative Service Book* was not in an appropriate *format* for liturgy, rather this was a minimum concern but a greater and more visionary desire was also expressed in the report:

6.111 There has also been a clear plea that the form of liturgies so beloved of the wider Church must be complemented in UPAs by more informal and spontaneous acts of worship and witness (C of E 1986: 136).

The consequence of all this was a new type of liturgical resource *Patterns for Worship* (see above, Section 4) that broke the mould of how liturgical resources could be presented. *PW*, Stephen Burns observes,

remains unusual—if not unique—among the range of liturgical resources published by churches in Britain, consisting as it does of rubrics, resources, commentary and sample services (Burns 2006: 25).

The more recent *NPW* (also discussed above in Section 4) continues in the same vein.

Although there is, to date, a lack of assessment of the reforming influence of *PW* (and consequently *NPW*), Bryan Spinks (1993) takes a closer, albeit, brief look at the intersection between modern Western culture and liturgical reform—in relation to *PW* as well as to *The Promise of His Glory* (hereafter *PHG*, C of E 1991)—in his essay Spinks notes the provisions made for family services and in poorer economic settings. He also sees that the efforts made in *PW* are both to relate the liturgy to real life and also to take ancient language and ‘press it into new use’ (Spinks 1993: 44-46). He applauds the attention to the Creation, and social justice and the book’s attempts to engage with class difference in British society (Spinks 1993: 46-47). His reflections on both the inclusivity but also the challenge that *PW* offered to the *status quo* of the

Church's worship inform the attempt here to assess the inclusivisation of CW in relation to the Creation and the theological shifts and challenges CW offers to the Church by using a fresh way of thinking about the prominence the Creation may have in Christian thought.

What neither the C of E report or the NCCB pastoral letter succeeded in doing was to consider the theological underpinning for liturgical innovation: the best that is managed, in *Faith in the City*, is a call to speak in less esoteric ways and relate worship to personal circumstances. The incarnational nature of worship is mentioned, but simply as that, incarnationality as 'an indispensable characteristic of a worshipping community' (C of E 1986: 135), this is not unpacked any further.

The vision for worship expressed in *Faith in the City* leans heavily on the need for liturgy that can work with different cultures and a different class of person living in an Urban Priority Area.

6.102 To understand worship in this way means that certain aspects of UPA life will necessarily greatly affect the formation of the worshipping life of the UPA Church. The main contribution of the Church to our cities is to be itself, and true to its vocation. It will gather up and inform local life. It must 'accept the positive aspects and validity of working class culture, particularly to build on the strong sense of family and community which is often found, and be prepared to communicate through feeling rather than the mind, through non-verbal communication rather than verbal'. It will be more informal and flexible in its use of urban language, vocabulary, style and content. It will therefore reflect a universality of form with local variations, allowing significant space for worship which is genuinely local, expressed in and through local cultures, and reflecting the local context. (C of E 1986: 135)

The call for a 'universality of form with local variations' does not exactly constitute a liturgical theology or even express a model of liturgical inculturation although it does hint towards a reforming methodology, which goes slightly further than the NCCB letter. What this proposal does not suggest is introducing a new pattern of

worship that cries out for justice in intelligible ways for people regardless of their poverty or wealth, in both urban and rural settings. Instead it looks to make the liturgy accessible in places of poverty and urban contexts.

It is as though both of these senior church panels were not able to see beyond their own existing world-view and so, although they could see a practical need for new liturgy, they could not spot the accompanying cosmological shift that reworking the liturgy implied. It was treated, at least by the authors of *Faith in the City* as making something esoteric more intelligible and immediate. Foley does get a little further than this by arguing that liturgy is radical by its very nature by following the lived liturgical example of Christ, which guarantees that liturgy will serve as an 'impetus for justice' because liturgy is 'in itself a just act' (Foley 1991: 116-17).

There is a rather startling comment in *Faith in the City* that reveals some flaws in judging what worship was or was not suitable in a poor urban setting compared with elsewhere. The report suggests the need to create liturgy that related 'to UPA Christians ... [who] feel they must hide from the clergy and the local Church their debts, their court cases, their sufferings at the hands of their husbands' (C of E 1985: 136; 6.107). This suggests a range of stereotypes swallowed by the panel not just about working class circumstances, but also about the distinctions between what working class and other people might hide from the Church. The Archbishop's Commission had formed an opinion on why C of E worship was not making connections in impoverished contexts, founded on some misapprehensions. This marks out some of the hazards in attempting to construct political or urban liturgies with-

out the right quality of foresight, or without enough time to establish wisdom that comes with hindsight.

c. Disability and children and liturgy

The inclusiveness of the liturgy for people with disabilities and for children has been given too little attention within new liturgical prayers and in liturgical studies. Deaf churches and the L'Arche communities *are* two exceptional living examples of where fuller expression of a worshipping person's identity is enabled where people are disabled. The general lack of attention resonates, up to a point, with a similar lack in eco-liturgical prayers and studies.

John Hull is one scholar who has done a little work in the area of disability and liturgy, and who 'studied some of the many references to blindness in hymns [and] concluded that when the blind condition is treated as a symbol of sin and unbelief, a largely unconscious prejudice against blind people is reinforced' (Hull 2008: 117; quoting his earlier article "'Sight to the Inly Blind"? Attitudes to Blindness in the Hymn-books', Hull 2002: 333-41).

In his follow-up article "'Lord, I was Deaf": Images of Disability in the Hymn Books' (Hull 2008: 117-33) he establishes criteria for what constitutes unhelpful metaphors relating to disability, defining them as those that are pejorative (2008: 122) or disparaging (2008: 127). He concludes that 'sensitivity towards the negative images of disabled people has hardly begun, but it is not impossible that this will be the next wave of reform' (2008: 131). Evidently practically all of the work for reform in this area remains to be done.

Similarly, Stephen Burns identifies a vacuum and yet a great need for liturgical reform in regard to children. He comments that compared with the abundance of theological reflection on identity, 'children are a neglected topic' in his important work on worship and children: *Worship in Context: Liturgical Theology, Children and the City* (Burns 2006). He notes the omission of sustained discussion of children from all quarters of the theological world, 'biblical studies, systematics, ethics, pastoral theology, or liturgy' (Burns 2006: 99). He also notes that 'children are rarely referred to in liturgical theology except in the briefest of ways in relation to infant baptism' (Burns 2006: 101). The overlooking of children in the liturgy is evident in English churches, even when they do report on children and the church. Just one chapter is given over to children and worship in *The Child in the Church* (British Council of Churches 1984: 125-44) and three pages in *Children in the Way* (General Synod Board of Education 1988: 49-52).

In response to this dearth of discussion, Burns attempts to summarize some significant discussions of children in theology that have taken place. Although Burns notes that there is an absence, within the Gospels, of reference to much of Jesus' childhood (Burns 2006: 102-04), he believes that the portrayal of 'Jesus' understanding of children [is] distinctive from the Jewish and Gentile cultures of the early Mediterranean world' (Burns 2006: 104). Burns discusses Jesus' recognition, blessing and affirming of children in relation to, Matthew 14.21, Mark 10.13-16, Luke 2.28 and Luke 15.20 (Burns 2006: 104-05).

He also considers how Jesus speaks in his teaching of 'children becom[ing] teachers of how the divine reign is to be received ("Truly, I tell you, whoever does not

receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it")' (Burns 2006: 105). He discusses interpretations offered by both Chilton and Gundry-Volf of this text. From Chilton, the suggested sense is that the grasping of the kingdom is just as a child would grab hold of something. Gundry-Volf's perspective is that Jesus responds as one liberated from the Law, just as a child was free from the Law's obligations (Burns 2006: 105-06, Chilton 1996: 85, Gundry-Volf 2000: 473-74).

He continues to discuss Gundry-Volf's theology of children in relation to the welcoming of children by Jesus and his command to the disciples to do the same (Mark 9.33-37 and Matthew 18.1-6) and finally in Jesus' passion and death, that the vulnerability of Jesus relates directly to the vulnerability of children in that ancient near eastern setting (Burns 2006: 106-07, Gundry-Volf 476, 477). Burns also notes fragmentary work done within feminist theology on the identity of children (2006: 107-08) but seeks not to develop an 'expanded theology of children and childhood [although] such a theology is most certainly reckoned to be needed' (2006: 108). Rather, he turns to consider the place of children in worship.

First, Burns considers the admission of children to communion within Anglican practice, discussing how 'sacramental belonging' (2006: 108) is for all the baptized not just for adults or the confirmed (2006: 108-11). He then moves on to look at Roman Catholic perspectives on children and the Mass. Drawing heavily on Searle's work 'Children in the Assembly of the Church', theological views of children as having a 'diminished humanity' compared with adults are discussed (Burns 2006: 114, Searle 1992: 35-38). Although this sounds derogatory, in part, this conceptualization of the child went hand in hand with an understanding of the child

as, therefore, 'standing closer to the veil that divides the visible from the invisible, the temporal order from the eternal' (Burns 2006: 114). This more ancient understanding of the place of the child in worship is compared by Burns, quoting Searle, with the sound-proof 'cry rooms' made available in some places of worship and other examples of children being removed from the liturgy so the adults can get on with their worship (Burns 2006: 114-15, Searle 1992: 41-42).

On the question of whether the need is for separate children's liturgies or a change in the liturgy so that the whole people of God may worship in communion with one another, Burns does not tender an opinion of his own, but rather in concluding his chapter 'Children in the Church' (Burns 2006: 99-126) considers David Holeton's evaluation in 'Welcome Children, Welcome Me' (Burns 2006: 117-20, Holeton 1999: 93-111). Holeton's call is for a pattern of Anglican worship that is 'more holistic, truly inclusive, and less cerebral' and therefore accessible to children, in a way that is more akin to the spaciousness afforded to children as sacramental participants within the Orthodox liturgy (Burns 2006: 117-20, Holeton 1999: 107, 111). It is not that *Patterns for Worship* did not recognize such concerns, but neither the introductory sections on 'Family Service' and on the term 'Family' (*PW*: 3-5) or in the prayers themselves is a successful and coherent approach to what includes children in worship. Whether such calls will continue to be ignored and why this differs from the relative successes for eco-liturgical texts in being included in *CW* shall be returned to in the final chapter.

d. *Liberationist liturgies and their implications for eco-liturgical reform*

The three groups of reform discussed immediately above provide insights relevant to eco-liturgical reform. Liberationist liturgies may focus on one particular aspect of the 'cry of the poor', or sit within the broader genre of theologies of liberation. In the United Kingdom many contemporary independent liturgies have been published in recent years, with a notable set of examples coming from the Iona Community (Wild Goose Resource Group, 1999; Philip J. Newell 1994, 1996) and the anthologies made for Christian Aid by Geoffrey Duncan 2002a, 2002b, 2004). Politically radical liturgies such as these reflect an approach that is not present in the core liturgies of mainstream UK churches.

The theological underpinning for such moves comes more directly from theologies of liberation than from well-developed liturgical theologies of liberation. There is a fundamental reason for this, expressed early on in the liberation movement by the approach taken in Solentiname and initiated by Ernesto Cardenal, where even the sermon is replaced by dialogue since, he explains, these dialogues are 'usually of greater profundity than that of many theologians ... This is not surprising: The *Gospel* or "Good News" (to the poor) was written for them, and by people like them' (Cardenal 1977).

Liberationist liturgies are arising as quickly as theologies of liberation develop. This growing is not something that even the fast-paced liturgical reform movement can currently keep pace with. This is a similar situation to eco-liturgy, the difference is that theologies of liberation are better developed than ecotheology is. Still, though, liturgy is often written without reference to specific liberationist theology.

In all these examples of liberationist liturgies discussed above, there is a consistent commitment not just to pay different social groups or issues greater attention, but also to shift the theological language used about people and God.

If a God-metaphor has serious limitations, we can try to mitigate them by explaining that it doesn't mean exactly what it says. Yet if it is a basic metaphor, a metaphor we live by, it will continue to shape the way we think and will limit what can be said and known. In worship the qualifications and explanations of theologians have little effect, since what counts is the metaphor's impact on the imagination (Brian Wren 1989: 200).

Wren's insight here, which is most pertinent for this study, is that the power of imagination has limits that are determined by the discourse used within a metaphor. Changing the discourse changes the imagination about the world we live in, about the cosmos we inhabit.

8. *The Content of this Thesis*

The main purpose of this thesis is to assess CW resources with a creation emphasis (Chapter 4), provide an analysis and critique of such texts (Chapter 4), assess how accessible such resources are (Chapter 5) and begin to explore what ecotheological adaptation of CW would look like (Chapter 6). Chapters 2 and 3 build the foundations for this work.

First, space is given to considering the history and impact of liturgical reform in the C of E in Chapter 2, so that the reformed materials of CW can be understood in a clearer light and to clarify what likely opportunities there would be for future ecotheological reforms. Reasons for what is already included in CW having a creation

focus or emphasis are explored in Chapter 2, to assist with interpretation, use and modification of those texts in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. Second, developing an ecotheological set of priorities and interests to be used in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 occupies the whole of Chapter 3. In doing so, reader-response theory and meaning in the liturgy are explored and eco-liturgies are examined.

For this study 316 texts from *CW* have been selected for detailed consideration (Chapter 4). In Chapter 5 a survey of the clergy's use of creation themed *CW* is made. Of particular interest, is whether optional materials in *CW* are known about and being used. This is important for judging the significance of the creation themed materials that *have* been included in *CW*.

In Chapter 6 a detailed consideration is made of the developments that have occurred in Collects and Post Communions in relation to the theme of the Creation. The detailed look at *CW* Collects and Post Communions (hereafter *CWCPC*) also experiments with how adaptations of current prayers could help make the texts more earthed.

The main focus of the Conclusion (Chapter 7) is on how this thesis enhances an understanding of *CW* in general, and particularly the creation theologies of *CW*. How such liturgical reform shapes the theology of the C of E is touched upon too. Time is also given over to questioning what the future likelihood is of liberationist theologies reforming mainstream churches' liturgies. The ethical imperatives for liturgical change and the technological influences on liturgical writing occupy the latter part of the final chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

CHURCH OF ENGLAND LITURGICAL REFORM IN ECOTHEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

In this study closest attention is paid to *Common Worship* texts. However, being in the best position to understand ecotheological themes, and to assess the significance of such liturgies comes, in part, from understanding the background to the process of liturgical revision. This chapter begins, in Section 1, with a brief examination of the recent history of C of E liturgical reform: looking in detail at how reform itself was being shaped. Second, in Section 2, comes a deeper examination of these reforms and a consideration of the effect liturgical change has had on the reconstruction of both ecclesial identity and theological thought. Particular reference is made to the Anglican Church in both England and Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia via a discussion of the work of Peter Nicholas Davies in *Alien Rites* (2005).

Section 3 puts *CW* in the appropriate context for this study by considering the ecotheological attention already given to it, particularly by Andrew Pearson (1996).

This leads into the task of Chapter 3 where criteria are developed for defining the type and quality of ecotheology present within liturgical texts. Davies' work also informs the survey of clergy that is the focus of Chapter 5.

1. *Liturgical Developments in the Church of England: 1965 to the present*

The C of E liturgy has developed radically between 1965 and the present. As radical as these changes have been, the radicalism has been to do with reform of the liturgy taking place rather than particular theological innovations in the content. Certainly there have been theological shifts and developments, but these are a more subtle part of the change. It is in this context that this study's interest in the theology of creation themed texts takes place, where theological radicalism is unlikely to be striking or readily noticed. Rather, the radicalism has been the sudden increase in the variety of texts available to be used that make reference to the topic of creation.

Liberationist perspectives have not made explicit or significant direct contributions to the work of the Liturgical Commission during this period. There have been, however, two publicly owned C of E attempts to explore liberationist themes in the liturgy. First in providing resources for Urban Priority Areas in *PW* (as recommended in the *Faith in the City* report, C of E 1985, and discussed in the previous chapter) and second in terms of inclusive language as explored in the report *Making Women Visible* (Liturgical Commission 1988), discussed below.

Apart from these two direct attempts to make the liturgy more inclusive there has been further lobbying to bring a greater sense of inclusion into C of E resources. *Making Creation Visible* (Pearson 1996) and *Children in the Way* (General Synod Board of Education 1988) are the two most obvious and immediate examples. None of these amounts to evidence that a liberationist agenda has pushed or been formative in the shaping of new liturgy, though these reports indicate that consensus where stronger views will have been expressed in debate about liturgical revision.

In addition to these influences on creation themed innovation and the contextual influences discussed in the previous chapter, it is also worth noting the influence of Franciscan spirituality and practice too. The 1989 revision of the Anglican Franciscan office book—widely known and used in the version entitled *Celebrating Common Prayer* (Society of St Francis, 1992)—made a very direct contribution to the resulting CW volume *Daily Prayer* (C of E 2005).

CW provides us with the result of revisions to the 1662 Prayer Book that began in 1955. This chronological period of C of E liturgical reform sits in parallel to the most creation and development of liberation theologies and environmentalism. That the liturgical revisions and theological shifts have occurred to the principle acts of public worship at the same time as ecological anxieties have grown makes this particular period important. Just as we can chart the beginning of liturgical reform with the establishment of the C of E's Liturgical Commission and the presentation of reports from the Scottish, Indian and English churches at Lambeth in 1958 (Jasper 1989: 213-14), we can also mark out how environmentalism became a significant concern

within society beginning with Rachel Carson (1962), and for Christian theology, with Lynn White (1967).

Although it is both impossible and meaningless to quantify the relative impact of White, Carson or creation themed rites in the C of E, it is the case that each of these has generated a shift in thinking, whether it is among those planning and participating in worship, amongst scientists and ecologists, or among those concerned with the role religion plays in human and global crises. Understanding the shifts in thought among scientists, ecologists and those studying the role of religion in human society are beyond the scope of this study. It is, however, pertinent to examine how the change to what is expressed in the C of E liturgy in relation to creation developed and now shapes contemporary thought for those leading and participating in worship.

Recent C of E liturgical reform was primed by the attempted revisions to the *Book of Common Prayer* (hereafter *BCP*). These efforts, begun in 1908, led to the proposals in 1927 of *The Deposited Book*, which—with amendments—became commonly known in the form of *The 1928 Prayer Book*. Davies (2005) argues that this is part of a continuous movement of reform since the beginnings of Anglicanism, and this opinion will be discussed in Section 2. What is certain is that since the reforming efforts between 1908 and 1928, a new journey of liturgical reform began in the 1950s and has continued up to the present.

The beginnings of the most recent episode in the reforming journey of the C of E began when the Archbishops' Liturgical Commission of the Church of England first met in 1955 (Jasper 1989: 211). The commission was not given scope to develop any-

thing much more radical than a repeat try of the revision process of the *1928 Prayer Book*. The Commission was given four objectives by Archbishop Fisher: 'simple non-controversial' amendments including 'variations which were already widely used'; 'more radical' and 'experimental variations' drawing heavily on the *1928 Prayer Book* to be trialled over 'a period of seven years'; new initiation rites; and a survey of contemporary liturgical revision in the C of E (Jasper 1989: 212).

The commission presented *Prayer Book Revision in the Church of England* (Archbishops' Liturgical Commission 1957) to the Archbishops in 1957. This report outlined the commission's projected purpose (and the 1957 report was brought to the 1958 Lambeth Conference). Six 'guiding principles for revision' were to be: 'conservative'; not 'repugnant' to scripture; expressive of 'theological and liturgical insights of the time'; 'related to current life and thought'; 'a co-operative enterprise of all the main schools of thought of the Church'; and an enriching resource for the Church, not for 'disciplinary ends' (Jasper 1989: 213).

Although the intention for revision remained conservative and more innovative proposals met with initial resistance, the agreement in 1963 by Archbishop Donald Coggan to involve the C of E in an ecumenically constituted Joint Liturgical Group (through the leadership of R. C. D. Jasper), created a looser and less binding structure within which creative liturgical opportunities could be explored in a more neutral space (Jasper 1989: 227-29). Two further powerful influencing factors arrived from the world Church in 1963: the Report of the Fourth World Conference on Faith and Order (Jasper 1989: 237), and *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* from the Second Vatican Council (Jasper 1989: 239).

Subsequently and critically for the C of E, new legislation—that became law as the ‘Prayer Book (Alternative and other Services) Measure’—permitted liturgical proposals to be considered and adopted for use. Key dates for the passage of this into state and Church statute lay between 1964 and 1966 (Jasper 1989: 232).

Throughout the Anglican Communion ‘new eucharistic liturgies’ were appearing. First ‘in Japan and the West Indies in 1959’, and then ‘between 1964 and 1967 sixteen other new rites appeared elsewhere’ (Jasper 1989: 237), which even included an experimental united African liturgy (Jasper 1989: 235-37). These developments proved that the *BCP* ‘could no longer be regarded as a bond of unity’ (Jasper 1989: 235). It was this loosening of the Church’s sense of being bound to the *BCP*, which was so essential for allowing the philosophical as well as the practical explorations of new rites.

It was these movements that set so much in motion for the new liturgies, which were presented and ratified by the C of E. *Series One* published in 1966 was mainly a reiteration of the 1928 Prayer Book (that had failed to be approved for use by Parliament). *Series One* meant that ‘for the first time in just over three hundred years, the Church of England had a solid core, if not a complete range, of services available for public use, alternative to those of 1662 and possessing lawful authority’ (Jasper 1989: 247).

Series Two published in 1967 and 1968—covering all main areas except ‘Matrimony and Burial’ (Jasper 1989: 264)—marked the beginning of an exploration of new structures for worship and new texts (rather than just amendments to the *BCP* as was the case with *Series One*) but still continued to use traditional language. The popular-

ity of *Series Two* booklets (Jasper 1989: 264-65), which were a tentative rather than a radical departure from the *BCP* was evidence of the need for further revision work to be done. *Series One* and *Series Two* were only temporary alternative forms that would ultimately be amalgamated and refined for inclusion in the *Alternative Service Book* (hereafter *ASB*).

One principal innovation for the C of E with the *Series Three* texts was the introduction of the use of more contemporary language and idiom. When the first sections of *Series Three* were approved for use from

1 February 1973 ... this ... was a milestone in Anglican liturgical revision. It was the first authorized service in contemporary language and much of its content was the product of ecumenical co-operation. In structure it remained identical with *Series 2*, but in content it was considerably enriched and improved (Jasper 1989: 317).

The complete set of *Alternative Services* was finally published in 1980 as the *ASB*. These included the *Series Three* texts (in the vast majority of cases without amendment) and, to summarize, the refined *Series One* texts placed within a *Series Two* structure (Jasper 1989: 321).

Consequently, when the *ASB* (C of E 1980) was published, perhaps not many imagined that it would date as rapidly as it did, in fact 'many wondered what a new' Liturgical Commission (1981-86) would do (Bradshaw 2001: 22). R. C. D. Jasper, though, for one, foresaw what longevity the *ASB* was likely to have, regarding it as a 'catalyst, a necessary step towards the creation of something even better' (Jasper, 1989: 362). It turned out to be less than another twenty years after this, though, that a total, complete revision, *Common Worship*, would begin to be published.

The impetus for such a full-scale revision came from several directions. In part it was the determination to publish additional resources that first appeared in *Lent, Holy Week and Easter* (hereafter *LHWE*, C of E 1984), which gave rise, later, to *The Promise of His Glory* (*PHG* C of E 1991). In part it was the level of interest in these supplementary materials that even ‘surprised’ commission members (Bradshaw 2001: 24). In part it was that the arguments for the use of inclusive language in society and the Church were slowly growing in strength. Such concerns had previously been raised in the decade before by one of those working on the *ASB*, Jean Maylan, but this concern was burgeoning at that point, not established (Bradshaw 2001: 26).

The liturgical success of *LHWE* combined with the questions raised in *Faith in the City* (C of E 1985), led to an even more radical proposal for a set of new liturgical resources, as Tovey recalls:

The idea of a ‘directory’ of material came in 1985. This was further developed both as a response to the *Faith in the City* report being critical of the culture of the liturgical provision of the church, and also as a resource for the growing ‘Family Service’ movement (Tovey 2008: 12).

When the following Commission sat (1986-91) they began work in the light of the previous Commission’s

“end-of-term” report [...] drafted by Colin Buchanan and entitled *The Worship of the Church* (GS 698) [...] Its message was clear. It was too early to revise the *ASB* after ten years, but it would be necessary to do it after a further ten (Bradshaw 2001: 26).

The new commission recognized that *LHWE*’s success meant it was timely to push ahead with a new publication *PHG*, but also, ‘in parallel’, work began on *Patterns for Worship*. *PW*, rather than just providing supplementary orders of service for particular occasions (as with both *LHWE* and *PHG*), set out a new approach of providing a

range of liturgical resources for different types of worshipping contexts as well as a breadth of occasions (Bradshaw 2001: 28). The result of this thinking took ten years from suggestion to publication, but when it did appear *Patterns for Worship* (1995), marked the most radical shift in C of E reform since the original Prayer Books of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

This commission also produced a report addressing a specific detail of post-*ASB* reform: *Making Women Visible* (Liturgical Commission, 1988) outlined how to make *ASB* texts more inclusive of both genders (Bradshaw 2001: 26-27). The Report admits that 'at certain well-known points in the *ASB* its language is felt by many to be insensitive to the presence of women' (Liturgical Commission 1988: 1, 1.4). During the preparation of the *ASB* it was not understood how essential this matter was going to become. It was only a matter of a few years after the *ASB* was published that legislative and ideological shifts indicated that, far from being faddish, these linguistic developments would mark a permanent change in the use of English language. The follow-on report to *Making Women Visible* (Liturgical Commission 1988) was *Language and the Worship of Church* (Liturgical Commission 1994), which defined the policy approach in regard to new liturgy.

Just as the *ASB* compilers and authors missed, by only a matter of years, the obvious need for linguistic changes that would be more inclusive of gender, so those working on the principal edition of *Common Worship* missed the pressing need to address environmental issues. In each case it is possible to read the slowness to respond to new movements (that were present in each instance) as a difficulty in judging a trend as something different to a permanent concern of prime importance.

2. Alien Rites: A Commentary and Analysis of Peter Nicholas Davies' Work

a. *Introduction to Alien Rites*

The amount of sustained and detailed theological liturgical analysis of *CW*, to date, is very limited. Paul Bradshaw, Ronald Jasper and Michael Perham have served as editors for a series of running commentaries on liturgical developments (see for example: Perham 2000 and Perham ed., 1989, 1993a, 1993b; Ronald Jasper 1989, Jasper and Bradshaw 1986; and Bradshaw 2001). Hence, *Alien Rites*, by Peter Nicholas Davies (2005), makes an early and original contribution to the analysis of these new liturgical resources by approaching the rite from a separated perspective.

More important than the fact that Davies got there first—which in itself is intrinsically useful—is that his approach looks in detail at attitudes, held by those who use the liturgy, towards linguistic change (and beauty in liturgical text). His careful analysis and critique of the history of liturgical reform within C of E and Anglican liturgy that includes *CW* provides a more accurately assessed context on which this study's work can be built.

In relation to this study, Davies lacks an engagement with the political or liberationist content of the text. This means that there are not many points of political overlap between his work and this thesis. Because, however, Davies' concerns with the politics of linguistic reform are so significant and thorough, they merit a substantial commentary and analysis in this chapter. He considers contemporary liturgical forms in the Anglican liturgies in two nations: texts from *A New Zealand*

prayer book—He Karakia mihinare o Aotearoa (The Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia 1989, hereafter *ANZPB/HKMOA*); as well as *CW* (from England).

A key attentiveness in *Alien Rites* is to the reaction new liturgies cause in those who also are familiar with the text of the *BCP*. *Alien Rites* uses two principle methodologies, first, a linguistic analysis of the new texts (Davies 2005: 3-144) and secondly a social-scientific survey of users of the texts (Davies 2005: 147-96). Davies, through both methods, seeks to weigh the relative merits of the new material in relation to the *BCP* both in linguistic terms and in terms of the users' experience of the materials. What does not take place in the book is a comparison between *ANZPB/HKMOA* and *CW*; rather, patterns of reaction to new liturgies replacing the *BCP* in two different contexts are paralleled.

b. *The success of revision*

An over-riding argument of Davies is that Anglican liturgy has been, from the inception of Anglicanism, one of liturgical revision. The question for him is not whether revision is appropriate but how successful the revision is. He asserts that both the intention of continuous liturgical reform is a stated aspiration at the heart of Anglicanism, especially around 'the issue of comprehensibility' (Davies 2005: 29-30) and also that for much of the time this aspiration has not been realized. He emphasizes the Church's valuing of reform for the sake of making meaning clear, ahead of 'theological considerations' (2005: 30-32), 'social change' (2005: 32-34), and cultural change (2005: 34-36).

Davies argues that theological considerations are not as 'relevant' (2005: 30) as other arguments. He recognizes that even in contemporary liturgies the appreciation of social inclusion of both the young and women in the liturgy is something that is beyond a feminist desire for liturgical change (2005: 34). Cultural change in his opinion (as also expressed here in Chapter 1), is something that is complex (2005: 34) and has 'accelerated in recent decades' (2005: 36), thus giving greater impetus for liturgical reform. However, these third and fourth arguments for reform reside, for Davies, under the larger heading of 'comprehensibility', which is discussed below in Section 3d.

c. Liturgy as a reforming journey

Understanding the C of E contribution to the modern movement for liturgical reform within a much longer running C of E desire for liturgical change, which began with the prayer books themselves, is highlighted by Davies (2005: 49-55). He notes how this continued as soon after 1662 as 1690 and that 'arguments in favour of change have been current for the whole period' since then (2005: 49). Debate around reform was much more to do with elements that were and were not included, for example, prayers for the dead (2005: 50).

Although Davies is at pains to point out a continuous desire for reform, there was a very long pause in the successful seeking of specific change, up until the Lambeth Conference of 1908 when there was a desire to make the liturgy 'more contemporary' (2005: 51). The Lambeth conference 50 years later in 1958—following on from

guidance from the Church of England Liturgical Commission's report of 1957—marked the beginning of worldwide liturgical reform in Anglicanism (2005: 51).

The development of *Series 3* is of particular linguistic interest to Davies because it is:

the first official liturgy of the Church of England to be written in contemporary English. The writers have attempted to give the liturgy the flavour of modern English by replacing archaisms of vocabulary and syntax, while at the same time ensuring that much of the content is still recognizably that of the *BCP* (2005: 54).

This partial amendment of existing language is intriguing, since it straddles the space between seventeenth and twentieth century English language as Davies's analysis demonstrates:

In its syntax, the language of *Series 3* shows many of the characteristics of the language of the *BCP* ... they are: premodification of the noun when addressing God ('almighty and eternal God'); long sentences (the whole passage of 19 lines consists of one sentence); and the repetition of grammatical patterns ('through him you have ... through him you have ... through him you have'). Similarly echoing the *BCP*, the services of *Series 3* contain many examples of lexical collocation: two or more words, either synonyms or closely associated in sense used in combination. Examples are: 'our duty and our joy'; 'celebrate and proclaim'; 'thanks and praise'; 'praise and glory'; 'hearts and minds'; 'praise and thanksgiving'; 'pardon and deliver'; 'confirm and strengthen'; and 'guide and strengthen'. The Prayer of Humble Access in *Series 3* contains a grammatical construction typical of the *BCP*. The final petition is: 'Grant us therefore ... so ... and ... that ...', thus linking two co-ordinating clauses within a subordinate clause, a construction which is extremely rare in modern English (2005: 51-52).

This analysis shows how the language that was developed for *ASB* texts is anomalous: proving an inherent weakness in the *ASB*'s quality and longevity. A more intriguing but underdeveloped observation Davies's makes is that 'before the second half of the last century, the focus in liturgical reform was rarely upon

language' (2005: 57). Typically, the content, especially the theological intention, was of greater interest, as is the case with this study. What is mystifying is the deployment of a quasi-traditional language. Davies defines the traditional elements that the *ASB* uses, systematically.

1. realization (phonology and graphology):

- i) the substantial use of alliteration and complex rhythm;
- ii) the archaic use of punctuation and, for example sentences beginning with 'And' (2005: 77-78).

2. form (grammar: accidence and syntax lexis):

- i) additional words, such as 'thou' in the phrase 'restore thou';
- ii) use of 'eth' at the end of words (2005: 78);
- iii) 'the distinction between clause and sentence is not as sharp as in modern English' (2005: 79);
- iv) 'two or more near synonyms' (2005: 80), for example, 'humble, lowly, penitent and obedient' (2005: 80), which shows less of a desire to clarify and define, Davies argues these show a 'fascination with the rhythmic cadences of spoken prayer' (2005: 80-81);
- v) the difficulty for those speaking modern English in understanding the denotative and connotative meanings (2005: 74) are evident, for example the use of 'bretheren', 'chiefly', 'sober', 'godly', 'health'. Davies argues that the meanings developed are peculiar to a religious mode of speech and therefore 'extra-ordinary' (2005: 81-82).

It is critical, for this study, to understand that the language deployed in the *ASB* and in a significant number of *CW* texts is atypical compared to its contemporary setting, since this provides a basic explanation when grappling with form and syntax separate from other questions that focus on theological content.

d. *The comprehensibility argument*

In considering the case for liturgical reform based on the need for comprehensibility, Davies draws on the *BCP* itself, quoting from three places. First in considering the preface for the *BCP* included in the 1549 edition that cites the Pauline concern that there is 'suche language spoken to the people in the churche, as they mighte understane and haue profit by hearyng the same' (Davies 2005: 29, *BCP*: 3). Second, Davies highlights the concern expressed in the Preface of the 1662 edition of the *BCP* that discusses the importance of 'the more proper expressing of some words or phrases of ancient usage in terms more suitable to the language of the present times' (Davies 2005: 29, *BCP*: 7). Finally, the strength of this argument is underpinned, Davies explains (2005: 171), by the concept of comprehensibility being established in the twenty-fourth of the thirty-nine articles of the Church.

XXIV

It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the Primitive Church, to have publick Prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments in a tongue not understood of the people (*BCP*).

Although Davies considers that these foundational arguments for comprehensibility constitute the clearest rationale for reform, he does not believe it has been a sufficient force for change for two main reasons. The first is the most obvious, very little in the way of reform did take place, this being evident in the fact

that although the 1662 Preface spoke of updating the 1549 the changes were 'relatively minor' (Davies 2005: 30).

The second issue that Davies has with the comprehensibility argument is that he does not see an automatic need to replace 'figurative language'. This is because he does not agree (2005: 30) with either Tillich or Crystal (Davies 2005: 30, Tillich 1963, Crystal 1995) that because such texts are ancient and 'outdated'—to the point that meaning may be obscured or altered—that this justifies revision. Rather, Davies understands that 'comprehensibility is affected not only by the denotative meanings of words by themselves, but also by their connotations or associations in the minds of hearers and speakers' (2005: 30). The inference that can be made here is that Davies hopes that beauty—as well as a substantial and yet partial grasp of the meaning of a text—can be 'good enough' for a liturgy's comprehensibility.

Davies does explore the partial comprehensibility of the liturgy, further, by surveying those using the contemporary and traditional texts. He asks three complementary questions on the topic with the following results:

- 55% of those from England found that the 'beauty and dignity of [liturgical] language [was] more important than whether [they] can understand it all' (2005: 171);
- 85%, however, said it was 'important to [them] to understand most of the language of the service' (2005: 171);
- 73% believe that 'the richness and beauty of the language of worship is more important than whether it is modern or old-fashioned (2005: 174).

Questions of richness and beauty 'do not override considerations of understanding' Davies concludes (2005: 174). As to the connotative meaning of a text, he sees in the responses to the *CW Collects* evidence that it is not just the age of the text that determines its comprehensibility. Of the 85 who commented on *CW Collects* 15 found them 'too long', 12 found the sentence structure 'too complex' and 10 found the language 'archaic' (2005: 176).

For Davies, therefore, no conclusive case can be made to justify revision on the basis of the need for comprehensibility, since contemporary texts may or may not be incomprehensible too. He does highlight survey feedback that suggests that training and education to understand liturgy is more important than how archaic or not the material is (2005: 172). It is clear from Davies's analysis that, neither comprehensibility nor the traditional nature of language is the guiding factor for judging the appropriateness and accessibility of texts. Rather, he maintains some neutrality on both these matters, preferring to consider what is appreciated and/or valued by the users of liturgy as a primary indicator of a text's merit.

e. Arguments against revision

In *Alien Rites* Davies gives some consideration to more contemporary arguments against revision, the most attention being devoted to the emotive and pastoral critique of liturgical reform given by David Martin (Davies 2005: 37-38, Martin 1993: 24-25). For Martin the modernization of the liturgy has the severest of consequences: people undergo a violation 'when the house of consolation and reprieve is taken over by alien rites' (2005: 38), hence the titling of his book.

Additionally, Davies reasons that

to a great extent, the arguments against modernization arise from an apprehension that a much-loved prayer book would lose its official status and authority and its usage would diminish. Among those who have been accustomed to the *BCP*, there is a sense of loss. To some, this is a loss not only of a great liturgical (and therefore theological) tradition but also of a treasure of English literature (2005: 45).

This serves as an 'impasse' (2005: 45) in arguments between those for and against revision. Here is the middle ground that Davies seeks to inhabit for the whole of his book: attempting, by adopting a position of relative neutrality, to offer either a solution to the 'deadlock', (2005: 45) or if not achieving that, at least providing a meta-commentary on it.

f. *An escape from the impasse*

Although the arguments are entrenched, Davies offers three ways of escape from this into a more considered analysis of perspectives on revisions:

- 1) the matter of quality of a liturgical text is not entirely dependant on the age of it (2005: 45);
- 2) he suggests that, because the quality of the new prayer books are inconsistent, worshippers have complex and varying, rather than equivocal views (which could eliminate an assumption that the debate is polarized);
- 3) Davies points out that there has been a misapprehension that there is some desire by the 'authorities' to do away with 'all that is loved and revered in the Anglican tradition in the vain pursuit of modernization' (2005: 45).

Davies reiterates a key motivation for modernization—that it is a long-standing Anglican principle (see the extensive discussion above and 2005: 45)—this gives a

reasonable justification for change (see also a longer discussion on the processes and motivations for C of E liturgical modernization 2005: 49-55).

Davies defines 'traditional' language as that of the *BCP* since this is the format of the arguments (2005: 73-86, Chapter 3). Davies's study carefully demarcates his definition of what counts as liturgy as that which is 'artefact' (2005: 10) and which Dix defines as being texts 'officially organized by the Church' (Davies 2005: 10, Dix 1945: 1). This means, for Davies, that other liturgical possibilities become classed as other options in worship: 'such as "light", "visuals", "place" and "movement" refer to non-linguistic phenomenon' (2005: 11). In attempting to restrict the area of his study, but wanting to claim a comprehensiveness of attention, there is an incentive for Davies to limit the definition of liturgy, but not one that is automatically going to hold sway.

g. *The limited success of liturgical modernization*

Davies asks three challenging questions of liturgical modernization and the first of the three comes with four sub-questions.

Question 1. To prove that the revisions are consistent with the stated principles for change (2005: 131), he outlines the four sub-questions that, by answering affirmatively proves consistency.

Qu. 1: sub-question i. 'Do these texts reflect the culture of the worshipping community?' Davies answers in the affirmative because the texts:

- have used gender inclusive language;

- contain greater 'active participation' for worship participants;
- provide a 'wide range of alternative forms' for use;
- offer 'greater lexical range' both in reference to God, theology and human identity (2005: 131).

Qu. 1, sub-question ii. 'Do these texts reflect the changing nature of the current understanding of God?' Again, Davies answers this in the affirmative because the texts:

- do not exclusively refer to God in masculine forms (more so in *ANZPB/HKMOA* than *CW*);
- God is referred to as a 'loving parent', 'source of love, care and 'compassion';
- references in *ANZPB/HKMOA* of God as 'vindictive destroyer' have been removed from the Psalms (though *CW* has retained these);
- there is less emphasis on God as an 'agent of punishment' and more on 'God's love expressed through Jesus'. For example, 'we thank you for counting us worthy' in *CW* Eucharistic Prayer 'C' versus references to the worship participants as 'unworthy' in *BCP* Eucharistic rite.
- there is a new emphasis on the worshipping community as a 'holy people' (2005: 132).

Qu. 1, sub-question iii. 'Are these texts written in contemporary language?' Here the answer is far more complex for Davies, partly because this is a less straightforward question to answer, but also because this is a primary focus of his research. He

concludes that it is fair to conclude that the language is contemporary with the following caveats:

- phonologically and graphologically, the form corresponds to contemporary styles;
- grammatically, in some cases entirely (2005: 132-33).

Davies follows on directly from this point by observing that:

CW frequently and characteristically shows a preference for the archaic syntactical forms of the *BCP* whereas *ANZPB/HKMOA* is, on the whole, more likely to avoid syntactical archaisms. The syntax of the *ASB* lies between these two extremes. Both the *ASB* and *CW*, in retaining the syntagma of the *BCP* collect, replicate many of the syntactic structures of traditional language. The shorter collects of *ANZPB/HKMOA* are grammatically more consistent with contemporary English (2005: 132-33).

Davies' view is one shared with and—in relation to the *CW* Collects—responded to, by the General Synod of the C of E, in the publication of the *Common Worship: Additional Collects* (hereafter *CWAC*, C of E 2004). These new texts follow in the pattern of the shorter Collects in *ANZPB/HKMOA*. The response is only partial since *CWAC* is simply Additional Collects and does not provide any additional Post Communion prayers, of which many (but not all) follow 'traditional' forms of syntax.

Qu. 1: sub-question iv. 'Do these texts reflect the changing nature of the current understanding of authority?' Davies concludes two things: first that no 'one particular form of liturgical language has precedence over any other' (Davies 2005: 133) and second, that a 'multiplicity of choice [...] changes the location of authority' because 'choices need to be made at a local level' (2005: 134).

More briefly Davies considers a second and third set of questions:

Question 2. 'Do the contemporary language texts deserve the adverse criticism which they have received?' There is a confidence from Davies that the criticisms are reasonable since the new liturgies:

- induce 'a sense of loss of traditional language';
- which in turn betrays 'a valuable heritage';
- the contemporary texts do alter the nature or doctrinal exposition of faith;
- the 'numinous' is lost from the liturgy (2005: 134-35).

His third and final question is:

Question 3. 'Are the contemporary language texts likely to fulfil the proposed criteria for worship?' Here the answer is ambivalent: the modern texts, Davies believes 'facilitate a reappraisal of our human experience ... while at the same time closing down access to "mystery"' (2005: 135).

This assessment of the value of 'contemporary' texts—whether or not the language can be classed, idiomatically, as contemporary—is one that Davies does not make a final judgement on, rather he offers tools for esteeming the texts. The reasons in this study for esteeming texts are different in emphasis from Davies's, but a similarity occurs in stance. New attempts at liturgical expression also benefit from new attempts at critique and analysis.

h. The shift in authority in new rites

The shift, that Davies maps, away from there being a 'single authority' or a single textual structure (2005: 65), is important for this thesis because of the fluidity around authority (2005: 65) and much greater level of choice and variety (2005: 66). This state of flux means that there is scope for the creation of more specifically themed texts, and the adaptation and improvement of existing materials becomes easier to propose (without anticipating a further 350 year wait).

Davies discusses the factors that both influenced and inhibited liturgical change in both the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia and the C of E. A principle anxiety was 'a reluctance to introduce into the liturgy any changes which might be seen to concede ground to Romanism' (2005: 66). Davies makes reference to Terry Eagleton's argument that a 'multiplicity of choices' is to do with the 'commodification of culture' (2005: 66-67, Eagleton 1986: 21), but Davies holds back, just, from agreeing that the new liturgies are a consequence of the 'culture of the supermarket' (2005: 67). He offers, instead a softer and more accurate argument that new liturgies are, rather, a reflection of developments that leads to a 'different understanding of how to address God' and a 'willingness to include original compositions' (2005: 67). This is the framework within which new liturgical rites appear, including creation themed texts. It is not the case that a whole new theology or cosmology is created, but a difference of emphasis or orientation is palpable and so the theology and the rites and the language used begins to shift.

i. *Alien Rites: points of synthesis and departure for this study*

Alien Rites gives most attention to the quality of language of the rite, not to its theology, its politics nor its inclusivity. This study gives time to scoping out how a creation theology relates to the formation of liturgy and finding texts that relate to the topic, where Davies gives attention to the motivations for reform, the debate around meaning and mystery in the rite and the merits of modernization. The main theological concern of Davies is one of the maintaining of the theological quality and depth in the rite during a process of modernization where this study is concerned the importance of theological shifts to respond to contemporary concerns (in relation to environmental crises).

In Davies and this study surveys are used to gain fuller soundings of the views of people using the liturgy. Davies predominantly asks qualitative questions in his survey, whereas Chapter 5 of this study gives greater attention to the quantitative concern of how and when new texts are used. The objective measuring of the quality of the modern and existing rite is something that Davies seeks to achieve. In Chapters 4 and 6 of this study a deliberate attempt to make subjective readings of the liturgical texts and, in Chapter 6, to propose changes based upon a theological premise where the priority is not quality but a changed theology. The motivations for a biased approach are discussed in Chapter 3 of this study.

3. *Making God in Creation Visible in Common Worship*

As discussed above, when the *ASB* was published in 1980 there was barely any additional mentions of 'God in Creation' compared to the *BCP*. By the 1990s some movement had begun to be made. There were sections in *PW* on 'Creation' and 'Harvest' (see Chapter 1) as well as texts in *Enriching the Christian Year* (Perham 1993). The public discussion about enhancing the C of E's creation themed liturgy first appeared in the C of E's report *Faith in the Countryside* (1990). There were two subsequent Grove Booklets. The first was *Worship in the Countryside* by David Cutts (1990). This was a rapid response and supplementary set of remarks reflecting the report's concern that there was a lack of specific resources for countryside settings. The second input was by Andrew Pearson in his Grove booklet *Making Creation Visible—God's Earth in Christian Worship* (1996).

The research for this project began from a premise in agreement with Pearson's: that God in creation in the rites of the C of E is 'Hid From Our Eyes' (Walter C Smith 1876). Just as the *ASB* ignored women, the earth has similarly been 'hidden'. Pearson's suggestions, taken up in this thesis, are to see how further revision could re-contextualize the Church in relation to the Creation and engage with society's and theology's concerns about ecological crises.

The effort Pearson was making here was to get the C of E to include the earthing of the liturgy as priority in reform. Michael Vasey, in the introduction to Pearson's

booklet, argues that there is an inappropriate apathy to correct towards the Creation within Protestantism in general and Anglicanism in particular.

An important chapter in Oliver O'Donovan's *On the Thirty-Nine Articles* helps to explain the instinctive apathy to creation in later Western Protestantism. He finds in the near silence of the Articles on creation 'the roots of modernity' (Michael Vasey 1996: 4).

Pearson explores the possibility that agrarianistic perspectives will suffice:

With the Anglican Church, some will argue that creation does get a mention at certain key festivals. Harvest is the most notable of these (pp 980-901 in the *ASB*), and there are other examples such as Rogation and even Plough Sunday. These however, are not good examples of trying to integrate the cosmos into Christian worship. They have several limitations. They are rural festivals, although harvest is celebrated in many urban areas (but some inner-city churches use this as a celebration of resources). However, these festivals limit inclusion of the creation into the liturgy to just two or three occasions per year (Pearson 1996: 12).

This study, in later chapters, will also consider on how many more occasions *CW* texts, which make creation visible, are likely to be used in a year. For Pearson, he is certain that the agrarianistic themes that are contained by default within the liturgy will not suffice in making creation visible:

the pattern of the Christian Year has its origin in the agricultural rhythm of the Mediterranean region. The neat Christological packaging of the church year hides its grounding in the human dependence on the vitality and order of creation. Adopting an ecclesiastical package is not enough. We need to learn again how to pray out of an explicit awareness of our creatureliness, and to respect neglected traditions of prayer such as public intercession at Rogationtide. The Scriptures must be allowed to teach us how, in our culture, to pray for and celebrate our life in creation. This needs to include all life in its scope: animals and the environment; urban as well as rural life; the expression of human creativity in art, science, and work; the ordering of corporate life through money and politics (Pearson 1996: 9).

Pearson's theological liturgical opinion of this is critical, though he sees it, moderately, not as a deliberate fault, but as

a 'sin of omission' on the part of the Church of England—at least—that our planet and the species dependent upon it (apart from *homo sapiens*) has hardly ever been included in our liturgy (Pearson 1996: 9).

The delicacy in winning the argument without alienating potential sympathizers within the C of E is perhaps what moderates Pearson's commentary on the texts that were not approved by General Synod. He observes that there was a significant attentiveness to the Creation in the experimental alternative prayers that were being tested.

six alternative eucharistic prayers were brought before Synod for final approval in February 1996 and were rejected at this last stage by the House of Laity

[...]

Prayer 1 begins:

God our Father, giver of light and life, maker of all things,
We praise for earth and sea, for wind and fire ...
For all the wonder of creation we praise you:
Hosanna in the highest!

[...]

Eucharistic Prayer 3 begins:

Blessed are you, Lord God of the universe,
you bring forth bread from the earth.
Blessed be God for ever!
Blessed are you, Lord, God of the universe, you create the fruit of the
vine.
Blessed be God for ever!
The whole universe praises you, its creator,
Sun and rain, hills and rivers praise you.
Blessed be God for ever!
The fruit of the earth praises you:
Wheat and grape, this bread and wine,
are part of the riches of your earth (Pearson 1996: 15).

Pearson concludes though, gently, that 'the rejection of these prayers, even as experimental texts, may indicate that the General Synod has some way to go in sensitivity to the creation' (Pearson 1996: 15). What Pearson could not predict is that the changes that have appeared between 1996 and the publication of *TSAY* (Church

of England: 2006c) have placed equally inclusive texts into the *CW* corpus, but not as centrally or prominently as in the eucharistic rites that were thrown out in 1996.

The efforts of this study will seek to discover whether, despite progress being made in 'making Creation [more] visible' in *Common Worship* than it was previously. What difference there is in a smaller proportion of the published rites being principle texts (i.e. texts for a eucharist/communion at Sunday worship in the C of E, which would be useful week-by-week) is returned to in Chapter 7. What is also presented in Chapters 6 and 7 is continued evidence, in the same vein as Pearson, of the need for further enhancements and an increasing visibility in *CW* of the Creation.

CHAPTER THREE

APPROACHES TO ANALYSING EARTHED LITURGY

Providing a justification for reading liturgical texts from a committed position occupies the first section of this chapter. The attention in Section 2 is on how to begin to undertake an ecotheological reading of texts. Then in the final three sections:

- details of how the Trinity's relationship with the Creation can be addressed in liturgies are considered (Section 3);
- the expression, in liturgy, of both realized and unrealized eschatology is explored (Section 4);
- as a subset of eschatology, how theologies of hope may be contained within the liturgy is discussed (Section 5).

Some more radical prayers will be discussed in this chapter for the purpose of comparison with *CW* and also as a way to explore the parameters of creation themed liturgy and its intersections with theology.

1. *Reading Liturgy from a Committed Position*

To make a reading of texts from a committed position is essential for this thesis, but it is one that would have been unwelcome back in the period when *Series One*, *Series Two*, *Series Three* and, ultimately, the *ASB* were being prepared. But in the same year that the *ASB* concluded the work of that sequence of Liturgical Commissions (1965-1980), a book was published from the West Coast of the United States by a literary scholar, Stanley Fish who had been known till then for his work on Milton. The title *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Fish 1980) marked a new departure for ways of reading and critiquing literature that gave a new importance to the view of the reader.

'Reader Response Theory' led to debates about meaning, identity and a multiplicity of truths. Such debates, related to post-modernity, still continue, and uncertainty remains as to what it may signify for contemporary scholarly activity. The theory 'has enormous implications for interpretation of liturgical texts' (Zimmerman 1999: 79). Zimmerman like others interested in meaning in liturgy (see also: Catherine Pickstock 1993, 1998; Paul Janowiak 2000; Graham Hughes 2003) seeks some absolute authority and ultimately meaning for liturgical texts.

In Zimmerman's exploring of Derrida's *Writing and Difference* (Zimmerman 1999: 72, Derrida 1987), she sees Derrida's theory of deconstruction as having 'attractive features for a liturgical hermeneut, namely, its insistence on the possibility of innovation in interpretation and its emphasis on inter-textual relationships' (Zimmerman

1999: 72), but pulls back from embracing such a theory, because it poses too many 'problems' including 'ontology, no authority to a text and no concept of embedded meaning' (Zimmerman 1999: 72).

Like Paul Janowiak (2000), Zimmerman believes that something special, holy and theological happens with liturgical text as it is read, differently to other literary material. Zimmerman believes 'liturgy is mystery, it is necessarily open ended' (Zimmerman 1999: 72) so liturgical hermeneutics resonates with liturgy's sacred purpose. Paul Janowiak focuses on the 'ritual dynamics' that occur in the 'preaching of the word' (Janowiak 2000: 85) as an aspect of the liturgical act. He argues for a deepening of Roman Catholic liturgical theology by combining it with reader response theory. He understands the result of this combining of theology and post-modern theory creates a particular and new holy action by providing an 'integrating hermeneutic' (Janowiak 2000: 173).

Sacramental theology needs the open-endedness of such theoretical creativity because confusion around liturgical proclamation as a sacramental act rests largely in a passive, one-dimensional understanding about the nature of the ritual act taking place and the sacredness of the dialogue that nurtures it (Janowiak 2000: 150-51).

Both Zimmerman's and Janowiak's claims, made exceptionally for liturgy, go beyond what would be either helpful or necessary to claim for the methodology being established here for this thesis. Zimmerman draws on Paul Ricoeur's textual theory (Ricoeur 1976), to develop a theory of solidity of meaning in liturgy (Zimmerman 1999: 17). She achieves this by using Ricoeur's theory that human action can be fixed in a text (Zimmerman 1999: 17, Ricoeur 1974).

Ritual is a good example of the fixation of human action. Rituals are rule-governed; they are executed according to a written or unwritten set of rules.

This is fixed meaning enabling the ritual to be repeated—so the encoded meaning is recoverable. With respect to liturgical texts, the residue of meaning recoverable by its fixation remains constant throughout liturgical tradition, even though the specific ceremonial that concretely shapes it changes from time to time (Zimmerman 1999: 17).

It is not that Zimmerman believes there is no place for reader-response theory in liturgical hermeneutics, rather it is that Zimmerman is expressing the belief that the liturgy itself has been ring-fenced by a divine authority that overrides the fluidity of meaning. There is meaning in the liturgical text, which is solid and then there is a further meaning created in the reading of the text, which is fluid:

The liturgical text has an integrity (truth) of its own at the same time that it interacts with the context of those who are celebrating to produce the meaning of the text in the here-and-now (Zimmerman 1999: 79).

The reinforcement of this view comes for Zimmerman from the use of Ricoeur's mimetic theory (Zimmerman 2000: 308-10, Ricoeur 1984, 1985, 1988). She applies the 'threefold mimesis' to the liturgical act by describing *prefiguration* as 'none other than the events of Jesus' life' (mimesis₁), *configuration* as 'those events in the actual liturgical celebration' (mimesis₂), and "'receiving" the events' as a *refiguration* 'of our lives in greater conformity to the mystery of Christ' (mimesis₃, Zimmerman 2000: 309).

Delving back into Peircean scholarship, Graham Hughes' analysis (Hughes 2003: 201-15) is that Umberto Eco's critique of deconstructionism as 'hermetic drift' (Hughes 2003: 202, Eco 1994: 26-27) is substantiated by T. L. Short who shows that Peirce jettisoned any move towards indeterminacy of meaning because he saw 'that "indefinite deferral of meaning is the negation of meaning"' (Hughes 2002: 203, Short 1998: 8). For Hughes this is important in proving that liturgy has determined mean-

ing. Hughes seeks to engage, substantially with Martin Stringer's approach to enquiring after meaning in liturgy (Hughes 2003: 209-12, Stringer 1999: 3, 7, 63-64, 76, 85, 87, 95ff., 97, 105, 120, 122, 125, 167, 176-77, 199, 205-06, 211, 212, 218). Stringer uses the tools of ethnography (Stringer 2004) to develop his theory of meaning in liturgy:

worship is an action ... without cause and without inherent meaning. It is an action that cannot be interpreted or explained (explained away?) in any easy fashion and cannot therefore be reduced to the functions or meanings of explanation or interpretation (Stringer 1999: 58).

Hughes declares 'indebted'[ness] to Stringer (Hughes 2003: 212) but disagrees, fundamentally on 'meaning' since Hughes wants to claim that because there is 'something to respond to' in worship (Hughes 2003: 212) that this proves meaning cannot sit entirely with the worshipper. Stringer's reply sits on a page not addressed by Hughes:

We actually find it very difficult to accept worship as it is, without cause or effect, open to the meanings that people wish to impose upon it. Increasingly, however, analysts are beginning to talk about worship in this way (Stringer 1999: 56).

My purpose in this thesis is to deliberately and honestly 'impose' meaning upon liturgy and open it up to meanings that matter to me. In declaring eight major influences in Chapter 1 I have sought to make my bias explicit. Although I am interested in the sociological approach of Stringer, I work as someone more interested in post-modern literary theory. What is *most* relevant to this study therefore is reader-response theory.

The question of authority of meaning does not go away with this theory; rather the power base shifts from text to community, and is neatly summarized by the subtitle of Fish's book (1980), 'The Authority of Interpretative Communities'. CW itself is

the act of an interpretative community, the C of E, as it seeks to express the life of faith, develop its understanding of Scripture, and grow its tradition. The vast difference between the *ASB* and *CW* reflects a shift in understanding of whether power over texts needs to reside with the authors of texts or with those selecting texts that they wish to choose.

There is also the action of various other interpretative communities upon the *CW* texts, including those concerned with theologies of liberation, and in the instance of this study, ecotheology. To undertake a deliberate and explicit act of subjective reading from a clearly argued and theologically tested basis—as is done in this thesis—addresses the question of bias head on. To be openly biased is as an act of academic honesty and yet to be engaged by a variety of biases is even more sophisticated. What shows a mature honesty is to also deploy a self-critique on the usefulness of the biased results. Beyond that, to analyze, to commentate on the perspectives of different interpretative communities offers a more sophisticated approach that can be classed as metacommentary:

Metacommentary, what is that? Let me try this formulation: When we write commentary, we read what commentators say. When we write metacommentary, we notice what commentators do.

This plain and symmetrical account of metacommentary seems to begin to immediately collapse, however, the moment it has been formulated. For what do commentators *do* apart from what they *say*? [...]

Well the main thing they do but do not say is not say what they don't say. Not many say, Of course, I am failing to ask this question of the text, or I am hiding from you, dear reader, my own opinion on the matter, or, I come to this text with a prejudice about what it ought to mean (David J. A. Clines 1993: 142).

To develop a critique based at the level of metacommentary in the context of this thesis is to treat those writing liturgy and liturgical hermeneuts like biblical commenta-

tors. Metacommentary on such activity involves noticing what is said and what is not said.

Admitting my own bias even in the comprehending of different ways in which theologies of creation are and are not being expressed by others contributes to my metacommentary here. Clashing with existing texts and commentating on my own adaptations (Chapter 6) is part of the process. To arrive at a position requires a journey, which many begin but not all complete, according to Stephen Breck Reid's categorization of readers of biblical texts (1995: 210-24) that I will apply to the context of liturgical theology and composition. (Reid speaks of those who 'read', but for liturgy, we need to include 'write' as well).

It is perhaps enough for many liturgical theologians and writers of new liturgical texts simply to become *Procedural Knowers* (Reid 1995: 216)—readers (and writers) who comprehend text through method. This style of reading (and writing) predominated in the twentieth century as a way of achieving an apparent objectivity in interpretation. Reid develops the theory as presented in Belenkey (Reid 1995: 214-16, Belenkey et. al. 1986: 3, 37-109) that being procedural is a stronger place to be in than to be subjective. However, the journey to a more complex approach to reading (and writing) text is to move beyond the procedural to those who know separately.

Separate Knowers readily use a hermeneutic of suspicion (Reid 1995: 216). There are two more steps that can be taken, first to become a *Connected Knower*, who can empathize with the text, and finally be a *Constructed Knower*. To be constructed in one's reading (and writing) is to use empathy, not just with the text, but also with the context and with oneself to develop a more honest and substantial critique (Reid

1995: 218-20). This constructed reading can be used to greatest effect when it is developed in the reading (and writing) of multiple texts, as a way of producing metacommentary.

This relates directly to the reading and writing liturgical texts (and reading liturgical commentators) from an ecotheological point of view. If we look at a collection of liturgical texts, seeking to discover in each text what is said or is not said about the Creation and environmental crises, then this is the first part of metacommentary. If we then complete a constructed reading of these texts it develops a metacommentary. If, in addition to this, further prayers or enhancements are offered by response this continues the process and makes explicit the constructed knowledge acquired, through the act of liturgical development (see Chapter 6).

A useful analysis is only one that relates to a wider interpretative community:

validity in interpretation has to lie in “interpretative communities”—groups that authorize certain meanings and disallow others. Validity in interpretation is then recognized as relative to the group that authorizes it (David J.A. Clines and J. Cheryl Exum 1993: 19).

A critique developed outside of an interpretative community is likely to be irrelevant. This is the check and balance to all bias in reading and writing texts, if no one else subscribes to the same interpretative community as the interpreter, the reading and writing still has a truth, but a truth which is unendorsed by others, and so of much less significance. Therefore, in developing a basis to read the texts of *CW* and write new ones, this study has sought not to make a new theology but to take key themes from a current in theology, an ecotheological one.

In the analysis of the liturgies, consideration is given to the theologies of creation that are present in the texts. This interest in ecotheology and the reading and writing

of text from an eco-liberationist standpoint is relatively new position but not a solitary one. There are a burgeoning number of academic publications in the area of ecotheology, proving that there are interested parties, and collectively speaking an interpretative community. The 'earthed' lens through which the liturgies will be viewed is one that will be made explicit. Then the established critique will look at the strengths and weaknesses of the existing theologies by considering their coherences and dissonances and examining specific texts. The circle is completed in the critique, adaptation and analysis of texts in Chapter 6.

2. *Cosmologies and Eco-liturgy*

Some cosmological perspective must be deployed to even explore and analyse liturgy. Approaching liturgy with a deliberately eco-liturgical set of interests generates a favouring of some cosmological biases over others that are not prioritized. Fixing a framework to serve as the lens through which *CW* can be analysed does not constitute a cosmological perspective. It would not be possible to create a neutral framework, but deliberately creating a lens through which to encounter cosmology does not create a particular cosmological position. What it does do is to enable the examination of cosmological dynamics rather than being a cosmology in its own right. Thus, the analysis is taking place from the position of a *Constructed Knower*, a stance that eschews the desire to establish a cosmology, but rather sets parameters—

as broad as the dynamics discussed below—as a way of examining the underpinning cosmologies of the liturgies being considered.

Seeking to discover the cosmology of liturgy has significance because, as Lathrop reminds us, there are many constructs, many cosmologies, and many risks involved in constructing such perspectives:

Cosmologies have been constructed that consign whole groups of people, whole parts of the world, whole ranges of species to evil or even to non being [...] Cosmologies are not all innocent, all of equal value, all beautiful (Lathrop 2003: 37).

One question that will be borne in mind in what follows is whether it proves to be possible—by exploring what cosmologies appear in *CW*—to determine what the cosmology of *CW* is in totality. This is a difficult and yet possible question to ask. Precisely quantifying exactly what a singular cosmology of *CW* is may not be achieved, but at least it may be appropriate to judge how conflicted the cosmologies are and what the main emphases appear to be within creation themed texts. This thread runs through all the chapters and will be re-interpreted in Section 5 of Chapter 7.

3. *The Trinity and Eco-liturgy*

Drawing on texts that are not restrained by the votes of those wary of major cosmological shifts allows a blunt consideration of the palette of possibilities available for those shaping new liturgy with an earthed emphasis. The benefit of offering an

analysis of texts not only allows a consideration of some possible approaches to writing earthed liturgy but reveals the pitfalls too.

a. *God as Creator in the liturgy*

In Section 5 of Chapter 2, samples of eucharistic texts not approved for *CW* were cited from Pearson (1996) here though is a text that did get authorized.

You fashioned us in your image
and placed us in the garden of your delight.
Though we chose the path of rebellion
you would not abandon your own.
Again and again you drew us into your covenant of grace.
You gave your people the law and taught us by your prophets
to look for your reign of justice, mercy and peace.
As we watch for the signs of your kingdom on earth,
we echo the song of the angels in heaven,
(Eucharistic Prayer F, *CWME*: 198).

This new material from *CW*, offers an eschatological journey through God's creation that sees the point of departure, rather than arrival, as the Elysian paradise of Eden ('the garden of delight'). We also see here a seeking after signs of God's reign in the present, a 'kingdom on earth'. The prayer is clear that our praise towards the God the Creator is a collaboration between creation, heaven and ourselves. Another prayer, leading into the Sanctus, continues similarly:

Therefore all creation yearns with eager longing
as angels and archangels sing the endless hymn of praise
(Extract from Extended Preface on the days between Ascension Day and Pentecost, *CWME*: 321).

These two texts, above, are exemplars of earthed prayer from *CW* that see God's work of creation as something we are participants in rather than disconnected from. That God's work of creation is spoken of at all is of interest to the earthed reader of

the liturgy. What is more significant for the eco-liturgist is how and when God is spoken of as Creator of the Creation. How the relationship between creator, humanity and the Creation is schematized in the prayers sifts many poorer texts from those that succeed in maintaining an ecologically relevant theological coherence.

We can take Moltmann's mapping of creation theology, within the context of his eschatological vision, as a guide to the type of theologies that are expressed in the liturgical texts. Moltmann introduces the Church's initial model of God in creation as one of 'religious cosmology' (Moltmann 1985: 33).

The theological idea of the transcendence of the Creator in relation to his creation evoked the cosmological notion of a temporally and spatially limited, contingent and immanent world (Moltmann 1985: 33).

He observes that it was as the natural sciences developed their own cosmology that the doctrine of creation became detached 'from cosmology altogether' (Moltmann 1985: 33). This left a reduced theology that focussed on 'a personal belief in creation' where the main emphasis was that the believer's faith was always in the creator and never the created (Moltmann 1985: 33). Moltmann continues,

In order to protect it from scientific attack, the Protestant theology of modern times liked to explain faith in creation as an expression of the feeling of absolute dependence.

[...]

Now though, science and theology have recognized a greater scope for interdependency accepting the scope of collaboration in exploring the 'sphere of cosmology and in the realm of social practice' (Moltmann 1985: 34).

The damage that the second stage of creation theology caused to the understood relationship between humanity and the creation is only now beginning to be repaired. A more developed creation theology is able, in Moltmann's view, to enable

the believer to realize that their existence in the created world matters as much, as if not more than, the fact that 'God created *me*' (Moltmann's emphasis, 1985: 33).

The fall-out from a separation of a consciousness about the Creation from a developed cosmology has been at the root of a false dichotomy created in prayers about environmental problems exaggerating the divide between God's creativity and humanity's destructiveness of the Creation. Such a binary opposition leaves little scope for the possibility that in creative endeavour, excess and non-intentional damage is likely to occur *as part* of the creative process. A theology of destruction and wastefulness needs to be part of a coherent ecotheology if this false set of oppositions is to be overcome in liturgical writing. The danger though is the following kind of result:

Lord isn't your creation wasteful?
 Fruits never equal
 the seedlings' abundance.
 Springs scatter water.
 The sun gives out
 enormous light.
 May your bounty teach me
 greatness of heart.
 May your magnificence
 stop me being mean.
 Seeing you a prodigal
 and open-handed giver,
 let me give unstintingly ...
 like God's own
 (By Dom Helder Camara, of Brazil, in SPCK 1998: 78).

This less than scientific analysis of the dynamics of the biosphere, which insinuates for example that the sun could easily manage to cool down and still maintain life on earth, is more than problematic! What would be more helpful is a theology of

wastefulness and destruction that comprehends them both as part of the creative process without legitimizing wantonness.

Further, what is needed is an understanding of the nature of goodness in the Creation. God's blessing or approval of humanity cannot be determined by whether the ecological equilibrium is being maintained or not, as the following prayer concludes:

Impartial God, you cause the rain to fall
On the good and the bad,
The just and the unjust,
The righteous and the unrighteous
(*'Active Power'*, in Geoffrey Duncan 2002: 114-15).

Effective liturgical writing not only needs to demonstrate a strong level of understanding of the work of the creator. It also must separate the natural processes of wastefulness, calamity, success and failure in the biosphere from those of sin.

In relation to the Creator, there is value in an acknowledgement being made of the boundaries of science and theology. This is particularly the case when the work of creation is described:

God of the whirlwind,
We realize we were not there.
You made it all without us,
From the earth's foundations
To the highest heavens.
You alone shut the doors of the sea
And made, from the clouds,
A coat for the earth
(By Janet Lees, in Geoffrey Duncan 2002: 27).

There are three principles that are noteworthy that occur in this prayer. First, the drawing on Job 38 means that the language, rhythm and metaphor are automatically familiar, even if the prayer is not. Second, by naming YHWH as 'God of the

whirlwind', the text does not seek inappropriate parity for humanity with the Creator in the work of creation. Third, in exploring the three-way dynamic—between God, humanity and the Creation—it avoids the danger of giving the Creation authority over humanity, which is in fact held by the Creator not the created.

Such a hazard becomes apparent in the following prayer that speaks of a 'Mother Earth' who 'creates' and performs miracles 'of renewal' that humanity can participate in as its cooperative 'citizens' and as the 'midwives' to this pregnant environment that is the gift of God.

CONSIDER CREATION

All people of the earth, each and every nation
 Arise and rejoice at the continued creation
 Of beauty, of springtime, the yearly rebirth
 of our protector, our home, our own Mother Earth!

Who despite man's apparent lack of care
 Creates bountiful splendour for all to share
 From mountain tops to the deepest sea
 All wonderful earthly miracles bursting free!

Yet this miracle of renewal acquires the helping hand
 Of the people to replenish and renew the land
 From the largest of cities to the most remote farms
 To unite in spirit and with the strongest arms.

Become a midwife to the birth of each flower
 A guardian of our resources hour by hour
 Man must learn to take time to appreciate
 The miracles of which he did not create.

For God has given this wonderful treasure
 And its preservation will be the measure
 Of people who recognise and will celebrate
 The birth of each season before it's too late.

In citizenship, in willingness to toil
 We must bend our backs and tend to the soil
 In stewardship, arise and applaud the worth
 Of the wondrous marvel of our Living Earth!

Consider creation. Consider it now
 (Web of Creation 2010).

The prayer suggests that it is the 'preservation' of the earth (stanza 5), as mother, which will be the 'measure' of those who are the earth's do-gooders. The people who serve the earth well are those who 'recognize' and 'celebrate' (stanza 5), this is the measure of those who are 'righteous'. The indication is that there are two types of people: those who are worthy 'celebrants' of the earth, and those who will not celebrate the Creation before it is 'too late' (stanza 5). In the call (in the title and on the last line) to 'consider creation' and to 'consider it now', the need for action by humanity is limited to considering. Meanwhile God appears a passive observer to the crisis. The nature of the dynamic between God and God's work of creation has been lost altogether.

This final text with its provocative set of contrasts, in many ways, summarizes what can be strong and weak in exploring the three-fold set of relationships between God the Creator, humanity and the Creation.

[People] In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.

[Reader] In the beginning of the technological age, man recreated the heavens and the earth. To the earth he gave new form with dynamite and bulldozer and the void of the heavens he filled with smog.

[People] And God said "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters. Let the waters under heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear".

[Reader] Then man took oil from beneath the ground and spread it over the waters, until it coated the beaches with slime. He washed the topsoil from the fertile prairies and sank it in the ocean depths. He took waste from his mines and filled in the valleys, while real estate developers levelled the hills. And man said, "Well, business is business".

[People] Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation, plants yielding seed and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, upon the earth...Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds". And it is so. And God saw that it was good.

[Reader] But man was not so sure. He found that mosquitoes annoyed him, so he killed them with DDT. And the Robins died, too, and man said, "What a pity". Man defoliated forests in the name of modern warfare. He filled the streams with industrial waste - and his children read about fishing...in the history books.

[People] So God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him. And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over every living thing".

[Leader] So man multiplied - and multiplied - and spread his works across the land until the last green blade was black with asphalt, until the skies were ashen and the waters reeked, 'til neither bird sang nor child ran laughing through cool grass. So man subdued the earth and made it over in his image, and in the name of progress he drained it of its life ... Until the earth was without form and void, and darkness was once again upon the face of the deep

(Richard H. Schwartz 2002: 37-39 in jewishveg.com 2010).

From this, three matters merit attention:

- i. God's continued Sabbath rest.* The text places God in a passive role (after the sixth day of creation), as if in a permanent Sabbath rest. God made, and since then humanity has been unmaking all that had been made.
- ii. Creation as humanity's victim.* The human act of engagement with the creation is at best one of 'manslaughterer' and at worst of rapist.
- iii. Humanity's contradiction of the Creator.* Humanity's actions are entirely contradictory to those of the Creator, and do not in any way contain within them the *imago dei*.

The success that could possibly come in identifying a trajectory towards an Armageddon is that it opens up space for introducing notions of rescue and redemption by God. That, however, is an inadequate theological and liturgical position because it simply throws the blame for the earth's destruction onto a sinful humanity and the responsibility for rescue back onto an apparently inactive creator.

b. *Christ as rescuer of creation in the liturgy*

We will now consider how liturgical prayers can explore the role of Christ as rescuer of creation. Earlier notions of creation theology emphasized personal salvation ahead of the redemption of the whole creation and separated science and theology from one another, whereas the combination of the disciplines of science and theology can serve the imperative to 'cure' the ills that are being inflicted on a suffering world.

Vincent Rossi speculates that:

If we are able to face this crisis for what it is, beyond denial or avoidance, is it possible to use the perspective we have gained by the raising of the existential stakes to realize a deeper insight into ourselves, our world and our actual situation in a way that will allow an understanding of the cause, and hence the possibility of a cure, of a problem in which the conflict of religion and science is undoubtedly one of the symptoms? (Rossi 1997: 69).

The weakness in Rossi's vision is that it may only lead to a re-merging of the ways between disciplines rather than a cure emerging from it. It also pins the blame for the crisis on an inter-disciplinary rift, perhaps excusing theology for lacking its own sense of how God's rescue speaks to the whole of creation.

An alternative approach to the talking of a cure for the Creation comes from Sallie McFague who argues that the fashioning of an 'ecological Christology' could be redemptive (McFague 2000). She is quick to point out that Christianity has 'from the earliest days' been occupied with how 'the renewal of creation, the salvation of the individual, and the liberation of the people' have all been 'necessary components of the work of God in Christ' (McFague 2000: 29). Having explored the types of Christologies that have emerged she takes from these signs of 'ecological potential' (McFague 2000: 33). She itemizes the following as 'needed dimensions' (McFague 2000: 33):

The insistence on justice to the oppressed, including nature, and the realization that solidarity with the oppressed will result in cruciform living for the affluent; the need to turn to the earth, respecting it and caring for it in local, ordinary, mundane ways; the recognition that God is with us, embodied not only in Jesus of Nazareth but in all of nature, thus uniting all creation and sanctifying bodily life; the promise of a renewed creation through the hope of the resurrection, a promise that includes the entire cosmos and speaks to our ecological despair; the appreciation of the intrinsic worth of all life-forms, not just of human beings; and, finally, acknowledgement that human salvation or well-being and nature's health are intrinsically connected (McFague 2000: 33).

This can be summarized. McFague has five requirements for a coherent ecological Christology. It must be one that speaks of:

- Justice, liberation and transformation of society and the whole creation;
- An attentive listening to and practical care for ecological matters;
- Encountering and listening to the living Christ in the sacrament of creation;
- The appropriate valuing and honouring of all life;
- The journey towards wholeness, healing and rescue is shared with creation.

Applying this to earthed liturgical texts needs some adjustment. Important as it is to consider what a prayer's Christology looks like, it will be easier to find use of the language of rescue, and harder to uncover direct discussions on the nature of Christ (original affirmations of faith being the obvious exception).

This first text, below, relates to McFague's requirements. All of this is achieved in 34 words of instruction for an activity.

People to add stones to a spiral of growth at the foot of a cross committing themselves to growing in God's way of love for creation and grieving the crucifixion of life on earth (Iona Community 1991: 82).

A commitment to grow in God's way in the context of love for the Creation and the suffering of creation certainly meets the criterion of addressing justice, liberation and

transformation. That time is devoted to 'grieving the crucifixion of life on earth' is making space for 'attentive listening', and the 'committing' ties in with the need for the other part of the second criterion of 'practical care'. The cruciform shape of the sculpture and the language of crucifixion mean that the Christ is the very way the theme of creation is explored as sacrament (criterion 3). Life is honoured in it being grieved for (criterion 4), and the 'journey towards wholeness' (criterion 5) is appropriately earth-centred.

The next two texts are harder to grade according to McFague's five requirements, and yet they both offer useful insights into how Christological themes are explored.

The earth is at the same time mother,
 she is mother of all that is natural,
 mother of all that is human.
 She is mother of all,
 for contained in her are the seeds of all.
 The earth of humankind contains all moistness,
 all verdency,
 all germinating power.
 It is in so many ways fruitful.
 All creation comes from it
 yet it forms not only the basic raw material for humankind,
 but also the substance of the incarnation of God's Son
 (Iona Community 1991: 80, Uhlein 1983: 58).

O Christ, there is no plant in the ground
 but is full of your virtue.
 There is no form in the strand
 but it is full of your blessing.
 There is no life in the sea,
 there is no creature in the ocean,
 there is nothing in the heavens
 but proclaims your goodness.
 There is no bird on the wing,
 there is no star in the sky,
 there is nothing beneath the sun
 but proclaims your goodness
 (Iona Community 1991: 62).

