'The Theory and Practice of Extended Communion
with particular reference to parishes within
the Anglican Diocese of Oxford'

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Abstract

The Roman Catholic Church, the Methodist Church, and the Church of England recently introduced a service of 'extended communion', which is the distribution of previously consecrated elements by lay-people to congregations, in the absence of a priest. This has been a highly controversial service, many theologians being against it, while at the same time policy-makers having to introduce the service. It is justified in part by reference to patristic precedent and to pastoral need, which raises significant theoretical questions about the relationship of theory and practice. This thesis analyzes the introduction of this service, particularly in relation to the changing context for the church, and the declining numbers of clergy. Policy-maker's assumptions are identified as hypotheses to test. The research then conducts a small-scale qualitative research project in the Diocese of Oxford to uncover and evaluate significant issues in practice. This part of the thesis, tests the ten hypotheses previously identified, and discovers and evaluates the development of local theology, previous research not having included this level of theological debate. 32 interviews in six parishes were conducted, as well as observational research and documentary analysis. The research challenges the assumption that extended communion is primarily a rural phenomenon, and the evidence uncovered suggests that the principal usage is clergy cover, whatever the espoused theory. This gap between theory and practice is developed into a methodological debate about the relationship between empirical research and theological enquiry. A model is created which gives a priority to revelation, but acknowledges its interpretation as provisional, and allows a challenge to theology from empirical findings.

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Chapter 1

Introduction -
the nature and scope of the research

Three of the churches in Great Britain have recently introduced a new service, which for the moment I will call extended communion. The churches are; the Roman Catholic Church, with *The Directory on Sunday Celebrations in the absence of a Priest* (Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, 1988); The Methodist Church, with 'Extended Communion' in *Methodist Worship* (Methodist Church, 1999); and the Church of England with *Public Worship with Communion by Extension* (The Archbishops' Council, 2001). The production of these services has not been without considerable controversy.

These three rites have been the result of substantial forces for restructuring within these denominations, a specific factor being the decline in the number of stipendiary clergy, in the context of declining religious institutions in a secular society. They evidence one response to external levers of change, a diminished role in society, and to the internal lever, of reorganization within a shrinking institution. At the same time some uses of these services may evidence new ways of being church. There are major theories on secularization, rooted in the work of Durkheim and Weber, e.g. Martin (2005); scholarly investigations of church decline, e.g. Gill (2003); denominational policy reports on reorganization, e.g. Tiller (1983); and recent debates on emerging church, e.g. the Church of England's *Mission-shaped Church* report (Mission and Public Affairs, 2004). However, there has been a relative neglect of the study, both in theory and in practice, of the changing shape of worship in the churches in general, and of the introduction of these services in particular. This thesis aims to contribute to this neglected area of scholarship.

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Extended communion may be defined as the distribution of previously consecrated elements to a congregation by a layperson (or a deacon) at a public service in the absence of a priest. In all three denominations the normal minister of the eucharist is an ordained minister (priest or presbyter). Only the Methodist church allows, in restricted circumstances, lay presidency. This definition tries to exclude rites in support of ministry to the sick although the use of previously consecrated elements for the sick means that there are some similarities. This is only one definition and in this field there is a great fluidity of terms, indeed, this is one of the substantial problems of the research. Throughout this thesis I have tended to use the term 'extended communion' and occasionally 'communion outside the eucharist', except where a particular denominational term is more appropriate.

This thesis locates itself as research into practical theology in general and liturgical studies in particular. Farley (1983) explains that, after the seminal work of Schleiermacher concerning theology in the academy, the subject of theology was divided into four areas: Bible, church history, systematic theology and practical theology. The last was seen as application of the three fundamental categories. This conceptualization led to the utilization of the term 'applied theology'; with a top-down theory to practice model. Schleiermacher differentiated various areas within practical theology including, the liturgical, moral, spiritual, pastoral and catechetical. The focus of this was primarily professional education of the clergy. Practical theology has seen a revival during the post war period in a number of countries; the United States of America, e.g. Browning (1991); the Netherlands, e.g. Heitink (1999); and in Great Britain, e.g. Ballard (1986). In the process of this revival practical theology has moved away from exclusively clergy training, and developed its own methodological starting points, in reflective theorization (Ballard and Pritchard, 1996, 2006), empirical perspectives (Cartledge, 2003), feminist approaches (Bennett Moore, 2002), and postmodern theory (Graham, 1996). It has, however, fragmented in this process and currently there is a gulf between practical theology and liturgical studies, for

example a recent *Reader* on practical theology has no chapters on liturgy and worship (Woodward and Pattison, 2000). Meanwhile liturgical studies has flourished in light of the liturgical movement (Fenwick and Spinks, 1995), and has developed its own methodologies, as we shall see in the next chapter.

Much liturgical research confines its interest to the history and development of worship texts, one recent study being a biography of a prayer (Lampard, 2005). However, recent theorizing in liturgical studies has encouraged the studying of the living operation of the texts in the context of the worship event (Hoffman, 1987). Some scholars have examined worship from an anthropological framework (Stringer, 1999), or studied the non textual aspects of a spiritual tradition within a denomination (Steven, 2002), or stressed the gulf between the written text and its performance (Garrigan, 2004). Reader response criticism might well suggest that despite the rubrics and canons that the central bodies of the church produce, local people and in particular laity add their own interpretations to the text and their perception on how to use it (Iser, 1978). The introduction of a new text is not just about publishing a rite, but also about catechesis and interpretation of that rite in local contexts (Rosier, 2002).

At this point it is important to chart this particular research within recent studies of extended communion. The contours of this mapping are correlated with other related research including my own previous research in this area. This thesis will not review eucharistic theology and relate it to extended communion in a deductive methodology as this has been a focus in the work of Hughes (1999), and my own previous research into inculturation has comprehensively examined eucharistic theology (Tovey, 2004). In part one aim of this research is to take an inductive perspective starting from the parishes, over against deductive approaches from theoretical perspectives. Unusually for liturgical studies this research will not be a text-based study looking at the meaning of the rite from the liturgical texts, as this has been a previous study (Tovey, 1994). Earlier research by Smethurst (1993) completed a national survey of the Church of England, but

was unpublished. Official liturgical committees were conducting diocesan surveys for the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church during the period of research, even if the results seem to have become hidden in the bureaucratic process. There has also been previous research of international surveys of Anglicanism (Tovey, 1993), and a detailed examination of the catechetical requirements of the Roman Catholic Church (Rosier, 2002). More recently Mills (2005) examined one particular parish in England. What is noticeable, however, is that previous scholarly discussion has omitted the voice of the practitioners and in particular the laity. This thesis aims to fill that gap.

While the genesis of these new services is important, the question of their application is one that will be also addressed. Prior to undertaking research for this study it would be fair to say that texts and policy documents existed but there was no clear idea of what was happening on the ground. This was particularly true in the Church of England. Despite the beginnings of systematic research mentioned above, there was no clear answer to 'what is happening?' beyond a collation of anecdotes and 'horror stories', which haunted the debates in General Synod, and will be discussed later. While this thesis will examine the issue from the wider position of the three Churches, a small-scale piece of qualitative research within the Church of England is seen as an integral part of the enquiry for its local and practical focus. Thus this thesis is not exclusively about the Church of England but does have a significant focus on this church.

There are a number of key hypotheses in this thesis. Some are general questions about this new phenomenon. What is extended communion? Should it be happening? What is the context for this service? What are its implications for ecclesiology and the doctrine of ministry in general, and what does this reveal about the genius both of congregations and denominations? These are some of the key questions that sit behind this study. But alongside these more open questions there are some hypotheses to be tested, drawn from assumptions that have underpinned recent debate in the production of the service, particularly in the

Church of England. These will be drawn out more clearly in the sixth chapter. However at this point these hypotheses can be introduced as they are central to the whole enquiry. These hypotheses are that: extended communion is primarily a rural phenomenon, lay people easily misunderstand it, the current liturgy is satisfactory for the situation, suitable training always happens, the elements are always transported correctly, and lay presidency is no longer an issue of significance in the parishes. The empirical research is thus central to the thesis as through interview and observation data was collected to uncover both what was happening and to find people's views. The thesis will show that some of the assumptions from which these hypotheses are drawn are false. It thus challenges some of the conventional wisdom concerning extended communion, both in the Church of England and by extrapolation into the other churches that have such services.

The testing of assumptions will be an integral part of this research. This places this enquiry in the second category of Heitink's (1999) classification of research in practical theology. He identifies three types of research: 'descriptive research' with a systematic description of a topic, 'explorative research' which both describes and test hypotheses, and 'testing hypotheses' in which often only one hypothesis derived from theory is tested. This research is 'explorative', both describing events and testing hypotheses in the field.

Recent scholarship on research emphasizes the presence of the researcher in the design and the importance of reflexivity (Etherington, 2004). One aspect of making the situation opaque is to reveal the pre-understanding of the researcher in an autobiographical declaration. My own personal involvement with extended communion has occurred for a number of years. I first conducted such a service as a lay chaplain in Uganda, and then as a deacon in a parish (Tovey, 1993). Moving to a Team Ministry I discovered women deacons frequently leading these services. This provoked me to a text-based survey of the practice in the Anglican Communion (Tovey, 1994). As a member of General Synod I voted for the

present Church of England service and have written two commentaries on the text, Tovey (2001) and (2006). Continued interest has led me to this present enquiry.

At the end of the thesis the reader will be able to see the significant complexity of what might seem to be a rather marginal service. It is the marginality of the service that raises significant questions about the practice and theology of the church today. The rest of this chapter will explain the ordering of the thesis to help readers in their journey through it.

The thesis is divided into two parts. Each part has a distinct focus, which will be examined below, and each part will have its own chapter of conclusions. The final part will be to develop conclusions for the whole thesis and provide a bibliography. This is not a mere administrative arrangement of the material but a substantive method of organization each part leading to a conclusion, the conclusion of each part contributing to the whole thesis conclusion. While this provides its own logic to the organization of the material and the argument of the thesis, the research process is more iterative and dialectical with all the parts interacting not consecutively but at the same time. This will result in various topics and themes surfacing and resurfacing throughout the thesis.

Part one begins with a review of various theoretical approaches in liturgical studies. While the importance of the historical paradigm is acknowledged, the investigation of a contemporary phenomenon enables a different approach. Various theoretical positions are explored including reader response, which is used to examine the terminology of the subject of study and then the importance of an 'encyclopaedia' for reading the situation is developed. This occurs by a critical examination of the three churches mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. These three chapters, one on each church, evaluate the texts in their context. They are an in depth study of the genesis of these services, for some denominations a previously untold story. The chapters are organized by

the date of publication of each service. This approach enables the last text to be studied to be that of the Church of England. This enables the development of hypotheses arising from the values and assumptions of the policy making process to be formulated in chapter six and then tested in the following chapters. Chapter seven is the conclusions to this part of the thesis.

Part Two is a small-scale qualitative research project that complements the previous chapters; a qualitative research enquiry in practical theology (Swinton and Mowat, 2006). Chapters 9 to 13 are an in depth case study of extended communion in the archdeaconry of Berkshire in the Diocese of Oxford. Data was gathered on the incidence of the service in the archdeaconry and six parishes were subjected to research and analysis. Chapter 8 will explain the methodology of this qualitative research, and scrutinize the particular techniques used in data collection. The archdeaconry is then approached as a case study, with particular reference to the six parishes studied, chapters 9 and 10. The next three chapters then analyze the data collected in documents and interviews, examining stories from the parishes and the views of those involved in leading and attending the services. The analysis focuses on three key themes in the data, the perspectives of ministry, liturgy, and ecclesiology (chapters 11 to 13). Chapter 14 brings part two to its conclusions.

Part three draws the research together. Chapter 15 reviews the whole compass of the thesis developing some conclusions about methods and in light of the hypotheses tested suggesting critical areas for liturgical theological development. Of particular importance is the question of the relationship between the empirical and theological in this enquiry and theological method. Chapter 16 is the bibliography of the thesis.

This study then aims to develop liturgical studies by the examination of the text as used in real situations, as a research project in practical theology. The issue of, what is actually happening was very unclear at the beginning of the

research, as was the theology of practitioners. Furthermore the churches developed policies with unexamined assumptions. This thesis has challenges at a variety of levels and major implications for the way we do liturgical theology. Answers will be given to the research questions and some surprises may occur on the way.

Part 1 The Development of Extended Communion

Chapter 2

Extended Communion and Liturgical Studies

Both in the academy and therefore also in liturgical studies there are various 'tribes and territories' (Becher, 1997). Diverse approaches have characterised liturgical studies with perhaps 'history' and 'text' being some of the most influential methodological lines of enquiry. In studying a comparatively recent phenomenon, such as extended communion, there is the opportunity to use a variety of lines of analysis. This chapter will look at a number of approaches and the methodological discussion that they entail. Rooted behind all this is the question of how to investigate extended communion, and thus the methodologies of this study. With the number of tribes growing, certain circumspection is required. Thus I intend to concentrate in three particular areas; history, hermeneutics, and reader response. These three will contribute to the territory traversed in this thesis.

Historical approaches

Perhaps the dominant approach in liturgical studies is historical. Many studies have been made of the historical evolution of the services of the church. One key theoretician who has greatly influenced this approach is Anton Baumstark. His influential *Comparative Liturgy*, developed from lectures in 1932, shaped this historical approach (Baumstark, 1958). He talked of the 'great liturgical units'; e.g. the Divine Office. These grow and develop in time and space. Thus it is possible to compare this growth across the different Christian traditions. Indeed, for Baumstark the essence of his approach is comparative study. In his methodology Baumstark understands the history of liturgy as a quasi-scientific discipline. This he explicitly states:

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It is this abundance of form which makes possible a comparative study of

Liturgies, by using methods similar to those employed in comparative

linguistics and comparative biology (p. 3).

Comparative study is a key part of his method.

The approach is believed to be empirical, studying factual data,

categorizing texts and looking at their evolution. This last point is very important,

as he wants to move beyond pigeonholing to a wider canvass. He says that

comparative liturgy:

> Seeks to disengage from the multitude of ascertained facts certain laws
>
> which in turn will guide it in its further researches (p.15).

Thus Baumstark talks of 'laws of liturgical evolution'. This entails a

presupposition:

> Every evolution consists in a progressive development from forms which
>
> are more primitive (p.15).

He then says that liturgical history is confronted with two antitheses: firstly,

uniformity *versus* variety, and secondly austerity *versus* richness. These antitheses

work in history making liturgical evolution a complex study, and somewhat

modify his presupposition of progression from simple to complex. He goes on to

expound a number of these liturgical laws the exact number of which is not clear,

whether five (Fenwick, 1992), or ten as developed by Taft (1999). The exact

number is not important for this study save to say that it is the generation of laws

that is central to Baumstark.

Baumstark was advocating an evolutionary approach. This was somewhat

dangerous in a church, which was reacting against modernism. However, it was

also the paradigm for comprehension in the academy. Time has shown the

limitations of the organic model (West, 1995). These are clearly laid out by Fritz

West:

> The chief limitation of the organic model: the difference between nature
>
> and culture... the essential difference between nature and culture lies in the

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means by which they develop. Nature is generated genetically, whereas culture is transmitted socially (p.25).

Baumstark was interested in texts and actions but the focus of his work and those of his followers has been on texts (Irwin, 1994):

> While Baumstark addresses the need to deal with "liturgical action," his work emphasizes more fully the textual aspects of the liturgy (p.24).

Other have been cautious of his conclusions (Davies, 1959):

> Despite his great learning and remarkable powers of synthesis, [he] did not always exercise this necessary scholarly caution in arriving at his conclusions and was apt to detect interdependence where others would hesitate to agree (p. 428).

However, this approach has had a profound influence through the work of Mateos, see West (1995), and Taft (1984).

Recently there have been further criticisms of Baumstark's approach. While acknowledging that there is much that still stands in the method, Stringer (1989) uses the work of Edmund Leach to point out the limitations of classification which:

> Does not... tell us a great deal about the nature of the object itself and even less about the way in which the distinct units are related (p.507).

This seems a little unfair as Baumstark was very keen himself to go beyond classification, hence the notion of laws. Stringer is, however, suggesting that there is more of a dialogue between liturgical studies and social sciences than is often acknowledged, and in social sciences the scientific status of disciplines has been keenly debated. Knowles (1994) has also criticized the approach, mostly in reaction to a too static understanding of the liturgical text. Both these authors receive a stinging rebuke from Taft (1999) who reconstructs Baumstark's liturgical laws and asserts their validity. What is clear is that the notion of law in his work has had to be modified. In historical evolution these laws are not 'external fixed principles', but (Bradshaw, 2002b):

Merely observable tendencies in much liturgical history, which may or

may not prove to be true in any given case (p.12).

Put another way (Day, 1998):

What we have are 'conclusions' founded upon the wealth of liturgical

data, from which interpretive principles can be discerned (p.306).

Liturgical history is not just about classifying texts but interpreting their inter-

relationship.

While Baumstark articulated this evolutionary approach, the study of texts

and their comparison is a much older process. In Anglicanism a comparative

study of texts can be traced back to L'Estrange and his *Alliance of Divine Offices*

first published in 1659 (L'Estrange, 1846). This book compared all the Anglican

services of the day (1549, 1552, 1559, and 1604), including those proposed for

Scotland (1637), and the Latin translation of 1551. It put texts in parallel columns

to enable the reader to see how the rites have developed. It then used this

comparative device to analyze the liturgical texts. Marshall (1989) states that:

L'Estrange provided a tool for study which became the model for

subsequent works (p.13).

This he traces through Brightman to his own work on American liturgies.

Marshall sees L'Estrange as combining:

Thorndike's depth of scholarship with Spark and Sparrow's point-by-point

commentary, adding his developmental study of Anglican liturgies (p. 30).

Thus his interest is in the historical development of Anglican liturgical texts. The

collection of texts and their analysis continues today not least in volumes of

Anglican eucharistic texts (Buchanan, 1968) and this comparative approach is

also found in, for example, the analysis of the ordinal (Buchanan, 1987), and in

extended communion (Tovey, 1993).

Methodological discussion in early liturgical studies has been particularly

influenced by the two editions of *The Search for the Origins of Christian Worship*

by Paul Bradshaw (1992) and (2002b). In the first edition Bradshaw introduced

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two key methodological concepts: 'lumpers and splitters', and 'ten principles of interpretation'. These are crucial to his approach although the ten principles went through considerable revision in the second edition.

The idea of lumpers and splitters is borrowed from comparative linguistics (1992):

The lumpers like to put many languages into few families. The splitters like to inspect the resulting lumps and find fault lines (p. ix).

He then confesses, 'I am a self-confessed splitter in an area traditionally dominated by lumpers' (p. ix). He reiterates this position in the second edition but adding (2002b):

In the intervening period I believe I can detect growing support for the splitters' cause (pp. ix-x).

This notion of lumping and splitting seems to have caught the imagination of the liturgical world, the original idea taking up only half a page, but worked out in the rest of the book. Baldovin (2003) comments:

He consistently attempts to show that the easy certainties of so many liturgical historians cannot be legitimately sustained (p. 185).

Tripp (1994) helpfully redefines the two categories:

"lumpers", theorists who put together data confidently, even when gathered from scattered times and places to form big general pictures... "splitters"... who keep discrete data carefully apart, to hold in stead view the untidy diversity and the as yet unfillable lacunae in the record (p.87).

A warning shot however comes from Taft (1994):

To deny the possibility of generalization, comparison, extrapolation is to deny the possibility of writing history.

And on lumpers and splitters he comments:

We need both sorts of minds at work on the data of any field. Problems occur only when one side goes too far.

But Stewart-Sykes (2004) believes, 'Bradshaw has achieved the collapse of the old narrative' (p. 325). Thus this is a seminal work that has introduced a splitting

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methodology into the study of early liturgy. The tension between making connections and holding apart the differences will be discussed further in this thesis.

The second key set of concepts is the ten principles of interpretation. Tripp (1994) notes a similarity and connection to Baumstark at this point calling them, 'necessary correctives to Baumstark, but not quite rendering him obsolete' (p. 88). But by the second edition they have gone and are subsumed under the heading of 'The Hermeneutics of Suspicion'. Bradshaw builds this on a comparison between liturgists and Biblical scholars. While liturgists approach their texts with a degree of naiveté, Biblical scholars have tended to approach texts with more skepticism. It is this method that he wants to promote. Taft (1994) likens Bradshaw to:

> A "bell ringer," sounding the alarm during the night watch when he spies something wrong.

He sees a danger in this of 'tilting at windmills'. Baldovin (1993), however, sees two facets of this hermeneutic, firstly one can make very few claims about the nature of early Christian liturgy, and secondly that the argument puts the stress on the 'original variety' in the earliest Christian worship. This he sees as quite distanced from the ideas of the evolution of liturgy and liturgical laws.

A methodological symbol that Bradshaw draws on is the children's game of joining the dots. Here by connecting numbered dots a child builds up a picture of something or someone. This is seen as analogous to the connections that historians make of liturgical texts. Bradshaw points out that the historian of the early church has to uncover the dots, evaluate them and then make tentative connections. This is a helpful picture of the process of developing understanding in general. Taft has already used a similar description of the writing of history. The question of the correct joining of dots in the analysis of data historical and contemporary will also be of significance for this study.

One effect of Bradshaw's 'hermeneutic of suspicion' is to remove the liturgical historian from a naïve reading of the text. Other factors come in to its study e.g. sociological context. It can be expected that liturgical texts will be read more in this way just as has happened in Biblical studies. But this is part of a wider move to question the object of examination in liturgical studies. Is it the study of the text itself or the study of the worship event? The Jewish liturgist and friend of Bradshaw, Hoffman (1987) made a strong case for the study being of the worship event in his book *Beyond the Text*. While this may be difficult with historical sources it opens up possibilities in the study of a modern phenomenon, in this case extended communion. This is also why liturgical studies has been assimilating other methodological approaches. Bradshaw is not the only scholar interested in hermeneutics.

Hermeneutical approaches

While the interpretation of historical data has been a key part of methodological discussion, the application of hermeneutical theory to liturgical studies has been developing. At the level of meaning, language and communication have been widely discussed in theology. Hermeneutics has become a subject in itself, particularly important in Biblical studies (Thiselton, 1992). Language, liturgical text, action and meaning are all parts of the hermeneutical discussion.

Wittgenstein introduced the concept of language games in philosophical discourse and included prayer as one of those games (Thiselton, 1992). This has resulted in a wide-ranging discussion of the hermeneutics of prayer, which includes a number of features. First, the way language functions in prayer and how meaning is generated (Thiselton, 1975, 1986). Within this discussion the place of metaphor has been of particular importance to theologians (Soskice, 1985), and thus to liturgists. One earlier theory of the way language functioned was that of words operating as models with their qualifiers (Ramsay, 1957). This was later applied in theology and liturgical studies a number of ways, including in discussion of God as Mother (Tovey, 1991). Second, another distinct but

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interlocking discussion in the language of prayer has centered on 'performative language'. Developed from the work of Austin (1962) this has clear applications to liturgy 'I baptize you' and 'with this ring I thee wed'. Performative language has been discussed in Biblical studies (Briggs, 2001) and in liturgical studies (Ladriere, 1973). One part of this discussion is how to define performatives. Making all liturgies performative is overstating the case and leads to the particular contribution of this approach being dissolved. There has been a complex and vigorous discussion of the meaning and understanding of language in philosophy, theology, and in prayer. The implication of this for liturgical studies has led to a number of scholarly contributions. The question is: how does liturgical language work and what is its meaning or meanings?

A substantial discussion of liturgical studies and hermeneutics was developed by Joyce Zimmerman (1988). In a complex study Zimmerman relates the study of liturgy to the work of Paul Ricoeur. She states a number of aims of the work:

> What is called for is a dynamic relationship between language and experience, between verbal and nonverbal. Then language can be expressive of mystery and mystery can be exposed in language (pp. 8-9).

Also:

> Liturgical language is not only communication, but is even more, a language which expresses the experience linking the community to the Sacred as symbolic mediation (p. 9).

Both of these quotes see language, as coming out of encounter, as being more than a human description of ineffably sublime experience, and that language is a community action. Thus an important strand of her thought for this study is:
In determining the meaning of a liturgical text, we must not only take seriously the process of recovery of meaning and the components of the text, but must do so within the specialized milieu in which the liturgical text is celebrated. The "reading" of a liturgical text is, in actuality, its celebration (p.69).

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This consequence of this line of thought is to open up the study of liturgy to the actual event of the service, not just the words in the service book and the history of their production.

> Zimmerman summarizes Ricoeur as saying:
> For Ricoeur, the power of a text is to conduct meaning from the side of the author to the side of the reader in a dynamic hermeneutical process. In this, the text is a mediating faculty (p.77).

This is done in three methodological moments, participation (pre-understanding), distanciation, and appropriation. In this process, for Zimmerman the text has a certain priority, and thus she is far removed from the approaches we shall see later which point to the 'death of the author', which Zimmerman (1999) was briefly to address later.

Aune (1990) sees Zimmerman as interested in the transformative nature of the worship event. Liturgy can refigure itself in community with the changes of understanding of the surrounding culture. It can also transform the worshipper in the worship event. However, Aune thinks Zimmerman does not do justice to the struggle that this may entail, and that issues of power and hierarchy are not sufficiently addressed in this hermeneutical work. The research presented in this thesis concerning extended communion entertains these methodological and interpretative possibilities.

Bridget Nichols is also critical of Zimmerman (Nichols, 1996). Nichols comments that she:

> Misappropriates Ricoeur's theory of the text by implying strongly that liturgical texts carry an implicit and predetermined meaning, which is rendered explicit in performance (p.32).

Nichols elaborates the 'appropriation of the text' into a 'moment of suspension'. In this moment a gap develops between the promises of creedal faith and their appropriation of the Kingdom. This she develops in great depth by examining the

services of the *Alternative Service Book* of the Church of England. She claims that in these services the secular horizon encounters the Kingdom horizon with challenge and hope, this being the transformative part of the process. Again it is the liturgical event that is the focus of the study, even if the book is text-based in its discussion.

Stosur (Ostdiek, 2003) criticized Nichols for selectivity in the use of Ricoeur. This is always a possibility in the application of a writer of such complexity. Kelleher (Ostdiek, 2003) said that although her study is said to be of the performance of a text this is an imaginary performance in her writing rather than a study of particular service events in a church. Spinks (1998) however, has a more positive assessment:

> This is a pioneering piece of work, taking this methodology considerably further than Joyce Zimmerman's work (p.498).

However, Spinks also reasserts the historical paradigm:

> It should not be concluded, however that textual and historical studies are rendered obsolete by this approach (p.498).

It is perhaps unfortunate that Nichols has not developed her work in the light of development of critical theory, nor has she applied her insight to the new texts in the Church of England in *Common Worship*.

Nichols holds a debate with Martin Stringer on meaning in liturgy. Stringer (1991) wrote an important article on 'Situating the Meaning in the Liturgical Text'. In this article he narrates a debate with an unnamed liturgical scholar that polarized into two positions, either the meaning of the liturgy is to be found within the texts of the liturgy and its performance, or the meaning of the liturgy is to be found in the minds of those who attend it. Stringer takes up the discussion of *Faith in the City* on the appropriateness of the ASB language to inner-city culture, and discusses the place and meaning of symbols in worship. Nichols (1996) comments:

I am hesitant about the forced dichotomy (he himself admits this is an almost false caricaturing exaggeration) between language and symbol as possible centres of meaning in liturgy (p.20).

Later he writes about the debate naming it as with Mark Searle (Stringer, 1999):

It is clear that both of us were using a relatively naïve understanding of the concept of 'meaning', and that the 'answer', so far as there is an answer, must lie somewhere between the text and the minds of the worshippers who use the text (p. 2).

In his earlier article he had concluded (Stringer, 1991):

The recent drift back towards imagery and symbolism, therefore, is a drift towards the kind of position which I took up in the argument. It is an acknowledgement that space must be allowed for people to draw their own meanings out of the rites and for people to put their own meanings into the rite (p.194).

This is reminiscent of the debate of the location of the meaning of a text being, with the author, in the text, behind the text, with the intended reader, or with the reader, to name a few locations. Similarly some have questioned the location of theology, as not just being in the academy (Green, 1990a), but also in the congregation (Schreiter, 1985), or the hymn writer (Sundara Rao, 1983), or the preacher (Tisdale, 1997). More recently Astley (2002) advocated 'ordinary theology', theology as in the Christian community or individual. These discussions will be developed in later chapters.

Important studies continue to discuss liturgical hermeneutics from various philosophical positions, increasingly located in a post-modern context. Pickstock (1998) engages in-depth with postmodernism. It is unfortunate that her work falls into a 'Newmanesque' fallacy of idealizing the medieval Mass. Garrigan (2004) looks at sacramental theology in light of the teaching of Habermas, but struggles with inclusion of the symbolic in the event of liturgical interaction. Hughes (2003) sees the semiotic theory of Charles Peirce as particularly important to the late

modem world. In this move he continues and develops Stringer's discussion of the place of symbols in worship.

Hughes' work is complex and is concerned about the meaning of worship. He has come to see that Peirce's work:

> Offers the best chance we have at this time of theorizing our constructing and transaction of meaning (p.6).

He assumes the standpoint of a theoretical worshipper going to church for the first time. How does this person make sense of what happens? There are a whole set of significations in the building, people, liturgy, hymns, to name a few from which this worshipper may construct meaning. There are also leaders of worship and writers of texts who are also trying to construct meaning. He develops his argument using Pierce to explain how these two can overlap or diverge. Hughes has to acknowledge that theoreticians in this area admit that meaningful actions occur but explaining them is a much more difficult activity.

> Peirce sees meaning as a collaborate process (Moore-Keish, 2005):
> Meaning emerges from collaboration between sign-producer (in worship the liturgical leader) and sign-recipient (the worshippers). There is no pure transmission of stable meaning from one to another (as in classical modernity); nor is there an endless play of signifiers without meaning (as in deconstruction) (p. 106).

Gorringe (2004) understands Hughes as saying that liturgy:

> Ought to be a boundary situation, in which we become aware of the limits of our understanding, the stark limits to meaningfulness in a world without God. Liturgy takes us across the frontier, and good liturgy enables comprehension across the frontier (p. 256).

This somewhat contradicts the view that Hughes has a 'liturgical theology without revelation' (Smith, 2004). Spinks (2004) sums up the approach of Hughes as saying:

> Meaning in late modernity is a complex of layered significations, and this applies to worship as well...Meaning is both a making and a finding, and in worship text, symbol, sound, and movement should allow the worshipper to *make* meaning and to *find* meaning (p. 794).

He is however critical:

> It would have been helpful to have seen how this may or may not work out in a sustained analysis of a particular act of worship, and some reflections on what meanings were articulated by the worshipper themselves (p. 794).

While this is true, the finding out of the meanings of worshippers is still very much in its infancy in liturgical studies, even if this research is concerned to go some way to rectify that inadequacy.

This discussion of hermeneutics has taken us well out of the text into a multi-layered meaning exchange in the liturgical action. While text is one aspect of the focus of interpretation its situation in the worship event opens up questions of meaning construction by the participants. In the 1985 postscript to his monograph, Thiselton noted that there had been a significant advance of reader response theory in literary studies (Thiselton, 1975, 1986). This has been developed and applied in the context of Biblical studies but is in its infancy in liturgical studies. In the mapping of methodological territory, reader response has some helpful insights, which will be used later in this thesis.

Reader response theory

Reader response criticism has been influential as an approach to the study of literature for the last forty years. Key practitioners and theorists have been Wolfgang Iser (1978), Stanley Fish (1980), Norman Holland (1989), also Umberto Eco (1979), Louise Rosenblatt (Clifford, 1991), and Janice Radway (1984) to name a few. These theorists have vigorous debated between themselves as to the nature of what is reader response and how it is to be studied, e.g. Fish (1989) and Iser (1989). Thus this is not so much a unified tribe of academics as a

movement, which spanning two continents approaches the act of reading from different theoretical perspectives.

A key interest in reader response is focused on 'the event of reading' a text and the 'generation of meaning' in that action. What happens when we read a novel or poem? What happens such that we can feel immersed, or gripped, or that new things have been opened up to us? It is the interrelationship of the text and the reader that is the focus of reader response. Iser goes so far as to talk about 'the intangible processes operative between the text and the reader' (Iser, 1989). The focus on the reader is such that it is sometimes said that the author is dead (Lye, 1996, 2000).

Reader response began in literary studies. However, it has come to play a part in Biblical studies, which itself has moved from a historical critical paradigm to a literary paradigm. The influence of reader response in Biblical studies has been helpfully summarized by Thiselton (1992). In Biblical studies there is a certain amount of skepticism about the approach, as reader response seems to look for meaning in the interaction of the text and the reader in such a way as to give a dominant input to the reader. Aichele (1995) goes so far as to call reader response an oxymoron for Biblical studies, as Biblical scholars still have a fixation upon the text as object. As yet there has been little impact of reader response on liturgical studies, but there are instances of its appropriation in homiletics (Janowiak, 2000). As the place of the text in liturgical studies is less dominating in comparison to Biblical studies, the possibilities opened up by reader response have as yet to be appreciated.

Suleiman (1980), and Tompkins (1980) both construct classifications of reader response approaches. Lye (1996) sees six 'positions' within reader response theory. The first is the psychoanalytic view, looking at the interaction of the subconscious of the reader and the text, e.g. Holland (1989). Second, the hermeneutic view, examining the horizons of the reader and the text (developing

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the work of Gadamer). Third, the phenomenological view, investigating the interaction of text and reader e.g. Iser (1978). Fourth, the structuralist view, which decodes the text with various levels of competence, e.g. in the work of Lévi-Strauss. Fifth, the political or ideological view: looking at the statements, assumptions, and attitudes in the text, which express ideologies about social and political realities, relations, values and powers. Questions of how women read compared to men might be included here cf. Radway (1984). Finally, the post-structuralist view(s), which examines how the reader constructs a text. Lye (1996) refers to Stanley Fish for this position. He also points out that this connects with various deconstructionalist approaches. This is a helpful overview, which classifies reader response critics according to their various philosophical backgrounds. Reader response is thus located as a particular area in the ongoing historical development of western philosophy and culture. For this study the works of Iser, Fish, and Eco will be examined.

Wolfgang Iser (1978) studied under Gadamer and bases his approach considerably on the phenomenological theory of Roman Ingarden. His approach to reading is a 'functional' reading of the text based on phenomenology. Iser sees the act of reading as breaking down the subjective-objective distinction. His approach has a number of key components, which Iser develops in his books and articles.

First, in the act of reading meaning is generated by an interaction of a fixed text and the reader themselves. The text provides the reader with gaps, blanks, or indeterminacies, which they are invited to fill in. It is in this encounter that meaning is generated. This means that the text is capable of different realizations.

Second, using speech act theory he sees three basic components to reading. 'The repertoire' are the conventions necessary for the establishment of the situation. These are the extratextual realities from the social system and

literary traditions. 'Strategies', are the accepted procedures for organizing the repertoire and the meeting point between the repertoire and the reader. Finally, 'Realization', is the readers willing participation in the reading encounter. All of these are integral to the act of reading.

Third, the act of reading occurs as the reader engages in retrospection and anticipation. Reading is like a journey; as you travel through the countryside the landscape changes and develops. On this journey you may not be aware of where you are going or you might be going over it again (he also calls this the wandering viewpoint). Retrospection and anticipation help you to develop the experience of this journey. However, the act of creation is not smooth but relies on interruptions, for in this we reflect on the developing meaning.

Fourth, Iser provides a historical framework in which the texts have been becoming more indeterminate. The works of James Joyce are an example that epitomize the text with such large gaps that the reader has to take on a major work of meaning creation in an experience that can be disorientating. The approach assumes that the reader tries to unify the text by filling the gaps (reminiscent of Bradshaw's model of joining the dots).

Holland (Iser, 1989) criticized Iser on the grounds that while he talks about his approach as an analysis of what actually happens when reading, in fact Iser never looks at real examples. Holland thus tries to contrast his empirical approach to Iser's theoretic approach. However, Iser defends himself as preparing the theoretic ground in order that more empirical studies may develop the work. Stanley Fish (1989) is more scathing. He sees Iser as trying to have his cake and eat it, for Fish says that one of the presuppositions of Iser's work is the clarity of distinction between the determinate and the indeterminate. In fact he says this is not self-evident and is itself a construction. This basic assumption is thus false. Fish tries to avoid going down the road of never ending individual interpretation by seeing this construction as social (we will pick this up later). He says that Iser

cannot sustain the aim of dissolving the subjective and objective. In conclusion he says 'the theory is finally nothing more than a loosely constructed network of pasted-together contradictions; push it hard at any point and it immediately falls apart' (p. 85).

Thiselton (1992) seems to warm to Iser. This appears to be based on Iser's approach having its roots in the text rather than in the reception of the reader. Iser narrows down the possibility of infinite polyvalence by appropriate reading competence. Thiselton shows that Iser's approach has been used in a number of works on Biblical theology, particularly using some of the theoretical tools of the reading process to illumine the construction of the Biblical text. Stibbe (1994) is one such example, who develops a fruitful dialogue with Iser in reading Jesus as hero in John's Gospel.

Iser seems to be quite individualistic in his act of reading. However, questions can be raised using his tools in the liturgical reading. When applied to the study of liturgy, this theory would be interested in the event of worship and the generation of meanings in that action. What does the text enacted generate in the congregation? What do they bring to the reading? Here it is perhaps important to distinguish between liturgical texts as written and as performed. Many worship leaders have had the experience of the vital difference of the two. Texts which look good in the study, sometimes don't work in performance, and sometimes they surprise. Iser's focus is on the act of reading, which when applied to liturgical texts is the worship event.

Fish (1980) vigorously contests the meaning of text. He rejects the definition of Hirsch that a text is 'an entity which always remains the same from one moment to the next' (p. vii). Rather the text is 'the structure of meanings that is obvious and inescapable from the perspective of whatever interpretive assumptions happen to be in force' (p. vii). The text is in the reader rather than in a book, an approach he develops in a series of articles. The death of formalist

analysis is the rise of his version of reader response. He basis this on the beliefs that formal features do not exist independently of the reader's experience, and the reader's experience is the product of a set of interpretive assumptions. He turns the issue of a point of interpretation on its head: this is not a problem to be solved but a clue to the meaning of reading. There is a transfer of responsibility from the text to the reader. For Fish this process is the essence of the meaning of a text. So it is not the written text that is important but the activity that the written text puts upon us. The reader's experience, not the page, is the object of description. He points out that much discussion of texts involves abstraction, stepping back and commenting on the text. However, when this is done the reader's experience is devalued. Fish wants to reverse this; 'the reader's activities are at the center of attention... they are regarded not as leading to meaning but as having meaning' (p. 158). The reader is involved in interpretative activity all the time.

Fish (1980) further considers the profile of the reader. He constructs the categories of optimal readers, intended readers, and informed or ideal readers. Such elaborations are however secondary to his concern to get at the reading experience of real readers. He says that readers see things in the text according to their preformed interpretive principles. Thus for Fish formal units are a function of the interpretive model that is used. This might be seen as an analogous discussion to Bultmann (1961) who stressed the impossibility of presuppositionless exegesis. Nevertheless, Fish sees the reader's experience, formal units, and structure of intention, as coming into view all at once. This is the interpretive act of the reader, which for Fish is an act of creation. He thus denies any objectivity of interpretation.

One criticism of this approach is that it is highly subjective. But Fish (1980) develops in another direction. Readers produce their own interpretations, but they are part of interpretive communities. These communities are composed of other interpreters with similar interpretive strategies. The strategies determine the reading of the texts. Communities then debate the meaning of the text. Texts

are debated not because of the stability of the text but because of the stability of the communities. Indeed he sees interpretive communities as more stable than texts. 'It is interpretive communities, rather than either the text or the reader, that produce meanings and are responsible for the emergence of formal features' (p. 14). Interpretive communities will be of further significance later in this research.

However, within interpretive communities there are informed readers. These people have three characteristics: first, they are a competent speaker of the language, then they have a full possession of semantic knowledge both as a producer and comprehender, finally they have literary competence. Fish sees this person neither as a real reader nor as an abstraction. We can all become informed readers. There is a plurality of informed readers for the various texts. The informed readers debate not the text but their responses to the text, sometimes quite vehemently. Meaning is an event in reading the text. It is a process and experience. The center of this is the reader. The aim is transformation of minds.

Thiselton (1992) sees progression in Fish's approach. He suggests Fish's later work as reaching the point where Fish sees through the illusion that meaning resides in the text at all. The approach of the later Fish is that textual meanings are constituted by the reader, not by the text, and Thiselton believes this approach is disastrous for theology. Janowiak (2000) has a more sympathetic reading of Fish. He is more pragmatic, using Fish's concepts when useful in understanding preaching, while not assimilating all the philosophical roots. For homiletician and liturgist the idea of interpretative community is very fruitful. Both homileticist and liturgist are dealing with a text in a corporate context, an event in which meaning is generated, meaning that is both conceptual and practical, and meaning that shapes communities and individuals. The text in both cases (the sermon as preached and the liturgy as performed) stands both over against and within the community. It is appropriated and may be transformative or supportive. Some of Fish's ideas will be used later in the thesis but there are other critics to examine before we get to that point.
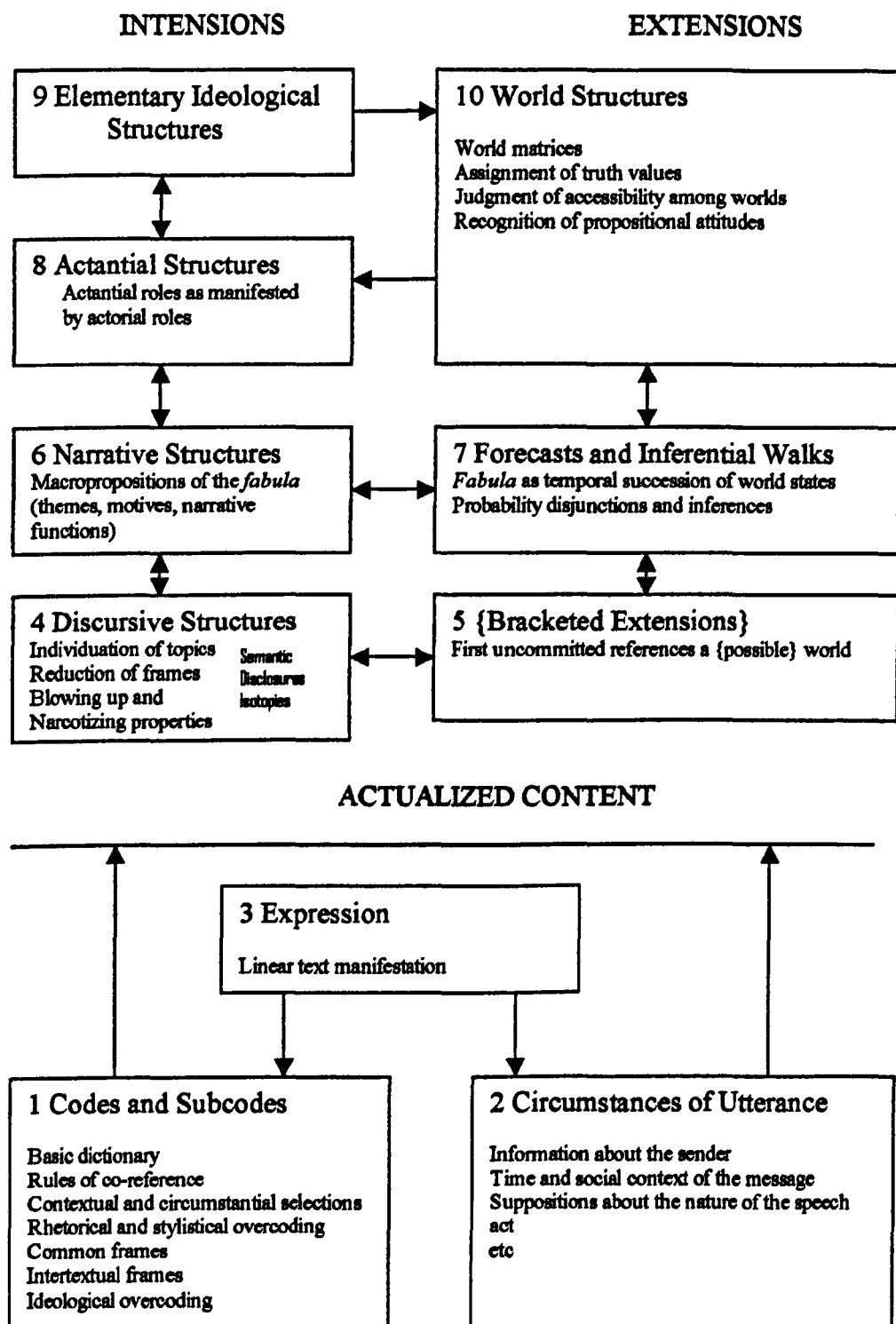
Eco (1979) starts with the differentiation between open and closed texts.
Open texts encourage a creative interaction between the text and the reader.
However, 'an open text, however open it be, cannot afford whatever
interpretation' (p. 9). A closed text is one that tries to keep limiting the
possibilities of interpretation, reducing the possibilities of reading. However, such
texts can still be read in various ways. So open and closed are two ends of a
continuum, strategies that the text takes in generating meaning in the act of
reading.

Eco continues to develop his complex theory into a model with ten
different and interacting levels, each concerning a different aspect of the
interaction of the reader and the text. This is represented in the diagram figure 2.1.
This is clearly a complex model that would require a lengthy exposition.
However, there are important features to clarify. He calls the model a 'theoretical
abstraction' (p.13) and as such it is not a description of what happens in each act
of reading. The reader begins in box three with the 'linear text manifestation' this
is the reading of a text or the celebration of a liturgy, a unity of text and utterance.
In this process there is a context, box two, and codes used in the reading box one.
The act of reading a novel includes a suspension of belief in which a dialogical
process occurs between worldviews and textual structures that leads to the
generation of meaning. Possible readings are developed and tested, some are
rejected others are substantiated. The upper set of boxes, four to ten, indicate a set
of possible approaches in the act of reading; not all have to be used in any one
reading event.

This model can be applied to a liturgy in that participation by the
congregation is a suspension of the 'normal' way of viewing the world. At a
eucharist we become a part of 'the night on which he was betrayed'. We are
invited to participate in possible futures and reflect on the contrast of our 'normal'

viewpoint and God's viewpoint. This is a rich and complex interaction hence Hopewell (1987) calls the congregation a 'thick community', echoing Geertz.

Figure 2.1 Eco's model of reading

INTENSIONS   EXTENSIONS

9 Elementary Ideological Structures	10 World Structures
	World matrices Assignment of truth values Judgment of accessibility among worlds Recognition of propositional attitudes
8 Actantial Structures Actantial roles as manifested by actorial roles	
6 Narrative Structures Macropropositions of the *fabula* (themes, motives, narrative functions)	7 Forecasts and Inferential Walks *Fabula* as temporal succession of world states Probability disjunctions and inferences
4 Discursive Structures Individuation of topics Semantic Reduction of frames Disclosure Blowing up and isotopies Narcotizing properties	5 {Bracketed Extensions} First uncommitted references a {possible} world

ACTUALIZED CONTENT

3 Expression

Linear text manifestation

1 Codes and Subcodes	2 Circumstances of Utterance
Basic dictionary Rules of co-reference Contextual and circumstantial selections Rhetorical and stylistical overcoding Common frames Intertextual frames Ideological overcoding	Information about the sender Time and social context of the message Suppositions about the nature of the speech act etc

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Eco mentions a number of devices are used in understanding the text. Beginning with box one, codes and subcodes, in the act of reading a liturgical text we use a basic dictionary, i.e. in our minds we hold a dictionary of words and when we read a word we use the dictionary to make an interpretation e.g. communion. Rules of co-reference are our initial interpretation of a word, which may include various possibilities, including the question whether we understand it correctly. It is rules of co-reference that begin to clarify our interpretation, including a method of waiting until the text gives us further clues e.g. does the word communion, refer to holy communion or extended communion (a problem we will see a number of times in this thesis). Contextual and circumstantial selections entail that within the reading we also encounter an encyclopaedia. This is virtually present within a text and our reading of the text actualises it. 'Aye' can thus mean 'yes' or 'I will obey'. Context provides the meaning based on the encyclopaedia. 'Every text refers back to previous texts' (p.19), extended communion refers back to holy communion. Rhetorical and stylistic overcoding: the reader is invited to recognize genre, in this case a liturgy with a number of distinct genres; this then influences the interpretation of the text. In the focus of this thesis, the reader has to recognize the liturgical genre of extended communion and its relationship to other liturgies, not least the eucharist. Common frames: frames are half way to an encyclopaedic entry. They are particularly important in making inferences when there is choice. Some of the common frames for this thesis include communion to the sick and extended communion. Intertextual frames: 'no text is read independently of the reader's experience of other texts' (p. 21). If common frames come from the reader, intertextual frames come from the wider textual base: another example would be the wider traditional uses of the consecrated elements. Ideological overcoding: any reader reads from their own ideological perspective, even when they are not aware of it. However, there is also an ideology within the text. When the two coincide then there may be less motivation to tease out either, when they clash the nature of the reading may change e.g. from the pleasurable reading of a novel to an ideological battle. Here the theology of eucharistic consecration and the nature of the elements is key. The

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points developed above are particularly helpful concepts in understanding the use of codes in reading a liturgical text. We will use these and other elements of the model in relation to extended communion in later chapters.

But is interpretation merely subjective? Eco continues to work on this in a later book *The Limits of Interpretation* (Eco, 1990). This question is more complex than it first seems. A simple sentence 'the eagle has landed' may well be code for something else e.g. as in wartime codes. Allegory may suggest that it is about the strong coming to earth. A bird-watcher might be reporting the return to the nest. Context clearly helps clarify interpretation. Eco being a medievalist develops the different ways medieval people interpreted. He then shows that there have been a whole variety of interpretative frameworks. However,

> Many modern theories are unable to recognize that symbols are paradigmatically open to infinite meanings but syntagmatically, that is, textually, open only to the indefinite, but by no means infinite, interpretations allowed by the context (p. 21).

This is an argument for the priority of the text in interpretation and Eco is not committed to unlimited semiosis. He admits that it might well be very difficult to say if a given interpretation is a good one. However, he believes in principle it is always possible to decide if it is a bad one.

Thiselton (1992) takes seriously the semiotic basis of Eco's work. He sees a number of helpful points in the work: that there is considerable danger of overcoding in reading Biblical texts; that Eco uses a wide range of models of what constitute texts; that reader competency is required in reading texts; and that the notion of open and closed texts is helpful and can be found in the scriptures. Thiselton agrees that Eco parallels Iser and suggests that there is much that is fruitful within his writing for Biblical studies. However, this approach has not been used widely, if at all, in liturgical studies.

Reader response has a number of tools for the liturgist who is interested in the meaning of the text for the worshipping community. The idea of interpretive communities and informed readers gives depth to the way meaning is held in a community. The gaps in the text indicate ways in which meaning becomes generated. Interpretive frameworks with dictionary and encyclopedia tell us something of the presuppositions in meaning construction of both individuals and communities. Notions of overcoding may help in discussions of what happens to the elements. All of these will be used in later chapters of this book.

Conclusion

This chapter has been an explanation and summary of some of the methodological approaches to liturgical studies. The high ground is the historical paradigm and while many still inhabit this land, the map is getting wider as more territory is charted. The foothills are those looking to hermeneutical issues. The plains include an as yet uncharted territory of reader response. In this thesis the history of the text of extended communion is not the center of enquiry but rather how the text makes meaning today. Because this study is precisely of a contemporary phenomenon the insights of reader response are particularly relevant. Worshippers at a service of extended communion can be asked their experience and understanding of the service.

Garrigan (2004) talks of her book 'developing a methodology in a cumulative fashion' (p. x). This thesis takes a similar approach. A lead is taken from Eco in the next few chapters that of reading requiring a 'dictionary' and 'encyclopedia'. The new phenomenon, extended communion, needs a language. The next short chapter contains a 'dictionary' of terms, although the meaning of 'dictionary' will need careful explanation. It illustrates the terminological confusion that inhabits the territory. The chapters after this concentrate on recent history, they form, in Eco's terms, the 'encyclopedia', a set of entries, of denominational case studies, that provide deeper understanding of the object of study, extended communion. Finally, in part two, worshippers and leaders are

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questioned about the meanings they generate from their context and use of the service.

Chapter 3

A Dictionary of Terms

Both Iser (1978) and Eco (1979) have posited the need for a dictionary and encyclopedia. The former relates to the terminology used, the latter to a wider conceptual geography. A moment's reflection will show that these are not discrete categories as they first sound. *The New SCM Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship* (Bradshaw, 2002a) seems to fall between the two. While some entries in the *SCM Dictionary* are brief comments, others run to a number of pages in length. This chapter will look at terms used in the literature and in the liturgies of extended communion. Then will follow a number of chapters with longer discussions of particular topics. Thus will be developed a dictionary and encyclopedia for this work and suggested historical precedents will be investigated.

The variety of terms in this chapter shows the ephemerality of the phenomenon being discussed. Darwin, Johnson and McAuley (2002) state that Derrida talks of the 'unending deferral [which] means that communication is polysemous' (p. 157). An example of this is in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1964), which defines a dictionary as:

> [a] book dealing with, usa[lly]. in alphabetical order, with words of a
> language or of some special subject... lexicon (p. 339)

and then a lexicon as a 'Dictionary' (p. 697). This chapter looks at a variety of terms but they all point back to one phenomenon. For this reasons the entries are not 'dictionary definitions' as that would produce very similar statements for each entry, rather they catalogue the various terms used and give examples of their use.

As yet, there is no one universally accepted expression for what I term 'extended communion'. Indeed the only reference in the *SCM Dictionary* that corresponds to the issue in question is 'Presanctified, Liturgy of the' (pp. 386-

387). There is a much richer set of terms used, some official and some colloquial. The form used for the rest of the chapter is to present the terms as a dictionary, providing comments on sources and nuances of the language. Names for the service will be given in full and acronyms put in brackets after the full term. At the end of the chapter theoretical issues to do with language will be analyzed.

A Dictionary

A Liturgy of the Deaconate with Holy Communion
The title of a liturgy developed at the Anglican St Andrew's Theological Seminary (n.d.), Quezon City, Philippines. The preamble stresses the link to the eucharist at the cathedral and suggests that priests may have administered this order, although it is clearly envisaged to be used in outstations. The rite is not mentioned in the latest *Book of Common Prayer* of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines (1999) but there are rubrics for the distribution of bread and wine previously consecrated in that book (p. 30). The stress in this title is on a diaconal role.

Administration of Holy Communion by a deacon or a lay person
A tile of a publication for the service in the Scottish Episcopal Church (1992b), also labeled *Communion* (see below). This is a functional title stressing the action and actors.

Assemblées Dominicales en l'Absence du Prêtre (ADAP)
This is the French term for communion in the absence of a priest, as will be discussed in chapter nine. Services began locally in France in the 1960s and since 1976 have been supported and researched by the *Centre National de Pastorale Liturgique* (Barras, 1996). The title focuses on priestly absence.

Celebrations of the Word and Communion (CWAC)

A title used for a rite approved for interim use of the Roman Catholic Bishops'
Conference of England and Wales (1996). The subtitle says 'for Sunday &
Weekday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest'. The weekday element is a
development of the Vatican *Directory* (see below).

Communion

A tile used in a publication for this service in the Scottish Episcopal Church
(1992a) also labeled *Administration of Holy Communion by a deacon or a lay
person* (see above). This is particularly confusing as Communion can be used as a
shortened form of Holy Communion i.e. the eucharist. However this confusing
usage is found in other terms used, e.g. in the previous term *Celebrations of Word
and Communion*, where communion is from the reserved sacrament not the
eucharist.

Communion Services

Austin (1991), Turner (n.d.), and O'Loughlin (1998) use this term for modern
Roman Catholic practice. This is a minimalist title and probably does not
differentiate itself sufficiently from the rite of communion within the eucharist.

Communion at Home

A phrase used by myself (1993) to refer in particular to patristic examples of laity
keeping consecrated elements at home and self-administering during the week.
There are no clear 'dots' in Bradshaw's (2002b) terms that connect the current
phenomena to this patristic activity. Indeed, it would appear that communion at
home was gradually banned (Freestone, 1917). See also, Domestic Communion
and Home-Communion.

Communion by Extension

A contraction based on a term introduced by the Church of England with its nationally authorized rite *Public Worship with Communion by Extension* (The Archbishops' Council, 2001) first so called by the House of Bishops (2000).

Communion from the Reserved Sacrament

A more generic term used in a number of rites. The Church of India, Pakistan, Burma, and Ceylon (Anglican) produced *The Order of Communion with the Reserved Sacrament* (CIPBC, 1960). It was clear that this was to be used by priests and deacons for the sick, and with those who were unable to be present.

Communion outside the Eucharist

A phrase developed by myself (1993) as a book title. The aim was to use a more phenomenological term that avoided many of the weaknesses found in the other terms, and to find a neutral term that would cross denominational nomenclature.

Communion under Special Circumstances

The title of a service in the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* (1979) of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America. The exact circumstances for the use of this service are broad: 'those who for reasonable cause cannot be present at a public celebration of the Eucharist' (p. 396) could be housebound, sick, or shift workers. It is clear that the service is intended to be led by a priest or deacon and from the reserved sacrament. The title emphasizes the extraordinary nature of the action.

Deacon's Mass

A more popular term used in a number of churches including the Episcopal Church of the United States of America, for example in *An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church* (n.d.). Rubrics in the *Book of Common Prayer* (1979) allowed the bishop to authorize a deacon to distribute Holy Communion from the reserved sacrament (pp. 408-409). It is a term used popularly in the Roman Catholic

Church, cf Bishop Guillory's comments who rejects the term (Guillory, 2006), and the Old Catholic Church, see Archbishop Bostwick's page (n.d.). However, some view this as a term that confuses the sense with the 'full' mass, see Hubbard (2003).

Diaconal Presider

A term used by the Western Liturgical Conference (1984) of the Roman Catholic Church in Canada for the deacon leading a service using previously consecrated elements.

Diaconal Presidency

A term used when a deacon presides at the eucharist. This is not to be confused with a diaconal presider who is using previously consecrated elements. Diaconal presidency is being discussed in the Anglican Diocese of Sydney (1993). Diaconal Presidency also occurs in the Moravian Church, see Linyard and Tovey (1994).

Domestic Communion

An alternative term referring to the patristic communion at home created by myself (1993); see also Communion at Home, Home-Communion.

Eucharistic Celebrations without Priests

An occasional term used particularly in relation to western medieval liturgies, see Leclercq (1981). However the use of eucharistic makes it easy to confuse with the eucharist.

Eucharistic Services

This is another popular term for the Roman Catholic practice of Sunday Worship in the absence of a Priest, see Hildago (n.d.). This does not clarify the distinction between a eucharistic service and a full celebration of the eucharist.

Extended Communion

This is a very popular term within Anglicanism. Perhaps first made public by David Smethurst (1986) in Ulverston, it was then used by a number of diocesan rites in the Church of England, Carlisle (1979), Salisbury (n.d.), and elsewhere in the Anglican communion, e.g. Tasmania (1991). In England the General Synod papers for the production of the official service began with this term (House of Bishops, 1993) but this evolved into *Public Worship with Communion by Extension.* Perhaps still the most popular term in Anglicanism.

However, in 1972 Colin Buchanan used the terms 'extended communion' and 'extended administration' to talk about communion for the sick (Beckwith et al., 1972). The Methodist Church in England and Wales has recently used the term in a similar way (Methodist Church, 1999)

Extended Serving of the Communion of the Church

A title recently used by the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America (1999). It is clear that this is primarily intended for the housebound.

Extending Communion

A term used in New Zealand for communion for the sick and homebound, see Booth (2006). Easy to confuse with extended communion.

Fermentum

The obscure practice in the early church of the West in which portions of the consecrated bread are sent from the mass to various other churches, see Thompson (2002). It probably has connections with the commixture, for the fifth century evidence in Rome, see Connell (2002). There has been a recent debate as to the exact nature of the practice, see Baldovin (2005), who denies any connection with Sunday Worship in the absence of a Priest.

Holy Communion outside the Mass

The title of a service that dates back to the Tridentine reform, was renewed in 1973, and published in *The Rites* (The Roman Catholic Church, 1976, 1983). The introduction suggests that the pastoral context in mind here is to enable 'the faithful unable to participate in the Mass' to receive communion from the reserved sacrament. The appropriate minister is priest, deacon, or acolyte, but the local ordinary may give a faculty to special ministers.

Home-Communion

This term is particularly used in relation to the patristic practice of lay people receiving communion at home from elements taken from the Sunday eucharist (Taft, 2003).

Lay Presider

This is a Roman Catholic term for the leader of a service of 'Communion from the Reserved Sacrament'. It was used in the title of a collection of services for the Western Liturgical Conference of Canada, (1984) *Ritual for Lay Presiders*. Care has to be taken not to confuse this with the term lay presidency.

Lay presidency

This refers to a layperson presiding at the eucharist. This has been a practice in some of the churches coming out of the reformation including Reformed churches and Methodism, but varies in frequency from one denomination to another. The Diocese of Sydney has been advocating this within Anglicanism, for example Diocesan Doctrine Commission (1993). See chapter six for a full discussion. In England there have been some advocates of lay presidency e.g. Lloyd (1977) and some against e.g. Green (1994). The House of Bishops report *Eucharistic Presidency* (1997) rejected this approach.

Liturgies with Lay Presiders

This is occasionally used in the Roman Catholic Church, see Maier (2003). It includes more rites than communion from the distribution of pre-consecrated elements, for example funerals and weddings.

Liturgy of the Hours and Communion

A title for services that combine the Roman Catholic Divine Office hours with receiving Communion from the Reserved Sacrament. This was one of the options in the 1988 Vatican *Directory for Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest* (Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, 1988). Morning and Evening Prayer [with Holy Communion] can be found for example in the provision of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops USA (1994).

Liturgy of the Presanctified

This is the title of a service in the Byzantine tradition. It is a rite of Vespers and Communion with elements from the Sunday Liturgy. It is held by a priest on Wednesdays and Fridays in Lent, some saints days and the first three days of Holy Week, see Woolfenden (2002). The Community of the Servants of the Will of God, a religious order in Anglicanism has adapted the service for their community (Monastery of the Holy Trinity, 1986). The link to fasting and clerical leadership suggests a very different 'ideological structure' to lay led extended communion.

The title is sometimes given to the Western practice of Communion on Good Friday from elements reserved from the Maundy Thursday eucharist. This is a practice in the Roman Catholic Church and more recently in some Anglican Provinces, including the Church of England (1984, 1986).

Mass of the Presanctified

This is the traditional term for the Western practice of Communion on Good Friday reserved from Maundy Thursday (Davies, 1963).

Order of the Administration of Communion

This is a part of the title of a service for extended communion in the Catholic Apostolic Church, the full title being the *Order for the Administration of the Communion on the afternoon of the Lord's Day*. This was first introduced in 1842 and was printed in further editions of their liturgy (Catholic Apostolic Church, 1843). For further details of the liturgy see Stevenson (1978).

Priestless Masses

Another occasional term used in the Roman Catholic Church, criticized as a negative title in terms of leadership and wrong in terms of the rite, see Marrevee (1988).

Public Distribution of Holy Communion by Deacons and Lay People

This is the title for a rite of the Anglican Church of Canada (1987). The title formally describes the action but does not mention that the elements are pre-consecrated.

Public Worship with Communion by Extension

This is the title for the 2001 rite of the Church of England (The Archbishop's Council, 2001). This had gone through a variety of titles including Extended Communion. See chapter six on Anglicanism for a fuller discussion.

Reader's Mass

A term used in one of the interviews, when an Anglican Lay Reader presides at a Service of the Word with the distribution of pre-consecrated elements. This term seems to be very occasional and used in Canada as analogous to Deacon's Mass

Rite of Administering the Eucharist with Diaconal or Lay Presidency

The title used for a liturgy authorized in the English Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood (1984). This is descriptive of what happens but rather cumbersome.

Ritual for Lay Presiders

This is the title for a liturgy book produced in Canada by the Roman Catholic Western Liturgical Conference (1984). Note the comments above on lay presider.

Sancta

A somewhat obscure patristic reference to a piece of reserved host added to the chalice at the eucharist (Freestone, 1917). This may be related to the fermentum, see above.

Second Table Communion

A custom in the Church of Scotland where the numbers coming for communion were so large that there were 'sittings' i.e. people were given communion in a number of sequential congregations but with bread and wine which was consecrated at the first sitting. This became a part of the official liturgy of the Church of Scotland (1940) but has since fallen into disuse.

Service of the Word and Communion

The title used by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Auckland in New Zealand for lay led services (Diocese of Auckland, 1984). It suffers from all the problems of using 'communion' in this context.

Signing the Chalice

The West Syrian tradition has a variety of rites similar to the Liturgy of the Presanctified. The Maronite Church has a service of Signing the Chalice on Good Friday (Diocese of St Maron, 1982). The Syrian Orthodox used to have Lenten services of Vespers and Communion (Codrington, 1903). This has fallen out of use, but there has been some experimentation with its revival in India and in groups in the United States of America. The title refers to the consecration of the wine using a previously consecrated host.

Sister's Mass

A popular Roman Catholic term for a service of Word and Communion presided over by a woman religious (Hubbard, 2003). In some cases sisters have pastoral charge of parishes or congregations. The term is confusing as this is communion outside the mass.

Sunday Assemblies without a Priest

A translation of the term ADAP used by the Roman Catholic Church in France (Brulin, 1980).

Sunday Celebrations Animated by Lay Presiders

A term used occasionally by some Canadian Roman Catholics and in the United States of America, for Sunday worship in the absence of a priest, see Hughes (1995).

Sunday Celebrations in anticipation of the Eucharist.

Another term for Sunday Worship in the Absence of a Priest used by French speaking Roman Catholics particularly in France and Canada, see Hibbard (1998).

Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest (SCAP)

This title follows the wording of the Vatican Directory of *Sunday Celebrations in the absence of a Priest* (Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, 1988). The designation is used in the official publication of the National Conference of Catholic Bishop's USA (1994), and in a major scholarly work on catechesis of the laity (Rosier, 2002).

Sunday Worship in the Absence of a Priest (SWAP)

The title used by some Roman Catholic liturgies following the Vatican *Directory* (Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, 1988), and popular in the United States of America.

The title was used in one draft of the Church of England proposals (General Synod, 1998b). However, it was felt that this was too negative in tone to be used.

Typica

This is now a section of the Byzantine Liturgy of the Presanctified but may be in origin an independent monastic office of communion from the presanctified, see Uspensky (1985).

Word and Communion

This is a contraction of the title for the national Roman Catholic provision in England and Wales (1996). Also another short hand title used for extended communion e.g. Tovey (2002).

Reflections

This dictionary has compiled 49 titles for extended communion or related practices. Two commentators have picked up on this wide variety of terminology. In 1992 Kathleen Hughes (1995) conducted research on extended communion, surveying every diocese in the United States of America. Hughes raises the question 'What do we call this new phenomena [sic]?' (p. 48). She found twelve different titles and said that both the title of the service and the name of the minister is a key issue.

John Hibbard (1998), who was involved in the production of the Canadian liturgy, also said that the first issue is what to call this form of celebration. He sees a problem in the many titles that describe the form of worship in negative terms e.g. priestless services. He argues for terms that use positive words.

The lack of any clear usage (we will see later, in chapter six, how the terms were changed in the Church of England as the service went through General Synod) is an indication of the newness of this phenomenon and of the various church cultures trying to label this new event. The interpretative lines that are

drawn by some people to connect with some traditional practices complicate this naming issue.

Compiling this dictionary is a hermeneutical event. Although the service is dependant upon the eucharist, I have not included any comparative titles for the eucharist, and there would be a variety of those. What is in, and what is out, and why? In part I have tried to build on the phenomenological approach of *Communion outside the Eucharist* (Tovey, 1993). So terms are included, if it is a service including distribution of communion (previously consecrated), but are not included if the term indicates a full eucharist.

The terms used in the dictionary also entailed value judgments by those developing or using the names. Hibbard makes a strong plea for positive labels but is inhibited by the Vatican *Directory* using the term 'absence of a priest' (Hibbard, 1998). Other churches are also trying to find the right language to use. Perhaps, using an aspect of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and treating language as a 'category', I can construct my own model, which will clarify issues (figure 3.1).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) say that in grounded theory 'a category stands by itself as a conceptual element of the theory' (p. 36), and a property is 'an element of a category' (p.36). They are both indicated from the data, in this case the terms used. Strauss and Corbin (1990) 'dimentionalize' (p.69) properties, dimensions being 'locations of a property along a continuum' (p. 69). While aspects of this methodology are disputed (Dey, 1999), this approach can help in the analysis of the above data.

Figure 3.1 Linguistic variation as a Category		
Category	Properties	Dimensional Range
Linguistic variation	Opacity	clear foggy
	Affectivity	strong weak
	Contextuality	specific non-specific
	Venerability	new old
	Acceptability	strong weak

The emergent category is linguistic variation. This is divided into five properties, as in figure 3.1 above. The properties then include a dimensional range. These five properties, which to some extent overlap, give an indication of the value of each term. The properties can be seen as clarifying aspects of the linguistic variation. Each will be examined in turn.

Opacity: Is the term clear in its meaning? 'Communion' might be seen as foggy, as it does not sufficiently differentiate from the eucharist. A 'Celebration of the Word with the distribution of Communion' is clearer.

Affectivity: Terms have an emotive element and affect the people involved. In many parts of Anglicanism there would be a problem if 'from the reserved sacrament' were a part of the title. Indeed, 'extended communion' while a bit foggy, does not raise feelings in such an emotive way, and this may be a reason for its greater popularity.

Contextuality: Some terms are very specific to a context. 'Signing the Chalice' would mean something specific to a Maronite, but might be meaningless to an Anglican. This becomes very tricky as the same term may be used in slightly different ways, as we will see later.

Venerability: The aspect of tradition sanctifies a name and a practice. 'The liturgy of the presanctified' has the advantage of continuous use and patristic precedent. Making connections between this and the 'new phenomena' of Hughes (1995) gives the name a gravitas.

Acceptability: Terms have to be acceptable, but to whom? Hibbard (1998) talks of winning the argument for not using negative terms at a seminar, but in formal conversation 'in the absence of a priest' is still used. In part this is because it has the stamp of Vatican approval, even if an unfortunate clause.

Forty-nine different terms are found above. This has tried to be exhaustive but there are undoubtedly some further terms in use, not yet discovered. From my context and for the purposes of this thesis I will tend to use 'extended communion'. However, I will not limit myself to this term and try, where possible, to use terms that relate to the tradition being discussed. This is particularly problematical with modern Roman Catholic practice that has generated so many new terms, but following Hibbard I will try to use positive terms.

Having begun by generating a lexicon of terms, this thesis will now develop the 'encyclopedia' (Eco, 1979), by examining the development of the services in the three churches.

Chapter 4

The Roman Catholic Church

The introduction to this thesis mentioned that three denominations have recently produced rites of extended communion, the Roman Catholic Church, The Methodist Church, and the Church of England. The next few chapters study this development in more detail. This is a development of an encyclopedia of modern denominational case studies. This chapter begins with the Roman Catholic Church, where 'Sunday Celebrations in the absence of a Priest' is becoming a common occurrence in some locations.

The approach here will be to survey some of the literature available on Catholic practice. This does not claim to be an exhaustive worldwide survey, but to be enough to build up a picture of the development of the service in this denomination in some parts of the world. There is a clear hermeneutical problem in relating the modern Sunday Worship in the absence of a Priest, with previous Catholic practices e.g. distributing communion after the mass, or indeed outside the mass (Dallen, 1994). This chapter, however, will begin with the Vatican Directory and then look at the precursors and developments based on this text, including the way the Roman Catholic Church has developed this service in a number of national case studies. There will then be an evaluation of the position of this church.

Directory on Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest 1988

This Directory was produced by the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship in 1988. This is not a liturgical text but a Directory with instructions for Episcopal Conferences, so that they might produce their own liturgical texts. The fact that the Vatican has issued such a Directory indicates that such services were already

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commonplace in some parts of the world, as we shall see later. The Directory's concerns put such services in a particular context.

The Directory begins with the norm of Sunday eucharistic worship. It then notes that there are a variety of reasons for departing from this norm. These include first evangelization (§3), persecution (§4), population movements (§5), and shortage of priests (§5). The document concedes that it is a response to the wishes of Episcopal Conferences. The Directory then states that there is an absolute necessity for the faithful to gather on a Sunday. It develops this into three elements required of Sunday worship (§12): first, the gathering of the faithful; then instruction by means of the scriptures; and finally the celebration of the eucharist. This is basic to Christian formation and the foundation of Sunday as a day of rest.

Next the Directory looks at why there might have to be a celebration in the absence of a priest. It then suggests various strategies. Its first direction is for the faithful to travel to mass elsewhere. This is stated as the preferred option. Otherwise there is the possibility of a service of the Reading of the Word and prayer. This would be a service of ante-communion. Then the document admits the possibility of Eucharistic Communion being added to this (§20).

At this point a danger is seen of the possibility of confusion between a service of the Word and Communion and the mass, so the document tries to say that bishops are to oversee the catechesis of a community to make sure that such confusion does not arise (§26). This is a particularly important point, which will be referred to in later chapters. One way of keeping this boundary is to suggest that in the intercessions there be prayers for the raising up of more priests. The priests are also told to visit the parishes for other functions (§27). Deacons in particular are to be the leaders of Word and Communion (§29). After that the parish priest may direct lay people to lead the service, both men and women, appointed for a period and instituted by prayer (§30). The document then goes on

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to suggest the possibility of listening to radio or TV services (§32) or of celebrating the liturgy of the hours (§33).

The last section includes liturgical direction. The basis is the Celebration of the Word and the distribution of Communion. Elements proper to the mass should not be included (§35). Instructions are given for the variations of the service, if a deacon presides or if a layperson acts as leader. The plan of the celebration is then given as a list, comprising the following elements (§41).

Figure 4.1 Elements of the Roman Catholic Service

The opening rites
The liturgy of the Word
The thanksgiving
The communion rites
The concluding rites

Bishops' Conferences are allowed to produce more detailed forms of celebration. Perhaps the most liturgically sensitive is the thanksgiving. This may be hymn, psalm or litany prayer and can be located in three different places: after the general intercession, or after the distribution of communion, or before the Our Father (§45). The preface of the eucharistic prayer is said to be inappropriate, as this might lead to confusion with the eucharist. The text for the Communion Rite comes from Holy Communion outside the Mass (National Conference of Catholic Bishops USA, 1976). Bread consecrated on the same day or reserved sacrament is used for the service. The assumption is of communion in one kind. The Directory closes with the reassertion of the need to gather on Sunday and for the faithful to participate in the Eucharist (§50).

A number of liturgists have questioned this provision. Austin (1991) asks if it is a break with tradition. Mitchell (2002) questions if this "short-term

solution" might become a "long-term problem". Jones (1988, 1989) an English laywoman who had experience of leading these services asks:

> Are we on the right road by replacing the Mass, in the absence of a priest, with a Communion Service? (p. 57).

Hughes (1995) has expressed doubts about these services. One of the anecdotes found in this literature is of the confusion in the mind of the faithful shown in the approval, for example, of "Sister's Mass" as it is shorter than "Father's Mass" (Dallen, 1994).

Hughes (1995) reflects on her experience of training people to lead these services:

> Many people who participate in a SWAP celebration believe that it *is* a Eucharistic celebration or a close facsimile (p. 47).

Huck (1989) talks of a trend in the wrong direction. Marrevee (1988) makes a similar comment:

> By delegating laypersons to preside over a worship service that is theologically quite different from a eucharist, but which is perceived and experienced by many participating as a Mass, one has embarked on a dangerous course (p. 221).

While quotations could be multiplied from liturgists questioning the rightness of this policy direction, Episcopal Conferences have been authorizing liturgical provision for these services. Hibbard (1998) perhaps best concludes:

> We are in a no-win situation. Anyone who has given even a cursory thought to the growth of Sunday celebrations of the word in Canada and the United States should... have mixed feelings about it (p. 92).

We will be returning to this literature in later section of this chapter.

Before proceeding to examine some of the liturgies produced, there are some key issues in the development of the Directory that should be noted and some further policy documents from the Vatican have bearing on the development of this provision.

Factors leading to the Directory

The need for the provision of lay-lead services was acknowledged at the Second Vatican Council in *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (1963). This document makes the provision for Bible services, i.e. services of the Word, in 35.4 (Flannery, 1981):

> Bible services should be encouraged, especially on the vigils of the more solemn feasts, on some weekdays in Advent and Lent, and on Sundays and feast days. They are particularly to be commended in places where no priest is available; when this is so, a deacon or some other person authorized by the bishop should preside over the celebration (p.13).

Graf (1981) comments that:

> The bishops responsible for the insertion of this section into the Constitution on the Liturgy had in mind also a communion service (pp. 182-183).

In 1962 Bishop Jorge Kemerer from Argentina had spoken in the Council favorably about such services. It was to take a further 25 years before there would be any Vatican provision.

A second factor, which is mentioned in the Directory, is the relation to the Service of Holy Communion outside the Mass. This was explicitly mentioned in section 38 of the Directory. This rite was revised in 1973 and produced together with the 'Worship of the Eucharist outside Mass' (National Conference of Catholic Bishops USA, 1976). The General Introduction gives the original reason for reservation as the viaticum (§ 5). It then gives secondary reasons of communion and adoration (§ 5). For the purpose of this study I will now concentrate on the second of these reasons.

> Sacramental communion received during Mass is the more perfect participation in the eucharistic celebration. The eucharistic sign is expressed more clearly when the faithful receive the body of the Lord from the same sacrifice after the communion of the priest (§ 13).

This is the starting point for Communion outside the Mass. The use of more in both sentences does leave a number of questions: more than what (not receiving, or receiving from the reserved sacrament)? Why not 'most' or why not leave out the word altogether? The document then goes on to ban priests from refusing to give Communion outside the Mass, stressing that such communion is a full participation in the eucharistic sacrifice (§ 15). Such ambiguity may mean that it is hard to limit Communion outside the Mass, and also undermines the argument of the need to go to mass regularly. There is a sliding scale of preferences as to who should be the minister of the service from first the priest, deacon, acolyte, and finally 'other special ministers' (§ 17). It is to be done in church where the mass is normally celebrated.

This service was a revision of the Tridentine Rite. Medieval rites of communion after the mass, e.g. the Gilbertine ordinal, were connected to a particular service and perhaps were a way of coping with a large number of communicants (Mitchell, 1982). In 1614 an order of Communion outside the Mass was published. This had no service of the Word. It was only allowed if there was reasonable cause, and was to be led by a priest (Tovey, 1993). The 1973 ritual includes a Liturgy of the Word, Mitchell (1982) calling them 'essentially a liturgy of the presanctified gifts' (p. 252). However, he goes on to point to the dangers of such rites calling them a 'hybrid form of the liturgy of the presanctified' (p. 252) and commenting that the church does not condone 'indiscriminate distribution of communion outside Mass' (p. 253). Thus Mitchell's statement that such rites are:

> extraordinary... a departure from the norm that is legitimate only when
> serious pastoral circumstances require it' (p. 254),

forms an apposite conclusion to such a rite. It was from such an extraordinary rite that 'Sunday Celebrations in the absence of a Priest' was to be developed.

A third factor was the development of the role of laity in distributing communion. 1973 also saw the promulgation of *Immensae Caritatis* (Flannery,

1981). This enabled there to be enough ministers to distribute communion either in the mass, outside the mass, or to the sick or dying. Thus it set up the possibility of 'extraordinary ministers for distribution of Holy Communion' (p. 226). These are to be used when there is no priest, deacon or acolyte, or when they are prevented from distribution of communion by old age, sickness, or other pastoral ministry (p.227). These lay ministers are another important factor in the production of the Directory.

In 1983 the new Code of Canon Law was published (Canon Law Society of America, 1983). This included a possible wide range of liturgical ministry by laity, including distribution of Holy Communion, 230 §3 (see also 910 §2):

> When the need of the Church warrants it and ministers are lacking, lay persons, even if they are not lectors or acolytes, can also supply certain of their duties, namely, to exercise the ministry of the word, to preside, offer liturgical prayers, to confer baptism, and to distribute Holy Communion, according to the prescripts of the law.

It allows Communion outside the Mass in canon 918:

> It is highly recommended that the faithful receive holy communion during the eucharistic celebration itself. It is to be administered outside the Mass, however, to those who request it for a just cause, with the liturgical rites being observed.

There are also instructions for the laity on Sunday worship in the absence of a priest 1248 §2. This only includes a Service of the Word or family devotions:

> If participation in the eucharistic celebration becomes impossible because of the absence of a sacred minister or for another grave cause, it is strongly recommended that the faithful take part in a liturgy of the word if such a liturgy is celebrated in a parish church or other sacred place according to the prescripts of the diocesan bishop or that they devote themselves to prayer for a suitable time alone, as a family, or, as the occasion permits, in groups of families.

Thus the Directory goes beyond the provision of the canon (Henchal, 1989) in connecting the Sunday Word Services with the distribution of Holy Communion.

A fourth factor, and this is the final driver for change, is the shortage of priests, indeed this is found in the title of the 1988 Directory, *in the absence of a priest*. The last century saw a growing awareness of a crisis in the Roman Catholic Church over the shortage of priests. Castillo (1992) indicates that the peak year for the number of priests in the USA was 1967. However, the Catholic population in the USA had been growing all through the century and so the peak year of the clergy to laity ratio was 1942. Since 1967 the number of laity has continued to grow and the number of priests has declined. Kerkhofs (1995) surveys Europe and finds similar difficulties. He points to an increasingly elderly priesthood not being replaced by new vocations. This varies from country to country with only Ireland and Poland having no parishes without a priest in 1995. This crisis in numbers extends to the rest of the world who have had fewer priests per laity than North America and Europe. This leads to arguments for reform of the priesthood, e.g. for auxiliary priests (Hickey, 1980), or for the ordination of community leaders (Lobinger, 1998, 2002). Indeed, there is a clear connection between the number of priests and the need to use services of Word and Communion. This can be illustrated by looking at some of the provision of Episcopal Conferences. We will see from this that some were using lay-led worship on Sunday well before the Directory of 1988 and that the Directory has been increasingly used in other Conferences since its publication.

Germany

Marrevee (1988) identifies the development of these services in the late sixties and early seventies in West Germany and Austria originating from the crisis in East Germany. After the war there was much dislocation of population in Germany and Eastern Europe. Many people from Catholic areas settled in previously Protestant areas with little provision for them (Graf, 1981). With few priests they began to develop lay led services. The literature on this goes back to

1958 (Graf, 1981). The practice was adopted in West Germany and Austria as the shortage of priests began to be realized in their parishes. It was in 1965 that the East German bishops asked the Vatican for special permission to have extraordinary eucharistic ministers. It is to be noted that Brazil asked for the same permission that year (Henchal, 1989).

In the 1970s "Sunday Mission Liturgies" were approved by Rome in which a Ministry of the Word and Communion were integral (Busse, 1996). This was developed into a "Celebration of Communion" which was put into the hymnbook *Gotteslob* (1975). This book covers German speaking Germany and Austria (Tovey, 1993).

Germany has a chronic shortage of priests (Kerkhofs, 1995). At the union of Germany in 1991 there were 13, 000 parishes and 11, 000 priests. They were aging then and the situation has since got worse. In 1994 34% of parishes did not have a resident priest. Alongside this has been the growth of full time trained lay people who pastor a parish. Kerkhof points to 5,000 laity being employed by the church in 1990. Clearly this is a significant development. In part it is fostered by the system of church tax and because women and married men cannot be ordained. But it does leave the strange situation of a full time pastor in the parish, who is not a priest, but oversees both the community and its worship.

Busse (1996) indicates that there has been variation in the way dioceses have implemented the Directory. He says that there have been debates about lay pastors and deacons, that there is ambiguity of being like the Mass and yet not the Mass, and the question arises as to how perceptions of emergency provision change when it is used regularly.

A decisively different approach to the situation was taken in 2000 by Bishop Josef Homeyer of Hildesheim (McGinnell, 2001). He ruled that from 2003 there should only be one Sunday eucharist in any parish and where mass was not

possible, there should be a service of the word without communion. This was a stepping back from the growing practice of *Kommunionfeier*. In the case of illness of the priest, mass is replaced with a service of the Word without communion (Homeyer, 2000).

France

France has a large number of small parishes, with the numbers of diocesan priests declining since 1938. *Assemblées Dominicales en l'Absence de Prêtre* (ADAP) has been growing in France. Furthermore a critical and unique long-term study has been conducted on ADAP from the *Centre National de Pastoral Liturgique*.

Such services began in France in 1967 in le Mans, but they were given further impetus by the policy document *Tous responsables dans l'Eglise?* (Assemblée plénière l'episcopat français, 1973). Barras gives 4 phases of development (Barras, 1996):

Pre 1967   Limited beginnings

1967 -1973   Slight development

1973 - 1984   More rapid increase

1984 - 1994   Development of a considered strategy,
           and relative slowing down of increase.

In 1976 *Centre National de Pastoral Liturgique* produced guidelines and services for ADAP, which were translated by ICEL into English (ICEL, 1978). Perhaps the significant feature of these rites is the thanksgiving prayers after the intercessions. The English translation led to them being used in other parts of the world.

In 1971 the *Centre National de Pastoral Liturgique* did a survey of diocesan liturgical commissions. At that point it was noted that ADAP was a relatively new development. In 1977 a second national survey was conducted on ADAP (Brulin, 1977). This was followed up by a survey in 1987 (Brulin, 1988). A further survey in 2001 on worship is also relevant to ADAP (Barras, 2001).

France has 92 dioceses. In 1977, 67 had regular Sunday worship without a priest, 16 had it on occasion, and only 9 never had these services (Brulin, 1977). 725 parishes were regularly involved, many of these on a monthly rota; another 384 had occasional services, and so 1,100 churches were involved in some way. 80% were in localities with less than 1,000 inhabitants. This may gives the impression of ADAP being mostly rural phenomena, but the geographic distribution does not show a simple urban / rural contrast The numbers attending range from 10 to 300. 38.6% had monthly services, but only 4.8% on three Sundays a month (Brulin, 1980). The place of the laity in the life of the church was significantly developing during this period (Centre National de Pastoral Liturgique, 1987).

The 1987 survey showed than 78 dioceses now had regular ADAP (Brulin, 1988). In some places that in the last survey had said it happened occasionally, it now happened regularly. The north and west had the highest frequency of service, the Ile de France and Provence the lowest frequency. It still predominantly remained a phenomenon of localities of less than 1,000. Brulin shows a stead decline of diocesan and religious priests in France in the period 1977-1985. Most parishes involved have one assembly a month (35.9%) and 21.5 have assemblies twice a month. The animators of the assemblies totaled 12, 300 persons 68.9% women, 31.1% men; lay people also take a variety of other liturgical roles (CNPL, 1987). Dioceses were therefore paying particular attention to the quality of the formation of these leaders (Janssens, 1983).

The 2001 survey on the worship of the church would seem to suggest that ADAP is becoming less frequent (Barras, 2001). This is mostly because the dioceses have been undergoing major pastoral reorganization. Previous surveys had noted that some parishes were becoming too small to be viable. This was beginning to be tackled by the bishops. Barres also comments that some leaders of ADAP had become burnt out and that in some places it was not very popular. Despite 20 years experience of ADAP people still wanted the mass with a priest.

Indeed Michel de Saint Pierre, a more traditional Catholic, has been very critical of Sunday Assemblies without a Priest (de Saint Pierre, 1979). The argument is put strongly that mass is an obligation and that people can drive from one village to another, at least in Normandy where he lives. ADAP is called 'pitiful celebrations without a priest...making our churches more and more like Protestant temples'. The author however has to acknowledge that the seminaries are empty. While this is a reactionary article, it does point out continued opposition to the movement and as such is an important example of opposition to the service from the laity.

United States of America

Veronica Rosier (2002) in a major study indicates the background to SWAP in the USA based on research from the official documents and archives. She sees a number of key stages in the history, which can be summarized as following:

1979 – 1986	Sporadic questions about the issue
1986 - 1991	Interim guidelines are developed
1991-today	An official rite is used and developed

Others have done their own research in the USA and there has been a considerable body of literature on the subject, both in terms of articles, and policy documents, diocesan and national.

The situation in the USA was behind that of Germany and France. Germany began in 1965, France in 1967. The first official question about SWAP was a letter in 1979 (p. 166). This means of course that it is likely that there was some experimentation prior to that. Kremerer (1963) had written an article in *Worship* about 'A Priestless Sunday Service'. This would have linked to the Bible services referred to in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. But it was pointing the way to growing provision. Twenty year later Kwatera produced training materials for laity (Kwatera, 1983) and deacons (Kwatera, 1985) with regard to Communion outside the Mass. In 1986 another article appeared discussing thanksgiving as a

liturgical provision, with an eye on the situation in Canada (Van Beeck, 1986). There appears to be a delay in the development of lay-led services because of the large number of permanent deacons. However, in 1986 it was decided to produce interim guidelines in response to a request from bishops in New Mexico and Texas (Rosier, 2002).

The Task Force's approach to creating guidelines was to conduct a survey. In 1987 it reported that of the 174 dioceses 80 had monthly services of SWAP happening in parishes, a further 56 dioceses predicted a need in the next 5 years, and a further 27 dioceses predicted a need in the decade to come. Thus in 1987 it was anticipated that by 1997 93.6% of dioceses would need to have some services in the absence of a priest. The Task Force then went on to produce policy documents and liturgies for this growing need.

Gathered in Steadfast Faith is the policy statement of the Bishop's Committee on Liturgy. It was approved in 1989 and published in 1991 (Henchal, 1992). This document thus has the advantage of being written after the 1988 Vatican Directory. It follows similar lines to the Directory i.e. the nature of Sunday and the assembly, but it expands the Directory by suggesting that the two forms of the service of the word, from the hours and from the mass, may both have the rite of communion added. It also adds more about the procedures for selection and training of the lay leaders. However, it has been said (Huels, 1990) that this document 'manifests considerable ambivalence about Sunday celebrations without priests' (p. 460).

The Conference of Bishops developed a liturgy: *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest: Leaders' Edition* (National Conference of Catholic Bishops USA, 1994). This was based on previous experience, on materials from abroad, and on the Directory. This was approved by the bishops in 1989 but delayed from coming out with *Gathered in Steadfast Faith* by the desire to have a bilingual English Spanish edition, and by a review of the document by the

Congregation for Divine Worship. Two forms of service are given. The first is based on the Hours, inserting the Liturgy of the Word and the option of Communion (p. 41, p. 75). The second is derivative of the Liturgy of the Word from the mass (p. 107). Included are 24 acts of thanksgiving, some scriptural, some traditional, some newly composed. The rite follows the missal in its use of many prayers. This leads to problems with some of the post communion collects using language such as the eucharist, this sacrifice, and the Easter sacrament (Tovey, 2002). The hard-back altar missal style of the edition of this book gives the impression of great permanence for this service in the church.

Hovda (1988) commented that priestless Sundays were a phenomenon that 'most of us have simply taken for granted' (p. 155), and that powerful forces can effectively undermine reform and renewal efforts in the church. He sees the development as contrary to the reforms of the Council. Huck (1989) also protested about the direction of this development. He asked:

How priestless will our Sundays have to become before the rules about who gets into the presbyterate are changed by the presbyters? (p. 37)

Mitchell (2002) called the development a 'short-term solution to a long-term problem' (p. 456) seeing communion services as dividing the sacrifice of the mass from receiving communion. Thus there has been critical questioning of this development in the USA, particularly by liturgists.

Kathleen Hughes (1995) conducted research in this area using her training experience. In 1989 she began to train people for leadership of worship in the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. She comments on the situation worldwide:

The phenomena of parishes in which no priest is available... is not by any means a new phenomena. The so-called younger Churches, or mission Churches, have long experienced a clergy shortage. It may well be that we have seen a flurry of publications from Rome because this is now a First-World phenomenon. (p.46)

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Hughes then comments on her developing alarm:

> This flurry of publication ... started to alarm me. Such publications, and especially the ritual book, seemed to suggest that SWAP is a reasonable alternative to Sunday Eucharist – not an interim emergency measure but something quasi-permanent. (p. 46)

On the symbolism of publication she concludes that it is no longer an interim rite of a local church for it comes as a 'handsomely published ritual book originating in Rome for use in the universal church' (p. 46). She conducted her research in 1992 and found great variety of names used for the service, great variety in training, directions on vesture, allowance of preaching (or not), as can seen in other parts of this thesis. She described the situation as 'a period of drift and denial' (p. 48). She raises question at all levels ecclesiological, sacramental, and liturgical about the veracity of this development.

In 1995 the Bishops of Kansas issued a statement about the centrality of the eucharist (Bishops of Kansas, 1995). They expressed reserve about authorizing SWAP, saying that they restrict it to emergencies only. Their basis for doing this is trenchant:

> We, the bishops of Kansas, have come to judge that Holy Communion regularly received outside of Mass is a short-term solution that has all the makings of becoming a long-term problem. It has implications that are disturbing:
>
> - A blurring of the difference between the celebration of the Eucharist and the reception of Communion.
> - A blurring of the distinction between a priest and a deacon or a non-ordained minister presiding over Communion service.
> - A blurring of the relationship between pastoral and sacramental ministry.
> - A blurring of the connection between the Eucharist and the works of charity and justice.

- A blurring of the need for priests and therefore a blurring of the continual need for vocations.
- A blurring of the linkage between the local church and the diocesan and universal church that is embodied in the person of the parish priest

This indicates the depth of disquiet about the emerging situation.

While liturgists and some bishops have been doubtful about the development of SWAP, nationally bishops have had to be practical. The numbers of clergy continue to fall, predicted in 2005 to be 21,000 (Feuerherd, 2003). However, there are about 13,000 permanent deacons and 35,000 laity who have enrolled in lay ecclesial ministry programmes. Meanwhile, 3,300 parishes are led by pastoral administrators, 20% of them by permanent deacons. The Bishops have issued documents on *Guidelines for Lay Preaching* (National Conference of Catholic Bishops USA, 1988), *Deacons at Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest* (US Catholic Bishops, 2002a), and *Weekday Celebrations* (US Catholic Bishops, 2002b). Training materials have been published e.g. for presiders (Mick, 2001) or lay leaders (Brown, 2004). While Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of the Priest seems likely to stay, some of the pressure for their growth is being reduced by the decrease of mass attendance by the laity in the USA (Feuerherd, 2003).

Canada

The first query in the *National Bulletin for Liturgy* regarding priestless parishes was in 1975 (Rosier, 2002). The response was to suggest a Bible Service with the distribution of Communion. 1981 saw the publication of a local liturgy for the Prairies (Western Liturgical Conference, 1981). This book went through a number of editions (Western Liturgical Conference, 1984), and was influential both in Canada and the USA. Various training materials were prepared for ministers of communion e.g. Moffatt (1987) and later Henderson (1991). Other dioceses began to produce their own liturgies e.g. Edmonton (1988), St George Newfoundland

(1992). A pastoral letter was issued in 1992 (Episcopal Commission for Liturgy - Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1992), and a national liturgy was produced in 1995 (National Liturgy Office, 1995). This gives a history as follows:

Pre 1975   Limited beginnings in remote areas

1975 - 1991 Development of diocesan rituals

1991 - 1995 Development of national liturgy

1995   Ongoing development

Thus Canada was ahead of the USA in beginning SWAP but took longer to develop its own national liturgies and training materials e.g. Britz and Maier (1996). The Canadian liturgy seems to have benefited from this longer period of development.

Sunday Celebrations, the National Canadian liturgy, begins with a reflection on the nature of Sunday. The Liturgy of the Word with Communion comes next. The Liturgy of the Hours concludes the book but there is no provision of this with communion (unlike the USA). The liturgy of the Word and Communion has a number of significant components that suggest it is the fruit of much consideration of previous experience. Firstly, the liturgy of the Word is given prominence with a procession and enthronement of the Word after the service has begun (p.xxix). Then, seasonal introductions are given with appropriate symbolic actions e.g. advent wreath, sprinkling with holy water, blessing of palms. Also, careful consideration of the hymn before distributing communion is advised (p. xl). There are reservations about the use of eucharistic hymns (p.xxxii). Finally, twelve *Proclamations of Praise* are included, as a response to the Word of God (p.xxxi), see also Hibbard (1994a).

There is also a word of caution in this book. There must be a 'live' link with the previous eucharist:

131. A communion service should be held only when eucharistic bread (hosts) can be brought from a neighbouring parish the same day as the *Sunday Celebration of the Word*, at the longest the day before, or the

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pastor can leave the bread from an earlier Mass, recently celebrated in the
community, in order that there may be some connection between the
receiving of communion and the celebration of the eucharist from which
the communion proceeds.

132. When hosts are consecrated so long in advance of their use by the
community that the link between the celebration of the eucharist is
unclear, a communion service should not be joined to the *Sunday
Celebration of the Word.* (p.xxxii)

Hibbard (1994b) voices the problem of the adding of a rite of communion to the
service of the word:

Without denying the real presence of Christ, communion outside the
Sunday eucharist is in danger of being reduced to the static presence of
Christ while losing sight of the dynamic activity within the assembly. In
other words, the eucharist is in danger of being reduced to a thing rather
than an action of Christ and an action of the eucharistic assembly. (p. 226)

This significant caution from Canada is not found in other local liturgies, and
flows out of experience of more extreme contexts for the use of this liturgy. This
approach of clear links is developed in the rubrics for the Easter Triduum. There
must be a eucharist on Maundy Thursday, and the presanctified can only be
distributed on Good Friday if there was a eucharist the night before (p. 61).
Communion outside the Mass may not be distributed at the Easter Vigil (p. 62),
but there may be a distribution on Easter day, provided that hosts are brought
from an Easter Vigil or an Easter Mass (p.62). All of this is underpinned by a
consideration of the theology of Sunday and of particular Sundays and their
relationship to the eucharist. Clearly in Canada communion with *Sunday
Celebration of the Word* is not always regarded as appropriate.

Canada has also had its critics of these rites. Marrevee (1988) calls for
more theological justification of the situation that has arisen. He talks of the
'ambiguity of the assembly' (p. 207) wanting to gather but not getting the
eucharist. He looks at the history of the development of the rites saying that these

services are adopted with 'somewhat surprising speed and not always with much needed critical reflection' (p. 209). Hibbard (1998) who helped write the service comments:

> Examining Sunday celebrations of the word is like discussing the role of food banks in attacking the problem of poverty (p.92).
> We are in a no win situation... (p. 92).
> I am not sure what we have created or how it will develop or what will result from it in the long term. I do know the reaction of many communities who are proud to be able to celebrate their faith and are puzzled by the negative reactions of many theologians... (p. 93).
> We must be mindful of those communities that cannot celebrate the eucharist... (p.93).

Turner (n.d.) is more critical. He says:

> The difference resembles that between a potluck dinner in which the meal comes to life before us, and leftovers from the refrigerator. Both feed the hunger, but the first better satisfies the soul. (p. 2).

He argues strongly for reform of the priesthood and to allow the return of priests who left to get married.

Canada has had problems with small rural congregations and shortages of priest for a long time. They have produced perhaps the best liturgy of any Episcopal Conference but it is still a controversial move in the eyes of even those who have written the liturgies.

British Isles

The situation in the British Isles varies from country to country. It has already been noted that Ireland still seems to have enough priests for Sunday Masses. However, the number of priests in training has declined and lay people are leading mid-week services using unofficial texts e.g. McCann (2000). In 1976 England and Wales had eight parishes without a priest by 1991 there were 53, it was expected then to develop in the next ten years to 1,000 (Kerkhofs, 1995).

The history of development of this service in England and Wales can be divided into a number of periods:

Pre 1988   Local experimentation

1988 - 1996   Locally produced rites

1996 -   National policy documents developing practice

The 1988 Directory came as revelation to many, but Matthews (1988) had to admit that 'in parts of England and Wales weekday lay-led liturgies are common' (p. 2). The National Liturgical Conference of 1988 discussed the Directory in particular, and also lay-led liturgy. Jones (1988, 1989) reported that in East Anglia there were problems with parishes being temporarily priestless, and therefore communion services were already being held. Indeed, Bishop Donnelly seems to have already approved for use in his diocese a rite based on the French material in 1986 (Brentwood Diocesan Commission for Liturgy, 1984b). The Pastoral Rites Group also considered using the 10th century medieval rite of Monte Cassino (Brentwood Diocesan Commission for Liturgy, 1984a).

The period after the production of the Directory saw steady diocesan growth in use of services of Word and Communion. In 1994 Brentwood was reporting that lay-led liturgies are celebrated as emergency measures but they saw the problem as growing. In 1995 Clifton diocese produced a cautious policy document (Buckley, 1995). In 1995 Northampton produced liturgies for use in the diocese. These were revised in 2001 producing one rite for lay leadership (Diocese of Northampton, 2001a) and another for deacons (Diocese of Northampton, 2001b). Later, the Diocese of Portsmouth (2002) also produced its own rite.

In 1996 the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales produced an interim rite *Celebration of Word and Communion*, also called CWAC (Catholic Bishop's Conference of England & Wales, 1996). It is implied that a fuller rite may be forthcoming as this is a slim volume, which points to local diocesan

variation. Some people objected strongly to this provision (O'Loughlin, 1998).
The rite was followed by an important teaching document *One Bread One Body*
(Catholic Bishops' Conferences of England & Wales et al., 1998). This tries to
outline the Catholic teaching on the eucharist. While touching many areas
including intercommunion there is one short piece on Communion Services:
31 This 'sacrificial' understanding of the Eucharist needs renewed emphasis even
among Catholics. In some Catholic circles there can appear to be a confusion
between the celebration of Mass on the one hand, and a Communion Service or
'Celebration of the Word and Communion' on the other. The Eucharist or Mass is
much more than a service in which we are led in prayer, hear the Word of God
and receive Holy Communion. There are certainly proper occasions for
Communion Services, above all the Commemoration of the Lord's Passion on
Good Friday. When no priest is available, Catholics cannot celebrate Mass.
Instead, they are sometimes invited to reflect on the word of God and to pray
together, and then to share Christ's body and blood consecrated at a previous
Eucharist. This is not the same as the Mass, however. No Communion Service can
substitute for the celebration of the Eucharist, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.
This seems to admit a failure in catechesis in the introduction of services of Word
and Communion.

Various people have continued to monitor the situation. An inter-diocesan
consultation in 1999 discussed CWAC (Anon, 1999). This produced feed back
that included, 'people don't notice the Eucharistic Prayer', 'we like Sister's Mass'
(p.5). The report from Nottingham in this consultation included the information
that there had been training in all 16 deaneries and over 800 people had attended
(p.7). In 2001 questionnaires were sent to monastic communities. The replies
indicated there existed present-day difficulties in finding a priest, and an
expectation was discovered that this would get critical, resulting in the holding of
communion services in the absence of mass. However, it also indicated that some
communities would prefer to hold Services of the Word than daily CWAC. In
2002 Northampton diocese conducted a survey, which showed that 54% of

parishes hold regular services of CWAC midweek, only one parish held such services regularly on a Sunday, but 26% had held such services in emergency on a Sunday. 84% used the diocesan service, others used the national rite, and four had evolved their own parish rite. In 2003 Anna Brennan (2003) wrote about the particular circumstances of enclosed nuns, again pointing to the growing shortage of priests and the need for communion services in convents.

The laity is taking a growing part in leadership of the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales at a local level. *The Tablet* has published articles on lay led parishes. In 2001 it produced an article on a parish near Heathrow run by a religious sister (Miller, 2001). In 2004 another article appeared about a paid lay 'pastoral administrator' running a parish in Arundel diocese, and publicly installed as such by the bishop (Hopper, 2004). There is also a growing literature for training lay leaders, e.g. Tomalak (2003). While the situation seems less of a problem than other countries, the expectation is that lay led communion services in parishes will grow with an increasingly aging clergy who are not being replaced by young men entering the priesthood.

However, the situation is not one of uniform development. The removal of permission for these services has already been noted in one diocese in Germany. The same has happened in the Diocese of Portsmouth. A consultation document *Go Out and Bear Fruit* (Hollis, 2005) proposes the end of celebrations of Communion. Parishes are being amalgamated into new 'Pastoral Areas'. Masses will be rationalized but:

> The plan also expresses a concern that any Sunday liturgy does not imply a lessening of the significance of the celebration of Mass. That is why the plan discourages "Word and Communion" on Sundays where Mass cannot be celebrated in favour of the development and adaptation of the Liturgy of the Hours. As the plan develops across the diocese, some churches will be without Sunday Mass. It may be appropriate to celebrate the Liturgy of Hours but not a service of Word and Communion. (Hollis, 2005)

Such services are to be phased out by Easter 2006.

These national studies reflect the experience of the developed world. It was noted in the discussion of both Germany and the second Vatican Council that requests for lay-led communion services came from other parts of the world. Thus the problem for the Roman Catholic Church is worldwide hence the production of the Vatican Directory in 1988. Before we can evaluate this development we need to examine further policy documents from the central church.

Further international policy documents

In 1997 the Vatican approved the *Instruction on certain questions regarding the collaboration of the non-ordained faithful in the sacred ministry of priests* (Vatican, 1977). This covers many aspects of church life, stressing the indispensability of the priesthood and the homily as reserved to the sacred minister. It does allow laity to be extraordinary ministers of holy communion, ministers to the sick (but anointing is reserved to a priest), to assist at marriages, to be extraordinary ministers of baptism, lead funerals, and lead Sunday services in the absence of a priest. This section of the document begins with a positive tone saying 'much good derives for the local community from this useful and delicate service' (p. 41). It then calls them 'temporary solutions' (p.41) and reminds the church that such services do not fulfill the obligation to attend mass on Sundays and holydays. This last statement seems to undermine the 1988 Directory. It also says that the eucharistic prayer is not to be used 'even in narrative form' (pp.41-42) at such celebrations. This may imply greater diversity of action at parish level than would have been allowed by other official documents.

In 1998 John Paul II wrote the letter *Dies Domini* (John Paul II, 1998). This is an apostolic letter on the importance of Sunday and the Sunday eucharistic assembly. In it there is a long paragraph on Sunday worship in the absence of a priest:

53. There remains the problem of parishes which do not have the ministry of a priest for the celebration of the Sunday Eucharist. This is often the case in young Churches, where one priest has pastoral responsibility for faithful scattered over a vast area. However, emergency situations can also arise in countries of long-standing Christian tradition, where diminishing numbers of clergy make it impossible to guarantee the presence of a priest in every parish community. In situations where the Eucharist cannot be celebrated, the Church recommends that the Sunday assembly come together even without a priest, in keeping with the indications and directives of the Holy See which have been entrusted to the Episcopal Conferences for implementation. Yet the objective must always remain the celebration of the Sacrifice of the Mass, the one way in which the Passover of the Lord becomes truly present, the only full realization of the Eucharistic assembly over which the priest presides *in persona Christi*, breaking the bread of the word and the Eucharist. At the pastoral level, therefore, everything has to be done to ensure that the Sacrifice of the Mass is made available as often as possible to the faithful who are regularly deprived of it, either by arranging the presence of a priest from time to time, or by taking every opportunity to organize a gathering in a central location accessible to scattered groups.

This would seem to be a rather optimistic appraisal of the situation, reflecting perhaps the Polish background of the Pope coming from one of the few countries with a sufficient supply of priests. Some countries are already in a permanent emergency situation even in the longstanding Christian areas.

Evaluation

This chapter has looked at the situation of the Roman Catholic Church at the level of Vatican policy documents, the work of local Conferences of Bishops, policies of particular dioceses, and the views of various liturgical commentators. What is noticeable in the Catholic literature is the absence of any significant voice of the laity, since most of the literature is written by priests and religious (this is

common in other denominations). While this deficiency cannot be addressed here, it does make the empirical research later in this book an important corrective.

Like all denominations the Roman Catholic Church exists in a changing world. In the church an emerging alternative structure seems to be developing at a parish level. This new model is one of an increasing importance of the laity and of clergy-laity cooperation (Hahnenberg, 2003). If this is seen as a continuum, at one end is the parish priest with some extraordinary ministers of communion who might on occasion lead SWAP mid week, at the other end is the lay led parish. The traditional parish might be seen diagrammatically in the following figure (4.2):

Figure 4.2 Catholic model of traditional parish


Key
P   Priest
LL Lay Leaders
C   Congregation
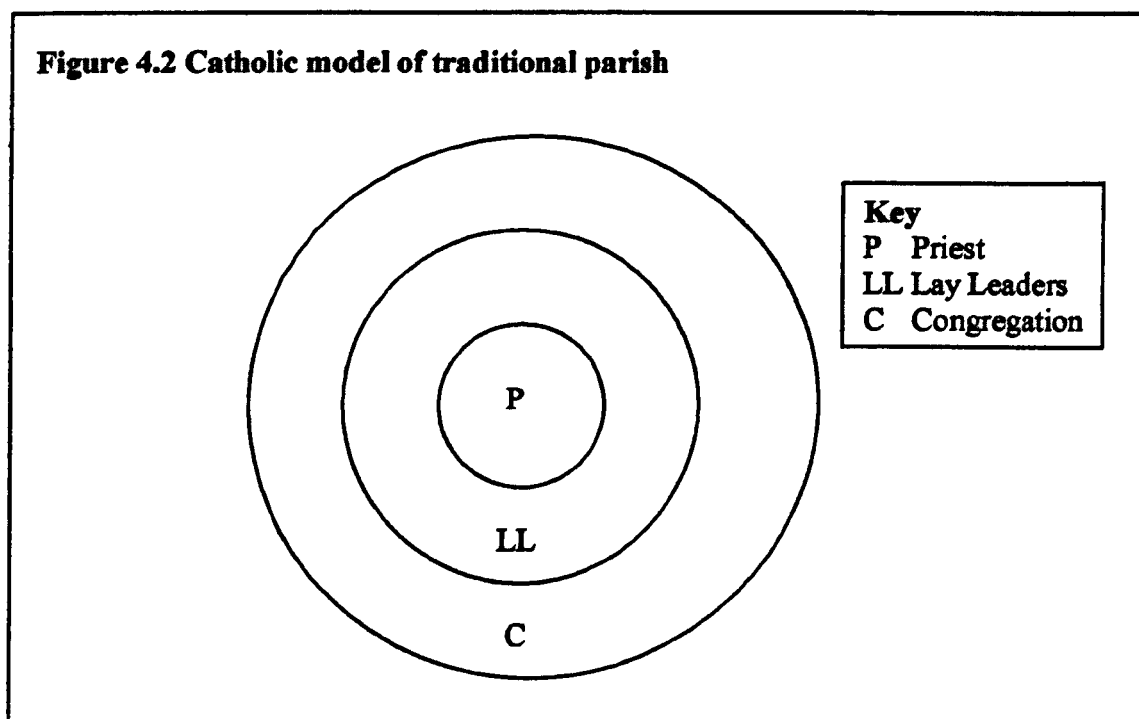
In this model the parish is centered on the priest, and lay leaders look to him for guidance, the priest being the central figure. Worship is centered on the mass,

which may be a daily occurrence. The priest lives in the parish coordinating and taking a leading role in the pastoral care of parishioners.

The emerging parish model is somewhat different. In the ideal type of this parish there is a lay-person in charge under canon 517 § 2. This person is paid by the laity, lives in the presbytery, and is installed by the bishop at a public ceremony. They lead many services in the church including daily prayer, funerals, ministry to the sick, conducting marriages, and baptism (on occasion). The parish priest lives in another village, has 4 (or more) churches to oversee, and comes to this parish once every six weeks to say Mass. The lay-leader conducts SWAP on both Sundays and mid week, using the reserved sacrament, and the rite approved by their Episcopal Conference. This might be seen diagrammatically in the following (figure 4.3)

Figure 4.3 Modified Catholic model

Key
P Priest
LL Lay Leaders
C Congregation
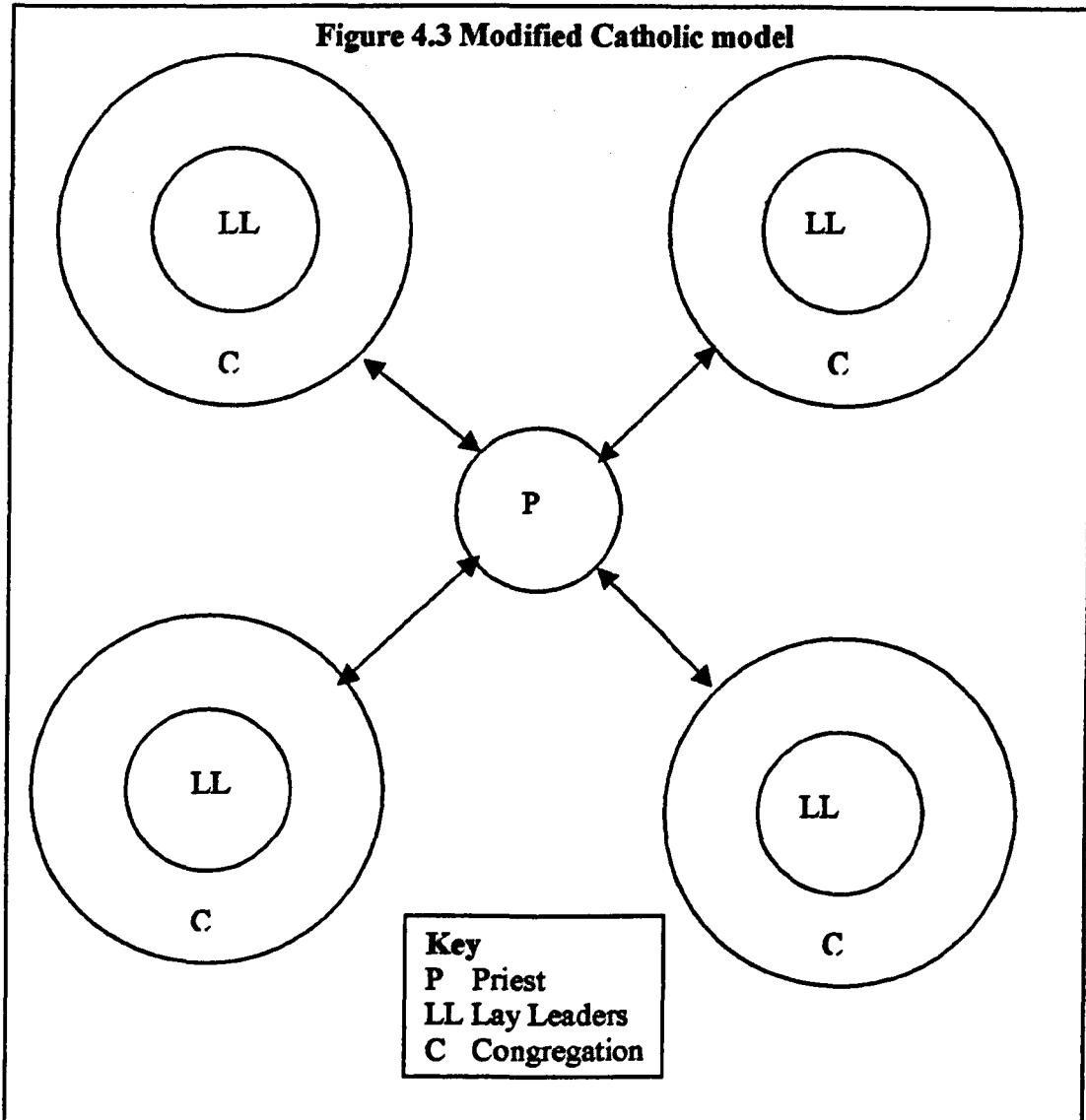
Such an emerging church is a significant departure from traditional Catholic life. The lay leader(s) functions in many of the previous roles of the parish priest. The priest takes on an overseeing role more akin to the dean or bishop. A key underlying problem is a failure to reform the priesthood. Indeed, the present situation seems to be undermining the Roman Catholic Church as constituted by the celebration of the Sunday eucharist. The lack of reform of the

priesthood is distorting the ecclesiology of the church at a local level. Short-term liturgical solutions have been used to evade questions of reforming the priesthood.

This ministerial issue can be seen in the official title of the service, Sunday Worship in the Absence of a Priest. At this Sunday worship which priest is absent? The Eucharist envisages the presence of the assembly, the priestly people of God, made one with God in baptism. It also envisages the presence of Christ as the assembly worships the Father in the Spirit. The parish priest leads the service, exercising ministerial priesthood. In this alternative model there is not a complete absence of priesthood at the Sunday assembly. The language here is clearly unfortunate.

Liturgically Catholic commentators seem divided about the soundness of a service of Word and Communion. In particular there is a divide between those who stress continuity with some of the traditional rites seen in previous chapters and those who see SWAP as a new rite for a new context. Mitchell (2002) says that:

> The practice of a "Communion Service in the Absence of a Priest" is not
> historically, an innovation in the Christian West (p. 460)

Austin (1991) sees a connection between monastic practice and weekday services of Communion. Henchal (1992, 1998) talks of a strand of tradition in Catholic history of services of the word but without communion. Woolfenden (2002) calls the new Catholic services a 'new form of the presanctified liturgy' (p. 387), thus presupposing both continuity and discontinuity. Rosier (2002) on the other hand talks of:

> The modern history of Sunday assembly in the absence of a priest as
> [being] approximately a sixty-year period from about 1940 until the
> *Directory* publication in 1988 and beyond, to its global adaptations
> continuing in local churches today. (p. 92)

Finally Dallen (1994) makes an important distinction:

> The weekday communion service has clear precedent in the tradition, all the way back to the home communion of the early centuries. There is no such precedent for the Sunday communion service whose history goes back no further than the mid-1960s. (p. 53)

It perhaps depends on which factor is the focus of analysis. Is it the reception of communion outside the eucharist? Is the presence of an ordained priest? Is it the gathering of the Sunday assembly? The strength of the Roman Catholic documents is to combine all these factors. However, the evidence presented in this thesis tends to the conclusion that 'Sunday Worship in the absence of a Priest' is an innovation in the Roman Catholic Church. This conclusion is reached not least because of the distinctive feature of it being a lay-led service in the absence of a priest, a new milieu for the Roman Catholic Church. The consequences of this are yet to become fully apparent.

Chapter 5

The Methodist Church

The new service book *Methodist Worship* (Methodist Church, 1999) includes a service of Extended Communion (pp. 229-233). This is new to British Methodist liturgy. There is, however, a particular meaning to the term in British Methodism that can lead to confusion in discussion with other denominations. This reiterates issues raised in chapter three, the dictionary of terms. Methodism also includes in its history another important experience, the love-feast, which could be seen as paralleling the eucharist (or in some way connected to it) in such a way that makes it important to the study of extended communion. We will see later that some of the parishes in the case studies have used agapes as part of their worship strategy. As the love-feast is an important part of Methodist tradition, and because of the findings of the empirical research to be discussed later, it is apposite, at this point, that the love-feast will be a second focus of scrutiny in this section. Therefore this chapter will examine two key issues, the service of extended communion, and the love-feast.

Extended Communion 1999

The service in *The Methodist Worship Book* takes the following order:

Figure 5.1 Extended Communion 1999
Notes
Preparation of elements
Greeting
Explanation: The Church of God...
Collect for purity
Confession and absolution
Collect
Reading(s)
Exposition
Prayers of thanksgiving and intercession
Lord's Prayer
Humble access
Words of invitation
Post-communion collect
Blessing

It is clear from the notes that this is an act of worship using elements that have been 'previously set apart at a service of *Holy Communion'* (Note 1, p. 229, their italics and bold). This then could be seen as used in similar circumstances to those of the Roman Catholic Church or the Church of England. However, note 2 clearly says that the service could be lead by a presbyter, deacon, or lay person, and even a lay person with a dispensation to preside at the eucharist. It becomes clear in note 4 that the recipients are to be those who are in a home or hospital. This is further clarified by the regulations in *Constitutional Practice and Discipline* the Methodist equivalent of Anglican canon law:

> 609 Extended Communion. (1) A Church Council may annually appoint lay persons to lead acts of worship in homes (including nursing and retirement homes), hospitals and hospices during which elements set aside at a previous celebration of the Lord's Supper are received. (2) Persons so appointed shall, unless already instructed in the conduct of such services, be instructed by the Superintendent or by a minister appointed by him or her, the form of service for Extended Communion authorised by the Conference being used as a basis of instruction. (Methodist Church, 1996).

Thus it becomes clear that extended communion becomes parallel to Communion for the Sick in the Roman Catholic Church and Church of England. However, even this statement has to be nuanced, for we shall see that although the bishops of the Church of England have made a categorical distinction between communion for the sick and extended communion, in practice it is not so easy to make that distinction. Methodists have two possibilities with the communion for the sick, housebound, or people in homes, namely to celebrate a service of Holy Communion in the home or in hospital, or to hold a service of extended communion. It is the latter, which this chapter will examine.

Background to the service

The roots of the present service go back to a paper of the Division of Home Mission called *Action and Ideas in Mission*, 1981 (Methodist Conference, 1984). This introduced a large number of examples to construct a case to argue for the practice: the example of David Smethurst in the Church of England parish of Ulverston, (this will be examined in the next chapter); using helpers to administer communion in large congregations; the infrequency of communion in many chapels combined with a large number of local preachers; the example of Justin Martyr (examined above); home communion in the early church (also discussed above); the example of Lutherans, Anglicans and Calvin, all of whom at some time have allowed communion for the sick; the importance of communion for the sick to John Wesley; the practice of ministers to communicate the sick with elements consecrated at the Easter communion; and the Primitive Methodist Conference of 1841 (which will be explored later in this chapter). The Conference report of 1984 noted that:

> Some might have to overcome a prejudice against a practice which might remind them of the 'reserved Sacrament' (p. 28).

However, it did authorize an outline rite, which became the precursor to the 1999 service.

Further debate was to occur on extended communion. In 1994 the issue was raised in the context of lay authorizations (Methodist Conference, 1994). It is clear that some parts of Methodism would like to expand the present rather restrictive application of the policy of lay presidency. This is a complex argument but issues of extended communion were drawn into it. The report notes the increase in reception of communion in Methodism in the last 30 years (p. 637). This leads to a changing definition of 'deprivation', the criteria for application for lay authorization (p. 638). In some places ministers cannot meet the sacramental needs of the sick, elderly and housebound. Thus it is:

> Entirely proper for persons other than ordained ministers to take the elements into the homes of those who have been unable to join in the celebration in the church (p. 639).

Once again the fear of reserved sacrament was mentioned, but the report did not think that Methodists would begin to venerate the elements. The Conference asked the Faith and Order committee to prepare suitable liturgical material (p. 643).

The discussion so far, and its development into the 1999 rite, is summarized in figure 5.2 contrasting general liturgical revision in the first column to the particulars of extended communion in the next three columns.

Figure 5.2 Process of authorization of Extended communion in Methodist Church			
Liturgical Revision	Extended Communion		
	Other Committees Division of Home Mission 'Action and Ideas in Mission' March 1981	Faith and Order	Order of Service
Proposals 1990 F&O to publish drafts 1991 Draft orders 1992		Extending Communion 1984	Outline Order 1984
	General Purposes Committee 'Lay Authorisation' 1994	Lay Authorisation and Extended Communion 1995 Lay Authorisation 1996	Extended Communion 1995
Revision procedures 1997 Revision committee recommendation 1998			Extended Communion 1999

The Conference in 1995 continued to discuss *Lay Authorisation and Extended Communion* (Methodist Conference, 1995a). This produced the order of service asked for in 1994, and is a direct precursor to the present service. The

Question of *Authorisation to Preside at the Lord's Supper* was raised again in 1996 (Methodist Conference, 1996). This time the Faith and Order Committee stuck to its previous position, pointing back to the 1994 report saying:

> A theological defense of Extended Communion appears in the 1994 report...this practice is not only compatible with our doctrines but also a means of providing eucharistic ministry in many cases of deprivation (p. 203).

While the 1994 report does give some justification for extended communion, it only summarizes the 1984 report, which gives the most detailed justification for the practice. The 1996 report commended the practice and affirmed the 1995 liturgy. This was later revised and included in the *Methodist Worship* (1999).

Liturgical revision

The 1999 book was the fulfillment of a long process of liturgical revision. At the 1990 Conference the Faith and Order Committee stated (Methodist Conference, 1990):

> The time has come to start work on a volume... to replace *MSB* [their italics, Methodist Service Book, the previous liturgy] (p. 105).

Neil Dixon invited comments on revision and suggested that (Dixon, 1990):

> 1995 is likely to be the earliest date in which the replacement service book will be ready (p. 53).

This was to be optimistic.

Questions of liturgical revision and cultural change have been in the discourse of British Methodism for a while. The *Epworth Review* ran a series of articles in the early 1980s on *Assessing New Liturgies*; one looked for local development and worship to voice the place of women and ethnic minorities (Nixon, 1981), another pointed to the increasing cultural gap between Methodism and its context (Corlett, 1981). Later articles were to discuss 'alternative worship' (Hare, 2000), and the postmodern challenge (Archer, 2000). None of these particularly discussed extended communion, indeed the lack of discussion is quite

noticeable in comparison with the Church of England. However, the last article did mention the aging nature of Methodism. Using the *Church Watch* report of Leslie Francis from 1996, Archer says that 42% of Methodist congregations were aged 60+ (p. 12). This might be one of the key factors for a growing demand on ministers to visit hospitals and homes to take communion.

The 1991 Conference approved the production of draft services published under the authority of the Faith and Order Committee, who have the authority to produce draft services for trial use (Methodist Conference, 1991). By 1992 the Committee had noted that requests for the draft services were far exceeding expectations (Methodist Conference, 1992). In 1998 the Conference approved the new book, including the service of extended communion (Methodist Conference, 1998).

While all the services were published as draft services, this was not true of the service of extended communion. The conference authorized the service (Wallwork and Atkins, 1996):

> As an authorized text no formal period of experimental use or comment is required (final page).

It was published as a booklet clearly stating its authorized status (Methodist Conference, 1995b). It is not clear as to why it did not go through the same process as other services. The Liturgical Sub Committee invited comments on all services in their revision process. Neil Dixon, in a personal communication, commented about extended communion: 'there was not much correspondence on Extended Communion during the previous 12 years' (Dixon, 2005). He goes on to say that the difference between Methodism and the Church of England is that Extended Communion in Methodism is the relatively uncontroversial communion to the sick but in the Church of England the issue is taking consecrated elements from one church to another.

Figure 5.3 Methodist Extended Communion Services		
Extending Communion 1984	Extended Communion 1995	Extended Communion 1999
Directions (4)	General Directions (8)	Notes (7)
	*1 Direction	*1 Direction
Greeting	2 Grace and peace	2 Grace and peace
	3 The bread...	3 The Church of God...
	4 Collect for purity	4 Collect for purity
	5 Confession	5 Confession
	*6 Collect	*6 Collect
Sentence of Scripture	*7 Readings	*7 Readings
Peace	8 Exposition	8 Exposition
Prayer	9 Thanksgiving Intercession	9 Thanksgiving Intercession
	*10 Lord's Prayer	*10 Lord's Prayer
	11 Humble access	11 Humble access
Words of delivery	*12 Invitation / distribution	*12 Communion
Concluding prayer	13 Post communion collect	13 Post communion collect
Grace	*14 Blessing	*14 Blessing

Figure 5.3 gives a comparative chart of the three liturgies of Extended Communion. The major difference is between the 1984 outline order and the 1995/1999 liturgies, which are full texts. The * in the 1995/1999 orders are the basic elements that must be included. Many minor textual changes were made but none of great significance. Section 3 is perhaps the major change where the very blunt words of 1995 were replaced with the words based on Church of England 1983 words from the Communion of the Sick (Dixon, 2003). It is also to be noted that the Methodists since 1995 have always included a simple prayer of thanksgiving, something that has been controversial in other churches.

Wesley and the sick

One of the early arguments for advocating extended communion was the importance given by John Wesley to communion for the sick. John and Charles Wesley's theology of the eucharist developed in hymnody (Rattenbury, 1948,

1990) and in missiological experience, the latter developing into the eucharist as 'converting ordinance' and the need for 'constant communion' (Burdon, 2002). It is clear that in England John Wesley held communion services at the sickbed sometimes with large numbers of people (Bowmer, 1951).

Bowmer suggests that Wesley was sympathetic to taking communion from the church service directly to the sick. He advances two reasons: first, that Wesley was aware of the precedent of Justin Martyr, which he interprets as for the sick (Bowmer, 1951, p. 139), and second that Wesley was also aware of the practice of the 1549 Prayer Book that included a rubric allowing the priest to take communion from the church directly to the sick person at home.

A further consideration is that both the 1718 and 1734 Nonjuror's liturgies followed the 1549 Prayer Book in allowing reservation to communicate the sick after the service (Grisbrook, 1958). The latter service was developed by Thomas Deacon who had been a member of the Holy Club. Bowmer concludes that Wesley would have had no problems with this method of communicating the sick, but as he was not a parish priest he did not have the pastoral opportunity to enact the practice (1951, p. 140). It was to be a considerable period before British Methodism would take up a modified version of this early suggestion. American Methodism seems also to have recently followed the same path allowing laypersons to take communion to those unable to be present (Benedict, 2003).

Contemporary examples of Extended Communion

Services of extended communion may be lay led. The place of lay ministry in addition to that of the local preacher has been of some discussion in Methodism. Some have warned that with declining ministers and increasing ministerial retirements lay people are being (Townsend, 1987):

> forced by lack of imagination... and sometimes sheer desperation... into becoming substitute ordained ministers (p. 11)

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Other have given a more positive assessment of the place of lay minister particularly in a rural context (Mayes, 1998). None of these discussions included extended communion.

There is some evidence of the contemporary utilization of extended communion, not least on chapel websites and worship plans. Four examples are indicative of the range of usage. First, London Road Methodist Church Dover gives information on extended communion in *The Messenger* of July and August 2000. The church council agreed that Mrs Sue Brockman be authorized to take communion to members in their homes, particularly those who are housebound. Elsewhere Mrs Brockman is described as 'our much valued and loved Lay Worker' (Newton, 2000). This would seem to be following the policy as outlined above. Second, Shirley Methodist Church, Croydon, advertises 'Once a quarter, a midweek celebration of Holy Communion, extended to the housebound' (Shirley Methodist Church, n.d.). This is a slightly different arrangement but also within Methodist practice. Third, Kirton Methodist Church in Lincolnshire advertised for Sunday 25th May [2004] 'Extended Communion conducted by Mrs. Helen Freeston' (Community on the Web Production, 2004). This chapel works closely with the Anglican Church and it would appear that Anglican practice has crossed over to Methodism. Finally, the Methodist Church Wellesbourne, Warwickshire, while Rev Heather Taylor was minister advertised in 1993 and 1994 (Wellesbourne Website, 2004):

> **Morning Devotions with extended (Pre-sanctified) Communion on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday at 9.30 a.m. for half an hour in Wellesbourne Methodist Church.** The aim of this meeting is to say a form of **morning prayer,** to share thoughts on the Gospel of the day and to pray together.
>
> **The Communion, using pre-consecrated Hosts** will be shared together very simply. All are welcome. (bold as original)

This would seem to be very unusual for Methodism and ceased with a new Minister.

This evidence indicates that extended communion is being applied both in ways conceived by Conference and also in more unusual ways. Kirton suggests that a crossover of practice is going on with Anglicanism, extended communion in Methodist terms is becoming extended communion in Anglican terms. This may be made possible by the use of the same term albeit to mean different things (see the next chapter). However, the critical comments of James Dunn (1992) might indicate that this use of the service would be opposed in some parts of Methodism:

> The theological nonsense of the 'reserved sacrament', where authorised 'lay' people take the consecrated elements from some center to dispersed churches – as clear a denial of these churches' priesthood and body-of-Christness as one could imagine (p. 46).

While, there has been a greater frequency of communion in Methodism in recent years (Lenton, 2000), there is also a decline in the number of Ministers and an aging church. This may lead to pressure for more of these services. Wellesbourne advertised a service that would be unusual even in Anglicanism but might be justified from some of the antecedents of extended communion seen in previous chapters. It is one a rare example in Methodism of a conceptual link being made between the Liturgy of the Presanctified and extended communion.

Primitive Methodist Conference, 1841

The 1984 Faith and Order Report mentioned the Primitive Methodist Conference of 1841, which is worthy of critical examination. The spiritual life of the Primitive Methodist was nourished by preachings, prayer-meetings, class-meetings, love-feasts, camp-meetings and the Lord's Supper (Marsh, 1952). Marsh reports that:

> There are many reports of love-feasts in the early Primitive Methodist Magazines but a curious silence regarding the Lord's Supper (p. 181).

He attributes this to no real anti-sacramentalism but that the Primitive Methodists were 'not versed in the doctrines of the Church' (p. 181). It is also clear that love-feasts were seen as a means of grace. Hatcher (1990) also points to the stronger emphasis on the love-feast while denying the church as anti-sacramental.

The 22nd Primitive Methodist Conference of 1841 is well documented (Bourne, 1841a). It was held in 'the large and pleasant town of Reading in Berkshire' (p. 352). In 1841 the church had 65,963 members with 154 Circuits. Previous to the conference Hugh Bourne had argued from Exodus and Luke that the bread for the sacrament should be unleavened (Bourne, 1841b). He also argued that the bread needed to be unleavened to signify sincerity and truth (Bourne, 1841c). The Conference report (Bourne, 1841a) included directions to make sacramental wine from raisins arguing that 'we have no direct scripture warrant for calling it [the cup] wine' (p. 355).

The Conference included open-air preaching, prayer meetings and 'processionings'. There were daily morning and evening services in the chapel. There was a Conference Camp Meeting on Sunday June 13 with 'thousands attending'. A love-feast was held in the evening, both in the chapel and, due to numbers, in the Sunday school room. 'Both lovefeasts were powerful and a considerable number of persons were converted to God' (p. 353).

The Lord's Supper was administered Saturday Evening June 12th in the Sunday school room. 'There was so great an attendance, that, large as the place was, it was nearly filled' (p. 353). The order of service as described was:
Singing and prayer
Sermon on the Passover and Last Supper including on unleavened bread
Taking of the bread 'with suitable remarks'
Fraction with 1 Cor. 11: 24
Filling of the cup, with words about the 'wine'
Administration by rows with a verse
Singing till all had partaken.
The effect was:

> A great satisfaction to all, it being the first time that many of them had
> taken the sacrament with unleavened bread, and in a cup of blessing,
> which they were well assured, was of the fruit of the vine (p. 354).

This to the Primitive Methodists may have been the great outcome, setting them on a particular approach to the sacramental elements. However, for this study the next paragraph is of particular importance. In almost an aside Bourne reports:

> Our friends had prepared a pretty large quantity of unleavened bread. This
> turned out rather pleasantly; as at the close many of the delegates wished
> for and obtained each a piece of the bread that remained, to take with them
> to their respective circuits; and others obtained pieces also (p. 354).

This is the section relevant to extended communion.

This last action reads as a spontaneous action. There was no theology of reservation driving the practice, rather the reverse. It was probably seen as a sign of fellowship and of the connection between those at Conference and those in the Circuits. As such it resembles some of the early church practices discussed in chapter five. This did mean that there was bread that had been set-aside for the Lord's Supper in the Sunday school room from the Saturday evening present and presumably still present during the love-feast on Sunday. It was at the end of the Conference that it was removed. This does not really argue for extended communion as communion of the sick as mentioned above in the report. This is more akin to extended communion as in the Anglican Church. It would also appear that this is communion in one kind, i.e. the bread, as there is no mention of taking away the wine. Here the fellowship of the church seems to be the clearest motive, something that will be of discussion 150 years later. There is however a irony in a study on extended communion in the Diocese of Oxford discovering that the Primitive Methodists had used this practice over 150 years before.

The love-feast

So far it has been shown that the British Methodist provision of 1999 for extended communion is more akin to communion for the sick. Also there has been at least

one example of extended communion, in the meaning of this study, at the Primitive Methodist Conference of 1841. However, some Methodists are interpreting this in a wider matrix. A further feature of Methodism relevant to of extended communion is the tradition of the love-feast. It has already been noted that this was a part of Primitive Methodism. It was indeed a feature of all Methodism going back to Mr. Wesley. It has also been an integral part of American Methodism. While not common today, it is by no means completely dead, and the Biblical and patristic roots are still being debated. More particularly it is a significant and neglected issue that emerged out of the empirical fieldwork integral to this thesis. For this reason the love-feast will be given detailed examination in this chapter. The purpose of this section will be to critically examine the origins of the service in Methodism and scripture, and its relevance to today.

Love-feasts and John Wesley

John Wesley did not invent the love-feast. Its 18th century revival began with the Moravians and other continental groups. On 13 August 1737 a communion was held at Herrnhut and this is the date that is seen as the beginning of the Moravian revival and the restoration of the love-feast tradition (Linyard and Tovey, 1994). John Wesley was to experience this with the Moravians before it was to become a distinctive part of Methodism along with the watchnight and covenant services (Parkes, 1997).

On 8 August 1737, while chaplain to the colony in Savannah, Mr. Wesley joined in the Moravian's love-feast:

> We joined with the Germans in one of their love-feasts. It was began and ended with thanksgiving and prayer, and celebrated in so decent and solemn a manner as a Christian of the apostolic age would have allowed to be worthy of Christ (p. 38).

Parkes comments that:

It was the apostolicity of the practice that made a distinctive appeal to

Wesley at this stage of his spiritual pilgrimage (p. 38).

This may be overstated; was the apostolicity the apostolic institution of the love-

feast or the apostolic qualities shown at that celebration? Maybe this is a false

distinction but it is important to remember (Burdon, 1988):

John Wesley made no attempt to discover, or reproduce, and original form

of Lovefeast... The origins of the Lovefeast were less relevant than the

spiritual good that was to be derived from the service (p. 37).

While this is true, John Wesley was aware that there was a Biblical precedent. In

his abridgment of John Cave's *Religion of the Ancient Christians* published later

in 1750 he includes these comments on the love-feast (Wesley, 1750):

the common feast, which in those days they constantly had at the

celebration of the Sacrament, where the rich and the poor feasted together

at the same table. These were called Agape, or Love-Feasts, (mentioned

by St. Jude, and plainly enough intimated by St. Paul,) because here they

testified and confirmed their mutual love and kindness; a thing never more

proper than at the celebration of the Lord's Supper...

Whether this banquet was before or after the celebration of the Eucharist,

is not easy to determine...

That which the Apostle reproves, is their indecency and intemperance,

commanding both rich and poor to "wait for one another," and to eat this

common meal together, that they might the more orderly pass to the

celebration of the Lord's Supper. In after ages, this feast was not till the

communion was over, when the congregation feasted together, and so

departed. These feasts continued for some ages, till great inconveniences

being found in them, they were prohibited to be kept in the Churches by

the Laodicean Synod, and after that by the Council of Carthage; and the

custom in a short time dwindled into nothing.

This shows a detailed knowledge of the origins of the love-feast. However,

Burdon is right in the sense that the key factor seems to be the quality of

fellowship presently experienced. Wesley saw the love-feast as apostolic in

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origin, but its contemporary significance was the evangelical impact and sense of God's blessing on these services.

This impact can be seen in a selection of the Journal entries on the love-feast. On 1 January 1739 Wesley records (Wesley, 1996, 1997):

> Mr. Hall, Kinchin, Ingham, Whitefield, Hatchins, and my brother Charles, were present at our love-feast in Fetter-Lane, with about sixty of our brethren. About three in the morning, as we were continuing constant in prayer, the power of God came mightily upon us, in so much that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his Majesty, we broke out with one voice, "We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord" (p. 194).

What is remarkable here is the eschatological aspect of the event with God's power coming in might and the eruption in joy, in spontaneously singing the Te Deum. This is not an isolated event at the love feast. On Friday 8 May 1741 Wesley noted his own healing at a love-feast:

> But at our love-feast which followed, beside the pain in my back and head, and the fever which still continued upon me, just as I began to pray, I was seized with such a cough, that I could hardly speak. At the same time came strongly into my mind, "These signs shall follow them that believe." I called on Jesus aloud, to "increase my faith;" and to "confirm the word of his grace." While I was speaking, my pain vanished away; the fever left me; my bodily strength returned; and for many weeks I felt neither weakness nor pain. "Unto thee, O Lord, do I give thanks" (p.348).

On Sunday 26 October 1741 he commented:

> I got to Kingswood by two. The words God enabled me to speak there, and afterwards at Bristol, (so I must express myself still, for I dare not ascribe them to my own wisdom,) were as a hammer and a flame; and the same blessing we found at the meeting of the society; but more abundantly at the love-feast which followed. I remember nothing like it for many

months. A cry was heard from one end of the congregation to the other; not of grief, but of overflowing joy and love. "O continue forth thy loving-kindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness unto them that are true of heart!" (p. 387).

The marks of the power of God, healing, joy and praise characterized the love-feasts. They were also times to resolve stresses in the fellowship. Church (1949) comments:

> The supreme value of the love-feast lay in its frank fellowship and in its
> Christian expression of freedom, equality, and brotherhood (p. 241).

This can be illustrated in the first verse of Charles Wesley's hymn The Love-Feast first published in 1740:

> Come and let us sweetly join
> Christ to praise in hymns divine;
> Give we all, with one accord.
> Glory to our common Lord.
> Hands and hearts and voices raise;
> Sing as in the ancient days;
> Antedate the joys above,
> Celebrate the feast of love.

This seems to be the only hymn specifically written for love-feasts, however, others of the hymns written at the time seem to have been appropriate for the event (Baker, 1956).

Methodist love-feasts in Britain

While saying that there was no prescriptive order for love-feasts Baker gives the following outline of the love-feast (p. 15):

Figure 5.4 Baker's outline of the love-feast
Hymn
Prayer
Grace (sung)
Bread distributed by stewards
Collection for the poor
Circulation of the loving-cup
Address by the presiding minister
Testimonies and verses of hymns
Spontaneous prayers and verses of hymns
Closing exhortation by the minister
Hymn
Benediction

Love-feasts were a restricted activity for the committed but did not require a minister to preside. They were restricted by ticket, which at first was strictly enforced. The liquid elements used were water (or tea). This was passed round in a two handed cup called the loving-cup. A variety of breads, biscuits, and buns were used. The elements were chose to be specifically different from those of the eucharist.

The status of the love-feast can be seen in various comments of early Methodists. Jonathan Crowther (1810) says:

> In principal societies there is a love-feast every quarter... To get admission ... the different persons must shew a ticket... no person not a member of the society, shall be admitted more than once to a love-feast (p. 147).

Further comments in the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine illustrate their importance (Anon., 1836):

> Our Love-feasts, it is well known are held in imitation of the *agape* of the primitive Christians, though under a simpler form and more expressly religious in character. They are, perhaps, the most popular and exciting of our social meetings... (p. 386)

In our economy of church fellowship, love-feasts may be regarded as stimulants: and to be made permanently useful, they must not be made too common (p. 387) Burdon (1988) notes that the first love feast in Primitive Methodism was in 1819 in Hull. He also shows that Methodist New Connection held love love-feasts, as did the United Methodist Free Churches. Frank Barker (1956) demonstrates that the love-feast was exported with Methodist missionary work. However what is clear is that in England the love-feast gradually declined and became replaced by teas and prayer meetings. This seems to have been a part of the process of socialization from a society to a church (Chamberlayne, 1964). Today it is rare in British Methodism.

Methodist love-feasts in the United States of America
The Wesleys had ministered in the colonies and there was a large growing Methodist element in the new country. American Methodists included the practice of the love feast. The first explicit reference to a love-feast is in the journal of Joseph Plimore who in March 1770 conducted a love-feast in Philadelphia (although there is a love-feast ticket that dates to 1769) and the practice soon became established in America (Johnson, 1981). The significant aspect of the love feast was fellowship and this is one of the reasons for their restricted nature. Ruth (2003) shows that this led to a fencing of the fellowship in the love-feast, while the table was more open for the Lord's Supper, an unusual contrast.

Bang (1997) makes a number of references to early love-feasts. For example in 1776:

> The second day of the quarterly meeting a love-feast was held. As soon as it began, the power of the Lord came down on the assembly like a rushing mighty wind; and it seemed as if the whole house was filled with the presence of God. A flame kindled and ran from heart to heart. Many were deeply convinced of sin; many mourners were filled with consolation: and many believers were so overwhelmed with love that they could not doubt but God had enabled them to love him with all their heart. When the love-

feast was ended the doors were opened. Many who had stayed without
then came in; and beholding the anguish of some, and the rejoicing of
others, were filled with astonishment; and not long after with trembling
apprehensions of their own danger. Several of them, prostrating
themselves before God, cried aloud for mercy. And the convictions which
then began in many, have terminated in a happy and lasting change. (p.
77).

Note here that the context was the quarterly meeting of the circuit and that a
pentecostal eschatological interpretation is given. This was a closed meeting but
the effects were not just on those confined to the meeting. On 3rd May 1776
another love-feast is recorded:

The Methodists held their love-feast: during which as many as pleased
rose, one after another, and spoke in few words of the goodness of God to
their souls. Before three had done speaking, (although they spoke but few
words,) you might see a solemn sense of the presence of God visible on
every countenance, while tears of sorrow or joy were flowing from many
eyes. Several testified the consolation they had received: some believed
they were perfected in love. When the passions of the people were rising
too high, and breaking through all restraint, the preacher gently checked
them by giving out a few verses of a hymn. When most of the
congregation went away, some were so distressed with a sense of their sins
that they could no be persuaded to leave the place. Some lively Christians
stayed with them, and continued in prayer for the space of two hours, till
fifteen mourners were enabled to rejoice in God their Savior. (pp. 79-80)

This illustrates the place of love-feasts in the revivalist approach. It was a place of
fellowship with God and fellowship with one another. In July 1776 another love-
feast is recorded at a Quarterly meeting. This time it was outside due to lack of
premises for the two or three thousand people who came:

We held our general love-feast. It began between eight and nine on
Wednesday morning, and continued till noon. Many testified that they had
'redemption in the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of sins.' And many

were enabled to declare that it had 'cleansed them from all sin.' So clear, so full, so strong was their testimony, that while some were speaking their experience hundreds were in tears, and others vehemently crying to God for pardon or holiness. About eight our watch-night began. Mr. J. preached an excellent sermon: the rest of the preachers exhorted and prayed with divine energy. Surely, for the work wrought on these two days, many will praise God to all eternity (pp. 93-94)

This gives a vision of the Quarterly Meeting with thousands attending, listening to preaching, participating in a love-feast, and watch-night, with times for singing, testimony, conversion. The process went on day and night.

Ruth (2003) says that love-feasts were particularly connected to Quarterly Meetings in American Methodist. He points out that they were quite strictly fenced and controlled. The order was slightly different to England with the collection coming later and then progressing to a Communion service. Perhaps this is because of the quarterly nature of the meeting with many activities and people attending for a few days, not least because of long distances to travel. The structure of the American Methodist service seems to be as in figure 10.5.

Figure 5.5 Ruth's outline of the American love-feast
Hymn
Prayer
Eating of bread and water
Testimonies
Monetary collection
Hymn
Prayer
Benediction

This varied within the multiform contexts of American Methodism.

As in Britain, the love-feast declined with the denominalization of Methodism (Westerfield Tucker, 2001). In 1965 a service was included as an

appendix of services in the United Methodist tradition, giving this an air of the unused, a ritual memory (The United Methodist Church, 1965).

Methodist theology of the love-feast

Wesley was clear that this service was of scriptural example, but was not the Lord's Supper. It is not clear that this boundary was always held. The love-feast was regarded as a 'means of grace' and a 'converting ordinance', but not a sacrament (Burdon, 2002). This led to difficulties as to its relationship with the Lord's Supper. Burdon comments:

> The Lovefeast of the form which Wesley adopted from the Moravians was a corruption of the early church intention since it tended to be a substitute for, and not part of, the eucharist (p.41).

This is true of British Methodism, but not so of American, as we have seen. Indeed, in the early church there were love feasts separated from eucharist. Burdon continues:

> Here was an action which was almost Eucharistic. When it became acceptable for Methodists to hold their own Eucharist the Lovefeast became a problem (p. 42).

While this is historically true, there are also social-contextual issues. The intense revivalist fellowship was part of the context of the love-feast and one of the drivers of that fellowship. It was not just increasing celebration of the eucharist but also the loss of revivalist intensity with the coming of denominational respectability that caused a crisis for the love-feast.

In America there was also consideration of the love-feast's theology. Spicer in 1838 distinguished between:

> the Lord's Supper... a *divinely instituted* means of grace designed equally for all Christians of every Church, whereas the love-feast is... a prudential means adopted by as, and designed exclusively for us, and those of our friends whom we may chose to invite (quoted in Johnson, p78, their italics)

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Both sides of the Atlantic were clear that there was a distinction between the love-feast and the Lord's Supper. The love-feast was a feast of fellowship, the sacrament a dominical ordinance.

The love-feast today

Burdon (1988) says for British Methodism, 'today the Lovefeast does not have a place within Methodist piety' (p. 41). Baker (1956) gives the reason for this as:

> The greatest single cause of the decline was the fact that the love-feast in its traditional Methodist form was a product and an instrument of revivalism. When, therefore, as almost inevitably happened, the revival atmosphere was suffused with, or even replaced by, what we may call the 'church atmosphere', the love feast was bound to suffer (p. 56).

While seemingly a persuasive argument this does not account of the continuation of the love-feast in Moravianism and the reappearance of the love-feast in new contexts. It is to the latter we now turn.

After the war the love-feast reappeared in an ecumenical context. The experiment of the parish of Hilgay in 1949 is a well-documented attempt at ecumenical breakthrough between an Anglican church and a Methodist Chapel (Thomson, 1951). In 1949 at St Mark's Church, Ten Mile Bank, an Anglican Methodist agape was held in Holy Week, on Maundy Thursday (Thomson, 1950). The order of service is given in figure 5.6:

Figure 5.6 The Hilgay agape 1949
Hymn
Sentences (vesicles and responses)
Psalm 145
Lesson: John 17
Hymn
Sermon
Hymn
Nicene Creed
Agape: (i) Prayers (ii) Blessing and breaking of bread (iii) Lord's Prayer (iv) Distribution
Prayers
Hymn
Blessing

Thomson (1951) described the agape as:

> If a tract of fertile and neutral territory had suddenly disclosed itself, a
> territory in which it was possible for separated Christians to learn to meet
> together as friends and disciples of the same Master (p. 14).

He also said of the event as (Thomson, 1950):

> A fellowship-meal, an expression of something far greater than itself, a
> means of grace (p. 379).

Thomson says that particular care was taken to widely consult a number of
authorities, so as not to cause any ecumenical anxiety.

In 1951 the Methodists reciprocated the invitation. They made some slight
variations to the order of service, outlined in figure 5.7.

Figure 5.7 The Hilgay agape 1951
Hymn
Psalm 145
Short litany
Lord's Prayer
Hymn
Lesson: Luke 24: 13-35
Hymn
Sermon
Hymn
Love-feast: (i) Prayers (ii) Breaking of bread (iii) Distribution (iv) The cup
Testimony
Hymn
Blessing

Some of the prayers were based on the *Didache*. This service introduced the loving-cup, from the Methodist tradition (with water in it).

This event was greeted favorably. Visser't Hooft (1949) was interested, but worried that people might confused this with the eucharist. E.C. Dewick (1950) was not concerned by this problem provided that a proper Catholic conception of the eucharist is held, for then the difference between the eucharist and an agape is clear. While that may have been obvious in 1950 more recent scholarship on eucharistic origins may have blurred such clear cut distinctions (Bradshaw, 2004).

If the ecumenical context is one matrix for the revival of the love-feast then the small group or community is another. One example of this is from the Ashram Community Trust. This small community in Sheffield includes in its *Community Worship* a Community Agape (Vincent, 1999). This book also includes particular eucharists for the Community with a radical edge. Catholics for a Changing Church (slightly straying from Methodism, but of significance

later in the thesis) have produced *Celebrations for Christian House Groups*. This includes both agapes and eucharists, but along simple lines for small groups (Catholics for a Changing Church, 2004). Similar discussions are found in Anglicanism (Lloyd, 1973), which will be developed in the next chapter. Also there has been a growing interest in a Christian Passover meal (Fawcett, 2004). So the small group is another nexus for the love-feast

The United Methodist Book of Worship (1992) includes the love-feast under Occasional Services (Langford, 1992). The book sees the service as a part of covenant discipleship groups and as a possibility for congregational suppers on major festivals. The order of service outlined in this book is as in figure 5.8.

Figure 5.8 United Methodist Book of Worship love-feast
Hymn or chorus
Prayers
Scripture
Address or personal witness to the scripture
Passing of the bread
[collection for the poor]
[circulation of the loving cup]
Testimonies, prayers, singing
[closing exhortation]
Hymn or chorus
Dismissal with blessing

This order is designed to be flexibly used, and there are variations of it on-line for covenant discipleship groups (McIntyre, 2000).

While the love-feast may be peripheral to much of the piety of contemporary Methodism, there is a degree of interest for small group and ecumenical worship. This may seem peripheral to a discussion of extended communion; however it is clearly another 'alternative' to the eucharist, one which is perhaps neglected. Nevertheless before too many conclusions are drawn, we need to reexamine the ground on which the love-feast was developed and its relationship to the eucharist.

Modern scholarship on the love-feast

Wesley clearly believed that the love-feast was an apostolic ordinance. Thus it
was commonly held that there were two distinct entities, the eucharist with its
roots in the Last Supper, and the non-eucharistic fellowship meal or agape
(Findlay, 1950). Studies were made in the patristic evidence for the agape
(Keating, 1901). Dix (1945) tended to push the separation of the eucharist and
agape as early as possible. However, others held to the possibility of this not
being a clear division within the apostolic era and continuing into the early
church. Shepherd (1962) held that the only possible reference to the agape as a
distinct fellowship meal is the reference to agape in Jude 12. However, the New
Testament basis was increasingly debated. Townsend (1979) commented on Jude
12:

> It is *prima facie* unlikely (though, not of course impossible) that Jude 12
> should refer to an Agape distinct from the Eucharist, which is otherwise
> unattested in the NT documents (p. 360)

McGowan (1997) has made the picture considerably more complicated. He
suggests that we have to begin with the term 'agape', not our preconception of a
meal. If this approach is taken, a number of meals previously called agape fall out
of consideration and some things called eucharist by us but agape by church
fathers appear on the horizon. He also points out diversity of practice in the
language of the fathers e.g. the cup-bread ordering in some texts (McGowan,
1995). This has led to him arguing that quite a number of ritual meals can be
labeled eucharist even if they are wine-bread or eucharists using water
(McGowan, 1999). Arguing for variation and diversity being larger than currently
conceived, the early church may have continued eucharists with meals for longer
than previously thought, and there may have been more variety in the types of
eucharistic meal (Bradshaw, 2004). This could mean a shrinking of the meal only
agape in the categorization of the evidence. Tertullian then becomes one of the
earliest examples of the clear separation of agape meal and eucharist.

The *Didache* is a particularly important document in understanding the early church and in interpreting worship. Some have even given this document the very early date, of 30-70 (Gibbins, 1935). There has been much debate as to the nature of the prayers, an early view being Nock (1929):

> We must, I think, adhere to the views that in the *Didache* μετα το εμπλησθηναι refers to the communal meal preceding communion proper (p. 390).

McGowan and Mazza indicate some of the difficulties in our understanding of the text being rooted in our presuppositions: what is 'communion proper'? Mazza (1995) formulates the problem succinctly:

> The greatest problem, and it lies in the attitude of the one who approaches the text of the *Didache*. No doubt each researcher in this area bears a precise idea of the Eucharistic celebration. But if one approaches the research allowing such a preconception free sway, there is no possibility of achieving objectively valid results (p.16).

How then are we to view the prayers over the cup and bread prior to the meal, and the longer prayers after the meal? Niederwimmer (1998) summarizes three scholarly opinions: those who consider the whole event a eucharistic meal, those who consider the meal as an agape, and those who view the early prayers as an agape and the later prayers as a eucharist (pp. 141-143). Bradshaw (2006) recently advocated the view of Garrow that the two prayers are two versions of a meal blessing prayer. There are naturally nuanced variations on these permutations. Two things are of importance in the discussion, firstly the lack of a narrative of institution in the prayers, and secondly the lack of relationship to the 'kergyma of the passion' (p.140).

All of this is a much debated area. What it shows for the purpose of this thesis is that the assumed basis of the agape in the New Testament is debatable and that the whole question of eucharistic origins is still very controversial. Those who have tried to resurrect the agape have had to show clear water between it and the eucharist. This is perhaps based on later dogmatic controversy. Wesley in his

choice of elements was creating some of this distance. Also the fact that this was not Holy Communion meant that there could be lay-leadership of the love-feast. The Hilgay experimenters used prayers from the *Didache* precisely because they believed them to be an early reference to a love-feast and not a eucharist. Today non eucharistic agapes tend to follow the omission of a narrative and a wider thanksgiving like *Didache*. However we can see from the current discussion on *Didache* that this may not be the safest ground for the definition of a non-eucharistic love-feast.

Conclusions

While Methodists have a service called extended communion this is not the same as the Church of England usage, indicating some essential differences in the 'genius' of each denomination. Extended communion in Methodism is for the sick and housebound. Thus there potenial is intertextual confusion through one term meaning different things to different denominations. This issue was discussed in chapter three. However, this chapter has one example of a crossover of meaning, where in an ecumenical context Methodists have adopted Anglican denotations.

The Methodist tradition of the love-feast, was seen as a lay-led prayer meal, of apostolic origin and distinct from the eucharist. This was an important strand of Methodist worship, which has almost died out, but is living in some small groups today. This suggests in certain contexts a need for this service, which is not simply superseded by the eucharist. Such contexts seem to be developing in Anglicanism today and a variety of examples of this will be given in later chapters.

The 1841 Primitive Methodist Conference had a celebration of the Lord's Supper, a Lovefeast, and a spontaneous happening of extended communion (in the Anglican sense). The supporting theological motif for all this was the strong fellowship of the evangelical revival, rather than a particular theology of the consecration of the elements. It is reminiscent of some of the patristic precedents

of extended communion for example the fermentum, but this connection is analogical not historical, a point developed previously in the hermeneutics of precedent.

Methodism contributes a rich tradition, which opens up the context of a discussion of extended communion. It contributes distinct contours to the map of extended communion, which significantly enrich the findings of this thesis. The final denomination to be examined in this section will be the Church of England, with its service of Communion by Extension.

Chapter 6

The Church of England
and the Anglican Communion

Introduction

In 2001 the Church of England for the first time produced an official service of Extended Communion (The Archbishops' Council, 2001). This event has been described by a key participant in the process, David Hebblethwaite (2004), the then secretary to the Liturgical Commission, as:

> One of the most controversial and theologically divisive issues in this period...
>
> So sharp were the divisions that it was unclear until the Final Approval vote... whether it would be authorized (p. 42).
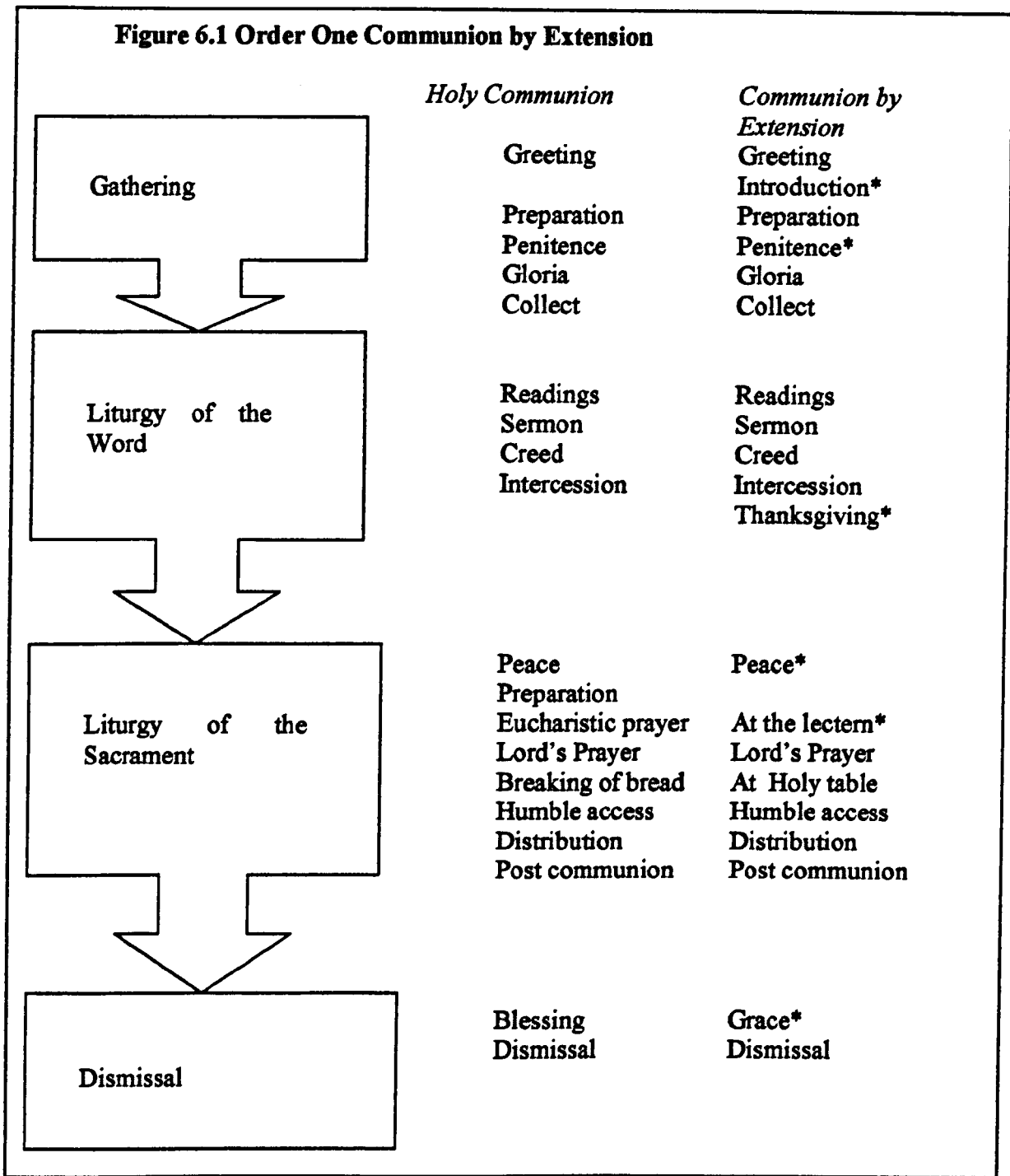
This controversial rite was not published in the main *Common Worship* volume for use on Sundays, but exists as a separate booklet (and downloadable from the Church of England website). It is an unusual piece of Church of England liturgy in that, although it is authorized by Synod, it may only be used locally with the explicit permission of the bishop. This is the only liturgy in the *Common Worship* services that has this standing.

While the Church of England has been producing its current liturgy, other Anglican Provinces have also been constructing such rites (Tovey, 2000). Also, prior to the 2001 publication there were a number of local rites in England (Tovey, 1994). All of this is in the English context of changing patterns of ministry, attitudes to the eucharist, and pastoral reorganization. This chapter will look at all these aspects of the Church of England, beginning, as with the other denominational chapters, in the production of the current rite. It will also briefly consider extended communion in other Anglican Provinces, and issues around the agape and eucharistic presidency.

Sunday Worship with Communion by Extension (2001)

There are two Orders provided for Communion by Extension following the
designations of the eucharistic services. *Order One* follows the modern language
liturgical movement shape services of the Church of England and *Order Two* is
traditional language Book of Common Prayer (1662) in shape. The content of
these two rites is summarized in the two following diagrams, Figure 6.1 and
Figure 6.3.

Figure 6.1 Order One Communion by Extension

	Holy Communion	*Communion by Extension*
Gathering	Greeting	Greeting
		Introduction*
	Preparation	Preparation
	Penitence	Penitence*
	Gloria	Gloria
	Collect	Collect
Liturgy of the Word	Readings	Readings
	Sermon	Sermon
	Creed	Creed
	Intercession	Intercession
		Thanksgiving*
Liturgy of the Sacrament	Peace	Peace*
	Preparation	
	Eucharistic prayer	At the lectern*
	Lord's Prayer	Lord's Prayer
	Breaking of bread	At Holy table
	Humble access	Humble access
	Distribution	Distribution
	Post communion	Post communion
Dismissal	Blessing	Grace*
	Dismissal	Dismissal

* This indicates that this element is different from that in the eucharistic service.

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Figure 6.1 compares Order One Communion by Extension with the Order One Eucharist. Detailed commentary on the services can be found elsewhere (Tovey 2001 and 2006); however, various points concerning the differences between the liturgies (as highlighted with an asterisk) are of significance. Firstly, there is no consecration in Communion by Extension, rather a reading and congregational prayer of thanksgiving which replaces the eucharistic prayer (called 'at the lectern' in figure 6.1). Also, throughout the service modifications are made for lay leadership, e.g. the absolution and blessing being in 'us' form. At other points the link to the 'sending' parish is made, e.g. in the introduction and peace. Then, the Narrative of Institution is included at the beginning as a reading, to set the context of the service. At various points the fact that this is a service of distribution of the pre-consecrated elements is reiterated (at the introduction, the peace, the giving of communion). Finally, there are various rubrics which carefully position the elements and the minister to show that this is not a eucharist. This is particularly pertinent at the point called 'at the lectern' where the minister is at the lectern and the elements on the holy table.
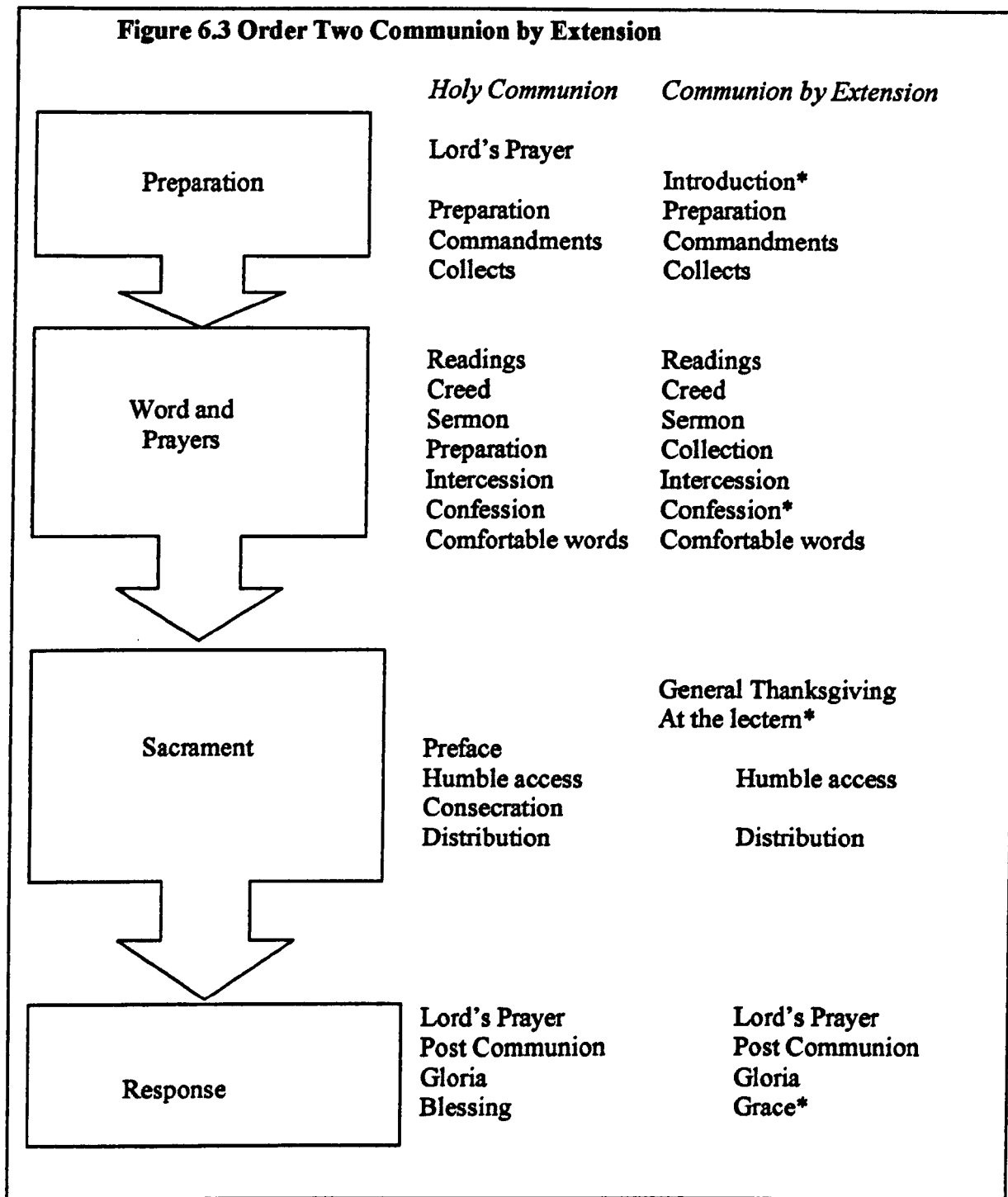
Order Two is summarized in Figure 6.3. This follows many of the principles above adapting them to the Book of Common Prayer. There are however some small differences between the two Orders. First, in Order Two the only occasion of the mentioning of the 'sending' parish is in the introduction. Second, the sequence of the material 'replacing' the consecration differs in both Orders:

Figure 6.2 Comparison of sequence	
Order One	Order Two
Hymn	Thanksgiving
Reading	Hymn
Thanksgiving	Reading

Why this difference exists is not obvious. However, some argued in the interviews for part three that Order Two feels particularly appropriate.

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What both these Orders include is an intertextual similarity / dissimilarity fault line with the eucharistic text. Iser (1978) talked about reading as a journey. In the journey through Communion by Extension you are given many 'safe' landmarks in the parts that are similar to the normal eucharistic liturgy. However you are also given a number of signposts to say that this is not the normal eucharist, and some new country to traverse with the new liturgical material produced for this particular service.

Figure 6.3 Order Two Communion by Extension

	Holy Communion	Communion by Extension
Preparation	Lord's Prayer	Introduction*
	Preparation	Preparation
	Commandments	Commandments
	Collects	Collects
Word and Prayers	Readings	Readings
	Creed	Creed
	Sermon	Sermon
	Preparation	Collection
	Intercession	Intercession
	Confession	Confession*
	Comfortable words	Comfortable words
Sacrament		General Thanksgiving
		At the lectem*
	Preface	
	Humble access	Humble access
	Consecration	
	Distribution	Distribution
Response	Lord's Prayer	Lord's Prayer
	Post Communion	Post Communion
	Gloria	Gloria
	Blessing	Grace*

* This indicates that this element is different from that in the eucharistic service.

'Notes' on the service and 'Guidelines' issued by the House of Bishops in 2000 are included in the service booklet (The Archbishops' Council, 2001). These explicitly state the policy of the House of Bishops, approved by the General Synod, and the context in which the service will be permitted. They incorporate significant assumptions made by the church, which this thesis aims to research and evaluate. These assumptions and statements become the basis of hypotheses to test in the empirical fieldwork. For this reason both the statements and hypotheses will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

One of the presuppositions of the House of Bishops is made explicit in note one which says:

> In making authorized provision for Communion by Extension, the House of Bishops has principally in mind the needs of a single cure with a number of authorized places of worship' (p. 32).

This is primarily referring to multi-parish benefices in rural areas. This rural presupposition pervaded the debate at General Synod, as will be shown later in this chapter, and was supported by the recommendations in *Faith in the Countryside* (Archbishop's Commission on Rural Areas, 1990). The hypothesis to test is: communion by extension is principally a rural phenomenon.

Note one is also concerned about the dependency of the receiving congregation.

> A particular congregation should not come to rely mainly upon this means of eucharistic participation (p.32).

This is an important ecclesiological statement and goes on to insist that the congregation must have regular eucharists. Thus the hypothesis to test is: some congregations are now dependent on extended communion.

Note two contains a categorical distinction between communion by extension and communion of the sick.

The practice of Communion by Extension as envisaged by the authorized service has some affinities with the communion of the sick, from elements which have been consecrated at a celebration in church. The main differences concern the public nature of Communion by Extension, and the consequent need for careful attention to the overall shape and content of the service. For this reason it is required that the service should be led only by a person who has been specifically authorized for this purpose by the bishop (p. 32).

While it may be clear to the bishops that there is a categorical distinction between communion for the sick and extended communion, it is a questionable if this is as clear in practice. Indeed, it has already been seen in chapter three that one of the early Anglican uses of the phrase extended communion was about communion of the sick (Buchanan, 1972). The Methodist Church also uses extended communion as a term for communion of the sick (Methodist Church, 1999). So there are grounds for suggesting that the language might be more confusing than appears at first sight. The hypothesis to test is therefore: in practice the distinction between communion of the sick and communion by extension is not as clear as assumed by this policy document.

Note two also regulates the catechetical preconditions for the minister of communion by extension:

the minister who leads the service must have a more specific authority from the bishop, and be appropriately trained (p. 32).

The nature of this training is not made explicit; appropriately trained is a flexible term. This could imply that training is devolved to the incumbent, or that dioceses are expected to offer structured training programs. The danger is that this ambiguity will result in a complete lack of training. The hypothesis to test is: many leaders of the service have received no training.

Note three provides a mirror image to the previous paragraph, the context in which extended communion is not envisaged.

Communion by Extension should not be regarded as a means of
introducing a sacramental element into the life of home groups, or other
parish groups, whether on an occasional or a regular basis' (p. 32).
This appears to be a complete ban on the use of extended communion in this way.
Its use is still debated in relationship to cell church ecclesiology, for example
Lings (1999a). This discussion will arise at various points later in the thesis. A
simple hypothesis from this is: communion by extension is never used for home
or parish groups.

Note five regulates the context and process of obtaining episcopal
permission for use of the service:
Explicit permission must be obtained from the bishop for the use of this
rite, and that such permission should relate to specific pastoral
circumstances. Such permission will normally be in writing, and will be
either for a particular occasion or for a limited duration. The bishop should
regularly review the use of this rite in parishes where it is used.
Communion by Extension must always be regarded as exceptional and
provisional (p.33).
The four points developed here are that there must be; one, explicit permission;
two, normally in writing; three, with regular review; and four, it is always
exceptional and provisional. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that this does not
always happen. Thus the hypothesis to be tested arising from this note is:
significant numbers of parishes do not follow the requirements of authorization.

There are concerns about the transportation of the elements. Note six says:
Communion by Extension will require that special care is given to the
conduct of the service, and especially that the consecrated elements are
treated in a seemly and dignified manner (p. 33).
This issue is included in the notes as it was a major problem raised in the General
Synod debate, which will be examined later in this chapter. Little assessment of
the evidence beyond the anecdote has previously occurred. The hypothesis to test

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is: parishes always treat the consecrated elements in a seemly manner. An examination of the General Synod debate is required to clarify the boundaries of the term 'seemly'.

These Notes and the accompanying Guidelines (which make very similar statements) are the authoritative policy document of the Church of England on extended communion. They were forged out of intensive debate in the General Synod. Testing the assumptions and values in these statements is thus a significant element of this research.

Origins in England

One set of publications and two pieces of research have already looked at the development of Extended Communion in the Church of England. The first publication is that of David Smethurst (1986), who told the story of the origins of Extended Communion in Ulverston in the Diocese of Carlisle. He followed this up with an unpublished survey (Smethurst, 1993). The story was then given a further review (Smethurst, 2004). My own previous explorations surveyed the Anglican Communion (Tovey, 1994). This was published in two forms, as a monograph (Tovey, 1993), and as an article (Tovey, 2000). In light of this information only a summary of the previous situation will be given, and this will concentrate on new research to deepen the understanding of the phenomenon.

Smethurst (2004) claims that the first recorded instance of Extended Communion in England was in Ulverston on Easter Day 1979. There had been a sudden decline in the number of priests. The parish had five worship centers and the number of priests had rapidly reduced from five to one. A lay team was developed, commissioned on Palm Sunday by the archdeacon, and on Easter Day laity took the elements from the 8 a.m. eucharist to distribute extended communion. Smethurst's research found that by 1993 17 of the 43 dioceses in the Church of England were practising extended communion (39.5%), another five dioceses were considering the issue. 13 dioceses had official guidelines (30%).

My 1994 research uncovered six diocesan rites that had been produce alongside diocesan regulations. Extended Communion was also occurring in a number of religious communities (Tovey, 1994).

Parallel to this development was a change in the Church of England's approach to the ministry to the sick. The Book of Common Prayer (1662) provides for a shortened form of Communion to be celebrated with the sick person in their home. The proposed 1928 Prayer Book would have allowed priests to administer from the reserved sacrament, the practice of reservation being revived by the Catholic movement. This was one of the reasons for the downfall of the book, but the changing context from 1662 to 1928 (not least of the rise of large hospitals) and from 1928 to 1983 (of declining parochial clergy) led to further changes in attitude. Colin Buchanan (1972) softened the evangelical opposition to using some sort of reservation in the case of communion to the sick, not least following Justin Martyr. This helped the development of the 1983 official publication *Ministry to the Sick* (Church of England, 1983), which allowed laity to take pre-consecrated elements to sick people for a home service. The rite used these words:

> The Church of God, of which we are members, has taken bread and wine and given thanks over them according to our Lord's command. I bring these holy gifts that you may share in the communion of his body and blood. We who are many are one body, because we all share in one bread (p. 21).

This is important for two reasons. Firstly, there was an increasing body of lay people who were used to administering communion in a short service for the sick, (and in church on Sunday). Secondly, these words began to be used in diocesan rites of extended communion, and are incorporated in the official 2001 liturgy (with some modification). It was clear from publications that this approach for the sick was acceptable to many evangelicals (Buchanan and Wheaton, 1983).

The House of Bishops discussed extended communion in 1982, 1989 and 1993 (Buchanan, 1993b). The original policy was to try to stop the practice, however this was an uphill struggle particularly in the period 1987 to 1994 when there were many women deacons in full time parish work waiting to be ordained priest (who may previously have been deaconesses). However, extended communion was not simply related to women's ministry but also about pastoral reorganization and decline in clergy numbers as can be seen in the Ulverston story. The House of Bishops were asked to reconsider their position by the report *Faith in the Countryside* (Archbishop's Commission on Rural Areas, 1990) and *Deacons Now* (ACCM, 1990). By 1991 the Liturgical Commission were discussing the issue (Hebblethwaite, 2004), and in 1993 the House of Bishops produced a report to the General Synod (House of Bishops, 1993). The story will be returned to and developed later in the examination of the General Synod debates.

Legitimacy

From its very beginning there has been debate about the theological legitimacy of extended communion. The beginnings in Cumbria were disputed in a number of publications. The original article in the Church Times 'Laity to the rescue' (Smethurst, 1979) resulted in a letter to the editor from Bishop Richard Hanson (1979), then professor of Historical and Contemporary Theology at the University of Manchester. He said that extended communion, contradicts the eucharist as an act of the people through the priest, obscures the truth that the eucharist is an offering by the local church, and puts an undesirable emphasis on the technical capacity of the ordained to consecrate the elements. He noted the pastoral need that lay behind the development and the need to debate the theology of ministry. The urgent development of the former with the institutional reticence to change the latter probably meant that his words fell on stony ground.

Smethurst (1986), in his second publication, included a response by Colin Buchanan, who commented on three key issues. First, that a relaxation by the

lawyers concerning the interpretation of the rubrics for the consumption of the elements, would further ease the situation and allow extended communion. Second, that the issue is tied up with questions of ministry, particularly eucharistic presidency, and lay presidency. Third, that there are pastoral problems with the relationships between congregations. Fourth, more importantly there is the liturgical problem of how to replace the eucharistic prayer. These issues were to be developed in the further debates.

Roger Beckwith (1986), from a conservative evangelical background, also delivered a riposte to Smethurst's advocacy of extended communion. He denied Smethurst's assumptions by saying that it is not necessary to have communion every week, even if it is desirable. Also that ordaining people who do not preach would be unacceptable, as this would produce medieval mass-priests. However, lay presidents who were not preaching would also be unacceptable to Beckwith. Finally any form of reservation is to be rejected and extended communion 'approximates to reservation' (p. 337). At this point extended communion was only in its infancy and these remarks indicated critical points of opposition.

The recommendation of the report of *Deacons Now* on extended communion indicate that the practice was becoming more widespread and produced further discussion. Colin Hart (1991), then lecturer in Pastoral Theology at St John's College Nottingham, questioned the service of extended communion. He started with an example of a frivolous use of the practice (to save time) and advocated that the House of Bishops should develop and enforce a code of practice as found in the report.

The presentation of the first official proposals also produced arguments against extended communion. Paul Avis (1991) argued strongly against it. He admitted:

The House of Bishops set its face against extended communion in the early 1980s, but the practice has spread illegally to such an extent that the House has decided to bring guidelines and liturgical drafts (p. 10).

He questions the theological, sacramental and liturgical integrity of the service saying that evangelicals dislike it because it stresses a magic moment of consecration and Catholics dislike it because it lacks the element of offering to God. From this he develops his fundamental point that it fragments the integrity of the eucharistic community, not least because the eucharistic president is absent and distantly magical. Also it fragments the integrity of the eucharistic action, separating communion from thanksgiving. He advocates more non-stipendiary ministers and non-eucharistic services.

Colin Buchanan (1992a) also noted the growth of extended communion. He saw a number of factors in its development. First, post Vatican 2 Roman and Anglo Catholics have reduced the stress on reservation and extra-liturgical sacramental devotions, softening evangelical objections. Then General Synod authorized *Ministry to the Sick*, which was widely welcomed and included a use of extended communion. He pointed to a critical issue at the time of rising numbers of deaconesses or women deacons not allowed to 'progress' to the priesthood. Finally, he asserted that there was a lack of knowledge of the House of Bishops' Guidelines or diocesan policies. That particular edition of *News of Liturgy* included a report from the Diocesan Liturgical Committee of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich diocese, which was discussing the issue, and a draft liturgical text from Durham diocese.

In anticipation of a Synod debate Christina Baxter (1993) outlined her case against extended communion. At the time she was Dean of St John's College Nottingham but was also a prominent laywoman and a Reader. She argued that in extended communion the word is separated from sacrament, particularly by not having the narrative of institution. She also warned that this service may become the norm, once you include clergy shortages, vacancies, and holidays (a key point

in light of the empirical research). She discussed a number of alternatives including ordaining local leaders or lay presidency possibly by Readers. This anticipated one of the directions of General Synod.

Opposition continued even on the eve of the production of a rite. Alex Hughes argued against the practice in a thesis (Hughes, 1999), article (Hughes, 2001), and a monograph (Hughes, 2002). His fundamental point has been the unity of the eucharist. Based on Dix's fourfold action theory, Hughes argues that you cannot remove one action, eating, from the other actions, taking, thanking and breaking, without doing damage to the eucharist. He does not, however, relate this to Dix's advocacy of the presanctified, which also divides the actions, and was discussed in chapter seven. While Hughes' approach is common to many arguing against extended communion, Hughes has perhaps been the most adamant opponent in print from the Catholic wing of the Church of England.

Smethurst's article (2004) on 25 years of extended communion brought further criticisms. Glenn Davies (2004), bishop of North Sydney, used the article to advocate lay presidency. He argued that communion by extension is a departure from the Book of Common Prayer and there was no attempt to consult the Anglican Communion about this departure. He sees this as a justification for Sydney to go forward with lay presidency.

This collection of opinion mostly against extended communion comes from all parts of the church. Although Smethurst has consistently advocated extended communion he has received much criticism from fellow evangelicals e.g. Baxter, Hart, and Beckwith. Opposition is also found in the catholic party voiced by Hughes. So advocacy and opposition have not fallen along party lines.

The Anglican Communion

The Church of England operates within the context of the Anglican Communion, as was commented on by Bishop Davies. This story of extended communion in

the Anglican Communion has already been told (Tovey, 2000), but needs some updating. The growth of extended communion can be shown by the chart below, Figure 6.4, which dates the production of a rite, Provincial or diocesan.

Figure 6.4 Extended Communion in the Anglican Communion		
Province	Provincial rite	Diocesan rites
Australia		1966 ff.
Brazil	1988	
Canada	1985/87	
Central Africa	1966	
England	2001	1979 ff.
India Pakistan Burma & Ceylon	1960	
Indian Ocean		1985
Japan	1984	
Korea	1973	
Melanesia		1973
Mexico	1979	
New Zealand	1989	1984
Philippines	1987 & 1999	
Scotland	1992	1764
Southern Africa	1980 & 2005	
USA	1979	
Wales	1974 & 2000	
West Africa	1980	
West Indies	1980	

This figure shows that apart from Dunkeld (Scotland) in 1764 all the instances of extended communion are post World War Two. There is also a tendency for the Provinces that have authorized the rite to be high church and eucharistically based. In the Provinces where Holy Communion has not been a weekly affair, as in much of Africa, there has been no need for extended communion. Some Provinces are against extended communion. One commentator (Hargrave, 1990) says for the South Cone:

> This is rejected by Chile and the other dioceses in the Cono Sur which stand in the evangelical tradition (p. 8).

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Similarly Sydney diocese has been opposed to extended communion.

The circumstances of Scotland and in particular Dunkeld were especially unusual. From 1746 to 1792 the Episcopal Church in Scotland was subject to penal laws because of its Jacobite sympathies (Macquarrie, 1997). They were not allowed to assemble in groups larger than eight so the practice was to gather in different rooms in a large house with a celebration in one room, communion then being taken to the other rooms. 1764 saw the production of a new Scottish liturgy (Cooper, 1977). Bishop Alexander of Dunkeld included an alternative prayer to the eucharistic prayer when a new room of people was being communicated from the reserved elements (Hall, 1848). The liturgy has been discussed in a previous publication (Tovey, 1993). This is an extraordinary case and there is no direct line of practice of extended communion from 1764 to the Scottish rite of 1992.

Across the Communion there have been changing attitudes to reservation and communion of the sick. In England the 1549 Prayer Book allowed communion to be taken from a public service to the house of a sick person, but by 1552 even this was stopped and reservation abolished. The little used Latin Prayer Book of 1560 followed the 1549 rubric, but in 1562 Article 28 declared 'The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ reserved'. In 1885 the archbishops declared that the practice of reservation was contrary to the Church of England. However, the 19th century catholic movement reintroduced reservation with much opposition from evangelicals (Meyrick, 1933). This movement influenced the whole of the Anglican Communion. By 1928 England proposed reservation for the sick but the book failed to get parliamentary approval. Communion for the sick using the reserved sacrament began to be included in Anglican Prayer Books, for example Scotland 1929, Southern Africa 1954, the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon 1960. However, even after the war evangelicals were still opposing reservation (Beckwith, 1971). *Baptism Eucharist and Ministry* (WCC, 1982), the multilateral discussion document, was able to recognized diversity of practice in relation to reservation. However, reservation

was tackled in the 1979 Elucidation of the ARCIC report on Eucharistic Doctrine, later published in the *Final Report* (ARCIC, 1982). This comments:

> Communion administered from the reserved sacrament to those unable to attend the eucharistic celebration is rightly understood as an extension of that celebration (p. 23)

However, the quote above, while clearly allowing some reservation does not fully cover all the circumstances for extended communion. Smethurst and others have dissociated extended communion from the issue of reservation or used any arguments connected with communion for the sick. This has not been altogether successful.

Spiritual Communion is another part of the Anglican tradition. The 1549 Prayer Book said that if the person is so sick as to be unable to receive the elements but is repentant they eat and drink spiritually. This statement is incorporated into many prayer books of the Communion. Anglican devotional material developed this into a set of prayers. Thomas Wilson, bishop of Sodor and Man, provided a form for this in 1663 (Wilson, 1851). A different form was included in *The Priest's Book of Private Devotion* (Crake, n.d.). It was also included in *The Supplement to the Book of Common Prayer* of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon (1960). Clearly this is an alternative to extended communion, as the General Synod was to be reminded.

Extended Communion has been an issue at inter-Anglican meetings e.g. the Lambeth Conference and the meetings of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC). It has arisen at a number of ACC meetings. ACC – 6 (1984) noted that in some places communion was infrequent due to lack of priests (Anglican Consultative Council, 1985). It suggested that local priests were the preferred option to extended communion or lay presidency. ACC – 7 (1987) noted that communion from the reserved sacrament was happening in New Zealand, Canada, and Brazil. It raised questions but did not oppose the practice, as it had with lay presidency (Anglican Consultative Council, 1987). Hargrave (1990) interpreted

this as the meeting that made a shift in the direction of using the reserved sacrament. ACC – 10 (1996) said in a section report (Anglican Consultative Council, 1997):

> Since the laity are currently denied access to sacramental ministry in some places, member Churches... should give urgent consideration to resolving that problem, by studying the theological and practical issues raised by those who advocate lay presidency or 'extended communion' (p. 155).

Clearly this is an issue that is not disappearing, and it is one that Anglicans seem to find hard to resolve.

Similarly extended communion or its alternatives has been raised at various Lambeth Conferences. Lambeth 1978 noted that bishops were responsible to make the sacrament of Holy Communion available (The Secretary General of the Anglican Consultative Council, 1978). A subgroup recommended lay presidency but the larger group decided not to discuss this further. Lambeth 1988 noted that extended communion had found acceptance in some parts of the communion (The Lambeth Conference, 1988). It also rejected lay presidency while affirming the possibility of local priests. Colin Buchanan (1988) commented:

> 'extended communion' is nowadays a much less contentious issue than years ago - a matter helped by the diminishing of the 'cultus', so that 'reserving' is truly directed to the actual needs of real people, who are ill or otherwise cut off from the eucharist (p.23).

This would seem to summarize the reasons for the softening of some, but not all, evangelicals towards extended communion. Lambeth 1998 only briefly mentions extended communion (The Secretary General of the Anglican Consultative Council, 1999). Its tone is cautious, seeing this as an exceptional measure. It then rejected lay presidency in the next paragraph. Thus at the international episcopal level the issue remains unresolved.

One official Anglican network has also touched on Extended Communion. This is the Inter Anglican Liturgical Consultation (IALC), which runs as the Anglican Consultative Council network on liturgy. The key event was IALC – 5 in Dublin (1995). Preparatory papers for the Consultation included two articles that discussed extended communion (Holeton, 1994). One paper on 'Ministry and Eucharist' noted that communion from the reserved sacrament was a possible option in the absence of a presbyter (Bradshaw and Gibaut, 1994). However, it also noted the reserved sacrament originally was used for those who were unable to come to the assembly, not for the assembly itself. A second article comments that the practice has developed in some Provinces but that it is not without controversy (Millar and Tovey, 1994).

The main report of the Dublin conference came out as a book *Our Thanks and Praise* (Holeton, 1998). The issue is touched on in two sections of the book. Firstly, in the second working group on Ministry, Order and the Eucharist, Section 10 of this paper discusses distribution from previously consecrated elements. It conservatively says, 'this practice ought to be no more than an emergency measure' (p. 282). The other times that extended communion is mentioned is in Provincial reports from across the communion. The report on Australia said that the bishop's conference in 1996 agreed to phase out extended communion and diaconal presidency (p. 190). The Canadian report noted the practice and awaits its reception by the Province (p.201). Central Africa discussed deacons using the reserved sacrament and looks to more presbyters (p. 207). Cuba commented that in the past seminarians and deacons have administered the reserved sacrament, but more presbyters have eased this problem (p. 211). Those reporting on England noted at the time a number of diocesan rites (p. 217). The report from New Zealand said that it is often hard for the laity to understand the difference between a Service of the Word with Holy Communion and the eucharist (p. 233). The West Indies reported an increasing number of priestless Sundays (p. 256). These Provincial reports gave a snapshot of the issues in the Communion at that time.
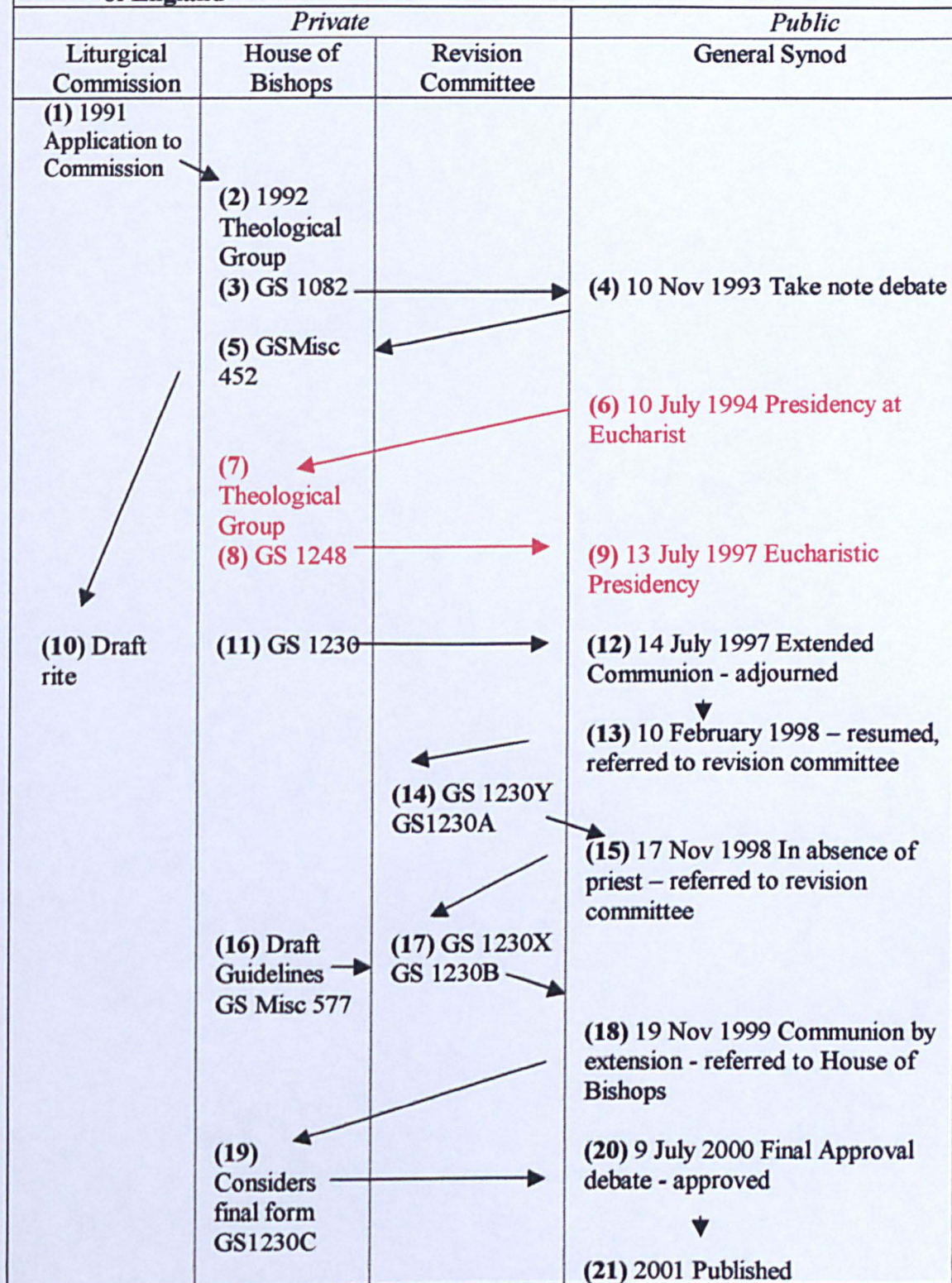
The General Synod Debates

Returning to the Church of England, the most significant discussion of extended communion occurred in the debates leading to the authorization of the present text. This was a long and tortuous process running over two Synods and with a subdiscussion on lay presidency. The process is outlined in Figure 6.5 and this will be explained in the next paragraph. The initial debate in 1993 was somewhat inconclusive. Immediately a private member's motion on lay presidency got enough support to 'be put' and so this issue was debated (outlined in red in figure 6.5). This resulted in the substantial report *Eucharistic Presidency* (House of Bishops, 1997). The process of authorization was then resumed by a new Synod. This took every possible stage of the revision process and for much of the time it was unclear if it would be passed. The vote on 10th February 1998 (stage 13 in figure 6.5) got sufficient votes to continue (a simple majority in each house) but not the two-thirds majorities that would be required for the final vote. The final vote passed but by only 67% in the house of laity (Tovey, 2001). This was one of the most convoluted debates of any liturgical business, and so I propose to look through the debates first grouping them in stages; then to look at the liturgical changes of the draft rites; then to return to the lay presidency debate and other related issues.

Figure 6.5 summarizes the route through the General Synod. The period covered is the ten years from 1991 when the first application was made for the Liturgical Commission to consider the issue to the publication in 2001 of the authorized text. This process involves 21 stages (numbered in brackets), crossing two Synods. There was also a significant debate on lay presidency that became a part of the process and this is indicated in red. This convoluted process includes papers moving between three different committees, on the one hand the liturgical commission, the House of Bishops and the Revision Committees (the first three columns) and on the other hand the public arena of the General Synod. At each stage the draft documents are indicated by their numbering e.g. GS 1082. The debates are named and dated in the General Synod column. There are eleven

primary documents to consider and seven major debates. The General Synod publishes a verbatim account of its workings in a series of volumes of *Proceedings of the General Synod*. Recent *Proceedings* are published online, but the debate on extended communion was immediately prior to electronic publication. This is a considerable volume of documentation to summarize, analyze, and evaluate. However, the debates in Synod are crucial as the draft policy documents evolved by incorporating issues discussed in the debates, and so they shape the final product in a critical manner.

Figure 6.5 Process of Authorizing Communion by Extension in the Church of England			
	Private		*Public*
Liturgical Commission	House of Bishops	Revision Committee	General Synod
(1) 1991 Application to Commission			
	(2) 1992 Theological Group		
	(3) GS 1082	→	**(4)** 10 Nov 1993 Take note debate
	(5) GSMisc 452	←	
			(6) 10 July 1994 Presidency at Eucharist
	(7) Theological Group		
	(8) GS 1248	→	**(9)** 13 July 1997 Eucharistic Presidency
(10) Draft rite	**(11)** GS 1230	→	**(12)** 14 July 1997 Extended Communion - adjourned
			(13) 10 February 1998 – resumed, referred to revision committee
		(14) GS 1230Y GS1230A	**(15)** 17 Nov 1998 In absence of priest – referred to revision committee
	(16) Draft Guidelines GS Misc 577	**(17)** GS 1230X GS 1230B	
			(18) 19 Nov 1999 Communion by extension - referred to House of Bishops
	(19) Considers final form GS1230C	→	**(20)** 9 July 2000 Final Approval debate - approved
			(21) 2001 Published

The first debate in 1993 (stage 4) was moved by the House of Bishops presenting their report GS 1082 (House of Bishops, 1993). This suggested four contexts for extended communion. First, communion at home for the sick, which was seen as a separate issue regulated under a different canon. Second, house-groups, which are encouraged to have occasional celebrations of the eucharist. Third, multi-parish benefices are envisaged as the major reason for extended communion and the report notes that some rites already existed in the rural areas. Finally, the absence of a priest for holiday, sickness, vacancy, was rejected as cause for authorizing extended communion. It was deemed at that time to be too frivolous a reason for the practice. The last two factors will be investigated in the empirical research.

The 1993 speeches raised many questions and issues (The General Synod of the Church of England, 1993). Some particularly talked of the need of rural dioceses and the positive recommendation of *Faith in the Countryside*. Trevor Lloyd raised sacramental problems about the nature of the elements, ministry problems with the shortage of priests, and ecclesiological problems: does it assume a unity that is not there? Bridget Langstaff suggested as an alternative the agape, 'a non eucharistic sharing of the bread and wine' (p. 900). The Bishop of Worcester referred to his experience of ADAP in France (see chapter four above). This was not the only reference to experience in France in the various debates. Paul Avis said:

> It confuses the nature of eucharistic community, conceals the importance
> of eucharistic presidency and confounds the unity of the eucharistic action
> (p. 903).

Christina Baxter begged the bishops to withdraw the proposals. Her objections were that it defaces the eucharist because the 'profound sign worked out in front of my eyes' is not seen, nor the narrative heard, and the ministry should be changed not the eucharist (p. 904). Some people used the symbolic terms 'some kind of ecclesiastical take-away', 'eucharist meals on wheels', 'hosts through the

post', 'picnic communion'. There were also fears that necessity would become the norm. The Church Times headline summed up the debate 'Many members wary'(Anon, 1993). Colin Buchanan (1993a) commented on the debate:

> In the debate on the report there was less interest in the declared theme, extended communion, than there was in lay presidency – an outcome contrary, I am sure, to all expectations (p. 1).

Subsequent to this debate a private member's motion received sufficient votes to get a debate on presidency. This will be examined later in this chapter.

The next two debates were not until 1997 and 1978 (stages12 and 13) and form together the next stage of the synodical process. It is particularly unsatisfactory that these debates were split. The House of Bishops brought forward a new proposal GS 1230 (House of Bishops, 1996). It is worth noting that this was a different Synod from the one that had debated in 1993. Stephen Sykes introduced the debate saying that the use of this provision was to be limited, that the Synod should listen to the rural areas, and that the proposed liturgy was sufficient. Patience Purchas gave an example of sacrament reserved in a lemonade bottle and Tupperware box, she said that this was unseemly and irreverent.

At the resumption of the debate in 1998 further points were made (The General Synod of the Church of England, 1998). Kenneth Stevenson noted occasional urban use of this service. David Houlding rejected extended communion saying, 'The Eucharist makes the Church, and only a full celebration of the Eucharist' (p. 80). Rosalind Campbell pointed out that the report on children and communion says that communicant children have to be present for the eucharistic prayer and not just come in for receiving communion. She observed that extended communion undermines this position. The Bishop of Hereford called it, 'an interim provision but... one that is badly needed now' (p. 84). Symbolic terms used were that communicants at such a service became 'second class', that it was the 'least undesirable' option, 'a step too far', and an 'eucharistic aberration'. After a full debate the motion was put in a vote by

houses. It had to obtain simple majorities in all houses to proceed. This it achieved the voting figures being given in Figure 6.6:

Figure 6.6 Voting 1998 (stage 13)		
	Ayes	Noes
House of Bishops	24	9
House of Clergy	128	57
House of Laity	106	89

However, the lack of a two-thirds majority in each house was to create an atmosphere of the possibility of rejection of the provision. Colin Buchanan (1998) commented:

> What can be achieved when the Synod is clearly dragging its feet against the whole concept?

The service was not having an easy ride.

In 1998 the Revision Committee produced a revised report GS1230A (General Synod, 1998a), which was used in the third phase of the debate in November (stage 15). Various points made in the debate included the suggestion that use be made of electronic means to broadcast the main service as an alternative. Then there was opposition because it seems to support reservation. Symbolic terms used in debate were, to 'dismember the eucharist', and 'a eucharist which is not a eucharist'. The report was recommitted to the revision committee. David Phillips (1998) commented on this service:

> The call for this service is driven by the falling numbers of full-time clergy. However, it assumes that what matters at the Lord's Supper is whether a Priest has said the magic words over the bread and wine, rather than whether the people of God receive the bread and the wine by faith.

This articulated the concerns of some of the more protestant members of the synod.

The fourth phase of the debate came in November 1999 (stage18), when the Revision Committee reported in GS 1230B, (General Synod, 1999). At this

stage significant points were made: that the service was not to be a part of the main Common Worship Sunday Service book, the House of Bishops was to introduce the Guidelines, the main difference with communion of the sick was its public nature, those already conducting the service would appreciate an authorized rite, and in some places the country parish was in the third or fourth round of pastoral reorganization through decline in clergy numbers. There was still much unease but it was referred to the House of Bishops.

The final debate took place in 2000 (stage 20) and was the final approval vote, requiring a two-thirds majority in each house. This was based on GS 1230C (House of Bishops, 2000). The title by now had changed to Public Worship with Communion by Extension and the House of Bishops' Guidelines had been added to the document. Significant points were made in the debate (The Archbishop's Council, 2000). One member of Synod said that:

> the underlying pastoral theology of the practices [reservation and
> communion by extension]... are related (p.237);

and another that 'we are dealing with particular needs of our rural communities' (p.238), that Synod members had good experiences in France of ADAP, that,

> Communion by Extension is alive... well and living in many if not most
> of our dioceses – certainly the rural ones (p. 244).

Trevor Lloyd repeated his points against the rite, said the service is wrong and warned that 'our whole theology of Communion will change' (p. 249). The Bishop of Stafford talked about the needs in a vacancy and at Christmas and Easter. Christina Baxter renewed her attack:

> Do we leave the service of Holy Communion as Jesus gave it to us or do
> we change that, in order to maintain the current pattern of ministry?.. I
> believe we need to change our criteria for ordination, so that we have
> assistant ministers and overseer ministers (p. 252).

There were still members arguing for lay presidency in the debate.

The motion was put by Houses and required a two-thirds majority in each. The votes were as given in Figure 6.7:

Figure 6.7 voting figures in 2000		
	Ayes	Noes
House of Bishops	28	2
House of Clergy	137	34
House of Laity	131	64

Colin Buchanan (2000) commented on this 'The last figure caused a gasp. It was a close-run thing' (p.1). David Hebblethwaite (2004) then secretary of the Liturgical Commission, commented:

> This rite is unique as a fully authorized liturgy in the Church of England, alternative to the provision of the Book of Common Prayer, which is only available for use in a diocese if the bishop gives express permission for it to be used. There are currently some dioceses where it is used and others where it is not (p. 43).

This most complex procedure entailed considerable theological debate, with many strong speeches against it. The debate in Synod is paralleled in the wider church, including the parishes in part three, which will examine their local theology. In Synod, pastoral need and the agreement that the bishops will closely control this service, seems to have won the day.

The liturgy through the Synod

The liturgy kept developing on its route through Synod. Part of the complexity of the issue was that the eucharistic rite was also being revised at the same time and the two services had to relate to each other. Also from the beginning a second rite was planned with Prayer Book shape. However this remained in outline form for much of the time. The title of the service also changed; this verbal instability has been noted in the chapters above.

An analysis of the evolution of the rite through General Synod identifies five critical stages. Stage one: in 1993 GS 1082 *Extended Communion* (House of

Bishops, 1993) had a brief introduction explaining the rite. However one of its features was 10 alternative thanksgiving prayers in an appendix. Stage two: in 1996 GS 1230 *Extended Communion* (House of Bishops, 1996) began to work along the shape of the revised Common Worship rites. The report was very similar to GS 1082 but the alternatives in the appendix were removed. It included the procession of the Bible or Gospels at the beginning of the service. Stage three: in 1998 GS 1230A *Sunday Worship with Holy Communion in the Absence of a Priest* (General Synod, 1998a). Clearly the title changed, the narrative was added to the introduction, statements at the peace and before communion were added to say this is extended communion, and while a rubric was added to encourage thanksgivings at the intercessions, the Revision Committee (General Synod, 1998b):

> resisted the inclusion of thanksgivings... because to do so would be to import a "feel" in the rite too closely akin to the form of a eucharistic prayer (p. 9).

Stage four: in 1999 GS 1230B *Public Worship with Communion by Extension* (General Synod, 1999) included the Order Two rite (see above) and revised the name. The House of Bishops' Guidelines were at this stage a separate document GS Misc 577 (House of Bishops, 1999). Stage five: in 2000 GS 1230C *Public Worship with Communion by Extension* (House of Bishops, 2000). This final report incorporates the Guidelines into the service book. These changes reflect some aspects of the Synod debate and the concerns of the revision committee. A journey through two revision committees is the most complex route for any liturgical business in Synod. Even to the end there was fierce debate about the legitimacy of this service. The alternative of lay presidency was also referred to even in the last debate, to which we now turn.

Lay Presidency

The process of approving Extended Communion in the Church of England also included an integral debate about lay presidency at the eucharist. The latter may seem like a novel suggestion within Anglicanism; however we have already seen

it discussed at the international level at Lambeth Conferences and ACC meetings. A call for lay presidency is mostly driven by the evangelical party in the church, notably from the diocese of Sydney, but there have been others in the discussion.

In England there has been a longstanding minority that proposed lay presidency. Hargrave (1990) points to the roots of the debate in Roland Allen and apparent support from William Temple and Canon Synge of New Zealand. The 1975 report *Theology of Ordination* (GS 281) rejected it. However, the debate in Synod produced a number of speeches in favour (The General Synod of the Church of England, 1976). Indeed, Colin Buchanan (1976) commented on this:

> Crowds were on their feet after every speech, each wishing to add his or
> her weight to a growing pressure for (controlled) lay presidency (p. 8).

In 1977 a group of evangelicals debated the issue in print giving a variety of approaches (Lloyd, 1977). The 1983 Tiller report discussed the issue (Tiller, 1983). Colin Buchanan (1997) said 'the subject has been around all my lifetime' (p. 1). In May 1985 Chelmsford diocesan synod voted on the principal of lay presidency (Buchanan, 1985). The voting suggested wide acceptance by the laity:

Figure 6.8 Voting in Chelmsford 1985		
	Ayes	Noes
House of Bishops	0	3
House of Clergy	29	38
House of Laity	53	19

Benedict Green (1994) was against it, while Alan Smithson (1998) favoured it. Thus while a mostly evangelical issue there are some catholics in favour. Indeed, there are some Roman Catholic authors who seem to have supported it in certain circumstances, notably Hans Kung (1972) in *Why Priests?*, Schillebeeckx (1981) in *Ministry*, and Boff (1986) in *Ecclesiogenesis*.

Around the Communion there have been similar debates about lay presidency. In March 1979 the Bishops of the Province of Kenya resolved that a deacon could preside at Communion with bishop's permission. This was endorsed

by the Provincial Synod and has happened in emergency (Buchanan, 1985). The Province of the Southern Cone narrowly missed voting in favour of it in 1986 (Buchanan, 1986). This was explored by Alan Hargrave (1990) a member of the Executive Council of the Province. A report of Cape Town diocese advocated it while noting its lack of acceptance around the Anglican Communion (Buchanan, 1993c). Sydney Diocese have been persistently producing reports on diaconal and lay presidency and voting in favour of it in its Synod. A whole series of reports have advocated lay presidency:

Figure 6.9 Reports from the Diocese of Sydney	
1987	*Lay Presidency At the Holy Communion* (Diocese of Sydney Standing Committee of Synod, 1987)
1993	*Lay Presidency at the Lord's Supper* (Diocesan Doctrine Commission of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney, 1993)
1994	*Lay and Diaconal Presidency* (Diocese of Sydney, 1994b)
1994	*Lay and Diaconal Administration of the Lord's Supper* (Diocese of Sydney, 1994a)
1995	*Lay and Diaconal Administration of the Lord's Supper* (Sydney Diocesan Doctrine Commission, 1995)
1998	*Lay and Diaconal Administration of the Holy Communion* (Diocese of Sydney, 1998)
1999	*Lay and Diaconal Administration of the Holy Communion* (Diocese of Sydney, 1999)
2004	*Lay and Diaconal Administration of the Holy Communion* (Diocese of Sydney, 2004)

While this is a substantial body of argument, the Dioceses of Sydney has not yet officially enacted its plans for lay and diaconal presidency.

Returning to the situation in England, the introduction of extended communion produced a debate on eucharistic presidency (stages 6-9 in figure 10.5). The first debate in July 1994 included a number of significant points (The General Synod of the Church of England, 1994). Michael Till argued that:

> where pastoral presidency becomes detached from eucharistic presidency, priesthood is diminished (p. 280).

Stephen Sykes said, 'in my view the literature in favour of lay presidency is not very impressive' (p.282). He pointed out that Canon B12 rejects it. George Carey argued:

> lay presidency is a contradiction in terms if we are to keep faith with the received doctrine of ministry of our Church (p. 287).

However, David Gillett noticed 'how strong the desire is on the part of a good number of people for lay presidency (p. 290). The debate concluded by asking the House of Bishops to produce a report on eucharistic presidency.

The report *Eucharistic Presidency* was the result of this debate (House of Bishops, 1997). This report includes a discussion of lay presidency; indeed it develops a substantial theology of presidency. Rooting presidency in the commission to pastoral oversight it rejects lay presidency. It also discussed diaconal presidency, which it sees as confusing the ecumenical debate about the renewed deaconate. This report was then debated in General Synod in July 1997. In the debate a variety of points were made (The General Synod of the Church of England, 1997). Stephen Sykes said, 'traditions about presidency developed in history' (p. 213) and,

> the eucharistic president should be as clearly as possible both a sign and a focus of the marks of the Church (p. 213).

Tim Royal questioned the division between authorizing people to preach but not to preside. He suggested ordaining Readers. It was stated that the whole question was based on a shortage of priests and some advocated the further development of Ordained Local Ministry (OLM).

This report has inhibited the development of lay presidency in the Church of England. However, some of those advocating cell church see lay presidency as necessary. David James, Bishop of Bradford, foresees by 2030 lay presidency as taken for granted (James, 2004). George Lings, however, seems more reserved about lay presidency as the solution to the administering of the eucharist in cell

churches (Lings, 1999a). The empirical research will test the hypothesis that lay presidency is no longer an issue in the parishes.

Agape

Another alternative raised in the Synod debates about extended communion and eucharistic presidency is the agape or love-feast. This has already been discussed in the chapter ten. To summarize that discussion the agape was a combination of meal and eucharist that is found in the Scriptures, not least 1 Corinthians and in early church literature (Agape, 1997). Baker states that it ceased in the early church but was revived by Pietist groups (Baker, 1986). Indeed, he notes that there has been some ecumenical revival of the agape in order to circumvent the issues of inter-communion. In his view this avoids the real issues. The Moravian Church continues to have the Love Feast as a part of its liturgy (The British Province of the Moravian Church, 1960). They influenced the early Methodist church where the practice has since largely died out.

The Church of England made provision for a eucharistic agape in Holy Week (Church of England, 1984, 1986). This was clearly conceived as a meal within the eucharist (Brookes, 1984). While the provision is set for Maundy Thursday, it is possible that it could be done on other days (Lloyd, 1986). The Episcopal Church of the United States of America (ECUSA) provided for a non-eucharistic agape on Maundy Thursday after the eucharist with the blessing of wine, bread, and other foods (ECUSA, 1988). There has been continued interest in informal gatherings to share a meal and fellowship (Bryden-Brook, 1998).

In the context of the matrix of questions about extended communion the agape is sometimes seen as a proposed solution. One of the issues is to clarify is the difference between a eucharistic and non eucharistic agape. This line seems to be crossed in *Take, Bless, Break, Share* (Bryden-Brook, 1998), which includes both types of service. The present Church of England provision is eucharistic. The

empirical research will examine the occurrence of the non eucharistic agape in the parish context.

Lay Ministries

The introduction of the 2001 service has an impact on the dioceses, not least on policies and ministries. Dioceses have had to revise, or for the first time produce, guidelines for extended communion. Example of these policies can be found at various websites e.g., York (Archbishop of York, n.d.), London (Diocese of London, n.d.), and Portsmouth (Diocese of Portsmouth, 2004).

Readers in particular may be involved in the ministry of extended communion. It is hard to find detailed information but one survey from Portsmouth suggests of 148 readers 67% have some experience of extended communion (Lloyd, 2004). Indeed, from this report 40% of occurrences are from the urban deanery of Portsmouth itself. Also there are growing numbers of lay people who are authorized to lead services of extended communion. Dow see this as an emerging lay ministry (Dow, 2004). He says that there are 80 such persons in the diocese of Monmouth only a few of who are Readers. The diocese of Oxford has introduce a new category of ministry Authorized Leaders of Services of Communion by Extension (Harries, 2003b).

Conclusions

There has been much fierce opposition to extended communion in the Church of England. It developed in Ulverston for pragmatic reasons to cope with a sudden decline in clergy in 1979. However, it has continued to happen in that parish ever since. Extended communion grew as a practice in the dioceses and eventually was debated at provincial level. After complex and controversial debates in General Synod it only just managed to get the required two-thirds majority. Opposition to it still exists at diocesan level, where some bishops have not allowed it, and even in diocese where it is permitted, some parishes refuse to use the service.

The debate in England included a number of assumptions, discussed on the floor of the General Synod and incorporated into policy documents, indeed the debate in synod developed a 'mythology' concerning the service. These assumptions will be tested in the second half of this thesis. The hypotheses are: that significant numbers of parishes do not follow the correct procedures; that the distinction between communion for the sick and extended communion is not clear in practice; that many leaders of the service have received no training; that it is primarily a rural phenomenon; that it is never used in home and parish groups; and finally that parishes always treat the consecrated elements in a seemly manner. Two other issues are to be investigated, attitudes to lay presidency as an alternative, and the extent to which agapes are used in parishes. Thus this chapter has raised critical questions of practical theology to be tested in the arena of the parishes of the diocese of Oxford.

Extended communion also raises a number of critical questions. One key issue is 'who is to say if this is a valid development' and 'what are the criteria to make such a judgment'. This question underlies the whole thesis. It will be returned to in the final conclusions. Also there is a significant theoretical debate about the relationship of theory and practice, in this instance between Synodical policy and practice in the parishes. This will be a fundamental issue in part three. Moreover it is of such significance that it goes to the root of the problem of how to do theology today. This key methodological question will also be discussed in the final conclusions.

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Chapter 12

Part 1 - Conclusions

This part of the thesis has engaged in an discussion of the methodology of liturgical studies and in-depth examination of the production of the new services in three denominations. This has identified a gap in the meaning of the term 'extended communion' between Anglicans and Methodists in theory, but a merging of practice in a few incidents. There is also a commonality between Anglicans and Roman Catholics in one of the key driving factors being a shortage of (or uneven distribution of) priests. A saying in received wisdom is that extended communion is a liturgical solution to a ministerial problem, cf. Huck (1989). This wisdom can now be critically evaluated in light of the previous chapters. However, before that some other conclusions arise out of this research.

One observation about the process of the production of theses liturgies is of an interrelationship between the churches. Denominations do not produce these liturgies in isolation, their introduction can reflects something of the genius of the church. On one level there are elements of shared context: declining numbers of clergy, expectations by the laity to regularly receive communion, declining organizations in a secular world. While the liturgical movement has stressed the centrality of the eucharist and the reception of communion, the institutions are increasingly unable to support this new paradigm with their older ministerial structures. Roman Catholics are expected to travel or receive reserved sacrament. Anglicans have perhaps identified more with the centrality of the eucharist and thus introduce extended communion. The eucharist for Methodism as not been the main service on a weekly basis for most churches, but there are the needs of the sick and housebound in an aging church. The issue of extended communion is never merely one of a liturgical form but is always intimately related to

ministerial and ecclesiological questions. As such it calls for a discussion of a number of complex issues in the life of the church.

However the genesis of theses rites has demonstrated an intertextual relationship between denominations. Aspects of terminology have been shared between Methodists and Anglicans and at times between Anglicans and Roman Catholics. Consciousness of events in France influences the policy of the Church of England, a number of speakers in the Synod discussion mentioning their experience of ADAP. There is also some textual borrowing, Methodists adapting Anglican material. This warns against seeing the services as three isolated productions, but rather as a more complex organically related set of developments.

This research unearthed that the first example of extended communion in the geographical area that will be investigated in the qualitative research was in Reading in 1841 at the Primitive Methodist Conference. The organizers of this 1841 designed a range of worship events including both the Lord's Supper and the love-feast. It was the discovery of the agape in the Anglican parishes selected for the research sample that provoked further study of the Methodist love-feast, not the other way round. Thus the research has included more iterative processes than the linear narrative of the thesis may imply. This is of significance as an indication in the way the theory emerges from the facts (a grounded theory approach). This can be contrasted with a more positivistic approach in which theory based questions lead to research based questions (Wengraf, 2001).

Turning now to the question of the relationship of extended communion to ministerial provision: from a problem solving perspective, extended communion may be a short-term fix to a longer-term problem (Mitchell, 2002). The problem is of providing adequate numbers of ministers to lead Holy Communion. This interaction between the short-term and long-term is very important in the process of change, as in figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1 Feedbacks Communion by Extension

Fewer priests

Less need for priests

Laity training

delay

Communion by Extension

Ordination
training

Less need for
communion
by extension

Delay

More priests
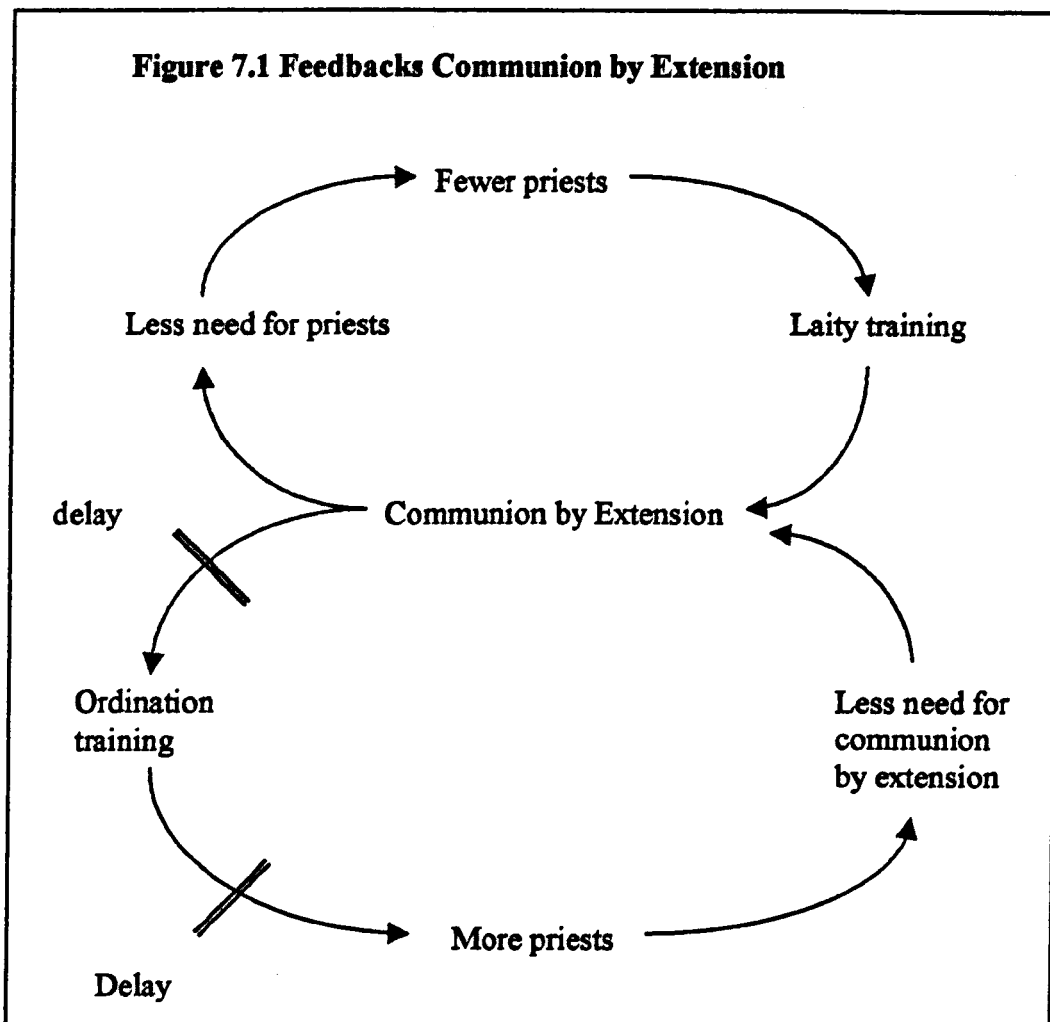
This diagram is based on one of Senge's models of change (Senge, 1990).
In this model because of delay in the long-term solution a short-term fix is
developed. It starts with the experience of the need of extended communion. The
top loop is the short-term fix, the training of laity to do services of extended
communion. It has a danger of becoming a positive feedback loop. The bottom
loop is the long-term solution. It has a negative feedback minimalizing the need
for extended communion, indeed possibly stopping it all together. The problem
with this loop is the delay in selection and training for ordination, which has more
depth to it than lay training, which means that it takes longer and may discourage
people along this path. Thus the danger is that the feedback loops encourage the

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short-term fix over the long-term solution. The solution, says Senge, is to keep an eye on the long term above the short term.

In the Roman Catholic Church there is chronic need for the renewal of the priesthood and the provision of more priests. The Church of England has been exploring new tracks for ordination training but perhaps needs to be more radical. Both churches have reservoirs of ministers in on the one hand permanent deacons and on the other Readers who could in theory solve the shortage of priests. But in both churches there is opposition to such a solution. The long-term solution is not to permit both these groups of ministers to lead services of extended communion, as long-term the normative worship for Christians is the eucharist. The churches must keep their eyes on the long-term problem of sufficient supply of priests to the congregations to enable the eucharist. Nevertheless, this research reveals a tension in these organizations between espoused ideals and practical solutions. A practical solution may become a new norm, and there is some evidence in the research to suggest that this is what is happening.

In Anglicanism each diocese has to interpret Provincial policies but few combine regulations about extended communion and ministerial provision. One exception to this is from the Diocese of Dunedin in New Zealand. Their regulations say:

> Each worshipping community which makes use of the provision for
> Extended Communion on a regular basis should schedule a regular service
> with a priest and should have a long term plan in place to eliminate the
> need for Extended Communion. (Diocese of Dunedin, n.d.)

This keeps the service in the realm of emergency or interim without letting it become normative, by keeping an eye on the long-term solution. Thus the short-term need is held within the long-term solution.

In partially supporting the conventional wisdom, this thesis does not accept the situation as a straight choice between extended communion or more

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priests. The overwhelming argument of liturgical scholars is that extended communion should be prohibited. Examples of this happening have been given in the chapters above. Those who argue this position also suggest that organizational effort be focused into recruiting new priests. Figure 7.1 may be read in a way that allows both extended communion and the training of priests to occur simultaneously. However Senge suggests that in this type of context such an approach needs to happen with a firm eye on the future. The Diocese of Dunedin seems to have managed to encapsulate this approach in its policy document.

Finally the discussion of the development of the Church of England provision included the formulation of a set of hypotheses. These will be used in the empirical research to test assumptions and clarify gaps between theory and practice. This by its nature is a developing part of the thesis and so will be returned to in future chapters. The relationship of theory and practice is a key methodological frame in this practical theology enquiry.

Part 2 The Qualitative Research Project

Chapter 8

Research Methodology

Introduction

The first part of this thesis have been a critical examination of the creation of the new texts of extended communion. The methodological background for this part of the research was set out in chapter two. The research in this first half used as a heurist the concept of 'reading' from the work of Umberto Eco (1979), who suggested that in the semiotics of reading there are a number of fields including a dictionary of terms and an encyclopaedia of concepts: chapter three investigated the dictionary, chapters four to six extensively developed the encyclopaedia. Some in reader response theory have seen their approach as a prelude to empirical study. Holland (1989) examined the psychology of reading, conducting psychological tests on readers. However, Iser (1978) argues for openness to a variety of approaches to empirical study while committing himself to none. This leaves open the possibility of alternative theoretical approaches to researching the question: how do people in parishes 'read' these new services?

The second part of this thesis is a qualitative research project critically examining people's responses to extended communion, focussing on six parishes in the Diocese of Oxford. This chapter gives a 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) of the research to allow methodological transparency (O'Connor et al., 2001). It is written in a more deliberately reflective narrative style to facilitate this clarity. The initial approach is of an open enquiry: what is happening and what do people think about it? The research intensively examines the events in one part of the Church of England. In seeing research as 'building theory from data' this utilises a starting point from grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). However, this is not a grounded theory research project, a school against which questions have

been raised, based on internal consistency (Dey, 1999), and from a post-modern perspective (Clarke, 2005). Nor is this merely a descriptive approach for the aim is to test a set of assumptions that were made in proposing the new liturgy in debate and in policy-making contexts raised in chapter six. These questions had already been introduced in the first chapter. To reiterate they are: is extended communion primarily a rural phenomenon? Do lay people misunderstand it? Is the current liturgy adequate for the situation? Is training happening appropriately? Are the elements always transported correctly? Is lay presidency a dead issue? This might suggest a positivistic element to the design (Bryman, 1988). However, the research itself was to uncover data raising further issues and questions leading to additional avenues of investigation. As such, this later facet of the enquiry locates the research more broadly in the interpretive paradigm (Silverman, 1993).

It was apparent from the beginning of the investigation that few people had a clear idea of what was happening across the church nationally or in the Diocese of Oxford in particular. Discourse on the issue was conducted mostly from a series of anecdotes bolstering opinions that were either for or against the service. There was considerable confusion between extended communion and communion for the sick (Field Notes 19 October 2003). No centralised record of parishes' activity was held, even if in theory parishes had to ask the bishop for permission. This gives the research a particular edge: this field of study has not been conducted before and uses an approach infrequently used in liturgical studies.

Most of the literature on the subject is written by experts many of whom are clergy or liturgical scholars. In looking at 'reading' of the service 'on the ground', I was particularly concerned to collect and analyse the reactions of laity and the lay people that lead the services. Liberation theology has questioned the elitism of traditional theology, e.g. Boff and Boff (1986) and Green (1990a). Recent contextual developments in theology have explored local theology (Schreiter, 1985) and ordinary theology (Astley, 2002). However, few have

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progressed beyond a theoretical discussion of such theology. A significant feature of this research and its particular contribution to the academy is its critical engagement with ordinary theology, even if such theology is unsystematic and inchoate.

Research strategy

Any research question is confronted with a multitude of potential traditions (Cresswell, 1998) and methods (Robson, 1993); and in practical theology empirical methods are increasingly used to research theological issues e.g. Cartledge (2003) and Swinton and Mowat (2006). This research project could have been conducted from a number of perspectives for example one possibility would have been a national survey. Social survey with questionnaires for quantitative research has been particularly advocated in practical theology by Leslie Francis, for example on the rural church (Francis, 1985). Such surveys have been a part of previous research (Smethurst, 1993), and a promise was made in the debate in General Synod that an official national survey would be made. Duplication of such work seemed inappropriate. Also such surveys tend to go to clergy and thus omit the ordinary theology that has been a key concern for this research. Therefore a small-scale qualitative approach was considered as fitting to the research question (Marshall and Rossman, 1999).

The focus turned to the Archdeaconry of Berkshire in the Diocese of Oxford. The archdeaconry was chosen in part because of size (see the next chapter), and in part for pragmatic reasons. An initial strategy considered was questionnaire (Oppenheim, 1966, 1992), observation (Robson, 1993), and focus group interview (Morgan, 1997). The last two methods were utilized in a recent study on charismatic worship (Steven, 2002). However, initial research soon demonstrated that this would be an inadequate strategy. A pilot questionnaire proved very unfruitful in the sense of collecting information but informative of the nature of the subject studied. Two issues were central. First, confusion about the difference between extended communion and communion for the sick

required complex wording in the questionnaire. Second, there is a perception that extended communion is not quite proper. Some places have been holding these services for many years. But this may have been done without bishop's permission, and unofficial liturgies may have been used in the past. Lee (1993) discusses the particular difficulties of doing research on sensitive topics, of which extended communion proved to be one. The consequence of these factors in this inquiry was that people were reticent to put pen to paper, but were willing to be interviewed.

I also discovered that extended communion was mostly for 'emergencies'. There were no parishes where it was a regular service in the sense of each month being a normal part of the service programme. As the services were irregular it made it very difficult to discover when such services were happening for observational purposes. This is a question of access in research (Gummesson, 1991). The occasional occurrence of the services would make gathering data by focus groups as a major part of research design practically impossible. Thus research design had to cohere with the subject under scrutiny.

The strategy was therefore redesigned to be: qualitative collection of data on an archdeaconry level through documentary analysis and informally structured group interview, and data collection on a parish level through observation, documentary analysis, and individual interview.

Role of the researcher

Davies (1999) talks of the participant observer as emerging from ethnographic research. Robson (1993) widens the scope in his comment:

> A key feature of participant observation is that the observer seeks to become some kind of member of the observed group (p. 194).

He clarifies that the researcher may reveal or conceal their role. I chose to always reveal my role in part because of my history, having had a number of jobs in the Diocese of Oxford since ordination in 1987. A further consideration here is that

presently I work for the training department of the diocese. Robson discusses the advantages and disadvantages of the 'insider' (pp. 297-300). The 'insider' position is seen as significant in other academic fields for example in organisational research, as it sometimes solves problems of access. Gummesson (1991) talks of access 'as the researcher's number one problem' (p. 21). Some aspects of the research were in the public realm, for example churches and services; other aspects were private including key documents. In part because of my work position access was readily given. Thus I have a particular 'privileged access' to some information. However, transparency about my research activities was ethically essential within this context.

The researcher begins with a pre-understanding of the context, cf. Bultmann (1961). Similarly I did not start as a *tabula rasa*, see Gummesson (1991). I myself had conducted services of extended communion as a deacon in Buckinghamshire. I then moved to Oxfordshire where the Team Ministry encouraged extended communion for women deacons who at that time were awaiting the decision to ordain women to the priesthood. I had written on the subject before (Tovey and Millar, 1994), and conducted a world wide survey of the Anglican Communion (Tovey, 1993). I did not want to duplicate this research, rather to develop it in the study of local attitudes, which was particularly missing in the literature. 17 years of ministry in the diocese gave me many contacts and a working knowledge of local practice.

The first phase - the archdeaconry

A start was made by documentary analysis of the official records of the Bishop of Reading. Marshall and Rossman (1999) call this approach 'unobtrusive' (p.116). However these are private documents and permission was required to view these files. At the time there was an episcopal vacancy and the Bishop of Oxford gave permission for me to go through the parish files, helped by the secretaries. The material included letters of authorisation, parish profiles and parish review

documents. This enabled an initial model to be developed on two key questions, namely where extended communion happened and why.

This preliminary model raised further questions, corresponding to the phases of model and second engagement of van der Ven, see Cartledge (2003). I discovered that some of the parishes that I knew were doing extended communion had no permission recorded in the files. In cases of emergency, permission had been given on the phone, and at that time there was no systematic recording of parishes with permission to use the service. The House of Bishops' Guidelines would seem implicitly to require such recording. The data from the bishop's office and my working knowledge did not match. Further investigation was required. However, a significant feature was revealed from this documentary inquiry, that there seemed to be about equal number of parishes that were urban (in contrast with rural) who were holding the service. The hypothesis developed from the literature review and in particular in debate at the General Synod, in which I was a participant, was to suggest that this service was primarily for the rural church. This was a key hypothesis to test.

Further data was gathered to test and refine the preliminary model from the episcopal correspondence. For two consecutive years I conducted workshops on extended communion at the annual Readers' conference and this necessarily resulted in gaining more information about the practice. I also began to lead training days for laity to lead the service as a part of my work, two of which were conducted during the research. Part of the workshop process was to reflect on what was happening, this inevitably led to further data. By its more informal approach these workshops were more like group interviews (Robson, 1993) than focus groups (Morgan, 1997). My research interest was made clear in the workshops. Conclusions from this data are presented in the next chapter.

McCormack Steinmetz (1991) discusses 'sufficiency' in qualitative research: 'What 'sufficient' means is often perplexing' (p. 158). The criteria used

in this research was that of 'saturation', in part adapted from grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). When further research resulted in know cases being confirmed but no new cases being discovered or new reasons for extended communion being given, this phase of the research was closed and strategies developed for the second phase

The second phase – the parishes

This section will examine methods used and issues emerging from the parish-based component of the research project. These include sample selection, access, documentary analysis, observation, and triangulation. As interviews became a substantial and fruitful element of the research, they will be examined in a separate section.

Sample selection and access

Sampling is a critical action within research (Marshall and Rossman, 1999). The first phase of investigation discovered that 19 parishes had used extended communion up to 2003 (see the next chapter). However, some of these were for reasons of emergency for example a sick vicar or a vacancy. These would make poor case studies, as the occasional and infrequent use of the service and its past usage would not give 'currency' to the research data. One critical finding from the first phase was the balance between urban and rural churches. This was important in developing the criteria for sample selection. As much of the data was in the private realm, willingness to give access was also required. Thus the selection criteria for parishes were, currency of use, willingness of participation, and a balance of urban and rural in the sample. Six parishes were chosen in all, three rural and three urban. The vicar was approached by letter, which explained the nature of the research and the proposed methods of data collection. In all cases the vicar was willing to participate themselves and for the research to be conducted in the parish. The sampling was thus, in Marshall and Rossman's terms (see p. 78), purposeful, criterion based, not random, and typical case.

All the parishes were visited on a 'field trip' separate to the interviews, a concept adapted from geographical research. Cameron (2005) raises questions of access and permission for research into local churches. These field trips confined themselves to gathering open public data. Public documents were collected and access was gained to the churches (where physical access was possible). This was for immersion in the local context and the gathering of significant data. Such immersion is critical in ethnographic studies (Davies, 1999), and is a methodology that has been used in practical theology (Stringer, 1999). While this is not an ethnographic study, immersion is still an important process in the research to fully understand the context of each case study.

Documentary analysis

A rich collection of documents was collected from each parish including guidebooks, weekly newssheets, orders of service, and parish magazines. Detailed information on each parish will be given in the case studies in the following chapters. Some of the parishes had web sites providing electronic documentation. Marshall and Rossman (1999) see such documentary review as, 'rich in portraying the values and beliefs of participants in the setting' (p. 116). This data confirmed the occurrence of these services; particularly helpful was the monthly or weekly newssheet. In one instance the weekly newssheet contradicted the monthly display in the porch, indicating that extended communion had happened in an emergency.

One key document is the parish profile. A parish has to write a profile each time there is a vacancy, a legal requirement if the parish is not suspended (Harries, 1995). These profiles give a snapshot of the parish and are an element of corporate self-understanding. I collected the profiles for each parish; sometimes I was able to collect more than one. They include data about services, but in no cases was extended communion mentioned in the parish profile; in one parish this lead to confusion and a clash of expectations. This we will see in a later chapter.

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Another significant set of documents are the service booklets that parishes produced. As the Church of England uses a written liturgy, the expectation of the laity is to be given a service book and hymnbook at the door. Some parishes had been conducting extended communion before the national provision and had produced their own service booklet. This can be indicative of local theology (Schreiter, 1985) and is possibly a neglected documentary source, cf. Cameron (2005). Others had directions written on leaders sheets. In some cases the ordinary service book for Holy Communion was given out and variations made without the congregation having the text in their hand. This seems to have ceased with the introduction of the official liturgy. Some places had customised service booklets using the Common Worship Orders. However, it should be remembered that there may be critical differences between the written text and its performance (Garrigan, 2004). Contrasts between the new official text and previous local texts were to become part of the interview process.

A further rich vein of documentary data is the service register. Cameron (2005) comments:

> For many practical purposes recent church registers and records are
> invaluable for accessing the numbers attending and nature of services
> (p.28).

Each time a service is conducted in the Church of England it is recorded in the register with the number of people attending. This is a potentially rich mine of information but has various problems. First, this is a private document and permission has to be gained for its use (Legal Advisory Commission of the General Synod, 1997). Then the recording of the type of service might not be very accurate. Also the recording of the numbers might not be exact and the accuracy may vary from church to church. Finally, if there are a number of signatures it might not be easy to discern who were the leaders of the service, a problem of legibility.

To access the service register permission was in all cases requested from and given by the vicar. The second issue, accuracy, was a major problem. In only a few cases the register recorded 'Communion by Extension'. Mostly the ordinary words for Holy Communion were used i.e. Holy Communion, Communion, Mass. This was particularly confusing, and only because of the help of the vicar or a lay helper was it possible to discern that the service was extended communion. This person took the role of the 'key informant' (Davies, 1999). In one case the vicar recognised that this was a problem and was at first unwilling disclose the data. However, towards the end of the interviews a second visit was made to gather this significant information. The numbers of people coming to the services was never seen as crucial data for this study, the question being about the occurrence at all not about the numbers attending. However, the numbers tended to be quite small, groups of less than 20, except in one parish where it was used at major festivals. The signatures were problematical but this was solved by inspection of the register with someone who knew the people involved. On the surface it would appear that some parishes have conducted services of Holy Communion with lay presidents. In all cases this would be a misunderstanding of the data. The registers proved to be a rich source of data collection, but requiring careful investigation and in some cases hours of research, but often revealing more use of the service than was realised.

Observation

Observation is important in qualitative research. Silverman (1993) develops Bryman's characteristics of qualitative research and relates them to observational approaches. At a 'descriptive' level (p.31) the field trips gathered data from public notice boards and information displays. It was also possible to observe the existence of tabernacles and aumbries in the parishes. This helped enrich the contextual understanding. But at another level of 'seeing through the eyes of' (p. 31) six observations of services were conducted in the period of research. This is observation at the 'public horizon' of worship (Steven, 2002). Two separate observational trips were made to one Orthodox Church to participate in a Liturgy

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of the Presanctified. Two separate trips were made to one Anglican church to participate in the administration of Communion on Good Friday. These enabled further immersion in the research subject. Finally two services of extended communion services were observed in different parishes within the research sample. This revealed some divergence of text and performance (Garrigan, 2004).

Triangulation

The collection of these rich and diverse types of data raises the important question of triangulation in qualitative research. Silverman (1993) notes the origins of the term in navigation 'where different bearings give the correct position of an object' (p. 156). The issue is of triangulation is related to the validity of qualitative research (Kirk and Miller, 1986). Each of the methods used has inherent dangers of inaccurate gathering of data, or of changing events through participation, the researcher becoming a part of that which is studied, no matter how determinedly detached. Triangulation enables the research questions to be approached from a number of perspectives. In this case the bearings in navigating the research project included: episcopal correspondence, service registers, local liturgical texts, local documentation including parish profiles, observational studies, and interviews. All of this information built up a multifaceted picture of the parishes and the archdeaconry.

Interviews

32 interviews were conducted between October 2003 and July 2005. The aim was to have at least the vicar, lay leader of the service, and one lay person in each parish. This would have resulted in a minimum of 18 interviews; in fact 24 interviews were conducted in parishes. The first interview showed that the bishop was such an important figure that I decided to interview all the recent bishops of Reading, a 'snowballing' approach (Marshall and Rossman, 1999) i.e the first clerical interviews led to epicopal ones. Opportunity was also taken for an in-depth interview of David Smethurst who claims to have begun extended communion in the Church of England in Ulverston (Smethurst, 2004). Four other

interviews were conducted because they developed particular issues, 'maximum variation' in Marshall and Rossman's typology, and in the case of a Roman Catholic deacon this gave the perspective of another denomination.

The criteria of selection of those interviewed in the parishes were important. I wanted to interview the vicar of each parish, as their attitude was vital to extended communion occurring, even if in the nature of the case they are never present at the service. I then wanted to talk to the leaders of the service, as it might seem a reasonable hypothesis that they would have thought through the issues in leading the services. The lay people had to be, experienced, i.e. to have been at a number of the services, and articulate, i.e. able to understand the differences between extended communion and Holy Communion. Churchwardens often fulfilled this criterion. These criteria correspond remarkably to Fish's 'informed reader' in the 'interpretative community', who according to Fish is competent in the use of language, has experience for comprehension, and has literary (or in this case theological) competence (Fish, 1980). Those people who were to be interviewed were selected in discussion with the vicar or in two instances with a lay leader. The knowledge of who had participated in these services is not a topic of public record. Therefore local information from vicars or lay leaders was essential. Being in favour of the service was not a criterion of selection. In one case the 'articulate' criterion did not apply and in another some explanation was required to clarify the subject of enquiry.

Scheurich (1997) calls for a reconsideration of interviewing. He thinks that the modernism of much interview process needs changing:

> We need to critically rethink what occurs in research interviewing and
>
> how we report (represent) our results (p. 73).

Questions of power in the interview have been raised and of how gender might be of influence, see Slee (2004). Positions that emphasise one 'subject position' e.g. male/female, have further been questioned in light of multi-layered identities (Sheehy et al., 2005). Power issues were considered in the methodology and the

decision was made to interview people in their homes, dressed informally. The tape recorder took time for interviewees to adjust to, but a friendship model was used. While culturally the interviewer and interviewee held a common framework, of belonging to the Diocese of Oxford, this did not exclude a certain amount of 'indeterminacy' in the conversation.

A body of basic information was collected at the interview e.g. sex of the interviewee, age, ecclesiastical categorization. This information is displayed in the following pie charts.

Figure 8.1 Interviews: Proportions male and female
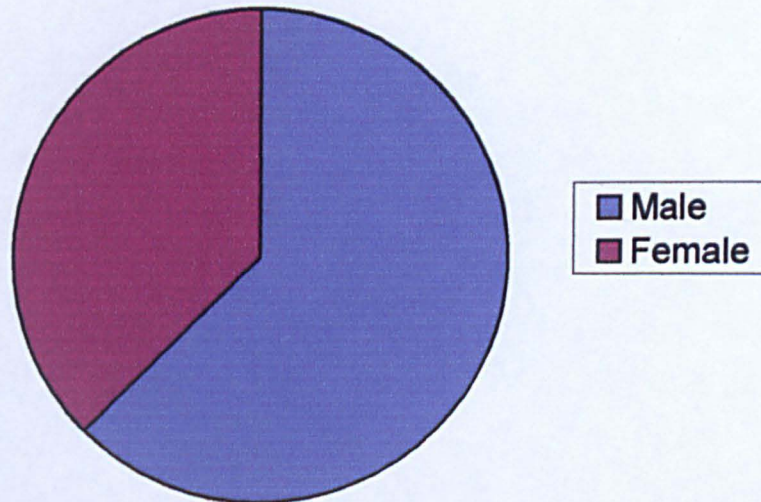
The interviews were not selected by gender. 62.5% of those interviewed were male (20) and 37.5% female (12): the bishops were all male and five out of six of the vicars.

Figure 8.2 Ages of those interviewed
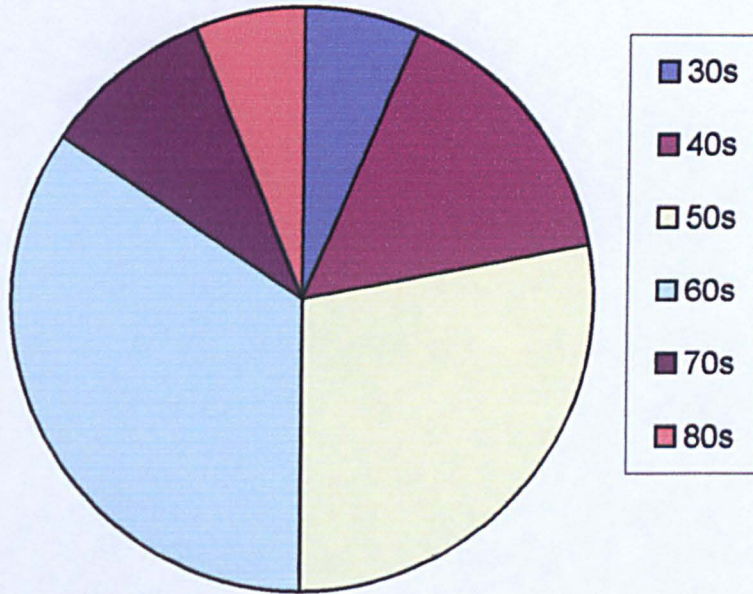
The ages of those interviewed varied from one person in their 30s (2) to people in their 80s (2) . The majority as can be seen from the chart were in their 50s (9) and 60s (11). Five were in their 40s and three in their 70s.

Figure 8.3 Categories of those interviewed

bishop
priest
deacon
reader
laity
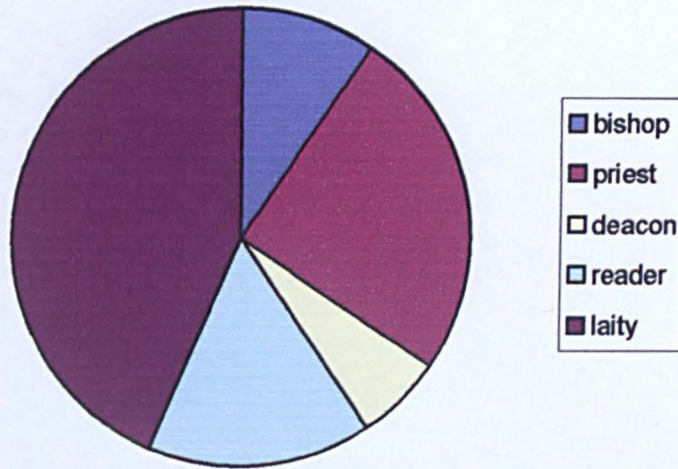
The people interviewed were categorized according to their role or office in the church. 44% (14) of those interviewed were laity, 16% (5) were Readers, who are also lay. So 60% of the interviews were with lay people. Three bishops, eight priests and two deacons were interviewed.

Figure 8.4 Service leaders

Deacon
Reader
Laity
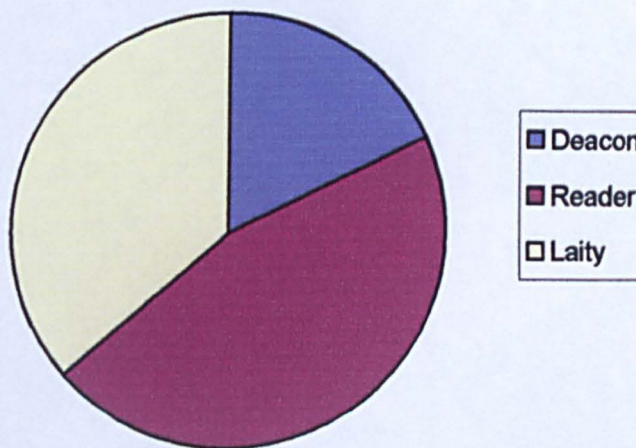
Of the eleven service leaders interviewed 46% (5) were Readers (two deacons and four laity were also interviewed). This may suggest that Readers have a particular role in conducting the service.

Interviews were semi-structured and taped (Drever, 1995). The interview questions were linked to the research questions but put in more everyday language (Wengraf, 2001). Notes were made as the interview proceeded and notes were written up after the interview in a research journal (Gillham, 2000b). Interviews lasted between 20 minutes and 40 minutes. The interviews with the vicars tended to be the longest. Each person interviewed signed a consent form in accordance with the ethical requirements for the research (Oxford Brookes University, n.d.).

The tapes were then transcribed and made anonymous. 80,000 words were transcribed from the interviews and these are available on a CD ROM at the back of this thesis. At first I transcribed the tapes myself but in due course another person transcribed the tapes. This loses the intimate connection to the interview, however this was recaptured in the process of correcting the transcription and coding the texts. Each step from the live interview, first to listening to the tape after the interview, then to transcribing the tape, then to reading a written text, loses something of the richness of the material for the sake of fixing it and making it available to others (Silverman, 1993). Each step also opens up more gaps in the text as it is removed from its original context. The transcripts vary between 78 lines and 836 lines in length. Nobody approached refused an interview and most were conducted in the home or local church of those being interviewed. This approach was chosen to help put people at ease.

The transcripts were coded according to a simplified scheme adapted from Silverman (1993). Coding is a complex business but the scheme used was relatively simple to fit this particular area of research where the analysis was primarily going to be of a thematic nature. Notice was taken in this part of the research of the work on narrative in interviews (Labov, 1972) and (Labov, 1997).

Other structures of talking and of narrative analysis were noted (Reissman, 1993). It was clear that some people did talk in particular narrative structures. As narrative has also been of interest as a research approach (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000), in theology (Stroup, 1981), biblical interpretation (Powell, 1990), and Biblical studies (Rhoads and Michie, 1982), there was an important linkage between disciplines in the method. Narrative analysis is multidisciplinary.

Computer software was used in the analysis of the transcripts (Feilding and Lee, 1991). They were incorporated into the NVIVO software and coded for analysis (QSR, 202). Codes were developed both from the literature review and from those that arose from the empirical research. Grounded theory has particularly emphasised the necessity of coding coming from the data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). However, pre-understanding either from experience or from study is hard to completely lay aside. It seemed unnecessary to require all of the codes to arise from the interviews. Indeed the hermeneutical dialogue between different aspects of the data is an enriching part of the research process. The questions raised within the interviews themselves at times employed such devices e.g. in comparisons made with ADAP in France referred to by a number of interviewees. Theory emergent from the data has to stand in relation to the wider theoretical field. Themes, narrative and symbols were all coded as particular important areas for developing theories and reaching conclusions.

The 346 separate codes (or nodes) were grouped into three trees using NVIVO and these were turned into models. These were diagrams, which enabled a presentation of the data showing the interconnection of the data collected across the interviews. This programme was a tool in the analysis of the data. The computer programme does not select the coding, so the interpretation is still that of the researcher.

Conclusion

The research project employed a number of methods of qualitative research. There is much methodological and ideological discussion both in social science and also in theology where these approaches are relatively new. Liturgical studies in particular has only recently begun to use these methodological approaches. No one particular methodological school was followed but a more broad based approach was utilised gaining benefits from a variety of perspectives, as recently advocated by Swinton and Mowat (Swinton and Mowat, 2006). The value of such qualitative research comes in the critical insight it gives to a particular field of study. It may challenge espoused theories and redirect policies of organisations. Such theorizing and challenge will emerge in the analysis of the fieldwork that is found in the next few chapters. These will first examine the parishes from the perspective of case studies and then three themes will be analysed in depth that are of particular theological significance both to the parishes and the wider church.

Chapter 9

The Archdeaconry of Berkshire
and the rural parishes

Introduction

Six parishes were chosen to be examined in depth: by observation, analysis of electronic and written data, and by interviewing. Examination of the parishes has been divided into two chapters for reasons of length; in this chapter the archdeaconry and the rural parishes are considered; the next chapter will scrutinize the urban parishes and draw together some conclusions. These chapters will study the parishes as case studies. Subsequent chapters will critically evaluate thematic issues arising from the data collection. The story of each parish will be described, trying to let that story come across from the interviews. This will entail quoting directly from the transcripts, an emic approach (Wolcott, 1990). The transcripts are quoted in full with no tidying up of the language. The participants and parishes are anonymised, which was part of the ethical agreement for the interviewing.

At this juncture the thesis intersects with congregational studies within practical theology. The roots of this are in the academic work of Hopewell (1987) in the United States of America, which flourished in many directions, e.g. Ammerman (1998). In England this line of research has been slower to develop (Guest et al., 2004), but a recent work (Cameron et al., 2005) has made significant space for the worship of the local congregation in this field, something neglected in previous studies. Hopewell (1987), echoing Geertz, called the congregation 'the thick gathering' (p. 3ff.). He saw narrative as fundamental to the analysis of the congregation because:

1. The congregation's self perception is primarily narrative in form.

2. The congregation's communication among its members is primarily by story.

3. By its own congregating, the congregation participates in narrative structures of the world's societies. (p.46)

He might have added that by becoming a congregational study the congregation participates in the narratives of the academy. These case studies consider one aspect of the life of the six congregations, their use of extended communion.

Case study method has a long history particularly in anthropology and sociology (Hamel et al., 1993). It has been used recently in the study of charismatic worship in the Church of England (Steven, 2002). It has been strongly advocated as a part of qualitative research (Yin, 1994). Yin encourages a more scientific approach, case studies testing hypotheses. Others are more open ended (Gillham, 2000a). I began to work with a more open-ended approach: trying to find out 'what is there'; but at the same time testing certain hypotheses as set out in the previous chapter. While I am sympathetic to the approach of 'let the evidence tell its story', I have to recognize that there is an interaction of the researcher and the evidence in an interpretive dialectic, see Cartledge (2003). In this the evidence has challenged both my own preconceptions and the wisdom of policy makers and the church.

The Archdeaconry

All the parishes are a part of the Diocese of Oxford and all are from the Archdeaconry of Berkshire. Oxford is a large diocese with 621 parishes and 815 churches, more than any other diocese in the Church of England (Diocese of Oxford, 2003). There are 402 stipendiary clergy, as well as retired clergy, NSMs, OLMs, MSEs, and Readers, which in Oxford are also called Licensed Lay Ministers (LLM). Because this is such a large diocese, almost as big as some Provinces, the focus was on the Archdeaconry of Berkshire, itself the size of some dioceses.

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Figure 9.1 gives a statistical analysis of the archdeaconry. There are 10 deaneries being alphabetically:

1. Abingdon
2. Bracknell
3. Bradfield
4. Maidenhead and Windsor
5. Newbury
6. Reading
7. Sonning
8. Vale of the White Horse
9. Wallingford
10. Wantage

Figure 9.1 Archdeaconry of Berkshire Statistics

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Electoral Roll	2153	2270	1332	2416	1845	3625	3221	922	1415	791	19990
Benefices	13	9	11	15	14	28	14	6	8	5	123
Parishes	18	10	22	17	37	32	16	20	17	12	201
Stipendiary	16	14	11	17	20	36	15	5	11	8	153
Assistant Priest	2	1	2	1	0	3	3	3	2	1	18
Retired Priest (PTO)	16	3	3	11	9	8	13	13	9	11	96
NSM	6	4	6	5	6	8	6	4	3	0	48
OLM	0	0	3	2	1	3	3	0	1	0	13
LLM - Reader	12	14	12	14	9	30	19	3	7	0	120

Thus the Archdeaconry of Berkshire has 201 parishes, 328 clergy, and 120 LLMs (Diocese of Oxford, 2003), but these are not evenly distributed. The

archdeaconry has one archdeacon and one area bishop, the bishop of Reading.
The evidence clearly shows that extended communion has been happened during
a number of episcopates. The following chart indicates the relevant bishops
(Anon, 2003):

<div style="border:1px solid black">

Figure 9.2 Bishops of Reading

Graham Foley	1982-1989
John Bone	1989-1997
Dominic Walker	1997-2003
Stephen Cotterell	2004-

</div>

The Diocese of Oxford has a longstanding policy on extended
communion, which can be found in the Diocesan Year Book. This has gone
through three phases. The first period is 1990-2000, when the first policy
document was printed in the 1990 version of the Oxford Diocesan Year Book.
This clearly says that the service should not be called a Communion Service
(Green, 1990b). The second period is 2001 onwards, when the policy was revised
in light of the House of Bishops Guidelines (Oxford Diocesan Publications Ltd,
2001). The final period is from 2003, where alongside the 2001 policy a new
authorized ministry was introduced of Minister of Communion by Extension
(Harries, 2003a). Prior to 1990 there was no published diocesan policy, but the
research evidence shows that before 1990 some parishes already had episcopal
authorization for the service.

At the beginning of the research in 2003 the exact picture of 'what was
happening' was very hazy and there was no clear overview. The methodology of
investigating the archdeaconry data was discussed in the last chapter. This
research discovered that there were 19 parishes/benefices using extended
communion, 15.4% of the parishes/benefices in the archdeaconry. Figure 14.3
tabulates the results. The parishes have been lettered A to S for the purposes of
confidentiality.

Figure 9.3 Extended Communion Archdeaconry of Berkshire until 2003

Date	Parish	Type	Reason given by parishes
1988/9 & 2003	A	Rural	Vacancy
1989	B	Urban	Cover & later Sick incumbent
1997 1998 2003	C	Rural	Sabbatical Rural Ministry team
Pre 1998	D	Urban	Occasional not present
1998	E	Urban	Increasing demand of nursing homes
1999	F	Rural	Retirement Team Vicar LLMs have done it in the past
2000	G	Rural	Sick vicar at Christmas
2000	H	Rural	A one off in the vacancy of curate Repeating in 2004 with next vacancy
2001	I	Rural	Rural Ministry team
2001 2003	J	Rural	LLM Interregnum
2002	K	Urban	Vacancy
2002	L	Rural	Occasional cover for vicar
2002	M	Urban	Mid week service
2002	N	Urban	Sick vicar
2003	O	Urban	New mission strategy / pastoral reorganization
2003	P	Rural	Incumbent ill By the curate while a deacon
2003	Q	Urban	Vacancy
2003	R	Rural	Incumbent ill (telephone permission)
Up to 2003	S	Urban	Vacancy by Readers. Covering daily mass. While deacons in parish

The episcopal parish files contained no correspondence about parishes A, B, D, G, H, K, M, N, R S, 52.6% of the parishes. In all the parishes some of

occurrences of these services have been one off emergencies others have been more regular events.

A significant discovery from this data was the number of urban parishes using extended communion, 9 out of 19 being 47.3%. This was a revelation in light of the view of the national church, as shown in the General Synod debate discussed in chapter 11, which believed that the demand for extended communion comes primarily from the rural church. The oldest recorded example of extended communion is from the primarily rural Carlisle Diocese (Smethurst, 1986), and *Faith in the Countryside* recommended its acceptance (Archbishop's Commission on Rural Areas, 1990). This rural bias in policy creating narrative may have been overrated. The evidence from this research clearly demonstrates that extended communion is not a primarily a rural phenomenon.

Figure 9.4 analyses the reasons for using extended communion contrasting the rural and urban contexts.

Figure 9.4 Reasons for using extended communion

	Rural	Urban
Sick vicar	G, P, R	B, N
Vacancy	A, F, H, J	K, Q, S
Occasional cover	L	B, D, M
Pastoral reorganization	C, I,	O
Deacon in parish	P	S
Nursing homes		E, S

This table of reasons for using the service also challenges the discourse in the literature and in policy-making. Rarely has the reason of a sick vicar been mentioned in the literature, nor the use of extended communion for occasional cover. In one case this has been connected to practical issues related to a part-time house for duty priest. While a vacancy has been the reason mentioned in some correspondence, we will see that this is not always as it works out in practice.

These results show some unanticipated use of the provision in comparison with the discourse of the national church. A particularly urban feature seems to be ministry in various forms of communion in homes for the elderly, as found in E and S. This raises a complication of definition categories, as we shall see in the next chapter. Again this is not often discussed. So what is happening does not quite fit with the discussion the policy-making level of the General Synod, which concentrated on rural church and pastoral reorganization.

The distribution of the parishes involved across the archdeaconry, can be seen in Figure 9.5. The map shows the whole of the Diocese of Oxford divided into deaneries. The three archdeaconries are marked out, with the Archdeaconry of Berkshire being the southernmost, identified with a thicker boundary. The map demonstrated that extended communion has occurred in 9 of the 10 deaneries in both the sub/urban east and the predominantly rural west. The parishes are scattered right across the archdeaconry.
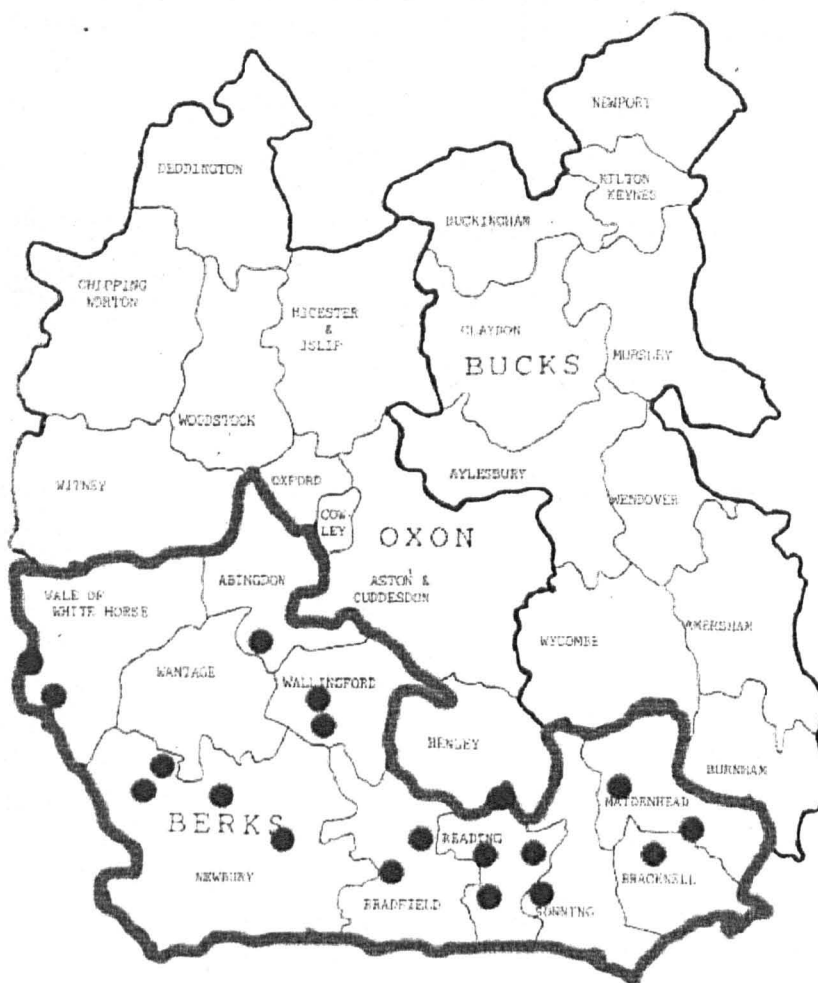
Figure 9.5 The Distribution of Parishes using Extended Communion

This thesis will now progress to an in-depth investigation of six of the nineteen parishes, presented as a set of case studies. The criteria for selection were discussed in the last chapter. Each parish narrative will tell the story of the parish, interconnecting this with the wider issues of the church and academy. The parishes are numbered one to six, and are made anonymous to keep the boundaries of confidentiality.

Parish 1

This is a rural parish that is a part of a Group Ministry of five parishes. There are two stipendiary clergy and three Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers) in the Group. A 'house for duty' priest and one of the LLMs serve this particular parish. The electoral roll is 114. Four interviews were conducted, the priest-in-charge being interviewed just before leaving on retirement. She is being replaced by another 'house for duty' priest.

Census information indicates a parish of 2,218, of which 98.7% are white, and 67.2% employed, both of these last figures above the national average. 79.2% of the houses are owner occupied, with an alternative of renting from a housing association at 11.2%. Most of the houses are detached or semi detached. 22.3% of the parish had education to degree level. This was the lowest for any of the rural parishes but still higher than the national average.

The data collected from this benefice included:
> Notice sheets
> Church guidebooks
> Orders of service
> Parish profile
> Four interviews, one with the priest-in-charge, one with the LLM, and two with laity
> Episcopal correspondence
> PCC minutes
> Numerical data from the service registers
> Observation of a service of extended communion
> Handouts available in the church

The priest-in-charge explained her motivation for encouraging the use of the service:

V1   I'm non-stipendiary Priest in Charge here... I've been here for 6½ years and... when I came... I announced that one of my main aims would be enabling the church to be the church with a view to forming a Ministry Team and getting others involved in ministry.

I   OK. And how did Extended Communion fit into that?

V1   Um, well when I was a non-stipendiary curate at {place 2} it took a long time to get through to... being able to take even home Communions at the beginning when I was deacon. When I was priested I became very much aware of what Readers were doing and not doing because that was what was my experience. So when I came here and {name} was training as a Reader (LLM) I was anxious that as soon as he... was licensed he would do as much as he possibly could.

I   So you saw Extended Communion as a part of his ministry.

V1   I certainly did, even before we were talking about Extended Communion I thought he would be able to do home Communions for me and on odd occasions he would be able to give Communion on a Thursday morning service at which only about half a dozen people come (lines 14-30).
      She further clarified:

V1   I wrote to the bishop before... {name} was licensed. It was when I lost my curate, the {curate's name} who moved to the {town} area, and I knew I was going to be on my own and I said to the bishop that it would be useful if {name} would be able to do Communion by Extension, and I wrote in June... sorry, and I had a letter back a fortnight later from the bishop giving permission for him to do that (lines 85-90).

So the motivation was not just about pastoral reorganization, with a house for duty priest and the loss of a curate, but also about ministry potential and not holding a minister back in a system that had seemed to be restrictive.

This story may not have been as apparent to the LLM, who seems to view the situation more in terms of need and flexibility, particularly in light of the forthcoming vacancy:

WL1a   Yes, I had permission from the bishop and indeed... that was obtained by
       {vicar} on my behalf in um... just after we had that meeting at {place
       name}. I then emailed {bishop} to ask him in view of the... vacancy at
       {village}, I could foresee that they might wish to make use of my services
       there in the absence of a priest, and so he very kindly by email gave me
       authority, permission to operate throughout the {name of group}.

I   And do you operate throughout?

WL1a   I haven't done it anywhere else yet, but now by getting this permission the
       other two Readers in the {name of group} also have obtained
       permission... so we are now moving to a situation where {vicar} will have
       gone, so you know, we have that flexibility should the need require (lines
       123-133).

However, the laity saw the service as something that was necessary in the light of
declining availability of clergy, an important factor with a part time priest and the
unwillingness of laity to travel.

L1a   I suppose it's been going on for 2 years in our parish and I think the real
       reason for it initiating was the fact that because the clergy are not always
       present or they need to take a break or a day off it means that without
       having the Extended Communion it would mean that we would have to try
       and find another priest to do the job or, you know, say that we would have
       to go to another parish. We are in a group but that would mean travelling
       and people I don't think really like travelling away from their parish
       church (lines 14-20).

L1b talked about difficulties in light of the Deanery plan being for the Group to
have only one stipendiary minister (lines 144-148, 160). This was also mentioned
by L1a, who thought that the service would become more common:

L1a   Well I can see it, you know, really as becoming a necessity in a sense
       because of the... I mean the NSMs are more and more coming onto
       parochial life and the ordained ministry full time stipendiary I see, looking
       at Parish Shares and sort of quotas etc, the structure of each deanery that
       this, you know there are going to be fewer rather than more stipendiary

priests and therefore it's going to mean that I imagine the Communion by Extension is going to be more widely used in the future. And I think if it's... if the people are prepared like we were with {vicar}, we had some instruction and training and it's quite acceptable I think (lines 147-155).

These overlapping stories show a variety of perspectives on the introduction to the service, this is a part of the thick description of the parish, see Swinton and Mowat (2006). These narratives relate to elements that are personal, local and denominational and form a rich tapestry. Perhaps of particular importance in these discourses is the position of the house for duty priest-in-charge, who is part time, unpaid, but given free housing. The declining allocation of clergy to the parish and to the Group is a significant part of the narrative of this and other parishes. However, it is not the only story, and perhaps the genius of this parish, borrowing a term from Hopewell (1987), is the successful process of change put in action by this priest which models good practice in liturgical change management, which we will examine this later in this chapter.

The service register was careful examined for numerical information. The services were recorded carefully noting that they were communion by extension. The pattern is tabulated in figure 9.6.

Figure 9.6 Parish 1 Number of services of extended communion

Total number of service of Communion by Extension (including Sunday)

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2002								1			2		3
2003	1	1	2		1			2	1		3		11
2004	2				1		1						4
Total	3	1	2	0	2	0	1	3	1	0	5	0	18

Number of Sunday Services of Communion by Extension

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2002													0
2003		1	2					1			2		6
2004	2				1								3
Total	2	1	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	9

This information collectd indicates that these services occur both midweek and on Sunday; but 50% of them occur on a Sunday. This may be a particular function of having a part time priest-in-charge, having more limited Sunday duty.

This parish seemed very happy with services of Extended Communion. My personal observation was that they were well led and attended. A considerable amount of parish development had been done during their introduction, resulting in the church being positive about this as a development.

While there is much written about change in companies (Senge, 1990), voluntary organizations (Gann, 1996) and of people in transition (Bridges, 2004), there is little written about processes of liturgical change. This is perhaps ironic, as all the churches have been undergoing a revolution in the worship in light of the Liturgical Movement, see Fenwick and Spinks (1995). One exception to this is Trevor Lloyd's rather dated Grove Book *Introducing Liturgical Change* written for the introduction of the ASB (Lloyd, 1984). Here he outlines a model, which is not unlike a model later to be developed by Kotter (1996), with a number of stages. This can be used to compare and analyze the process as happened in parish one (Figure 9.7).

Figure 9.7 Introduction of liturgical change	
Lloyd's model for liturgical change	*Parish one*
Sharing the vision The vision is shared with the wider group and ends up with the PCC	June 2002 priest contacts bishop
Delegating responsibility The preliminary discussion results in PCC delegation	July 2002 PCC approve unanimously
Setting up a working party This is the group that deals further with the issue	(Not applicable)
Teaching Particularly in sermons	To be done in magazine Priest in charge and LLM attend diocesan training day – November 2002
Discussion in house groups To find out what ordinary members feel	(Not applicable)
Questionnaires Further data gathering from the working party	(Not applicable)
Leaflets Information available at the back of the church and items in the parish magazine	Article in Parish magazine August 2002 Bishop's Guidelines left in church
Decision-making The final decision of the PCC	Nov 2002 PCC favorably review experience of such services

This parish put into operation a successful process of change. In some areas there is a conflation of the process compared to Lloyd's model, and some of the elements that Lloyd suggested are not included, particularly in the area of teaching and consultation. This may well be to do with factors of congregational size, Lloyd working in a large urban church and developing the model from this setting; parish one is a rural church of smaller size. There are also differences in

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the location of decision-making in approving of Extended Communion compared to the introduction of the ASB. The latter had to be a decision of the PCC; the former requires prior permissions of the bishop and lay leaders. If agreement is not in place at this level, then there is no question of the decision arriving at the PCC level for discussion. However, in my personal observation I was able to collect the Guidelines on extended communion in the back of the church and clearly the whole congregation had both been informed of the change and they were content with this happening.

The 'genius' of this parish is its openness to change and development. This may be the result of a long history of innovation, having had one of the first women prients to minister in the county. The priest in charge was adept at change management, but the congregation where also accepting of innovation. This is in part helped by the relative autonomy of incumbents in the Church of England, an organiztion with a relatively flat organizational structure.

Like any parish there are a number of overlapping narratives, but while decline is a key one it is not the only one, with others being the fulfilling of potential and successful change management. It was perhaps in the latter that the last priest-in-charge was particularly successful. Further research of change in congregations might well be a fruitful development in practical theology.

Parish 2

The second rural parish is a multi-parish benefice of 7 churches in 4 parishes with electoral roles of 111, 34, 9 and 40, the total on the electoral role of the parish being 194. There is one stipendiary priest and two Readers. There has also been an associate priest and some retired clergy. This changing pattern of additional priests has been of great influence in the story of this parish. In one way this is the multi-parish benefice that was envisaged as being typical of the context thought to be crying out for extended communion when policy was discussed at General Synod.

The census information makes the population of the equivalent ward 5, 468. The people are 95.9% white and 79.1% Christian. This was the parish with fewest people claiming to have no religion at only 4.6%. 54.3% of the housing is owner occupied with 33.3% privately rented, the highest of any of the parishes. 37.7% of the population had a degree three of the parishes with a similar figure. The parish is not far from a main town and includes a large educational center.

Data collected from the benefice included:
Notice sheets
Church guidebooks
Village magazines
Web based information
Orders of service
Incumbent's report for three years
Four interviews, one with the Vicar, one with a Reader, one with a lay leader, and one with a layperson
Episcopal correspondence
Numerical data from the service registers
Extended communion had only occurred irregularly.

The interviewees narrated a number of stories concerning the introduction of extended communion. The vicar says:

V2   And it was introduced then on a couple of occasions at {village1} to start with, when I couldn't be here and we couldn't find anybody to cover. And it was done by a lay person, {name}, who was licensed to administer the chalice and it was before Bishop {name} had sort of taken his initiative. So I had one of those sort of pastoral conversations on the phone with him and it was left that er... that's OK, watch this space, was where it was left.

I   (laughs) OK.

V2   So it happened then, but as we moved towards becoming a benefice, a larger benefice, then it became more common, in that sense. But it was always normally when I had to be somewhere else and there was a communion service timetabled and we couldn't find a priest to take it (lines 77-87).

The first lay leader gives a similar story:

WL2a   Yes, uh, well for the last 7 years, when the previous incumbent to {incumbent} was here, I took services without Communion by Extension. When {incumbent} arrived, which I think was about 3 years ago, the benefice changed and there was obviously other churches involved and he couldn't cope with ministering to all of them, and he asked me if I would take Communion by Extension. He gave me some tuition obviously before, and I think since that time I've done it on 3 occasions. It isn't a regular thing here (lines 16-22).

Within the story of becoming a major benefice, difficultly for cover in the holiday period seems to have been the reason to introduced the next lay leader to leading the service:

WL2b   Yes, it was definitely based on need. Er, clergy illness or holidays. For instance, when it comes to August... there's {priest} up at {village 5} and {incumbent} had the same holiday, so if there's that situation I might be asked to do it then. Um... if there is other mitigating circumstances, I suppose last minute arrangement, it could happen like that, but it would be emergency... (lines 49-53).

The lay interviewee also narrated the story of becoming a major benefice:

L2a   This was not long after we were discussing it as a parish, before {vicar} came, and he knew, what 4 years ago, he was going to be walking into... taking over 7 churches (lines 74-76).

One clear thread from this tapestry is that the new vicar, someone taking over seven churches, was expecting to develop a plan of lay led worship including extended communion. However, this is not what actually happened. An influx of retired clergy in particular has inhibited the expected growth of extended

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communion in this benefice. The question is: has it also stifled the growth of lay ministry or just put off the inevitable? The situation is changing again as clergy are beginning to leave the parish, and thus there may be a return to the original scenario.

The service register of the parish, where it has happened most often, records this information (Figure 9.8):

Figure 9.8 Parish 2 Number of services of extended communion

Total number of services of Communion by Extension

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2003						1			1		1		3
2004							1						1
2005													
Total						1	1		1		1		4

All services were Sunday services except one mid week.

All services were scheduled to be Holy Communion but a priest was not available.

This is a surprisingly small number of services, confirming the views expressed in the interviews of occasional use. The literature might have suggested that this multi-parish benefice would have a regular pattern of services of extended communion. There have been two factors that have kept the services to the minimum in this case, first a serendipitous move of two retired priests into the benefice, and second the commitment of all the clergy team to resource the pattern of communion services. These two factors resulted in the services of extended communion being rare, with some churches in the benefice never having had extended communion or only having one or two services. One of the perceived difficult periods was the summer with holiday cover, although the register shows no services in August.

There was some debate about the best liturgical provision for the service. While the authorised service is now used, there had previously been a service of Morning Prayer with extended communion. This was felt to have certain benefits:

V2   Because I don't think it's um, what I liked about my service I should say is that it was very clear it wasn't a communion service, it was very clear it was an act of Morning Worship with an opportunity to receive from the reserved sacrament, whereas now it's so like a communion service that that has brought confusion to people (lines 168-172).

This is a permutation that Common Worship seems not to have envisaged.

Another significant finding in this parish was a service of agape on Maundy Thursday with the Methodist Church; this theme will be developed later. There were strong links with the Methodist Church in two of the parishes. This was expressed in a shared Maundy Thursday Passover style service. The development of the Church of England Methodist Covenant might also give an added development of resources for leaders of eucharists in the parishes (Methodist Church of Great Britain and the Church Of England, 2001). At present the legislation for ecumenical partnerships was felt to be too complicated.

One clearly positive note is the joy of the leaders in taking the service:

WL2b It was absolutely wonderful. And although I would have the natural
        nerves beforehand, particularly since I knew I lacked confidence and I
        think that's been confirmed in other directions too, it's grown since then
        obviously because of being able to do it, and erm, gaining that confidence
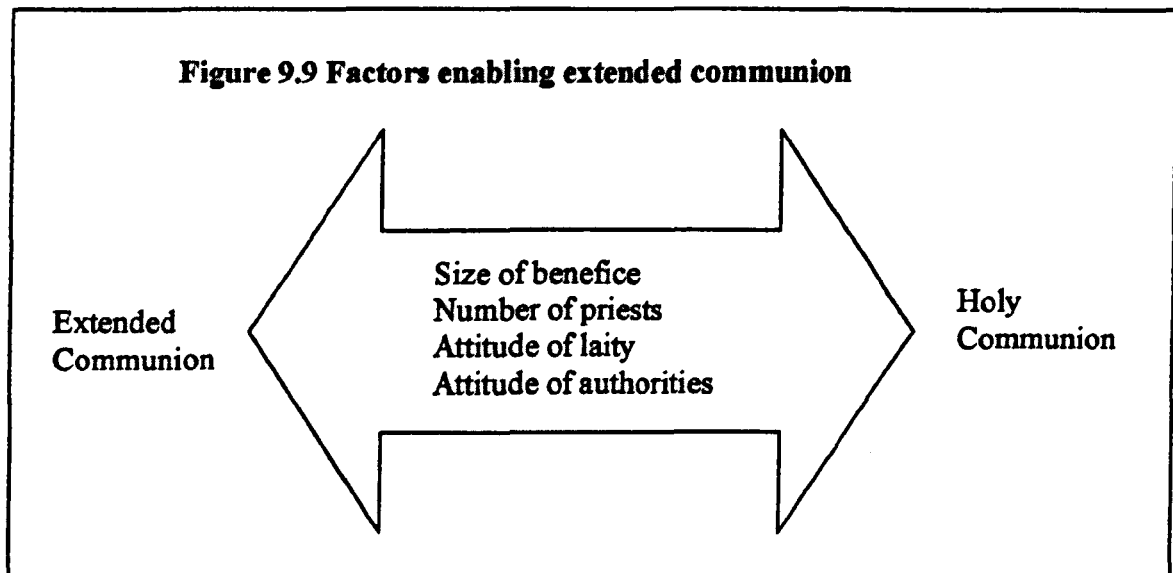   (lines 74-77).

The other lay leader said:

WL2a No, I'd say slightly in awe actually, you know, because I'm a great
        respecter of the sacraments and um, obviously you know that they must be
        administered in, you know, obviously a proper way, but having, you
        know, a great deal of prayer about it and what have you, and um, you
        know I got the strong feeling that this is the only way regrettably with the
        increase in benefice and if the sacraments have got to be brought to people
        in this way then that's it. That has to be it (lines 144-150).

This leader while accepting the situation still sees it as not the most desirable way
of getting the sacraments to the people. He picks up on the need to give teaching
to the people, saying some people deliberately do not come to these services.
There is certainly a contrast between the demand for catechesis in the Roman
Catholic Church (Rosier, 2002) and the lack of it in the Church of England. The
clear delight of a number of the laity in leading this service should not be
neglected as a significant factor. The layperson interviewed also brought up that
there are issues for some people about the gender of the leader of the service. This
will be returned to later.

The story of this parish indicates the way a benefice can be dependent on
factors outside its control, in this case the changing supply of retired clergy. This
indicates an organization that is not easily managed by the hierarchy, retired
clergy are not directed by bishops as to where they live. It also shows a context
where in this case priestly ministry was seen as the norm and thus lay leadership
of extended communion was always to be exceptional.

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The vicar uses extended communion as emergency cover for when a priest is not available. In part this is out of recognition of the rules developed when the Common Worship service was introduced. However, it was the providential addition of two retired priests that changed the situation altogether. This parish would indicate a simple model for the utilization of extended communion:

Figure 9.9 Factors enabling extended communion

Extended Communion ← Size of benefice / Number of priests / Attitude of laity / Attitude of authorities → Holy Communion

A combination of factors has to work together to allow extended communion to flourish. However, these factors are not simply predictable by the size of the benefice. Had this been so my forecast would have been that this benefice above all those studied would have been the place of maximal usage. This simply was not true.

Parish 3

The third rural parish is a benefice of four parishes with electoral rolls of 49, 42, 29, and 21. There were four churches with one vicar, one retired priest and a Reader. As we shall see there were two other people who form a Ministry Team. The interviews were conducted after the retirement of the vicar and in the vacancy. The denary plan is for the benefice to expand with the addition of 5 more parishes to make a benefice of 9 parishes overseen by one stipendiary priest.

The census information puts the population as 2,233. These people are 99.2% white and 79.8% Christian. 30% of the population had studied at degree level. 66% of the housing is owner occupied and 11% is rented housing association. While it is rural it is close to a major town in the area, but not in the diocese.

The data collected from this benefice included:
    Notice sheets
    Church guidebooks
    Orders of service
    The Parish Profile
    Four interviews, one with the former vicar, one with a lay leader, and two with laity
    Episcopal correspondence
    Numerical data from the service registers.
Extended communion has been very rare in the vacancy but more frequent in previous years.

The retired vicar explained the reason for having a service of extended communion:

I   What we were talking about before was, how does the extended communion fit into the plan, the worship plan of the benefice? And you said there were two priests with 4 parishes, there was a rota between the priests for doing Holy Communion and you got to the point of saying there were 3 lay benefice ministers.

V3   Right. What happens is that if there, we keep the services going at those times in those places and one of the, one of the things, one of the options is, that the lay minister should, if it was to have been a Communion service, should take Holy Communion by extension.

I   If one of the priests is not available?

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V3   That's right. As happens on holidays or whenever (lines 35-46) .

The vicar richly relates two stages in development of the use of extended communion.

V3   Well, now, I mentioned earlier that there were two stages. The first stage, which was under bishop {name}, originally, um... he, we did it in that early stage, under those, before we formed our benefice ministers, under those who had permission to um, er, administer the sacraments of bread and wine. And we had his permission, er, that those who had his license to do that, could in exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the congregation um er, administer Holy Communion by extension.

I   OK. The second stage?

V3   The second stage was quite different, um, er. The bishop was present when these benefice minister were, um, er, er, made... by covenant between, me the people and them, and he gave permission for them to do this... (lines 68-78).

So the second stage was the creation of a ministry team in which some of the ministers lead Communion by Extension and some did not. The gap between the stages was due to an objection:

I   So one person objected...

V3   Objected, at the PCC, um, and the thing fell into desuetude (lines 171-172).

This will prove to be significant factor for the vacancy.

The lay leader's story is around the sabbatical of the vicar and the ministry team. So her periodization of the story is completely different.

WL3a It came up when our vicar, who is now gone, but was here at the time, wanted to go on sabbatical, which was in 1999, I think he went, um, and, he was working, he was going away for two months, we had a ministry team in place with, um, three ministers... who had been... commissioned by the bishop to be ministers... and we were working out a pattern of... how we were going to cover the services, while he was away, and I think it

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was his suggestion that this could be one of the things that we would do. Um. And two of us, I think one was not very keen, but two of us, were very happy to do this um, er, said yes we'd like to...(lines11-19).

In conversation it became apparent that WL3a did not know about the objection, which the vicar seems to have shielded from the Ministry Team.

The practice in the parish was outlined by this lay leader:

WL3a I was somebody who went to the 8 o'clock communion where they were consecrated or else we met with the vicar, retired priest, who was doing the service, at the end of the service and received them from him, and I remember that sometimes if the arrangements fitted he would actually bring them to the church where we were, and hand them over there (lines 70-74).

This seems very much as happens in other places (Smethurst, 1986).

The lay leader has a threefold periodization of the story:

WL3a there were three periods one was the sabbatical, and then there was the sort of ordinary period, and then now there has been the period when we are in interregnum (lines 129-131).

The present period at the time of interview was the vacancy:

WL5 In the interregnum, um, the ministers offered to do it, and the priest who is in charge of us, the retired priest who is in charge of us, very happy to say we can put this in as part of the pattern if we want, but I know quite openly that two of the church wardens one, so two of the parishes are represented in that, where it is, are not keen. And one of them is one who actually is putting together the rota. So during the interregnum there has only been one occasion when we've been actually asked to do Holy Communion by Extension (lines 161-167).

Out of this story issues of power develop.

The laity interviewed represented the two sides of the story. L3a, churchwarden in a different parish to WL3a, explained why he did not really approve of extended communion.

I   Now what I want you to do first of all is just say your experience of extended communion in this parish.

L3a   I have to say very, very limited. Umm, I should think we've probably had it er, twice. Um, um, I have to say it wasn't well received, I was the churchwarden at the time, and, um … which is why we haven't had one since (lines 10-15).

This was reiterated later:

L3a   Right. But their gut feeling was No, this isn't something we want (line 58).

L3a organized the worship rota in the vacancy and did this by importing retired clergy. Thus extended communion was not used. On a question as to the role of extended communion in the future he replied:

L3a   I don't frankly know… No, if there's serious shortage I suppose there'll be no option, but actually… in a sense it raises questions about the whole point of… ordained priesthood anyway (lines 87-89).
He went on to question a 'two-tier' priesthood, OLM having been discussed in the parish.

Consequently in that parish extended communion had only ever happened twice, and not in the vacancy.

L3b, warden in a third parish, was more open to the practice. She saw the origins in this way:

L3b   It started… {vicar} introduced it ,when he felt that there was, we all 4 churches wanted a service each Sunday so he introduced it to the ones that he thought would be happier with it. {reader} has always been the one to do it, and also in holidays or if {retired priest} was ill or something then we used it. We've got some anti's… but on the whole I'd say sort of 80%

were, um, all right with it within the people that come to this church, I'm not answering for the other 3 churches (lines 12-18).

Thus there are conflicting attitudes between the laity in this benefice.

In this parish issues of gender also were narrated as significant:

L3b   Yes, yes, OK. Um, and some... just didn't like it because it was a lady I think, doing it. But then again the higher church ones accepted it because... it had already been consecrated by a man (lines 23-25).

This is not the only time that this issue has been raise both in the question of who consecrates and who distributes.

This leader noted the reason for non-use of extended communion in the vacancy:

L3b   But since the interregnum we haven't had ... the beginning of the interregnum ... because of two churchwardens being sort of against it, they've always wanted to, you know, dig up the old priests at 80 plus and stuff, to come and take services.

I   Uhum. So you haven't had any, any organizational aspects of the services here during the interregnum?

L3b   Yes, we have, because the 8 churchwardens have all got together, but because there were 2 churchwardens that said, well, I've said we'll have Extended Communion, it's not a problem, they've said **Oh no, no**, we'll find a vicar.

I   And they've found a vicar.

L3b   Yes, they've been a bit overpowering, and they've found a vicar. You know, because all these retired vicars came out of the woodwork sort of then (lines 34-45).

This story was corroborated by WL3a (lines 161-167), as quoted previously in this chapter. Thus the place of some of the wardens became significant in the vacancy phase of the story, which will be developed later in this chapter.

The data from service register is from the parish where L3b is warden, one of the places it has happened most frequently. Figure 9.10 tabulates the services of Extended Communion.

Figure 9.10 Parish 3 Number of services

Total number of services of Communion by Extension all on Sundays at the service

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2000			1										1
2001					1							1	2
2002				1	1				1	1		1	5
2003	1				1								2
2004													
Total	1		1	1	3				1	1		2	10

First Service was March 2000. Communicants 9-15.

Vacancy began August 2003

Monthly Agape began September 2002

All of these are Sunday services as the parish has only one service a week. As a total number this is not a large number of services and corroborates the emergency use of the service, as cover for when the priests are not available. It also shows the ending of the services in the vacancy. Both aspects confirm the stories told in the interviews. It is significant that this is a parish that has also set up a monthly agape, an informal service of the word that includes eating together. This will be discussed in a later chapter.

A noteworthy facet of this parish includes a narrative of an inversion of power. Power is a complex issue discussed concerning, organizations (Handy, 1976, 1993), or gender (Furlong, 1991). The conception of power as primarily hierarchical was challenged by Foucault, who saw power as in interlocking patterns (Fillingham, 1993). Chambers comments that (Cameron et al., 2005):

> It is these internal networks of social regulations and the customary
> distribution of power as much as theological dispositions that go to make
> up the identity of a congregation (p. 202).

The complex pattern of power networks was highly significant in this parish, in this case with a hierarchical dimension.

While the vicar was present his charismatic power could persuade the parish that extended communion should be a part of their life and a part of the work of the ministry team. This could be tabulated as in figure 9.11:

Figure 9.11 Power in the parish

Diocese, bishop, canons

vicar

Ministry Team

wardens

Congregations, individuals, village
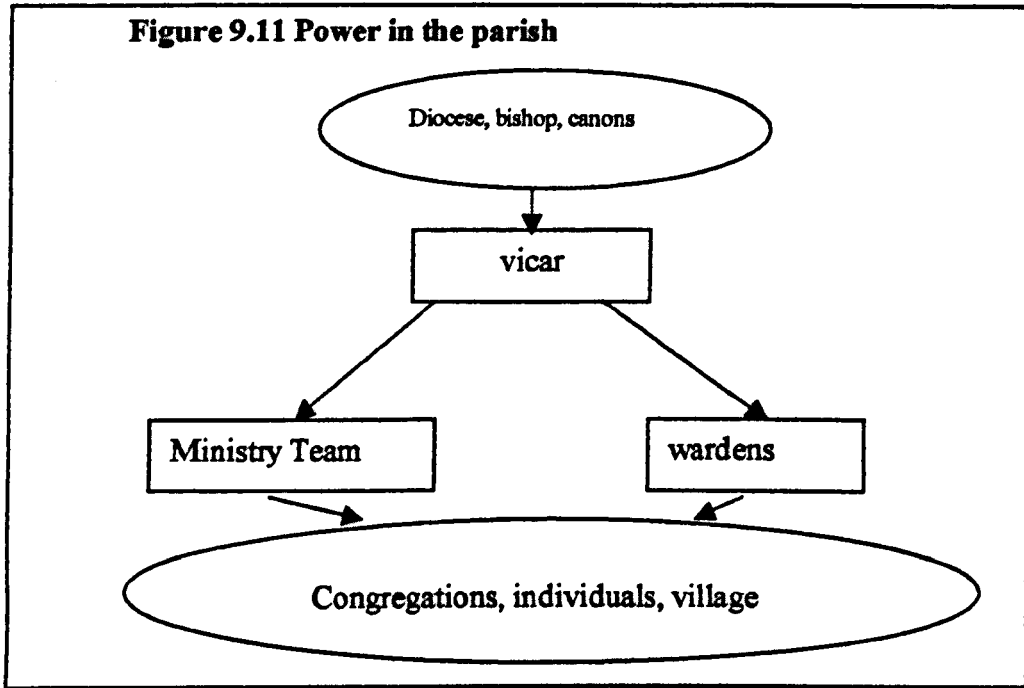
The network changed in the vacancy. At that moment the wardens gain further power with the legal responsibility to ensure that the worship of the church is conducted. Indeed, this situation is aided by funds being made from the diocese to pay for clergy to visit and lead worship, if necessary. Thus visiting clergy are brought into play, in this case covering the eucharistic services and ending the occurrence of extended communion. This results in a new power relationship, figure 9.12.

Figure 9.12 Power in the vacancy

Diocese, bishop, canons

wardens

Ministry Team

Visiting clergy

Congregations, individuals, village
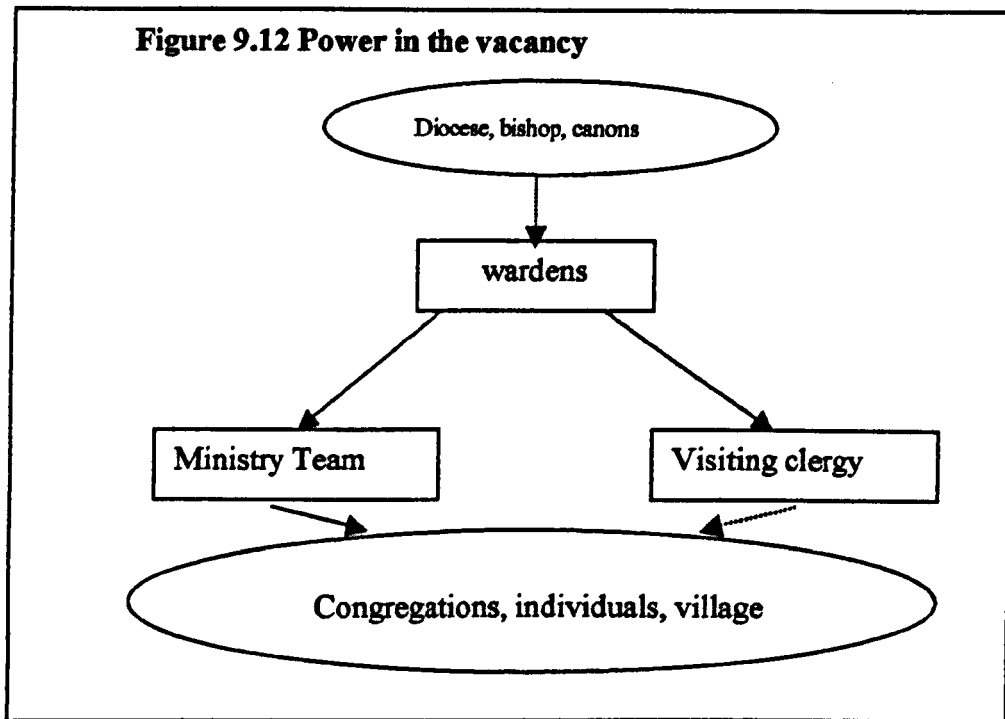
While technically the eight wardens held the power, in practice it was given to one warden who organized the rota, who also happened to be a patron of another of the parishes. This was L3a who was opposed to extended communion. He organized visiting clergy to preside; but their link to the parish is by its nature more tenuous and tendentious. This indicates that while the Church of England appears to be a hierarchical church in certain defined situations particular laity can be quite powerful and thus block the use of extended communion. A whole network of gatekeepers has to be positive about the development before it can be introduced.

One working hypothesis was that in a vacancy if a ministry team existed there would be more frequent use of extended communion. A vacancy was described as one of the reasons for extended communion in the documentary analysis and literature review. In this case the reverse happened; extended communion ceased. Similar stories have been reported to me in at least two other parishes in the archdeaconry. This case demonstrates tensions between new power

groups (ministry teams) and old power groups (wardens and patrons). Not all had accepted changes in the benefice and the introduction of the new services. Thus the issue of power can be highly significant in the occurrence of this service.

This chapter has examined the archdeaconry and three rural parishes. The next chapter will continue the case studies and formulate general conclusions.

Chapter 10

The Urban Parishes and Case Study Conclusions

This chapter develops this thesis by an examination of the urban parishes as case studies, as explained in the last chapter. The final part of this chapter will end with conclusions covering all the case studies.

Parish 4

Parish 4 is a suburban parish in the archdeaconry. It is High Church in its tradition and is open to the ministry of women priests, although there is one chapel in the parish where women priests are not allowed to preside. The parish has an electoral roll of 223. There are 3 priests and two Readers (Oxford, 2003). Parish 4 has two worship centers with three Sunday services of Holy Communion and a daily eucharist in a variety of centers including a number of nursing homes.

The electoral ward in which the parish resides (but the boundaries do not fit well) has a population of 5,065. This is 95.9% white and 76.5% Christian. It has the highest proportion of degree level inhabitants 38.7% well above the national average of 19.8% (Census, 2001).

A variety of data was collected from parish 4 including:
Observation of a service
Information from the parish web page
Two parish profiles, 1992 and 2001
Orders of service, including the now authorized service
Correspondence both personal and with the bishop
Three interviews: one with the vicar, another with a leader of communion from the reserved sacrament, and one with a layperson
Numerical data from the service register.

It would appear that the issue had not been discussed in the PCC.

The story of extended communion in the parish is narrated by the leader:

WL4a Well I started off as a Reader, taking Communion to nursing homes. Um,
obviously from the reserved sacrament, um and then, because of need in
the parish, I have um, over several years taken, um service in the chapel
and in the church from the, direct from the reserved sacrament, uh, and,
uh, which is kept there.

I Could you say something about the need that you talked about.

WL4a Usually when, perhaps in interregnum, or uh, when the curate is um, has
not yet been ordained priest, uh, or during holiday time there has been a
need to take the pram mass communion service, on a Tuesday morning,
held in the chapel, and sometimes on a Saturday, um in, from, in the big
church, {name of church} itself.

I Have you had to do it on Sundays as well?

WL4a No. I have never had to do it on a Sunday. We've always managed to get
another priest to fill in, if there was a problem in the parish (lines 12-24).

The vicar shed light on this story:

I And when you came here, what did you discover?

V4 That it seemed, again only on weekdays, and they had just had an
interregnum, and I am not aware of any occasion during the interregnum
when a Sunday service... was covered in such a way (lines 36-39).

So the story is of the development from, firstly taking communion to the sick at
nursing or old people's homes only, to secondly communion from the reserved
sacrament in homes and for midweek masses. Readers and deacons formerly led
this service, but with three priests it is now a very rare occurrence. Increasing
numbers of clergy have reduced the need for the service, something borne out by
the church records.

The service register revealed the following pattern of services from the
reserved sacrament (Figure 10.1).

Figure 10.1 Parish 4 Number of services

Total number of service of Communion from the Reserved Sacrament (including Sunday)

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2000					2	2	2				1		7
2001	1	1	2	1	4		1	11	10	9	11	2	53
2002	5	1	4	10	4	5	5	6	11	3	8	2	64
2003	5	3	2	7	4	3	9	2	1		4	1	41
2004	2	1		1	3			1				1	9
2005	1		3	2	3	3							12
Total	14	6	11	21	20	13	17	20	22	12	24	6	186

Number of Sunday Services of Communion from the Reserved Sacrament

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2000												
2001										1		
2002												
2003	1											
2004												
2005												

While there is a considerable number of services of this type, the figures corroborate the interviews; these services were almost exclusively a mid week activity. The service register covers all the services in the parish but communion by extensions was often recorded as 'Mass' and thus the information had to be gathered by sitting with the vicar, who knew the signatures in the book and could say if the leader was a priest, deacon or Reader. The period includes a vacancy, and two curates and a Reader becoming deacons. However, the majority of the services have been led by one of the Readers, who since the fieldwork has been ordained priest. She also leads on occasion communion from the reserved sacrament in a home that will not accept the presidency of a woman priest.

The frequency of services is influenced both by the high church tradition of the parish with its commitment to a daily mass, but also the large number of homes in the parish all of which want services. The study of episcopal correspondence in the previous chapter demonstrated that this is a particular urban problem.

Three key issues emerge from the research on this parish. First, that there are imprecise boundaries between communion in a home and communion for the sick. Second, some laity are unable to distinguish between extended communion and the eucharist. Finally, there is a critical distinction between extended communion and communion from the reserved sacrament. These will be examined in turn.

The service I observed was in a private nursing home. While advertised as a parish service on the website it transpired that the context was more private than public and my contact had warned the authorities in the home of my intended visit. My field notes say 'key issue here of informant who has got me into a semi-private service in a nursing home'. The issue of the boundary between communion for the sick and extended communion was raised in the interview with the vicar who said:

V4   It depends under which set of guidelines you are operating, are you giving communion from the blessed sacrament, [or] under the guidelines of the pastoral services, like communion to the sick (lines 61-63).

While the Church of England has made a categorical distinction between communion for the sick (The Archbishops' Council, 2000), which is allowed, and extended communion, which is controlled (The Archbishops' Council, 2001), in the real pastoral context this is not always so clear. At a residential home some are sick others are elderly: which rules (and liturgy) apply to this situation? In practice this is a gray area, which is not so easy to identify on the ground as policy-makers might suggest in theory.

There is much anecdotal evidence of laity not being able to distinguish between extended communion and the eucharist, an anxiety found in much of the liturgical literature. Interviewing a layperson after the service showed that this is true of some people. The interview was slightly unusual as the worship leader was still in the room, but pressed twice the layperson made no distinction between the service just held and a holy communion:

I   And today's service was slightly different. Does it feel any different...

L4a   No, not at all (lines 56 & 60).

It was clear that the interviewee could not distinguish between Mass and communion for the reserved sacrament and WL4a pressed a further question:

WL4a Um, {Name of L4a} the service was quite a bit shorter, isn't it. Do you feel there is anything missing?

L4a   No, not really no, No, I think its quite um... It gives us the message, the message (lines 71-73).

The interviews rest on the assumption that both the interviewer and the interviewee can hold a clear distinction between extended communion and Holy Communion. In this case the lack of this shared understanding made the interview difficult, an example of substantial indeterminacy (Scheurich, 1997). As it became apparent that this fundamental distinction could not be made, the interview was curtailed. This, however, does not make the interview a failure as it provides a

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concrete example of the anxiety often expressed in the literature. However, misunderstanding is not universally true. In other case studies there are examples of people who see the distinction clearly e.g. in parish three L3a was clear of the distinction, as this was the basis of his objection to the service. L4a was a long-term communicant in the Church of England. What was important to her was to receive communion. How this happens was far less important.

The third point is a categorical distinction between extended communion and communion from the reserved sacrament. This was argued most strongly by the vicar and looking back on the interview was another fundamental distinction that led to some confusion in the interview.

V4   [Of course there is a difference between giving extended communion from another eucharist

I   [Yea

V4   And giving communion from the reserved sacrament.

I   Could you expand that.

V4   Well, um, extended communion from another eucharist your, o, don't you say where the communion has come from, you know at a celebration which took place earlier this morning at St Martin you know da, di, da. You know, where as the blessed sacrament, Lord knows when the sacrament was consecrated. Its just there (lines 87-96).

The vicar himself raised this issue, partially in response to my use of the term extended communion, a power reversal in the interview (Scheurich, 1997). It implies a criticism of the official liturgy, with its words concerning the origin of the eucharistic elements; an unhelpful use of language in a church with reservation. Indeed at the observed service the words were changed to say that this is a service 'from the reserved sacrament', cf. Garrigan (2004). Also, later in the liturgy the holy gifts were not said to be 'brought to us' as in the authorized service, but 'here for us'. The use of reserved sacrament revealed the presuppositional limitations of the present text.

Further reflection suggested this was a critical distinction that had not been sufficiently been taken into account in writing the authorized liturgy. Fundamental tensions exist between the two terms 'extended communion' and 'communion from the reserved sacrament'. Feldman (1995) suggests that semiotics assumes that 'surface signs are related to an underlying structure' (pp.21-22), and suggests that 'semiotic chain analysis' helps reveal the issues in more depth (p.30ff).

The semiotic chain, figure 10.2, analyses the distinction between extended communion and communion from the reserved sacrament, a fundamental difference for V4. The top lines take the connotative meanings. This is then elaborated in the tensions of 'expression' and 'content' lower in the diagram. The 'outcome' is a reflection based upon this approach, the conclusion of the analysis.

Figure 10.2 Semiotic chain analysis

Extended Communion ←——————→ Communion from the
Reserved Sacrament

Low/middle ←——————→ High

Connotation

Denotation

Expression	Content		Content	Expression
Consecrated Elements	various + open	←——→	specific + closed	Blessed Sacrament
Communion Set	holy vessels	←——→	holy place	Tabernacle/ Aumbry
Extension in space	geographic	←——→	temporal	Extension in time
Specific Occasion	transitory	←——→	permanent	Presence

Outcome

Reservation is an old battleground in the Church of England. It is one of the reasons for the failure of the 1928 Prayer Book. If 'extended communion' had been introduced as 'communion from the reserved sacrament', then it might have not captured the middle ground. A new term enabled a political maneuver to make the practice acceptable even to the point of national authorization.

The high church tradition of this parish gives it a distinctive genius and is illustrative of some of the present complexities of that tradition and of the wider denomination. The denominational structure has been to allow considerable variation in parishes and to be light on the enforcement of styles of worship. The parish illustrates how this tradition can critique the assumptions generated by Synod and this critique exposes some of the political maneuverings, through

language, to enable an innovation. It also holds within a parish some of the tensions over another innovation, namely women priests.

The evidence from parish four confirms, the problems for some laity of distinguishing the eucharist from extended communion, illustrates the complex boundary between communion for the sick and extended communion, and reveals political dimensions to the language used in church discourse. All of these have effects on the liturgical text, both as printed and used.

Parish 5

This is a suburban parish in a large town. It is moderate catholic in tradition and has had a woman vicar. The electoral roll is 154. There is one priest and three Readers (Oxford, 2003). There is a second worship center, which is a church plant with a Free Church - Anglican partnership.

The electoral ward of the parish has a population of 8,157. The population is 95.9% white and 79.6% Christian. There is 73% employment and 95% owner occupation of houses. These last two figures are the highest of all the case studies (Census, 2001).

The data collected from this parish included:
Information from the parish web page.
The parish profile from 2002
An Order of service 'An Order of Service for Holy Communion
(from the Reserved Sacrament)' – undated but based on the ASB
Five interviews: one with the vicar, three with different lay leaders,
and one with a layperson
Numerical data from the service register.
At present extended communion in this parish had fallen into desuetude.

One lay leader explained the origins of extended communion in the parish:

WL5a Umm. I was licensed by the Bishop of {town}, I can't remember the year, but quite a long time ago. Must be about 20 years ago. And I think probably the first time we had reserved sacrament in this church could have been fairly soon after that.

I   You were licensed as a what?

WL5a To assist with the chalice and to do... to use the reserved sacrament. I have no other qualifications you know, 'cos I'm not a Lay Reader or anything like that (lines 18-25).

Further information was given as to the reason for this happening:

WL5a It's in the PCC minutes. Obviously, it's been recorded in there. Um... and we had... it's not the service that you've got at the moment, we had a service card made up for use with the reserved sacrament, and it was used possibly in the evenings when it was difficult to find a vicar to come to our... you know to an evening service at holiday time or something like that, not on a regular basis (lines 29-34).

So the difficulty of the vicar regularly being at midweek communions was the starting point. The available registers went back 16 years. It was a surprise to everyone that extended communion had been happening for this length of time. I had some previous knowledge of the parish having helped in the vacancy. The previous vicar had a long period of sickness and I had thought that extended communion was a response to that. Clearly this had not been the case, as extended communion originated well before that. It was three bishops ago that this practice began, and the interview showed that the bishop had been involved in permitting the original practice.

The present incumbent, who arrived in 2002, was not very keen on extended communion. He sees this as part of his background:

V5   The other thing, I suppose being the higher church background is that um I've got a sort of sense that you have a complete service or you don't have one at all. ... and so to me the reserved sacrament is sort of neither fish nor fowl. It sort of tries to fall in between the two, and whereas I see it

perfectly all right for home communions, but even then I'm happier dropping more of the service, I personally wouldn't use the reserved sacrament prayer, I would always go fresh and take the bread and wine and say the words even if it's a truncated version as it were, I've never done that, so I feel that people should be having something whole and complete (lines 112-122).

The result is that he has tended to phase out the services, instructing that Morning or Evening Prayer should be said in his absence. This has led to some regret in the laity about what is seen as a change in policy:

L5a   I did ask on one occasion why we did not use the reserved sacrament on this, we just had Morning Prayer, and um I this, you know, it occurred to me, well why are we not having Communion, because this is what I like to be able to do once a week, if I don't go to the service at the nursing home (lines 18-20).

Likewise another of the lay leaders regrets the change in direction:

WL5c Um. Well before I actually did take communion I wasn't too sure about it. I felt it was kind of bending the rules if you like. I was a bit sceptical. But because I was kind of landed with it if you like, because of {previous vicar} not being well and the interregnum, I came to appreciate doing it, and I lost my inhibitions? No that's not really the word, um,

I   Doubts, questions?

WL5c Probably, yes.

I   OK.

WL5c As I say, I really enjoyed it then. I would really like to do it now, I would like to continue doing that. I miss that very much, you know not being able to stand in on a Tuesday when {vicar} isn't around (lines 85-95).

This change in policy has not been an agreed one but comes about by an accidental clash of knowledge and expectations. The parish did not inform the incoming incumbent of their practice, it was not in the parish profile, and it was only in the doing of this research that anyone realised that there had been such widespread use of the service.

The service register revealed the following information on extended communion (figure 10.3). The evidence demonstrates an extensive of the use of this service.

Figure 10.3 Parish 5 Number of services

Total number of service of Communion from the Reserved Sacrament (including Sunday)

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
1989	1	1		1	2	2		2		1	1		11
1990		1	1	1	1		3	1	1	1	1		11
1991	1		1	2		1	1		1	2	1		10
1992			1				1					1	3
1993	2			4		1	1	1	1	2	1	3	16
1994	1		1	1	2			2	1	2		1	11
1995	1	1	1	2	2	2	4	2	1	1	1		18
1996	3	2	1		1	3	1		2	1			14
1997				3	1				1	3		1	9
1998		1		2		1			3		1	2	10
1999	2				1	1		1	2				7
2000			2				1	1	2		1	1	8
2001		5	2	3	1		3	1		1	1		17
2002				2				1					3
2003													0
2004					1								1
Total	11	11	10	20	12	11	15	13	17	11	8	9	148

This data required the help of an informant, something Davies (1999) comments on as important in research. The services are recorded as Holy Communion in the service register. Fortunately WL5a had filled in the register for the whole of this period and so we were able to gather this concrete data by sitting down for two hours and working through the registers. This issue of accurate recording has been a problem for the research in other parishes in the cases studies.

The services have been used regularly since they began in 1989. Three people have been involved, but WL5a has done the vast majority of the services. These have been mostly for mid-week services (there are two midweek communions with an average attendance of ten) and they seem to have been introduced to allow the vicar to be away for meetings and holidays (notice the higher figures for April and September). It was also used in the vacancy for a similar purpose and while the previous vicar was sick. There is a clear decline since the present incumbent came in 2002. There have been only six occasions when the service was on a Sunday but never as the main Sung Eucharist, which has always been conducted by a priest.

By contrast the church plant has tended to concentrate on Family Services. Extended communion has not been a feature there, partly because of the Free Church involvement. What is interesting is an experiment in the use of an Agape (see chapter ten), using a modern collection of services (Bryden-Brook, 1998). It happened in this way:

WL5b   I bought a book called 'Bread broken and shared' I think it was, it's a book of Agapes from different traditions, there are some catholic ones and world ones. With some it's difficult to see the difference between Agape and communion, but it seemed to me that it was OK to do that at {place name} and umm... we did one or two over the years, maybe at special times like Easter or other times where it fitted in with the teaching. And we would use grape juice and a roll and a form of words which was in this book, which had been used by other churches or other...

I   I don't know this book at all.

WL5b It's a collection of Agapes anyway. Some of them had additional paragraphs that you could insert that turned it into a communion service. It was a way that we could break bread um... as an expression of church, of who we were, without bussing somebody in to do the magic bit and without excluding people who weren't baptised or who were visitors (lines 112-124).

This research has uncovered significant use of the agape, which will be discussed further in chapter 17. The vicar and WL5a thought that the agape was 'not taking the church anywhere'. The vicar had considerable doubts about this service:

V5   The other thing that we've encountered in this parish was that the church plant didn't have any sacramental services so there was no Communion. I was informed however that they had had an Agape meal, that's how it was described. And I will occasionally turn up at the church plant unannounced just to see what's happening, and I came one week to discover that they were having a sort of meal with bread and wine... (lines 56-62).

V5   And the reason that I was unhappy with it is not as you might think I was thinking 'that's not a proper Communion service' but the other way round, that I think from my evangelical background that if someone stands up and says, you know these are bits from the Bible and Jesus on the night he was betrayed did this and this, it is a Communion (lines 65-70).

So the worship pattern has been changed to allow the vicar a monthly visit to lead a eucharist.

The mythos of this church (Hopewell, 1987) is represented in its parish profile calling it a liberal catholic parish. It has had considerable stretching of that definition not least in its changing of leadership and in the developments in the church plant. The parish has a number of stories based around each church and there are distinct differences between the two. The denomination seems to have been particularly absent in any matters of oversight of the church plant leaving this to the local parish priest. This would seem to be a particular and peculiar approach of the Church of England.

Two conclusions can be made from the practice of this parish. The first conclusion is based on the service rota. The research uncovered a depth of history of extended communion in this parish that few realized (including the present incumbent). This custom was not mentioned in the parish profile and the new incumbent has inadvertently changed the practice. The church describes itself as wanting 'to live the Eucharist daily and also live in an attitude of deep understanding and openness to the Holy Spirit' (parish profile p. 8). It is this Catholic tradition that has allowed extended communion to flourish here for so many years. The sheer number of occurrences puts this out of the occasional category. The reasons for this, however, varied from vicar to vicar. Once it has begun it may continue for many years, cf. Ulverston.

The second conclusion concerns the possibilities of an agape. While this was not a successful strategy here, it has been in other places, e.g. parish 3. The literature has suggested a number of alternatives to Holy Communion; for example, in a study on 'Communion without a priest' some options were suggested (without making them mutually exclusive), either ordain more priests, or have extended communion, or non-eucharistic services (service of the Word or matins), or even lay presidency (Millar and Tovey, 1994). To this could now be added a fifth option, an agape meal (figure 10.4).

Figure 10.4 Alternative strategies
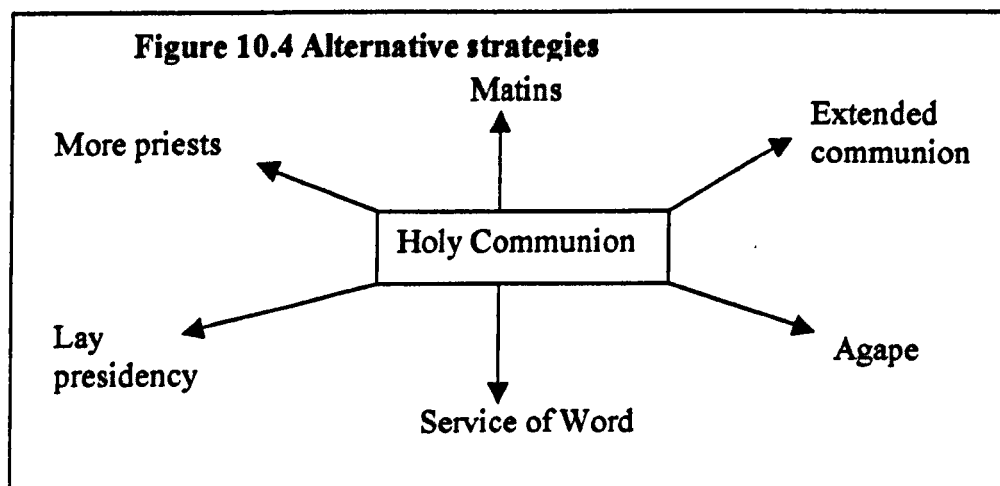
The research data suggests in practice the agape is an important liturgical resource in some parishes. Four out of the six parishes had

experimented with it. Yet it remains an unexplored option in official texts. This research indicates an area being explored in practice but as yet unexplored on a policy-making level.

Parish 6

The last parish is an urban parish in a small town. It is a team ministry with five churches and four congregations. Two vicars, an associate priest and an OLM, presently staff the parish but until quite recently each congregation had its own vicar. Pastoral reorganization was a painful process with a major review being a part of the procedure. There has been a rationalization of the worship provided by the four churches, which are all within a mile of each other. The electoral role information is divided into three districts with the figures being 129, 67, and 103, a total of 299.

The census information registers the population of the ward as 4, 965. This is 91.2% white and 75.7% Christian. These were the lowest figures for all the parishes and included some adherents of other religions. 38.3% of the population had a degree which is surprisingly high: this may be due to a considerable gentrification of the area in recent years. 73.8% of the housing was owner occupied but 20.4% of the population lives in flats.

The data collected from the parish included:
Orders of service
Weekly news sheets
Monthly newsletters
Web pages
The Review document
Church brochures
Four interviews, with the priest-in-charge, a lay leader, and two laity
Episcopal correspondence
Numerical data from the service register.

This rich collection of material was gathered on two visits, but I had also previously been to the parishes at various times in the course of my employment.

The Review was written in 2000. It identified that there are too many church building for the numbers that came to church and this resulted in maintenance dominating the discussion. While not been able to sustain the status quo (at that time of four paid clergy), it recommended for the particular church studied that it become "a center for experiment in 'lay led' church". This was defined as:

> A shift from a traditional pattern of the ordained initiating and giving
> pace to the ministry – to the laity initiating and giving pace to the
> ministry, drawing on the ministry resources in the town.

One priest would be given 'oversight' of the church but working in the manner defined above. This set the parameters for the development of this particular congregation and its use of extended communion.

The narrative of the priest with oversight starts with the sudden reorganisation of the parish.

V6   Right, OK, um here because of a thorough-going review process of the
      Team ministry which consists of 5 churches organised in three
      parishes, and the retirement of the previous Team Rector, and the week
      later move to another parish of the other Team Vicar and also the
      curate having finished her curacy, it went from four full time
      stipendiaries to me on my own... with five churches. We brought
      together two of the congregations to form one congregation
      permanently, so that brought us down to four, and we were already
      developing, under the previous Team Vicar for to, a strong lay team at
      {church 1}. {church 1}'s tradition was traditional Low Church really,
      (lines 10-18).

This sudden change within a short period entailed some rationalisation:

V6   Yes. And we stopped an 8 o'clock at {church 3} Parish Church
      because there was between six and twelve at that whereas at {church
      1} there was between twenty and twenty-five there. So we said that's

the Team's 8 o'clock, although that was very contentious in a number of ways, because {church 1} isn't the Parish Church. Although actually three of them are Parish Churches, {church 2}, {church 1} and {church 3}, but that's another issue (lines 312-317).

Sharing oversight between two congregations was difficult due to past history:

V6   but, I mean in living memory the priest at {church 2} had told people that if they went to {church 1} they'd not really been to church and in living memory the priest at {church 1} had told people that if you go in {church 2} you'll be struck by lightning (lines 205-208).

Lloyd in the synod debate had pointed to such congregational differences (see chapter 11). However, considerable progress has been made in breaking down these prejudices.

       Church 1 is the lay-led congregation where extended communion has happened most frequently. It has occurred only a handful of times in the other congregations. Church 1 was a Low Church congregation with a developing Family Service. The 8 o'clock became a team service of Holy Communion, but the question then came up of what to do about communion at major festivals, not least Easter.

V6   at the same time we thought about Communion by Extension, and Easter Day was a difficult day for one stipendiary to do the number of Eucharists that were needed, and as the lay team were... were really, you know, it seemed to me primed to try it, Easter Day did seem like a bit of a risky decision to try (lines 101-106).

Confidence gradually grew and this has now become a regular feature of Easter Day. The regular Team 8 o'clock Holy Communion is at the church but the major service of the day is Communion by Extension. This was not without controversy in the clergy team:

V6   I suppose there's a bit of me that feels like are we really supposed to be doing this, you know, should we really be organising it in such a way that there can be a priest every time. Maybe that's because colleagues have – feel a bit like that. Er... so it does feel a little bit risky that we've pushed the boundary a bit (lines 375-379).

It would appear that faithfulness to the review has kept the vision on 'lay led' and this has overridden any other concerns.

The worship leader said much the same about the development of the service, but filled out some detail:

WL6a Our first challenge came in the April of 2001 when we sat with Father {name} to plan Easter worship. Um, Because... clearly he couldn't be leading a main act of Easter worship that was Holy Communion in both parishes. And while Sunday by Sunday people here um, were quite comfortable with the service of the Word and quite happy with that there was a view being expressed quite strongly here that on Easter Day people wanted to be able to receive Holy Communion at the main act of worship (lines 57-63).

The bishop monitored this new development and there was thorough planning by the team:

WL6a So we did a lot of planning for that first Easter Day, um, we had a complete rehearsal of the service, um, on the Maundy Thursday, and we had the lay team involved in various aspects of the service: one person leading intercessions, someone else reading the gospel, I was actually responsible for leading that part of the service, um, that involves the reading of the gospel reading from St Luke, 'they recognised him in the breaking of bread' and then actually being responsible for the distribution of the consecrated elements (lines 78-85).

The publicity led to interest from the local press who did not grasp the theological nuances:

WL6a We had some local press coverage, we had, to be honest, the whole thing was a bit unfortunate from the media point of view, and I don't suppose we managed the media terribly well, because they ran a story, they had pictures, they took pictures at the rehearsal on Thursday of Father {name} gathered round the altar with members of the lay team, and they sort of ran, they ran a story that basically described Communion by Extension but, typical of the press, they misunderstood a key element really and described the lay team at {church} would be

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officiating at this Holy Communion service on Easter Day, so there was a bit of misinformation in there really. But of course by the time that appeared in the press the week afterwards, you know, we'd done it anyway (lines 110-120).

This has become a regular pattern on Easter day and is growing in use on other occasions as necessary, mostly mid week and occasionally on Sunday.

The laity talked positively about the service, particularly in the context of a Family Service tradition, which includes the children receiving communion:

L6a   I really enjoyed it. I really like the, all age worship which is what our family service has become really, and involving the children, and this seems to be a development from that, because we've had um, we've actually had children from 7 onwards who've had the opportunity to take communion, so we've given them a six week course, and I was involved in that as well (lines 69-73).

The other lay person commented:

L6b   I thought it was um... it was not what I expected from my background, but given the Family Service, the culture in this church I thought it fitted very well (lines 31-33).

It would appear that this has been received well, in a church whose principal service is the Family Service.

The church Service Register shows the following use of the service, figure 10.5:

Figure 10.5 Parish 6 Number of services

Total number of service of Communion by Extension

	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
2001				1									1
2002			1					6		1			8
2003				1			1	4		2		1	9
2004	1		1	1			1	2		1	2		9
2005		1	1										2
Total	1	1	3	3			2	12		4	2	1	29

All of the services are mid week apart from the March/April service which is Easter day The sudden jump to 6 midweek services in August 2002 was because the only paid priest in the Team at the time was given an extended period of rest and extended communion was used as cover.

The use of the service on Easter day is a particular feature of this parish. There were no figures for Easter 2001 but the attendance at the following services for Easter day service was:

Easter	Adults	Children	Total
2002	65	19	84
2003	58	10	68
2004	78	14	92
2005	40	15	55

The church hosts the Team 8 o'clock Holy Communion service, which is staffed on a rota. At Easter the elements are kept from this service to the next, the 10 o'clock Family Service; this is one of the growth points of the church and is lay-led. The church, although quite low in tradition, is applying for a faculty to put a tabernacle in a side chapel for communion to the sick and for extended communion. This would indicate a changing institution where traditional theological boubdaries concerning reservation are breaking down in favour of a more flexible pragmatic approach. It has also experimented with agapes, including in the preparation of children for communion.

This church is distinct from the others as a case study, not least because of the Review which set up a 'lay led church' and redefining the role of the priest with oversight. However, WL6a noted that in reality there were close links to the priest and that all this had been done under his oversight (and that of the bishop). Also of significance is the number of midweek services where extended communion has happened, 24 occasions in 5 years. A 'once a year' service has gradually developed into a more regular usage.

This review was a major structural document indicating a particular need for change. With official backing and support from senior leaders it was able to push through change in the face of considerable opposition. It is however questionable on an ecclesiological level if the notion of a lay led congregation fits with traditional Anglican ecclesiology. Perhaps this is indicative of in light of major change and declining denominational resources church leadership is willing to try innovative solutions despite their challenge to accepted norms. This might indicate an organization that is more open to innovation than might be the current perception.

This parish has taken, albeit by parallel evolution, a similar direction to the Roman Catholic Church: the traditional model of parish has given way to an alternative model. This is illustrated by figure 10.6.

Figure 10.6 Models of parish

Traditional model of a parish

Lay led parish

Key:
P   Priest
LL Lay leaders
C   Congregation
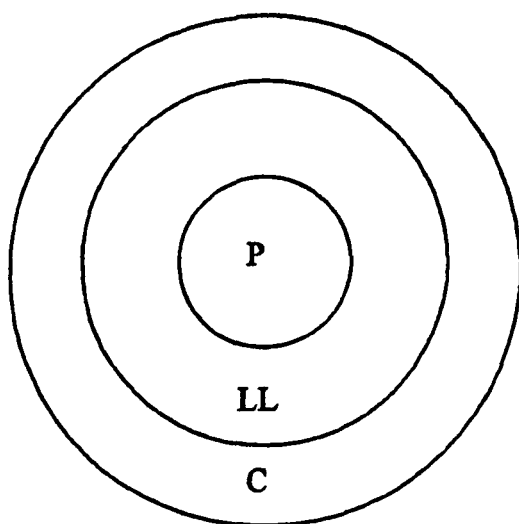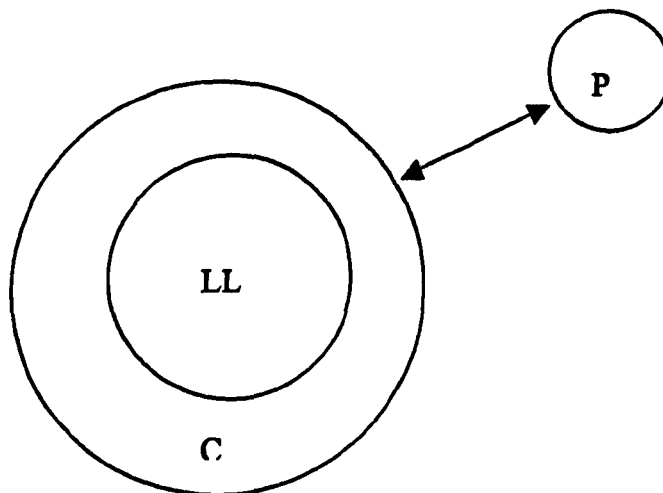
The concept of a lay led congregation seems problematical within Anglican polity, raising the complex problem of the relationship between

leadership and ordination. There are also intricate questions of ecclesiology, which will be discussed in chapter 13. Nevertheless, the situation at this parish is changing and at present there is a considerable exploration of vocation, perhaps leading to at least one of the congregation being ordained.

Case study conclusions

These case studies have uncovered rich veins of evidence about 'what is actually happening' and the interpretation of the story from a variety of perspectives, cf. Hopewell's (1987) 'thick gathering'. Interviews have been effective in finding out the local story, albeit that each person only holds a piece of that story and it is not only or even the vicar who usually is the key holder of the narrative for a particular church, cf. Ammerman et al. (Ammerman et al., 1998). The service registers also hold vital information for the purposes of corroboration of the narratives in the interviews and triangulation of the data for analysis. It is now time to develop conclusions from the case studies, these being formulated under the headings of the narrative of reorganisation and the statistics of occurrence.

Narrative of reorganisation

The prevailing story is of pastoral reorganisation in response to declining numbers of stipendiary clergy. One of the bishops noted how long this process had been going on and that extended communion had a place within this wider story:

I   And was this particularly connected at the time to pastoral reorganisation which seems to be an ever ongoing process?

B1   Inevitably, I mean it was a decline in number of stipendiary posts, this was becoming an issue for multiple parish benefices.

I   So were those beginning to be set up in your time or were they already set up and just expanding in number? Do you see what I mean in terms of multiple parish benefices?

B1   Oh there were numerous ones when I became Bishop because remember I was an Archdeacon before, so it's a bit difficult to recall when things actually happened, but I mean the whole business of

pastoral reorganisation has been going on really since the late sixties so it's long.

I   It feels like it anyway.. *(laughs)* Every few years we seem to have a cut in number again and more reorganisation (lines 75-86).

This story is not however just one for the countryside but also in towns, parish six being a foretaste of that but both the other urban parishes are in deaneries where there have been amalgamations.

Another bishop sees this a continuing:

B2   we are being called into an era where the way we give expression to Church life will change radically and probably rapidly, and um, for me the key question is what is an authentic expression of us being a worshipping community? And um, and what does it mean for us to be a Eucharistic community? (lines 159-163).

He sees the future with a new model of emerging church often called fresh expressions of church (The Archbishop's Council, 2004b).

B2   I'm certainly not against Communion by Extension, but my anxiety is that the churches that are needing to transition into a new way of being the Church and a new way of expressing what it is to be Church, to become much more of a lay community, er... is this the best thing for them to be doing? Well yes, if it's the only way they're going to get communion, but no, if it means that the only way they can imagine being Church is to cling as best they can to a way of worshipping which feels secure and familiar (lines 32-39).

His view is that extended communion belongs to old models and could inhibit radical change. However the curate in parish 4 saw a place for extended communion in fresh expressions of church (V4 lines 422-444), cf. Lings (Lings, 1999a).

Meanwhile the growth of communion by extension seems to be a pragmatic response to this. Bishop 1 saw the whole thing in this way:

B1   Oh, arising out of pastoral need and in that sense a rather Anglican response I suppose. I wouldn't, in sort of, generally, wouldn't wish pastoral need to actually wag God's tail, if you see what I mean. But if

there seems to be demonstrable need and the theology seems to be sound, then I feel it's right to move in any particular direction and this one I think would be the way in which I'm a rather pragmatic sort of person (lines 68-73).

Although later he admitted to some limitations to this approach, 'there are some bits of pragmatism that I'd be less happy with' (line 221). Similarly, pastoral need came up in a variety of guises, as we saw at the beginning of the last chapter. These narratives show a variety of need and generally corroborate the requests as expressed in the Episcopal correspondence.

However, it should not go unnoticed that need and necessity are not the only factors in the story, there are other narratives that subvert this root narrative. V1 had been keen to introduce extended communion for the development of the Reader in training. This was in part motivated by her previous experience of frustration in her own ministry. Also the foundation of extended communion in parish five was not because of pressure of clergy numbers, they have remained fairly stable in the parish. What was more important was 'cover' to enable the clergy to be elsewhere. But in so doing the parish has considerably strayed beyond the considerations of the House of Bishops.

Statistics of occurrence
The service registers have revealed much valuable data, even if the problems of inaccurate recording and illegible signatures have proved to be practical difficulties. This data uncovered is invaluable in providing another perspective on the research topic.

Aggregating all the information from the six parishes and plotting them on a chart gives a significant overview, as in figure 10.7.

Figure 10.7 Total number of services in the parishes (1989-2005)
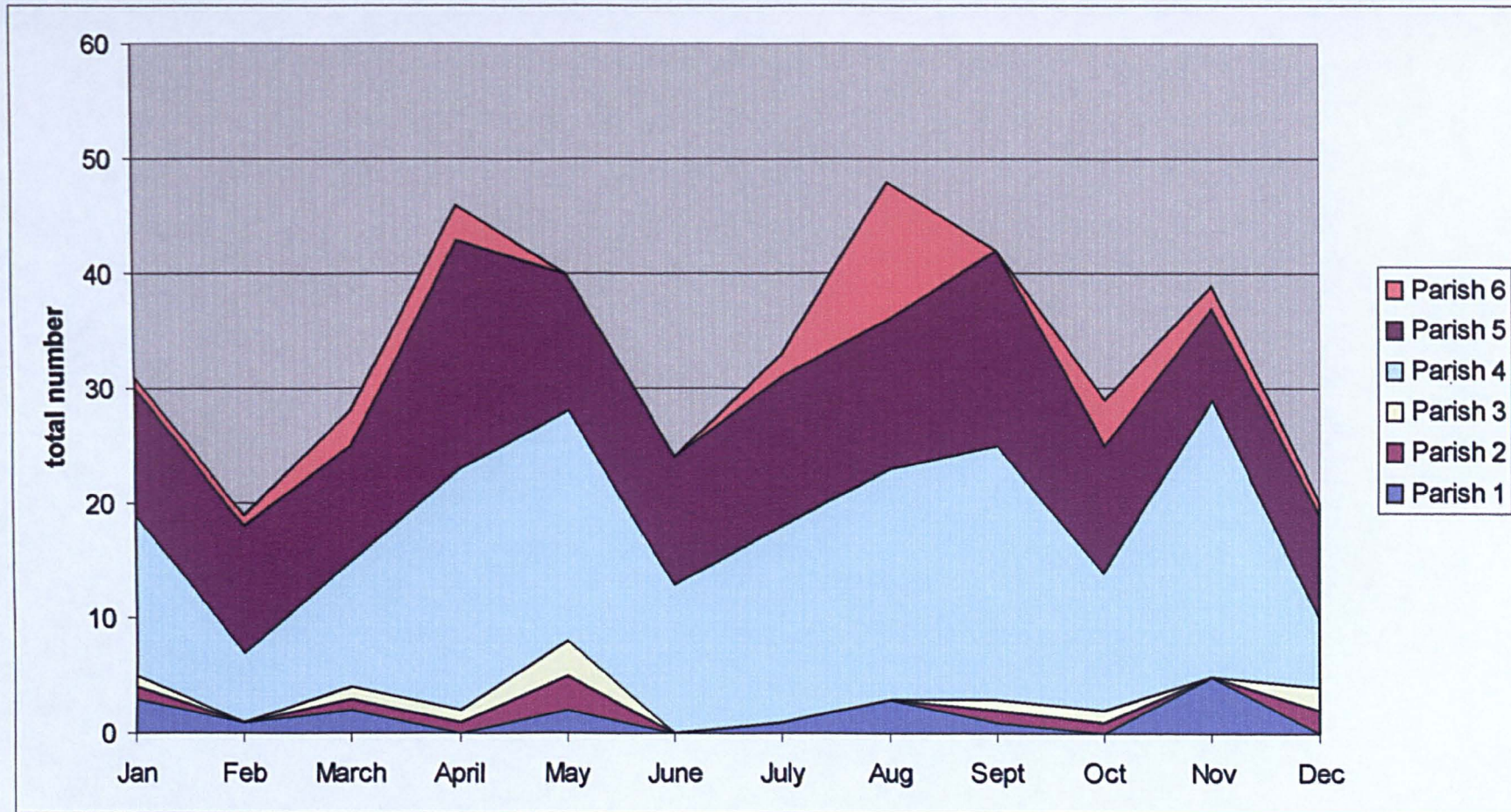
Two significant features should be noticed in this graph. Firstly, parishes 1-3 are the rural parishes, parishes 4-6 are urban: thus in terms of the total number of services there are far more in the urban areas than in the countryside. The validity of this as a generalized conclusion could be challenged based on the sample of the parishes being small, but the data suggests strong grounds for reconsideration of prevailing beliefs that extended communion is primarily a rural issue. In retrospect this might have been foreseen. Many country churches have communion once a fortnight with no mid week services. Many town churches have two communion services on a Sunday and at least one mid week communions. This leads to the conclusion that, if extended communion is used in towns, then there will be more occurrences of the service. This is what the data has shown. The thesis that extended communion is primarily a rural phenomenon is disproved by the data of this research.

Secondly, there are particular peaks in the aggregation of all the data from the churches, which are January, April/May, August/September, and November. These primarily correspond to clergy holidays, post-Christmas, post-Easter, summer, and autumn half term. The fact that these peaks occur across a range of parishes suggests that the most important factor for the use of these services is cover for holidays. This factor would seem to outweigh all other factors mentioned in the documentary analysis. This is another key finding of the research. What is shown is that within a narrative of decline in stipendiary clergy numbers, some of the remaining clergy are using extended communion to cover their holiday breaks.

Postscript

These are significant conclusions in understanding the uptake of these services and their inclusion in the life of the church. The findings of the research point to use in both urban and rural parishes, primarily for holiday cover, and more as a mid week service. The last two chapters analysed the research data as case

studies, the next three chapters will examine the evidence from a systematic perspective.

Chapter 11

Ministry

Introduction

This chapter begins the topical analysis of the empirical data in three key areas, ministry, liturgical practice, and ecclesiology, categories which emerged from the investigation of the General Synod debates (chapter 6 above). The aim of this chapter is to analyse and reflect on views expressed about the theology of ministry in the research data. Chapter 8 specified that three particular modes of discourse were important to analyse namely, themes, narratives and symbolic language. These will in part be used for subheadings in each of the next three chapters. Emergent issues are also significant, i.e. issues that arise from the analysis of the data suggesting further lines of theorization. One hypothesis developed in chapter 6 will be examined concerning the significance of the debate on lay presidency. Thus this chapter will examine the implicit theology of the parishes and reflect on that theology in light of a wider discussion of the theology of ministry.

The official introduction of extended communion in the Church of England implicitly introduced a new category of lay minister (see chapter 6) and thus a development of the theology of lay ministry, not least in allowing a function previously prohibited. On the one hand lay people may not preside at the eucharist, but on the other lay people may lead services of extended communion. What sort of lay ministry is this and how does it fit into a doctrine of ministry? Priesthood and lay ministry are problematic areas of theology for both the Church of England (Croft, 1999) and for the Roman Catholic Church (Hahnenberg, 2003). In both churches there is a lively debate about lay ministry, e.g. Fox (2002) and Greenwood (2002). Not surprisingly these issues were raised in the interviews.

Theme: a new category of minister

In the first interview conducted the vicar was clear that the introduction of extended communion had produced a new category of ministry:

I   Right... So the lay ministers are all LLMs?

V3   No. They're just lay people.

        I   OK.

V3   We could go deep into that, but we invented our own category of lay minister.

I   [OK

V3   [In consultation with, and with a covenant with, each of the parishes to accept their ministries.

I   Oh! Ooh!

V3   Which was declared, at the service of ho... confirmation before the bishop, under the rubric of the renewal of baptismal vows... So we invented a whole new category of minister *laughs.*

I   That's very interesting. I'll come back to it (lines 47-58).

The vicar was clear that a new category of minister had been created, a lay minister who had to be accepted by all the congregations. The case study reveals that this was not entirely successful. This extract also illustrates questions around the inauguration of that ministry. This is the only parish where it was done in a formal way by adding some prayers in the confirmation service (the one formal occasion when the bishop was to come to the parish). This occurred on St Nicholas Day 1998. A service for the formal inauguration of lay ministry is provided in the Roman Catholic Church in the *Book of Blessings* (ICEL, 1989). Such an arrangement is not provided for in the official forms of the Church of England.

In all the parishes studied the bishop was involved in authorising the ministry: officially each person who wishes to lead extended communion had to get a licence from the bishop (although LLMs seem to be licensed to lead the service they need the occasion to be authorized). However in less than half of

occurrences in the archdeaconry had this happened (see chapter 9), proving the hypothesis that many parishes do not follow the correct procedures as laid down in national policy. But this was not as straightforward as it seems. There appears to be no process of review and so WL5a had been working on a license provided many years before:

WL5a Umm. I was licensed by the Bishop of Reading, I can't remember the year, but quite a long time ago. Must be about 20 years ago. And I think probably the first time we had reserved sacrament in this church could have been fairly soon after that.

I   You were licensed as a what?

WL5a To assist with the chalice and to do... to use the reserved sacrament. I have no other qualifications you know, 'cos I'm not a Lay Reader or anything like that (lines 18-25).

It would be surprising if the bishop envisaged that such permission would last for 20 years and the records on the parish show that the present bishops are not aware that this permission had been granted. 20 years ago extended communion was a rare event, and documents have either not been properly archived or have been lost. The introduction of the new Church of England liturgy and House of Bishop's Guidelines presupposes a more coordinated administration of permission.

V3 in his comment 'we invented our own category of lay minister' anticipated in that parish a development that six years later the diocese was to adopt. The Diocese of Oxford in 2004 introduced an authorised 'Minister of Communion by Extension' with specific details of training requirements and methods of authorisation (Diocese of Oxford, n.d.-a). This is one of two authorised lay ministries in the Diocese. It has not attracted a large number into training (by 2006 12 people), partially because many of the people involved in this ministry are already Licensed Lay Ministers (Readers), some of whom, like permanent deacons in the Roman Catholic Church, have begun to see this as a key part of their ministry.

Narrative: fewer priests

The development of this lay ministry is connected in the interviews to the decline of stipendiary priests. This was clearly seen in some of the narratives. L1a sees this as a developing area:

L1a   Well I can see it, you know, really as becoming a necessity in a sense because of the... I mean the NSMs are more and more coming onto parochial life and the ordained ministry full time stipendiary, I see as, looking at Parish Shares and sort of quotas etc, the structure of each deanery that this, you know there are going to be fewer rather than more stipendiary priests and therefore it's going to mean that I imagine the Communion by Extension is going to be more widely used in the future. And I think if it's... if the people are prepared like we were with {vicar}, we had some instruction and training and it's quite acceptable I think (lines 147-155).

There is some confusion in this narrative but I think the point is that not withstanding the fact that some non-stipendiary ministers are becoming stipendiary there is still going to be a shortage. Lay ministry is perceived as developing in light of a stipendiary clergy shortage.

This is exacerbated by people's unwillingness to travel to church:

L7a   I think that it's going to have to be something that becomes much more commonplace because particularly in this area we are going to be faced either with using the laity a lot more or greatly reduced number of services simply because of the changes that are proposed within the team and the {name} Group, so we either have to travel to a service where there is an ordained priest to do it all, or we say it's... we'd much prefer to have a local service, presided over by... a lay person. And I personally think that the way of keeping your congregations is to do it that way, and not to try and make everybody move to wherever there's a priest (lines 120-128).

It should be noted that this is in a cluster of churches in a Team Ministry where it is already known that their team vicar will not be replaced when he moves on. The expectation is that lay people will have to preside at services to keep regular services going.

One of the bishops, covering for the vicar, illustrated the practice in a rural setting:

B1   Well I mean yesterday, for instance I er, at a Eucharist in {village} I consecrated 5 separate lots of Eucharist elements which were being taken out by the 2 lady deacons to other services in {name} yesterday.

I   Right.

B1   Holiday time.

I   Yes (lines 100-105).

In this parish there is diaconal ministry, but it could equally have been lay people and we have already seen that this could have been in an urban setting, as in say parish six. Reduction of clergy and issues of holiday cover are key aspects of the narrative.

Narrative: ministry teams

All of the parishes in the study have a ministry team. This is a significant change in Anglican modes of ministry. Various experts have been arguing for ministry teams in the Church of England, e.g. Bowden (1994), and Greenwood (2000), although recently some have warned of their dangers (Dawswell, 2003). The case studies show these teams have a variety of forms. Parish six was set up after the review as a 'lay led church':

WL6a The term they used in fact in the Review document was 'lay led church', which um, we struggled a bit to understand as a church council here, and I think it would be fair to say, on going back to try and get further clarification on what the authors of the document meant, they weren't entirely clear themselves what a 'lay led church might' look like. Um, but

were interested to see what might grow and evolve out of the dream (lines 27-32).

The church was already developing a lay team:

V6   we were already developing, under the previous Team Vicar for {church 1}, a strong lay team at {church 1}. {church 1}'s tradition was traditional Low Church really, 8 o'clock Communion from the Book of Common Prayer with 11 o'clock Matins and 6.30 Evensong, choral with a choir. But they'd been developing a Family Service at 10, which became, was... had a strong enough lay team that when the Team Vicar went it could continue with the lay team (lines 16-22).

The vicar theologised about this lay team and priestly ministry:

V6   I think that actually that last question raises it for me, in how much I felt that the lay team and I, we as a team, have shared in the priestly ministry of the Church in a sense, rather than me letting them take what I've consecrated and give it to other people but that I think it's made me feel that my priesthood isn't sort of exclusively mine, we share it. And I think that's been a strengthening thing in the ministry here. We've shared in the priestly ministry of the Church... Yes, I think that's one of the factors for me that's made it a good experience (lines 368-375).

This link with priesthood is a major issue. Here a priesthood of the lay team is discussed as an extension of the ministerial priesthood. It would seem to be an development of the *in loco Christi* theology of priestly ministry, where priestly ministry is seen to be representing Christ, particularly in the eucharist. This a christological model of ministry rather than pneumatological approach. In this parish the ministry team leads the church. Now from a Roman Catholic perspective, Daniel Donovan (1992) makes the connection between leadership and presidency essential:

> The separation of leadership of the community from presiding at the eucharist is a mistake that will eventually undermine Catholic ecclesiology. The leader of the eucharist must be the pastoral leader of the community and vice versa (p.53).

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Introducing a minister of extended communion who does not have that overall pastoral responsibility makes such a division, unless they are part of a team.

In parish three the lay team was inaugurated with a 'covenant' and publicly given the bishop's blessing. There were then expectations of meeting regularly to train and develop. But the covenant also was with the people so that they would acknowledge that these people were their ministers. It was important in this parish that all the churches recognised all the ministers and accepted their ministry.

The other parishes had more loose arrangements. In parish five there has been a mixture of lay ministry, the leadership of a warden cum sacristan working with members of the congregation who have become Readers. In this case a considerable amount of autonomy was given to the one Reader who helped set up the church plant. This person has run this plant for many years, but was not accepted for ordination, which left an established congregation with lay leadership, much as in parish six. This elicits the question of the relationship between leadership and ordination, and of the theology of the ministry team.

Like many dioceses Oxford has encouraged ministry teams (Diocese of Oxford, 2004). The document *Servant Leadership Teams* states:

> For too long, the Church has been dependent upon the clergy to provide ministerial services to (largely) passive lay 'consumers'. As Ephesians 4.13-16 notes, if the people of God, gathered into the Body of Christ, are to grow to maturity in Christ, all the baptised members of the church need to develop their gifts and use them interdependently. This includes leadership gifts. While it is expected that the clergy are called and gifted to lead, it is now crucially being recognised that lay people too, have the ability and the desire to serve the church in a leadership capacity, which may involve rather more than the practical leadership gifts which are expected of those who serve on PCCs etc. Laity preach, teach, do pastoral

care, serve as evangelists. In vacancies, they take responsibility for significant areas of a church's ministry, such as jointly with the bishop ensuring the church's well-being in terms of its worship, mission etc. As PCC members, they have a say in articulating the vision of the church and the way its finances are spent. Lay people co-ordinate services, house groups, and pastoral visiting teams. Indeed, in many churches, if you scratch the surface of its life, you will see most leadership functions, other than the sacramental ones, being performed by lay as well as ordained people. They may even have responsibility to lead church plants (pp. 2-3).

This is a major change in the practice of ministry and has theological ramifications. It would seem that this document argues for ministry teams that are a mixture of lay and ordained leaders. The theology is based in the pneumatology of gifts. But there is a presupposition that not all leaders in the church will be ordained. This contrasts with Donovan's comment above or the argument for ordaining *viri probati* (Lobinger, 1998, 2002), which implies that all the leaders will be ordained priest. The lay and ordained ministry team is a new innovation, and asks the question whether there is a coherent theology of the ministry team.

Symbolic language: the minister of extended communion

Little explicit symbolic language was used of the minister in attempts to develop the theology of ministry. WL1a saw himself as 'the servant of the local congregation' (line 155). V4 commented that one of the lay ministers called their role as 'doing mass in everything but name' (lines 212-213). The national expert talked of these laity as:

E   they were acting *in loco parentis* for the clergy who weren't there, really (lines 187-188).

This is much in the same way as V6 talking of extended priesthood. It would appear that while lay-leaders and laity have not theologized much about the nature of the ministry, some clergy have their own developing ideas.

Nevertheless, the attitudes of the ministers themselves are important, as this might be their starting point for future discussion of the theology of ministry. WL3a talked of the burden of the team working through the sabbatical of the vicar. At the end she said she was 'shattered'.

WL3a   I think that, yes, I think, well partly we had to do all the other things, like prepare a sermon, or just the everything that went with the service, um and I think we concentrated **extremely** hard and we, both of us that did it were very keen to get it right, as right as we could get, and we took the responsibility extremely seriously, further it was emotional, spiritual, everything, it just took a lot out of you, so we were shattered (*laughs*). And we did a lot of preparation for the other parts of the service as well, we got together for the lessons and things like that, so there was a lot going into the whole service (lines 116-123).

But there were also the benefits gained from this ministry. Two ministers talked of the privilege of leading communion by extension.

I   And how did you feel about, when you started to doing it, in what sort of would be the daily Masses?

WL4a   Um, well enormously privileged. I would say, um. *Hands in head* It seemed to be, in a sense, a little step further towards what I longed for, for a long time, to the priesthood (lines 72-76).

This was a very significant step in this person's life who has subsequently been made a priest. WL5a also commented on this privileged position, although in this case there has been no development in vocation, for WL5a remains a lay leader in the congregation.

Another significant symbolic dimension to the theology of ministry is around issues of gender. This has been raised in a number of ways. On one level there are those opposed to women priests who would not be happy with receiving extended communion if the consecrating priest was a woman. This arose in a workshop I was leading, which included a service of extended communion. I was questioned after my introduction to the service about the gender of the priest who

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had consecrated the elements, to check it was a man. The questioner would have withdrawn had it been a woman.

Gender was also raised in relation to the minister of extended communion. This may seem a surprise as women administering communion in church is common. However, there are pockets of resistance to this.

L3b   Um ,and some... just didn't like it because it was a lady I think, doing it. But then again the higher church ones accepted it because... it had already been consecrated by a man (lines 23-25).

It may be that a Holy Communion service with the male vicar leading and women distributing the sacrament will be acceptable, but a service of extended communion led by a woman was too much for some in the congregation. The problem is now compounded by the appointment of a woman vicar in the parish.

All of this implies a number of questions about the theology of ministry attached to the lay leaders and particularly to ministers of communion by extension. However, before any conclusion can be drawn further ministerial alternatives need to be explored, particularly forms of non-stipendiary ministry and lay presidency.

Alternative approaches: non-stipendiary ordained ministry

While in the Roman Catholic Church communion from the reserved sacrament has been said to be a liturgical answer to a ministry question, and reform of the ministry is not on the cards, this could not be said of Anglicanism. The Church of England and in it the Diocese of Oxford has been developing new expressions of ministry. Falling numbers of stipendiary ministers has been supplemented by rising numbers of non-stipendiary ministers, see Mantle (2000), and ordained local ministers, see Torry and Heskins (2006). This is one answer to a clergy shortage: raise up more priests.

The latest statistics on ministry from the Church of England indicate the following situation (The Archbishop's Council, 2004a), figure 11.1. This of course excludes diocesan recognised ministries such as minister of extended communion.

Figure 11.1: National Statistics of Church of England ministries

Comparison of licensed ministries 2002

Dignitaries	370	Parochial stipendiary	8,712
Non-parochial stipendiary	399	Non-stipendiary clergy	2,091
Chaplains, etc.	1,159	Active retired ordained	4,624
Layworkers and Church Army evangelists	351	Licensed readers	8,384
		Readers with permission to officiate and active emeriti	1,900
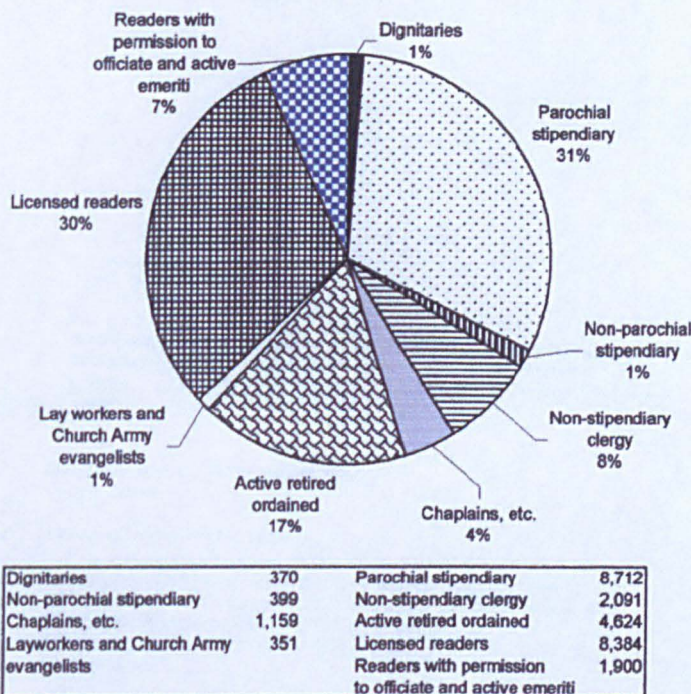
The largest groups of ministers are the parochial clergy (31%), closely followed by Licensed Readers (30%). The latter often lead communion by extension. The active retired then form the next largest group who in the case of parish three covered for Holy Communion in the vacancy. Non-stipendiary form 8% of ministers and they include the ordained local ministry. The 2002 statistics did not break down this category into any more detail.

The Diocese of Oxford has been vigorously encouraging non-stipendiary ministry. A course for training this ministry was set up in 1972 and the first NSMs were ordained in 1975. The course advocates a change in the theology of ministry (St Albans and Oxford Ministry Course, 1994):

> Victorian perceptions that identify the church wholly with its clergy, perpetuated by the notion that the local church is a group of people gathered round the stipendiary minister (p. 4).

30% of the ministers in the diocese are now NSM, which is significantly more than the national average of 8%. The diocese says (Oxford Diocesan Publications Ltd, 2005):

> For some, the primary focus for their ministry is the parish, both church and neighbourhood...For other NSMs... the primary focus is their workplace (p.339).

This was the first phase of moving away from a sole reliance on stipendiary ministry. However, some felt that this was more like a scaled-down model of stipendiary training and began to argue a more radical vision.

Towards the end of the 1970's a discussion in the diocese arose over local presbyteral ministry. This would give the local community an opportunity to nominate candidates, and the ministry would be locally based and locally exercised. They would operate within a team. A diocesan report recommended Local Ordained Ministry in 1984. In 1989 a deanery synod motion from north Buckinghamshire argued for Local Ordained Ministry. In 1994 four people were selected for training and they were ordained as Local Non Stipendiary Ministers in 1997 (Diocese of Oxford, 1997). Part of the theology of Ordained Local Ministry is expressed in the following later statement (Diocese of Oxford, n.d.-b):

> We assert that the role of the OLM priest in the local church, pre-eminently visible and symbolically expressed in eucharistic presidency, is expressing the truth that the local church is a full and complete expression of the universal catholic church (p. 7).

This report rejects the notion of various grades of priesthood and centres priesthood in presidency, but not necessarily community leadership, except in a team context. There are now 60 OLMs in the diocese, 13 in the archdeaconry of Berkshire.

OLM received national recognition in the report *Strangers in the Wings* (Advisory Board of Ministry, 1998). It is now a recognised category of priest in two-thirds of the dioceses nationally. The categories of ministers are now being relabelled around 'deployability' rather than stipendiary status, but the priest who is locally deployable in their parish is still a recognised category and corresponds to OLM. Lobinger (1998, 2002) has argued for a similar ministry in the Roman Catholic Church, but the idea of ordaining community leaders, *viri probati*, has not found sufficient episcopal approval to encourage Vatican consideration. So the contrast is of the Church of England expanding its categories and training for ministry, while the Roman Catholic Church sticks to its traditional pattern.

A tabulation of the parishes in the study reveals the present provision of ministry (2005):

Figure 11.2: Ministry provision in the parishes studied

Parish	Stipendiary	Retired	NSM	OLM	Reader
1		1 (house for duty)			1
2	1		1		2
3	1	1			1
4	2		2		
5	1			1 (in training)	3
6 (all the Team)	2		1	2	1

Emerging from this research data is the conclusion that the relatively small numbers of services of communion by extension in the archdeaconry has been

significantly influenced by the diocesan policy of encouraging NSMs and OLMs. Also noteworthy in the case studies is that the urban parishes have OLMs. Once again what is often seen as primarily a rural requirement is also revealed to be also an urban occurrence. Nevertheless, despite the large proportion of NSMs and OLMs in the diocese, 30% compared to the national average of 7%, it still does not completely eliminate the need for extended communion.

Alternative approaches: lay presidency

One hotly debated alternative to clergy shortage in the Anglicanism (and in other churches) is to allow lay people to preside at the eucharist. This was partly discussed in chapter six. To reiterate this is particularly championed by the Diocese of Sydney (Diocese of Sydney, 2004). But it has also has both its protagonists in England (Lloyd, 1977) and its opponents (Green, 1994). David Smethurst (1984) concluded his M Phil thesis by suggesting Readers be allowed to preside at the eucharist as this would solve the problem of falling numbers of stipendiary clergy. We have already seen in chapter six that the House of Bishops (1997) produced a report on presidency as a part of the debate on extended communion, rejecting lay presidency. This might have seemed to have closed the question, but evidence from the research suggests this is not the case.

Lay presidency is still raised as an issue in the Church of England (Harper, 2006). One of the hypotheses of this research developed in chapter ten was, that 'lay presidency is no longer an issue of significance in the parishes', and so one of the interview questions was about attitudes to this possibility. This subject was raised in 21 interviews. It was often put in the form of asking what would be your attitude be to the situation, if Readers were officially authorised to preside at the eucharist, the most likely scenario in the Church of England. The results were of interest and significance.

Figure 11.3: Attitudes to lay presidency in the interviews

	In favour	Against	Unsure
Clergy	3	4	3
Lay leaders	4	1	0
Laity	3	3	0

These interviews indicate significant support for lay presidency. The clergy included a number who questioned the basis of the issue. One who was in favour put it this way:

I   Would you be happy with, I mean if it was nationally approved, with the sort of Lay Presidency thing, like if all the Readers were suddenly told you can preside at the Eucharist?

V2   Preside at the Eucharist. At one level I don't think I'd have a problem with it, because I don't think, um I don't think Lay Presidency will ever happen in that sense because I think as soon as you authorise somebody, to me it's almost like another form of ordination. The problem is, I know in some Free Church circles I've worked round as a Youth Worker, I wouldn't be happy where it's just you know, well who's going to come up and um, break the bread today, I think there has to be a process of discernment, selection, training and approval (lines 286-295).

This issue of authorisation was also raised by some who were against it.

B2   You know, so I mean for instance, I can't understand what the issue is. Nobody's saying that people shouldn't be trained and authorised. What is a priest but somebody who's trained and authorised. Now I think I'd want to say a bit more than that but I wouldn't want to say less than that and nobody else wants to say less than that so, I mean, I think for some people there are other things which are driving this agenda. Um, and I think, I'm a great believer... I mean I do believe um... in the priesthood as a gift to the Church... the ordained priesthood. What I'm not... I believe in priesthood I don't believe in 'vicarhood' and I think we need to express priesthood in a different way; which is why I'm in favour of Ordained Local Ministry (lines 104-113).

So some clergy see ordination as the symbol of authorisation. This made the clergy answers difficult to classify. It should however be stated that support for lay presidency did not divide clearly on churchmanship lines. People were in favour and against from different positions within the church.

What is of importance is the support of the lay leaders. The only one who was against lay presidency was in training for ordained ministry. Of the other four, three were licensed Readers, and the other was one of the lay leaders of the 'lay led church'. One of them put it this way:

WL1a but personally, um...ye... I don't have any problem with a group of Christians actually gathering and breaking bread in the Lord's name, theologically, I don't have any problem with that at all.

I What, you mean even without a priest?

WL1a No. I don't think so. But of course I'm also a member of the Church of England so I have to abide by, by the principles by which the Church of England operates (lines 156-152).

This was seen to be following the example of the New Testament. A similar approach was developed by another minister:

WL6a Personally? No, entirely. I'm entirely comfortable with it because I guess my understanding of what we're doing is that we are entirely following our Lord's command to break bread when we meet together to share as fellowship of his body on earth and so I personally would be entirely comfortable with that. But, I know that there would be people in this church, even with the experience we've had so far, there'd be people in this church who wouldn't be and I'd want to respect that and for any change to be done very gently (lines 346-352).

The laity that commented they were in favour of lay presidency also noted that there would certainly be other laity who would be against it.

What is surprising is that, as the Church of England has a shortage of presbyters, there is no particular call to ordination directed to the Readers, who might seem a natural recruiting ground. This call and an appropriate scheme of

training might enable a relatively simple transfer to ordained ministry, which may persuade more of them to be ordained. There appears to be a significant organizational reluctance for this approach.

The evidence from this research disproves the thesis that lay presidency is no longer an issue of significance in the parishes. Perhaps it is because the House of Bishops' report has not filtered down to the level of ministers in the parish, while the discussion of the issue by Sydney and others continues to be in the church press.

Conclusions

The theology of priesthood in general and lay ministry in particular is a complex area. Donovan (1992) contrasted the pneumatological and christological approaches to ministry. This tension can be seen in the discussion above between diocesan pneumatological approaches and a local theology of extended priesthood. Croft (1999) included lay ministries as charisms along side the three-fold ordering of the church in diaconal, presbyteral and episcopal ministry. This he represented in a diagram (p.39) as in figure 11.4.

Figure 11.4 Croft's model of ministry
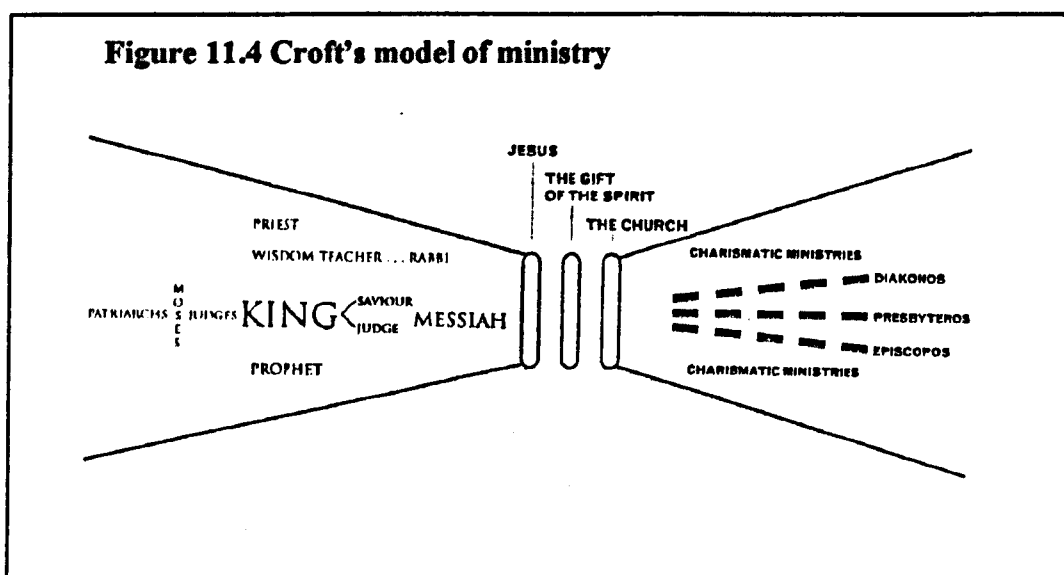
This figure indicates Old Testament models of ministry that are transformed by Jesus and the Spirit to distinctive New Testament forms. These include the ordered ministries and the charismatic ministries. He does not, however, go into any depth on the relationship between (lay) charismatic ministries and the ordered ministries, neither does he root ministry in baptism. These are key theological issues.

Hahnenberg (2003) wants to root all ministry and ministries in baptismal calling. He wants to define various callings by factors such as regularity of use and how public the ministries are. He then suggests various methods of appropriate liturgical recognition. He too represents his view with a helpful diagram (p. 204), as in figure 11.5.

Figure 11.4 Hahnenberg's model of ministry

Leadership of Communities   Ordination to Bishop or Presbyter

Leadership of Areas of Ministry   Ordination to Deacon or Official Installation

Occasional Public Ministries   Commissioning Blessing

General Christian Ministry   Baptism

Reality of Ministry   **Ideal Liturgical Recognition**
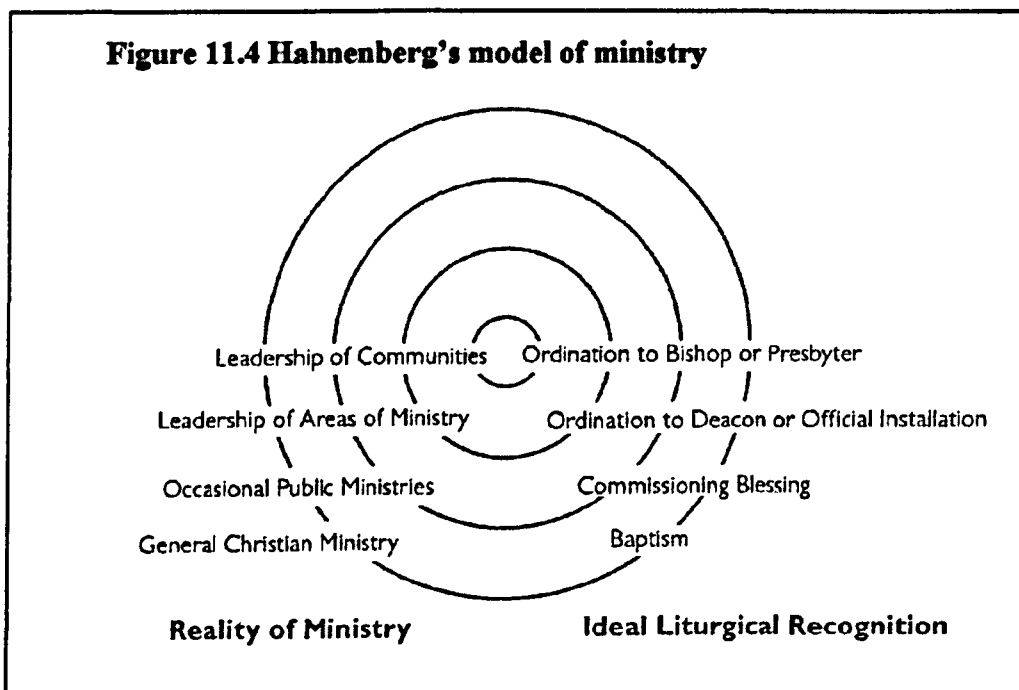
While this would appear to be fairly close to the vision of the Diocese of Oxford's *Servant Leadership Team* in the end it would seem that only the ordained ministry is the leadership of the church. Bowden (1994) argues that teams reflect a Pauline

model, where the stipendiary represents apostolic travelling ministry, and OLMs are local elders who work with laity in local churches. This is perhaps the closest to a theological approach to ministry teams, but as a new phenomenon there is still much theologizing to do. The Scriptures provide diverse models of ministry. The early church developed a doctrine of ministry from presbyter to priest. Theological clarity today is required on the relationship of ordination and leadership.

Of particular interest is the priestly element of the layperson, who is a Minister of Communion by Extension. The Roman Catholic language of 'Sunday Celebrations in the absence of the Priest' has already been criticised. There are three elements of priesthood in the Sunday assembly: firstly the high priesthood of Christ, calling the assembly; then, the priesthood of the baptised, gathering together; finally the ministerial priesthood, giving order to the gathering. The Roman Catholic language is in danger of making the ministerial priesthood appear the most important and essential element. This would be very questionable and seem to negate any assembly that gathers for a ministry of the Word. If there is no ordained presbyter, there will still be some ministerial ordering. Two interviewees talked of an extended priesthood or vicar-hood in extended communion. Is this the way forward for a theology of the ministry team?

The priest is seen to act *in loco Christi*. This is particularly true in presiding at the eucharist. In the narrative of institution the priest takes on the role of reciting the words of Christ. It could be argued that this also happens in baptism with the performative formula 'I baptize you in the name...' By emphasising the presence of Christ throughout the service the ordering by the presbyter could be seen to be *in loco Christi* beyond the eucharistic prayer. ARCIC (1982) asserts the ministerial priesthood as:

> not an extension of the common Christian priesthood but belongs to another realm of the gifts of the Spirit. (p.36)

Baptism Eucharist and Ministry (WCC, 1982) on the other hand talks in a more functional language:

> Ordained ministers are related, as are all Christians, both to the priesthood
> of Christ, and to the priesthood of the Church. But they may appropriately
> be called priests because they fulfil a particular priestly service (p. 23).

There would seem to be a gradation of priestly activity in eucharistic ministry:

- Presidency at the eucharist, reserved to the ministerial priesthood.
- Distribution of the eucharist, under supervision of the priest.
- Taking communion to the sick in their homes, perhaps by lay teams.
- Public distribution of consecrated elements by Ministers of Communion by Extension.

All these activities are under the High Priest in the priesthood of the baptised. Ministers of extended communion are seen to be participating in priesthood by extension because they look as if they share in some functions of eucharistic presidency. However, Mason (1992, 2002) reminds us of priestly actions in normal life e.g., blessing, forgiving, and the ministry of the priesthood of the baptised in BEM is seen as a ministry of sacrifice and intercession. This may be a sufficient basis for saying that the Minister of Communion by Extension exercises a priestly ministry but as a function of the priesthood of the whole people of God, without being an extension of the ministerial priesthood. Perhaps what needs to be recognised more is the priestly ministry of the assembly. Nevertheless, the danger is that Ministers of Communion by Extension become perceived as connected to the ministerial priesthood. This very complex issue is raised by the introduction of extended communion.

This chapter then has critically examined issues of ministry in relationship to extended communion. The Church has implicitly developed a new category of lay minister. The theology of this is not clear and a local theology of participation in the ministerial priesthood was uncovered and debated. Previous methodological discussion indicated that local theology was unsystematic. However, implicit development of the theology of ministerial priesthood has been identified in this

chapter. The place of local theology will be debated later in the thesis. The hypothesis that lay presidency is not a significant issue was disproved and empirical data suggested that the proportion of non-stipendiary ministers in the diocese reduces the need for extended communion. The next chapter will examine the second of the key themes, that of liturgical practice.

Chapter 12

Liturgical practice

Introduction

This chapter examines the second theme that emerged from the study of the denominations, and in particular the Church of England, and interconnects with the empirical research. The study of the development of the Church of England text occurred in chapter six. The enquiry as to how it is used in practice is found in this chapter. Policy makers, in this case the General Synod with the House of Bishops and the Liturgical Commission, consitute one level of decision-making. Practitioners and members of the congregation are at two further levels. Chapter eight referred to the concept of ordinary theology (Astley, 2002) and of local theology (Schreiter, 1985), these are levels of theological discussion, which are often more diffuse and inchoate.

Chapter six uncovered assumptions made by policy makers, and developed them as hypotheses; those concerning liturgical practice will be tested in this chapter, sometimes indicated in the sub-heading, hypothesis. A considerable body of data was collected from the parishes, particularly in the interviews, on the liturgical aspects of extended communion. Questions were asked about attitudes to the recently produced services, how people were using them, training, and seeing if there were alternatives. The introduction of an authorised liturgy and its 'reading' by practitioners is one of the key areas of examination in this enquiry. As in the previous chapter, themes, narratives and symbolic language are central to the analysis.

Theme: attitudes to the new service

There were some people with a strongly positive attitude to extended communion. This included a bishop who said about the development:

I was relaxed about it, I didn't feel that it was a huge problem or obstacle
that somehow had to be overcome (B1 lines 36-37).

A vicar who said of the service:

I think it's good. I think it's rather long, it seems to be rather longer than
the ordinary service in parts. But I think it fits well and the feedback from
the congregation is that it's very obvious that we're doing something
different. It couldn't be mistaken for a, for a normal celebration. And I
think that's a benefit (V1 lines 125-129).

A worship leader said:

I think that when a church wants to have a Eucharistic service and there
aren't enough clergy to go around it's the only way to do it. I have no
problems with it myself, I'm happy to lead it in my current situation
(WL7a lines 107-109).

Finally a voice from the laity:

I think the introduction is quite useful to know when the service was held,
that the bread and wine were consecrated, so that I think is very good.
And I think as a whole it is a fairly good structure in the sense that it
follows quite closely to a normal Eucharist service that we are used to
anyway (L1a lines 114-117).

And another voice from the laity:

It was not what I expected from my background, but given the Family
Service, the culture in this church I thought it fitted very well (L6b lines
31-33).

So there were certainly a number of people who appreciated the service,
understood its nature and welcomed it. They welcomed an official liturgy
produced by the church.

There were, however, a large number of criticisms of the present text.
Some people seemed not to like the service at all:

I have to say it wasn't well received, I was the churchwarden at the time,
and, um ... which is why we haven't had one since (L3a lines 14-15).

Others seemed to accept it grudgingly calling it 'second best' (V4 line 437), a 'stop gap' (V3 line 186), 'grudging' (V3 line 114), 'confusing' (V2 line 171) because it is too like a eucharist, and potentially 'damaging' (B2 line 179), as it reduces the eucharistic action to reception. It is notable that these negative attitudes are primarily from ordained leaders who don't lead the service. This indicates that hierarchical position influences perception of the service.

The interviews uncovered a number of particular criticisms of the service. Some people including incumbents, were not aware that there was an official service. This is in part because it is not in the main Sunday Service Book of Common Worship. Those who used the service had a number of criticisms; that the provision was 'starchy'(WL6a line 299), 'too long' (WL6a line 299), and 'thin' (WL3a line 219). The reading and prayer before communion were seen by some as inadequate, although nobody seems to have explored the provision for thanksgiving during the intercessions. WL4a felt that the ordering of the service was faulty and that the flow of the service was interrupted (lines 108-114). There were requests for greater clarity about the lavabo, consumption of the elements, cleansing the vessels, and keeping the registers. All of these are problematic in the context of laity leading a service based on the eucharist. Priests receive training for presiding at the eucharist, lay leaders of extended communion may not have received such training. Some lay leaders are critical that the rubrics make assumptions about the pre-understanding of the leader based on foreknowledge of eucharistic practice as a priest.

Some people interviewed began leading extended communion before the official service was produced. Thus some of the above attitudes were in contrast and reaction to what they had produced themselves. One church had produced a eucharistic meditation to replace the eucharistic prayer.

> We take bread
> symbol of labour – exploited, degraged,
> symbol of life.

We will break the bread

because Christ, the source of life, was broken for the exploited and

downtrodden.

We take wine,

symbol of blood, spilt in war and conflict,

symbol of new life.

We will drink the wine

because Christ, the peace of the world,

was killed by violence.

Now bread and wine are before us,

the memory of our meals,

our working, our talking;

the story which shapes us,

the grieving and the pain,

the seeking and the loving.

And we give thanks

for all that holds us together in our humanity;

that binds us to all who live and have lived,

who have cried and are crying,

who haunger and are thirsty,

who pine for justice,

and who hold out for the teim that is coming.

This gave the service a different atmosphere to the reading and prayer in Common

Worship. Its theology was, however, questioned by the next incumbent. Another

church had deliberately written a service of Morning Prayer with Communion.

This was felt to be better as it did not confuse the service with Holy Communion.

We have already seen, in chapter nine, this has been one of the approaches of the

Roman Catholic Church. Some had used the preface of the eucharistic prayer

from the Alternative Service Book and stopped at the sanctus, before going on to the Lord's Prayer. While this could be confusing as an approach, it had led some to have had experience of a richer provision of thanksgiving than is in the current provision. Chapter six showed that richer material was produced in an earlier draft of the Synodical texts. The official text narrowed the provision, which was read locally by some as constricting. However, the parishes had loyally begun to use the official liturgy. This was seen as, helping to 'keep the daily eucharist going' (WL4a line 141), better than having morning prayer as a mid week service (L5a), and one person commented on the spiritual benefit that she found from the service (L4a).

The range of contexts in which the services are now used probably goes beyond that envisaged by the producers of the service. As we have seen from the parish case studies, the service was predominately used for mid-week services, both in churches and residential homes for the elderly. However, it was also used on the major festivals of Christmas and Easter. Indeed in one place the worship leader added extended communion to an Easter Family Service to fulfil the requirement to receive communion on this feast of feasts. In parish six this has been the main service for Easter day, since 2001. While the rubrics allow the use of the service on holy days and major festivals, this has not been as clearly thought out as in the Canadian Roman Catholic provision, where we saw caution about reservation over the Triduum (National Liturgy Office, 1995). Concrete cases from the Diocese of Oxford reveled expanding use of the service. The use on Palm Sunday raised questions about the blessing of palms by laity. The same issues might arise on Candlemas or on Ash Wednesday. Harvest might seem a more neutral time, but the research data revealed that the laity thought the present provision does not connect well to the material for Family Services. This was particularly seen as a problem in parish six. There was even a service of baptism and extended communion in another archdeaconry conducted by a deacon. The contexts in which the service is being used are breaking the presuppositions of its writers.

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Chapter six proposed to test the hypothesis that the current liturgy is satisfactory for the present situation. The empirical findings challenge this point. While some parishes think the current liturgy is adequate, there are others that question the content and flow of the present service. Once the context of the service is extended to link it to liturgical seasons or Family Services the liturgical provision begins to look narrow and thin. The assumptions of the Synod make the liturgy increasingly inadequate for the parish context, the horizon of Synod (to borrow from Gadamer) being narrower than the parish horizon.

Symbolic language for the service

In interview people used a number of symbolic expressions, with which to discuss the service and articulate their understanding of it. This language is the root of local theology and is mapped in figure 12.1.

Figure 12.1 Liturgy – symbolic language
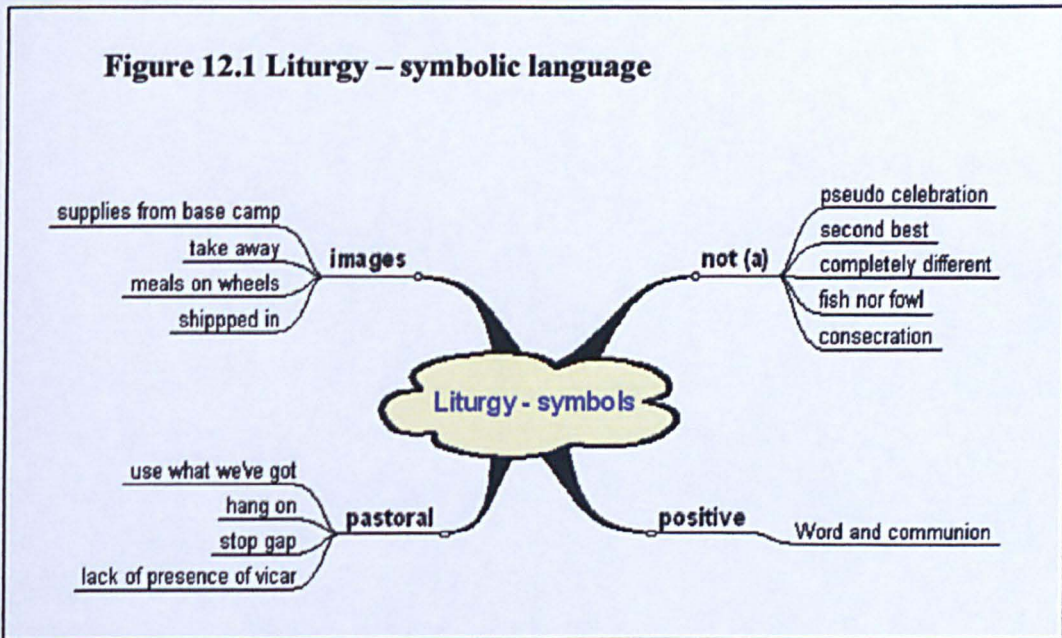
This map of the symbolic language used includes both positive and negative images. Some people discussed the service in negative terms, which can be seen in the 'not (a)' branch. In these the approach seems to be: starting with the eucharist, how do I envisage this service? This is then seen in the negative terms, a pseudo celebration, second best, not fish nor fowl, not a consecration. Even the more positive image in this set 'not completely different' starts from the root question of comparison with the eucharist. As the liturgy of communion by extension relates to the eucharist, an interpretative trajectory is given which might foster negative images. The positive use of 'word and communion' I want to examine later in the chapter.

The 'images' branch seems to start from taking the service as it is and then connecting it imaginatively to common experience. This is a more positive type of ordinary theology than the 'not a' approach. Each sub branch relates to food experiences where it may be cooked and or supplied from elsewhere. In many ways these are reasonable images for a service where the elements are pre-consecrated and the sending congregation is named. Nobody used the wedding cake analogy, where pieces of the wedding cake used to be sent to guests who were unable to come, which seems to have a more celebratory feel to it.

The pastoral images relate closely to the ongoing pastoral reorganization discussed in chapter 10. However the comment about the 'lack of presence of the vicar' was a striking phrase by one person (L6a, line 104-105). This of course is the essence of the service. It was here that this Anglican discourse approached the Roman Catholic 'in the absence of a priest'. It is, however, another negatively based image speaking of how the service is less than a eucharist and showing the dependence in the church on the ordained priest. In one way this is a service that is breaking out of that mould.

As an example of local theology, these images are rather undeveloped. In the absence of Biblical and traditional models people have taken their own

primary symbolism of eating and the eucharist, and connected it to occasions where food is eaten separate from its cooking. Current experience is filling the gaps in reading the text.

Alternative narrative: agape

Chapter 19 (and figure 10.4) introduced a variety of services instead of the eucharist. What emerged from the empirical research was a significant number of churches using some kind of agape; indeed four of the six parishes in the study had used such services (figure 12.2). This is an alternative discourse that is neglected in pastoral liturgical literature and policy-making. There is no official provision for a non eucharistic agape. Parishes are producing a thicker reading than policy makers at this point and as such this forms a significant finding of the empirical research. Chapter ten included a substantial discussion of the agape, particularly related to the Methodist tradition. This section will develop the discussion with a focus on the narratives of the use of the agape in the six parishes.

Figure 12.2 The agape in the parishes

Parish	Agape
Parish 2	Maundy Thursday service with the Methodists: a 'Passover' type of agape. Blessed bread at a Palm Sunday ecumenical Family Service
Parish 3	A regular monthly service in a village
Parish 5	An experimentation in a Free Church / Anglican church plant
Parish 6	Used in Family Services and in preparation of children for communion

All of these services are non-eucharistic. Lloyd emphasised the desirability of the eucharistic agape (Lloyd, 1986). This was expressed in the official provision *Lent Holy Week Easter* (Church of England, 1984, 1986). However, the non-eucharistic agape was noted in the chapter on the Methodist

Church and in chapter six the agape in Anglicanism. This research discovered its use in a variety of creative contexts.

Parish two used it to share fellowship with Methodists and others. In this quite lengthy quote two contexts of agape practice are identified:

I   Um...you haven't had here or anywhere else experience of Agape type things?

V2   Oh, yes.

I   Where you clearly had non-Eucharistic things, of worship with food, if you see what I mean.

V2   Yes. Well we do that with the Methodists. We have a Methodist Covenant here.

I   Oh right.

V2   Yes. It's not an official LEP or anything like that because we felt that was just more red tape, but we do have a covenant and I work very closely with the Methodist minister. So we've had Agape suppers both in our church and St {name} where we did a Maundy Thursday.

I   [Oh right.

V2   And in the Methodist church.

I   And these were non-Eucharistic?

V2   They were non-Eucharistic but there was the breaking of bread and passing wine around. And then on Palm Sunday we pinch... we give out blessed bread on the Orthodox tradition.

I   [Yes.

V2   Because it's a big ecumenical service and, you know, there's us, the Methodists, occasionally some Roman Catholics, the Sally Army join in and everything like that. My predecessor had always done a Communion service, which precluded all sorts of people. Um, so we felt we'd do Palm Sunday as a Family Service but we wanted to do something that enabled people to share.

I   So you have a non-Eucharistic service with blessed bread.

V2   Yes.

I   OK.

V2   All the bread is brought to the... it sorts of sits in baskets, a bit like how they do it in Taizé, if you've been to Taizé.

I   Mm.

V2   So all this French bread is all in baskets and it's kept on the altar, and then we say a prayer of blessing like a food blessing, a grace, and then that's shared out amongst the congregation and people are invited to take some of the bread home for somebody if they want. And that's been very well received, and the first year we did it the Captain of the Sally Army who was with us, he came up to Graham who's the Methodist Minister at the end and he said that was the first time in I think eight years that he'd ever felt fully included in that service, because I don't think they have communion, they wouldn't do that, but they were quite happy to share bread in that understanding (lines 451-489).

Here two ecumenical contexts have led to a reconsideration of practice and the use of two alternative approaches to an agape. These uses have similarities to the Hilgay experiments discussed in chapter ten.

Parish three has an agape in a small village. The worship leader mentioned this as I left the interview and thus it was not on tape, but I was able to subsequently pick up the issue in the interview with the layperson at that particular village.

I   Tell me something about this Agape thing that you do here. Just anything about it.

L3b   Um.. well we used to have a family service... and that sort of died really and we couldn't get the youngsters to come. And then {vicar} thought it might be a good idea to have, you know if you have food with something it usually entices people to come.

I   Yes.

L3b	So we thought we'd try it and it must have been going for at least 3 years now I should think, or 2½ years.
I	So how often is this service?
L3b	Once a month. We don't have in the summer, July and August, but otherwise we have it basically once a month on the last Sunday and it's very informal. We have a table with a cross and a candle on, and we all sit round it on chairs... And we have the gospel reading and some prayers and we sing 2 or 3 songs, but sort of half way through we have coffee and croissants and orange juice. The children can come and sort of, play as they want to, or draw or, depending how old they are. And then we discuss the reading over the coffee and the croissants and that, and then we finish it and we all, we have the intercessional type prayers, but we all each light a candle and say 'we light this candle for so and so or for something', or pray for, whatever. But you don't have to take part if you don't want to. I mean, if you want to light a candle you can, if you don't want to light a candle you needn't, you can just sit there and listen.
I	Yes, yes, it sounds interesting.
L3b	And that... it's that part of the Agape that sort of really gets to me, the prayer and the... lighting a candle to somebody or other.
I	Oh good, right, fine.
L3b	I mean sometimes we have up to twenty, other times we have about eight and, you know it just all depends. And {reader} normally takes that... but we can, you know one of us can lead it if {reader} not there.
I	OK. And you've led it at times, have you?
L3b	Once (lines 91-122).

This is a rather simple and informal approach. It is similar to the Moravian Lovefeast provision (The British Province of the Moravian Church, 1960). This has proved to be very effective in this church.

The situation in parish five has already been discussed, where the agape in the church plant was seen as suspicious, and has been superseded by a service of

Holy Communion. Parish six used the agape in the Family Service and in preparing children for Holy Communion.

WL6a Um, the... we've tried the Agape meal within the family worship.

I Uhm.

WL6a And that was lovely, actually, I mean that felt very nice and people were very positive about that afterwards. Um, and that was very much done as effectively as the activity, the sort of sermon slot talk within our normal family worship, um, because obviously you don't need to use any particular form of words to do an Agape meal. So that was great. I think the reason for not doing that at Easter was the need for more structure, more liturgy for some of the older members of the church.

I Yes. The Agape meal have you done more than once, I mean is that right?

WL6a Yes. We've used that as a sort of teaching aid on, I suppose probably three occasions. Two in the main, two in the family service, and then also we did that with the children we were preparing for communion. We prepared a group of children for communion before confirmation.

I Mm.

WL6a And um, we used the Agape meal idea there. It's not something that's in our, our sort of month by month.

I [It's an occasion.

WL6a It's an occasion. And it's used to teach about communion (lines 353-376). This is in complete contrast to the church plant in parish five. Both are Family Service based but an agape succeeded in one parish but failed in another.

A significant find of the empirical research was the practice of the agape. This was not a major feature at General Synod discussion, and is an alternative narrative under the surface of Anglican discourse. While there are difficulties in generalizing from qualitative data (Kirk and Miller, 1986), it emerged that parishes are using agapes for a variety of situations and in most cases this is a valued part of the worship. The Primitive Methodist Conference of 1841 in Reading managed to include Holy Communion, Love-feasts, and extended

communion. In a climate of change because of pastoral reorganisation the research demonstrates that parish practice is broader than policy discourse.

Hypothesis: training

The House of Bishops' Guidelines mention the importance of training in preparation for extended communion (The Archbishops' Council, 2001):

> the minister who leads the service must have a more specific authority from the bishop, and be appropriately trained (§2, p. 32).

Similar concerns exist in the Roman Catholic Church (Rosier, 2002). The bishops have not specified in any way the meaning of appropriate training. Questions were asked in the interviews about training to test the hypothesis that many leaders of the service have received no training.

Most of the people involved had some sort of training. WL1a said:

WL1a   The training has been, {vicar} does a sort of journeyman apprentice deal. I mean {vicar} has sort of talked me through this sort of thing, OK? (lines 44-45).

WL2a made a similar comment:

I   And you said you had some training, what sort of training did you have when you started doing this.

WL2a   Well, only with {incumbent}, only at a very local level.

I   So that meant what? Looking through a service and walking through it type of thing?

WL2a   That's right.

I   But not much more than that.

WL2a   Not much more than that.

I   Not much more than that, OK (lines 60-68).

This story could be repeated in most of the parishes. Clearly clergy in the first instance trained the leaders by going through the service with them and then having a dry run.

A few people had received further training. WL2b mentioned going to a workshop at the Reader's conference one year. WL6a mentioned a day conference run by the diocese and reading a Grove Book on the subject, the only one to mention this wider training. Parish three had seen ongoing training as an essential part of the ministry team and integral to continuing in membership of the team.

In one parish the people selected to lead extended communion were already experienced in leading worship and so seem to have had no training:

I   What training have you had for this?

WL5a I haven't had any really, apart from being a regular constant communicant in this church um... I'm sacristan, I've been church warden twice, but um... I was licensed to be a chalice assistant forty years ago, probably very early on (lines 75-79).

At least one other leader said they received no training.

WL2a talked about the need to train the congregation.

WL2a Well I feel here that people need to be initiated on Communion by Extension, um, there hasn't been any adverse response to it, but I don't think people are aware, the congregation are aware, of what is exactly going on at this stage, and obviously they treat it with a little fear and trepidation when they see a lay person um, administering the sacraments when they're obviously not ordained. But I do think it would be more beneficial if there could be a greater emphasis on what Communion by Extension is and what it means (lines 34-40).

Parish one by contrast had a catechetical process by discussion in the PCC and had information sheets available at the back of the church for people to take away (personal observation 2004).

The bishops have not made clear what is 'adequate'. Receiving no training at all would fall outside the guideline; individual diocese must make decisions based on the policy statement. The Diocese of Oxford requires that Ministers of Communion by Extension participate in a training process demonstrating

knowledge and skills in leading this worship. The hypothesis that many leaders of the service have received no training is thrown into question by the research. While there was no training in a few cases, most leaders received some degree of training. What emerges from the research is a question of the catechesis of the laity. This seems to be a neglected area in the view of at least one practitioner and sharply contrasts with the Roman Catholic approach (Rosier, 2002).

Hypothesis: care of the elements

Rev'd Patience Purchas in the General Synod debate raised the issue of the way the consecrated elements were cared for. She talked of having experienced the consecrated elements put in plastic containers (The General Synod of the Church of England, 1997):

> One of the lowest points in my ministry was one August Sunday morning
> some years ago...I arrived in good time and went into the vestry, as one
> does, to find the churchwarden busy filling the chalice from a large
> lemonade bottle labelled "consecrated wine". Beside her was a
> Tupperware box labelled "consecrated wafers"... I asked God's
> forgiveness and did the best I could do in the circumstances (pp. 397-398).

Chapter six noted that the care of the elements formed a part of the Notes for the service, not least because of this anecdote in the Synod debate. Thus a hypothesis to test was developed; that the elements are always transported correctly.

Some of the churches in the study had an aumbry in which reserved sacrament was kept. This then continued to be used for extended communion. One church, parish six, was introducing an aumbry to facilitate communion to the sick and extended communion. Other churches simply used the safes that were available. The parishes seemed fairly pragmatic about their practice, using what was available.

WL3a described how in parish three sick communion sets were used to transport the consecrated elements:

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WL3a Um, we, we, I was somebody who went to the 8 o'clock communion where they were consecrated or else we met with the vicar, retired priest, who was doing the service, at the end of the service and received them from him, and I remember that sometimes if the arrangements fitted he would actually bring them to the church where we were, and hand them over there.

I   And he used a home communion set or something like that?

WL3a Yes. We did (lines 70-76).

This would appear to be the norm in most of the parishes, many of them using pre-existing home communion sets for extended communion. One place developed their own vessels specifically for extended communion.

E   So we said we'd try and time the services so that there was a bit of continuity and a bit of dignity, so we actually commissioned some silver cup and chalice, you know.

I   Like communion, um, sick communion sets?

E   Rather like sick communion sets but rather bigger than that.

I   Yes.

E   And er, we had a lady who was very generous and was keen and she was a silversmith, and she actually made a couple of boxes for us.

I   Oh, really?

E   Yes, so we actually had personalised sets (lines 71-80).

Sets are now made commercially for extended communion.

However, my observation in one parish was that they were using the plastic containers disliked by Rev'd Purchas. These were not designed for the job but adapted from the kitchen, with stuck on labels saying 'reserved sacrament' and kept in the safe. If this is deemed inappropriate, then this proves the thesis that not all parishes are using seemly containers for the consecrated elements.

Theme: Word and Communion

It was noted above that one phrase was used in a positive way to talk about the service. This theme emerged from the literature and empirical research but is not integral to much Church of England discourse. D1, a Roman Catholic permanent deacon, who was experienced in leading these services, and who had received specific training for this, introduced the theme of Word and Communion. He made a fundamentally important point in ways of looking at the service:

D1　To me it's a distinct service in its own right, it's not making do because we haven't, we can't have Mass. I think the way it's structured, if you structure it round the Word rather than... thinking of it as a second best to Mass, than it gives it a different flavour (lines 140-143).

He goes on to explain that laity are not allowed to preach in the Roman Catholic Church so deacons have an important ministry of the Word in preaching. Later he picks up this theme again:

D1　Well I think there could be problems with it if... as I say if it was looked upon as second best. I think it's got to be presented in such a way that it's not second best it's something completely different to Mass (lines 162-164).

Here he is repeating what is fundamental to his conception of the service.

Many of the modern services of extended communion including the official Church of England provision are based on the eucharist. The service is an adaptation of the normal eucharistic liturgy, with the distribution of communion. This is the way of 'second best to the mass'. D1 is starting from a different point, the Service of the Word. Here is a rich service of Word and prayers adequate in its own right. Vatican II mentioned Bible Services (*Sacrosanctum concilium* §35:4, and *Inter Oecumenici* §37-39). Services of the Word are common in both Anglican and Methodist worship, where lay preachers form a vital part of ministry of the churches. Recently the Church of England has made extensive resources for Services of the Word (The Archbishop's Council, 2002). The Service of the Word is the starting point for D1's thinking about extended

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communion. To this rich liturgy is added communion from the reserved sacrament, or in the Anglican language communion extended from a sister community. D1 is making an important hermeneutical point that the starting point for the understanding liturgy leads to very different attitudes to the service, as indicated in figure 12.3.

Figure 12.3 Starting points for extended communion

Mass ──────────▶ less than the Mass ───▶ second best

Service of Word──────▶ more than the Word───▶ rich addition
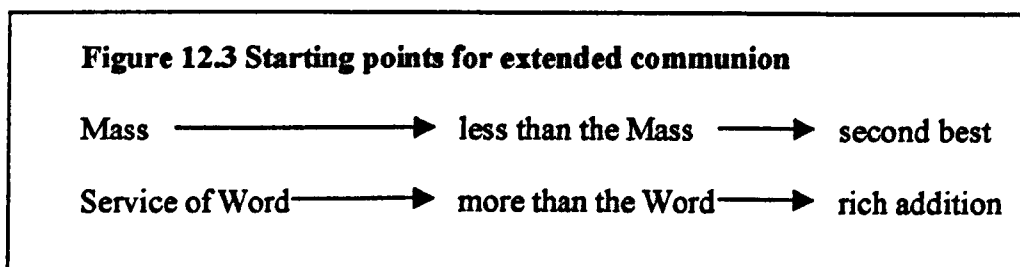
This fundamental difference may lead to different liturgical resources e.g. a bare bones provision, as in the Church of England, in comparison with the rich provision in the Roman Catholic Church in Canada. It is also a significant point in the liturgical theology of the service. The increasing variety of uses of this service demonstrated in the research is stretched in the second best approach but welcomed in a rich addition approach.

Conclusion

As might be expected there were a variety of attitudes to the service of extended communion from hostility to a warm welcome. Some people were very pleased with the liturgy but many had critical comments. Chapter six developed a number of hypotheses; the conclusions on the liturgy specifically can now be summarized. The findings of the research challenge the hypothesis that the current service is adequate. They also find that training is variable and in some cases nonexistent, nor are the consecrated elements always kept in a seemly manner. In these areas there is now proven a significant gap between policy formulation and parish practice.

In terms of local theology, many symbols were uncovered in interview about the service, most rather negative in the context of a service seen as 'not a eucharist'. However, from the research emerged a positive approach of Word and Communion, which forms a contrasting starting point challenging the liturgical theology of the writers of the service. Also of particular significance in the parish narratives was the agape, an alternative story neglected at the policy-making level of the church.

Chapter eight introduced the idea of local theology criticising those who have introduced the idea for lack of testing of the concept in the field. This chapter is one of three allowing the voice of that theology to be heard through the research. It has uncovered a rich vein of that local theology in which symbolic language and alternative narrative are particularly important. However, local theology is by its nature rather unsystematic, as it is the operational interpretation of the text by practitioners at the local level. Nevertheless listening to its voice Anglican liturgical theology is challenged concerning its starting point. Presuppositional horizons of use are shown to be inadequate, and parish practice seen to have emergent creativity not yet realised at 'higher' levels.

Chapter two raised questions of liturgical hermeneutics, these have been central to this chapter. Zimmerman (1988) and Nichols (1996) gave a privileged priority to the text and were criticised for ignoring real liturgical events. Hoffman (1987) encouraged the study of the 'text' as the living worship of the congregation. Garrigan (2004) studied the difference between the texts and their performance. This research develops this methodological debate with the inclusion of the performers of the 'text' as integral to a developing liturgical theology. The exact method in which this is included will be returned to the final concluding chapter.

Chapter 13

Ecclesiology

Introduction

This is the last chapter in the empirical research section of the thesis (part three). This part has analysed the research data as case studies and as topics. This chapter addresses the final topic, ecclesiology. It will be followed by a concluding chapter of the qualitative research, part three of the thesis. This chapter continues the approach of testing hypotheses developed in chapter six and of evaluating local theology, the voices from the parishes, in an inductive theological methodology. As in the other chapters, such theology is identified in themes, narratives and symbolic language, all a part of the thick text of the parishes.

Perhaps the most underdeveloped area of debate about extended communion in the wider literature is the ecclesiological dimension. There was a great shift in the Church of England in the latter half of the last century to making the eucharist the central service. This began in the parish communion movement (Gray, 1986). It was then taken up by evangelicals (Buchanan, 1992b). The slogan of the movement was 'The Lord's Service for the Lord's People on the Lord's Day'. This contains an implicit theology that the eucharist makes the church. How extended communion fits into the ecclesiological context is problematic and something that is being worked out on the ground in attitudes and symbolic language.

Symbolic language: ecclesiology

The interviews included language that had ecclesiological dimensions, mapped in figure 13.1.

Figure 13.1 Ecclesiological language

plugging gaps   one big church

worshipping community

holding body together   **Ecclesiology**

parish unit

parasite   lay led church
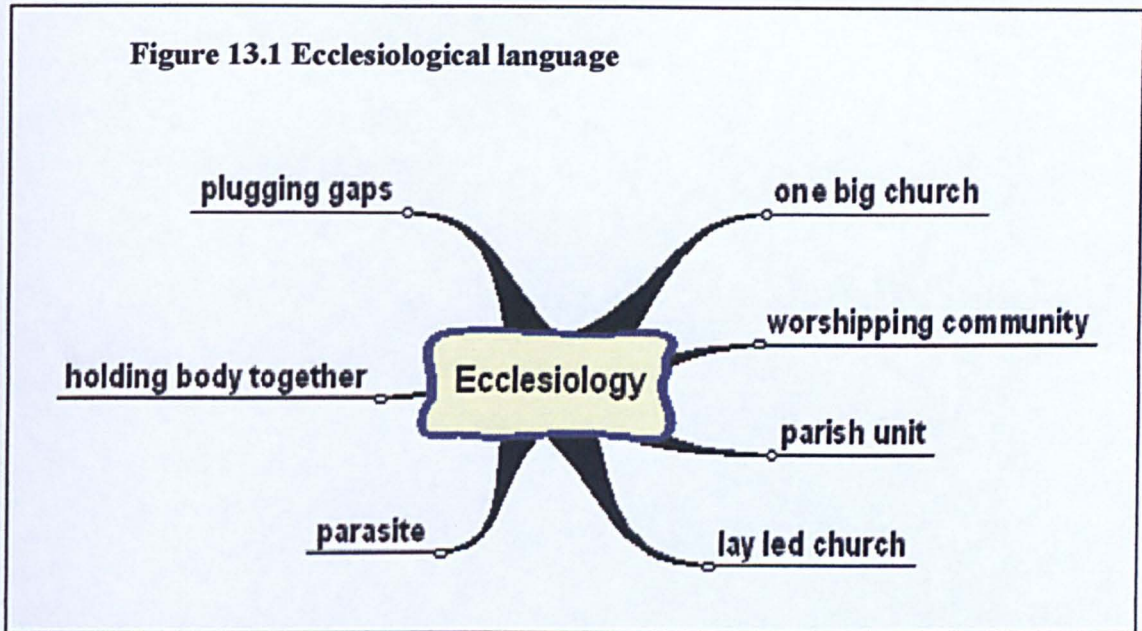
In figure 13.1 the branches on the right are a grouping of the more positive words or phrases and the branches on the left are those that are more negative. They reveal something of the conception of the church and of a church in transition.

Looking at the positive phrases, the church and community have links to Biblical roots. The Church, εκκλησια, is the people that are called out, a New Testament term for the people of God, and is often confused today with the building. Community, κοινωνια, is similarly a New Testament term that emphasises the fellowship element with one another and with God. Parish, however, is a later term, which has changed in meaning from what was a diocese to a smaller unit (Schillebeeckx, 1985).

The ecclesiological discourse in parish six concerned developing a thriving 'lay led church' (the fourth branch on the right). The genius (Hopewell, 1987) of this congregation was to be this ecclesiology. It was to have much less stipendiary input than was traditionally conceived. Nevertheless the implication was that this continues as a full expression of the church catholic in its context.

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WL5b, who was working in a similar context, raised the interconnection of lay led churches with extended communion:

WL5b Um... And I suppose I'm still working through this whole idea of reserved
       sacrament and what we do at relation. Whether it's, you're saying we're
       part of the one big church and that magic bread and wine's been taken
       down there and we're part of that, or whether it's not a true expression of
       how we are as church (lines 79-83).

Clearly this person sees ecclesiological problems. This is the tension of a daughter church. The church plant is 11 years old but does not have an ordained member in the congregation and as such is reliant on the vicar coming for eucharist. Does this mean that this is not an independent congregation and how does it develop into ecclesial maturity? There are significant practical questions of how to express oneself as 'as church'. These are both in relation to its self-identity, a new plant that has included Free Church people, and in relation to others, in this case the 'mother' parish church.

       David Smethurst saw extended communion as strengthening the parish as a unit.

E   This actually has every piece of, every wafer if you use a wafer, has
       somebody's name on it and it's actually for somebody in the parish unit
       who you know and for whom you can pray and who the congregation can
       be linked with through prayer and support and concern. It isn't just
       taglagged out to somebody. So I think that Extended Communion actually
       in this context is a very personal, um, you know pretty well who's going to
       be there, who will receive it, and so when congregation actually say 'go in
       peace to love and serve the Lord' they're actually committing themselves
       to the people to whom they're going within the same parish unit.

I   So in your – I'll just try and tease this out a bit – in your theology of this,
       so to speak, what I hear you just saying is that the community, the parish,
       is the important thing rather than the consecration of the elements.

E   Yes, yes I do, yes. I think it's right that it should be done properly, and

         done with dignity and under proper authority and I count it a great

         privilege to do that. But it actually serves the needs of the wider

         community (lines 367-381).

In Smethurst's theology, consecration is for a particular community, here the

president knows who will be at the service of extended communion and so the act

is seen to be strengthening the bonds of unity in the communion of the parish.

This is a very positive ecclesiology of extended communion. It particularly works

because this is happening in one parish, which already has some sort of

community links. As we have seen above the strength of those links in many

cases was questioned in the General Synod debate, and later we shall see some

reservations in the interviews.

         The bishops raised questions of community and extended communion.

One hoped that in receiving extended communion people would view themselves

as part of a wider community:

B1   I've never received communion by it I don't think, in that way. But I

         think I would want to have an image in my mind of the worshipping

         community, which I knew or at least felt connected with somehow as

         being the root of what is happening (lines 188-191).

While that might be true, the danger is that people concentrate on 'making my

communion' and thus reinforce an individualistic path. By contrast another bishop

saw eucharistic community as essential and believed that this is not fulfilled by

communion by extension:

B2   I have a strong eucharistically based spirituality and indeed ecclesiology,

         so I do believe it's very important that the Eucharist is at the heart of

         Christian worship and Christian community, I think it does need to be the

         Eucharist, not Communion by Extension (lines 55-58).

Even where there is positive language there may become hesitancy about what is

happening. There were others interviews with a more definitely negative

approach.

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This bishop developed his concern about the present situation:

B2   Communion by Extension as a very acceptable pragmatic way of plugging gaps in the timetable if I can put it as crudely as that, with our existing pattern. But no, I don't see it as part of the strategic way forward, I think it actually lets us off the hook of asking ourselves the harder questions of what kind of a Church we're supposed to be (lines 71-75).

Not the way forward, but a way of 'keeping the ship afloat'. One vicar put it this way:

V3   People don't do theology but they say no, as an expedient to hold the whole body together fine, but as an institutionalized way, No. No we are not going to do it (lines 202-204).

The narrative of decline in the interview is based on two metaphors, a sinking ship and a body falling apart. In both cases pragmatism is seen to allow extended communion but there is no enthusiasm for this as a way forward. One person used an even more negative term:

I   The expression you cited, the expression that a house group should always have extended communion, what ecclesiological community have you got there?

V4   Well as I say you've got a parasite of the parish church, haven't you? (lines 152-155).

This phrase 'a parasite' was also used, in the context of discussing the place of house groups (line 133). This is a vividly negative term but it is used because of the belief that the parish communion is the expression of the church. Any extended communion community is derivative of that and relies on that for its life. Even those whose wording is more positive do not have any greater vision for those communities relying on extended communion.

Narrative: community boundaries

One way to tease out understandings of extended communion particularly on the ecclesiological level is to explore boundaries of acceptance as to where the

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consecrated elements should come from. One question was, as a *reductio ad absurdum*, the time when a diocese is having a clergy conference over a weekend. Do the parishes all have matins or could a bishop celebrate communion and the one celebration be extended over the whole diocese?

People had particular boundaries concerning the origin of the consecrated elements but these boundaries are based in differing theologies. One person's problem was based in logistical issues:

I   Would it make a difference if you had to go outside the benefice to collect the communion?

WL2b   I think logistically yes, it could be, because the day that I was doing it at {village 5} I was taking a service at {village 4} first and then up to {village 5}. There was no time between the {village 4} service and the {village 5} one. The same with {village 6} if I was there. So therefore I had to go to {the village} first and collect it, then to {village 4}, and then whiz from {village 4} up to there for 11 o'clock.

I   Yes, yes.

WL2b   So yes, I think that could be difficult. If it was conveyed somehow or other from a nearby parish beforehand, apart from making an enquiry of the tradition or the churchmanship of that particular parish or church, um... in essence no, that would be... I could follow that and hopefully it would be accepted (lines 238-251).

The logistical problems are clear although there is a sad element about this: the vicar whizzing around in the country has been replaced by the lay leader doing the same. This is in part because it takes many part-time lay people to replace one full time person. There is also in this narrative a church party issue, one of the few times that this was advanced in the research.

Another view was that going outside the benefice would be problematic to some but not to others.

I   Is there anything about connection? If your retired priest had moved then you would have to be going outside the benefice all the time.

WL3a We would.

I   Would that make a difference?

WL3a I don't know. It wouldn't to me theologically.

I   Yes.

WL3a I thought we'd got to go outside the benefice on Palm Sunday, to collect the elements, and I gathered just from vibes that one or two people said, oh dear not sure about this. It didn't worry me (lines 301-310).

This confirms a certain amount of nervousness about the practice and its greater acceptability within recognised boundaries. This comes back to David Smethurst seeing that there is a possibility of extended communion expressing benefice unity.

One churchwarden said that to her the consecration was the most important thing:

L2a   Um...Well I would have thought if it had been properly blessed and everything else, if someone's you know, brought it, or, the only thing that would concern me is if I'm taking the service (lines 195-197).

Belief in consecration is probably the reason for much acceptance of going outside the parish or benefice. Indeed one person admitted that they had already had travelled to the other end of the deanery to collect consecrated elements:

I   In another scenario, which is about 'how would feel about if', if you were down to one priest of course, and er... she was away on holiday, er... would it make a difference if the elements had to be collected from say {town} and brought in?

L1b   Well that's easy to answer, the answer is no because it's already happened, fairly recently (lines 176-181).

L1b   Um we were running short of, at least we thought we would run short so to be safe we asked {name} at {place} as Area Dean (lines 183-185).

L1b   Whether he would consecrate, which he did and we have a bottle of wine with a label saying 'this was consecrated by the {area dean} at such a service...'

I   So you actually got it from {place}.

L1b   Yes

I   Which is the other side of {town}.

L1b   That's right.

I   So within the Deanery is OK?

L1b   I think so, yes I think so.

I   OK. I suppose what I'm teasing out is, you know, is there a boundary of how far would it be before you...

L1b   No, I think within the Deanery, I mean we know {area dean}, {area dean} has celebrated here (lines 186- 198).
        We rang up the Area Dean, or you know Church Wardens did and said you know, what do we do, and he said well I'll do it for you.

I   What if you ended having to cross the deanery boundary to somebody you didn't know, would that make a difference?

L1b   No, to me it wouldn't, no not at all, no (lines 206-210).

Again the narrative has a clear understanding of consecration and this seems to be the most important aspect of the issue to this person.

The narratives above have all been from country parishes. This is because the urban parishes all used reservation in various ways. Parish four and parish five reserved the sacrament in their churches, and used it both for communion of the sick and extended communion. Parish six reserved the elements in the safe when extended communion was needed and the clergy team could make sure that a priest was available to lead a eucharist on the same day as the service of extended communion (or as close as possible). Urban extension was mostly in time. Here is a striking rural / urban contrast, which makes the whole question of the supply of elements less of an issue in urban areas. Whereas reservation occurs in some the country parishes, it does not happen in each individual church. In the major

benefices studied the elements had to be transported from one congregation to another. Rural extension may be both in time and space. Thus boundaries around the origin and transportation of the elements became particularly important.

As a coda to this discussion, it is clear that extended communion was an irregular service, thus there were also regular celebrations of the eucharist in the parishes. Therfore the thesis from chapter six that some congregations are now dependent on extended communion is not proven. The one exception would appear to be in parish six where the 10 o'clock Easter day congregation has begun to have extended communion as its norm.

The doctrine of consecration would seem to be the major reason that makes extended communion acceptable to those interviewed. There are indications that some people have feelings about a real connection, and that the benefice should be the limit of extension, but this seems to be overridden by an objective theology of consecration. Thus is created a hierarchy of beliefs around the issue, that consecration is more important than fellowship. This is not a required position; the reverse would have to be said of the Primitive Methodist Conference in Reading. But it is the present position expressed in the interviews.

Theme: Fresh expressions

There has been a growing interest in church planting and 'fresh expressions' of church in the Church of England. The research parishes include one church that has a 'church plant' of 11 years standing. Thus this has been an issue for a long period e.g. Hopkins (1988). This new congregation would have been created around the time of the first official report on church planting of the Church of England *Breaking New Ground* (Board of Mission, 1994). Where the planting team was of laity, the suggestion was that communion by extension might be used (p.35). George Lings (1994) added the comment that some dioceses hoped that the leaders would become OLM. This had not happened in this case study causing some pastoral difficulties and experimentation with an agape for a period. In

collecting examples of new forms of church Lings has provided case studies of two churches in the diocese. One is in Thame with a number of church plants in new estates (Lings, 2000), and one in Bracknell which is a youth congregation (Lings, 1999b). Meanwhile some churches began to experiment with cell church (Potter, 2001), and talk began of 'emerging church' (Cray, 2002). This reached a climax in the report *Mission-shaped Church* (Mission and Public Affairs, 2004).

With fresh expressions of church in the air it is not surprising that two people discussed the relation of this to extended communion (noting that the 1994 report had commented positively on the possibility). One vicar said:

V4   ... we have, ..., {curates name} particularly is in touch with the whole alternate worship, these are her words, alt worship, emerging forms of being church, new ways of being church, church planting networks.

I   Mm

V4   I don't know if you know her, her own background was house church,

I   Right

V4   Which she has moved away from quite consciously, they ended up worshipping in {place name}, um and now she's really really, and she finds... that network almost totally evangelical, (lines 427-435) she's a passionate evangelist, but she wants to do it from a Catholic ecclesiology.

I   yea

V4   So that's what we were teasing out, is, what are we actually saying about by doing communion in people's homes and do we express it better by, um it was an open debate, and I was trying to say what I said to you, extended communion is always second best (lines 438-444).

This conversation was about fresh expressions of church and the provision of the eucharist. It would appear that the curate advocated extended communion in a positive way, while the vicar had a more reserved position. This parallels the 1994 report which suggested the use of

extended communion in contrast with the 2004 report which says (Mission and Public Affairs, 2004):

A mission initiative that does not have an authorized practice of baptism and the celebration of the Eucharist is not yet a 'church' as Anglicans understand it.

Churches are eucharistic communities... The Eucharist lies at he heart of Christian life... New expressions of church may raise practical difficulties about authorized ministry, but, if they are to endure, they must celebrate the Eucharist (p. 101).

Extended communion was not suggested as an option in this later document.

The place of extended communion in relation to this development of church understanding was set out by one of the bishops in this way:

B2   I'm certainly not against Communion by Extension, but my anxiety is that the churches that are needing to transition into a new way of being the Church and a new way of expressing what it is to be Church, to become much more of a lay community, er... is this the best thing for them to be doing? Well yes, if it's the only way they're going to get communion, but no, if it means that the only way they can imagine being Church is to cling as best they can to a way of worshipping which feels secure and familiar (lines 32-39).

This would seem to argue against the parish communion movement. He would not be the only person to do so (Cray, 2002):

I believe the Church of England's wholesale buying into the Parish Communion movement has robbed us of missionary flexibility and made our regular services excluding to the enquirer (p.22).

The bishop (B2) therefore asks people to consider the best way for them to be church and be eucharistic community. In the context of that discussion extended communion is seen as a potential barrier to change.

While the bishop was happy with the occasional service, in a more radical situation of eucharistic famine he commented:

B2   But when you reach a point where you say, we can no longer have this Eucharist in our church, that is simply no longer possible, then I think the way forward strategically is for the church to consider what would be an authentic expression of our being a worshipping community? Now, my own view, that would be that Communion by Extension is probably not the most authentic expression of their being a worshipping community, it needs to be something else (lines 49-55).

His vision of looking forward in this more extreme context was:

B2   another way which became authentic for them which would either be through the discernment of, you know is there somebody from within our community that is called to the priesthood, so strategically therefore we're looking at Ministry Teams, OLM ministry, as strategically the way forward (lines 61-64).

This vision fits more with the local ministry movement (Greenwood, 1999), although fresh expression material rarely interacts with this movement.

In a more radical lay-led cell structure his vision was:

B2   If it is to be an entirely lay-led worshipping community expressing its life in that way, how is it going to be linked in, Eucharistically with the wider Church of which it's a part? And therefore the strategic question is, how do a number of cellular lay led expressions of church have a common Eucharistic life? Now for me, those two, strategically they're the two ways forward, and Communion by Extension actually doesn't fit into either of them (lines 65-70).

In distinguishing the cell level and the celebration level of the larger group, sacramental activity would seem to be suggested to be at the larger level. This somewhat conflicts with Potter (2001) on cell theory 'To have a single cell is to have an authentic church' (p.11). However this is an unresolved issue, as Lings (1999a) acknowledges with his typology of responses to sacramental provision in

cell churches. In this diocese a number of approaches have been taken up. One church has agapes in the cell and Holy Communion in the celebration group. Another has approached the diocese to have services of extended communion in the cells, which would be against the Guidelines. The future is not clear, and is emerging in a pluriform way.

Theme: doctrine of economy

One bishop justified extended communion by the doctrine of economy.

B3   I can see how with fewer clergy, how this can be, will become a more widespread practice, and I think we have to somehow get the message across that this should not become normative, and that this is an interim arrangement and some thing to do with the doctrine of economy. That it's – it is better than not being not being able to receive communion at all and it is a way of the Eucharistic community being together and receiving communion. But that we really need to think more deeply about ordaining people to celebrate the Eucharist and encouraging local vocations (lines 227-234).

This doctrine of economy is an Orthodox view and has been defined in this way (Moss, 1965).

The Orthodox Communion modifies... strictness by the principle of economy

The Church, according to this principle, is the steward (οίκονομος) of the mysteries of God and can make that valid which is in itself invalid if necessary for the salvation of souls. But this principle is severely limited.

While this limitation may be true, it has not stopped one Orthodox saying (Archbishop Michael (Shaheen), 1977):

Thank God for the Doctrine of Economy in Orthodoxy that provides shelter and some flexibility.

This bishop (B3) is probably right in justifying extended communion by economy not least by analogy to the Orthodox tradition of the Liturgy of the Presanctified.

Economy is similar to the pragmatic argument mentioned by a number of people above or the discussion of responding to need. However, the research uncovered at least one case of need and / or economy that has lasted for over 25 years. David Smethurst gave the story of the beginnings in Ulverston.

E   When I arrived in {town} I had to close a big parish church, a thousand seater, and we did that and that was behind us, but the result of that was we used three separate altar tables in the parish church, which was a big thousand seater again. And, one of our ladies said well, you know, we extend from the main altar and then we take little teams out to the two side altars, um, what is there to prevent us doing that but going further, and going to St {name}, St {name}, St {name} and so on. And we thought that was probably quite a good idea, and we said what will we call it? And she said well, it's extending the communion so we'll call it Extended Communion. And to the best of my knowledge that's actually, when the phrase was coined.

I   So that was in '78?

E   That was '79... well '78... um '78/'79 it would be. So we took it to the Archdeacon who was {name}, who was a very – he was a South African – he went on to be Bishop of {place}, but he was a great archdeacon, good theologian. And he said, he couldn't see any objection theologically, and he would convince the bishop, which he did. And the bishop reluctantly, {name}, went along with it and said as long as you've been trained and authorised, we will do it as a short term experiment in {town} and see how it goes. So that's what we did. And in the Easter of '79, the very first, {name} came on Palm Sunday and laid hands on everybody (lines 37-56).

The significant point here is that it originated as a short-term experiment. It might be said that it was successful and so has continued. Continued it certainly has for the parish continues to have services of extended communion to the present day (Parish of Ulverston, 2003). Was a short-term experiment supposed to evolve into something else? Here, as elsewhere, this research discovers unforeseen consequences in the decisions making process.

The fundamental question here is when does an experiment, or something that is interim, become a norm? Bishop 2 wanted to suggest that more than a few times a year was acceptable, but not beyond that. The Guidelines from the House of Bishops are there to inhibit this practice becoming a norm for a community. However, when examples can be found of this happening for over 20 years, it would seem that it has become a norm. Only more focused monitoring of the situation with a questioning of ministerial provision will encourage communities to look more seriously at the health of their congregation.

Theme: Eucharistic ecclesiology

George Carey said (Board of Mission, 1994)

> Our Anglican understanding of the church is deeply rooted in episcopal
> leadership and parochial structure (p.3).

This is one ecclesiology that might oversee and operate extended communion and can be seen as a presupposition in the House of Bishops' Guidelines.

Another approach to ecclesiology for Anglicans is found in Article XIX of the 39 Articles:

> The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men [and
> women], in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments
> are duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that
> of necessity are requisite to the same.

This might seem to give an Anglican definition of a congregation from which to judge extended communion. One complication in this is the meaning of *coetus fidelium*, congregation of the faithful. Cray (2002) says that the congregation here is the diocese. He is following Avis (2000) in his interpretation, who argues that the article refers to:

> A 'particular' church, which for the English Reformers meant a national
> church made up of dioceses (p.77).

In doing so he admits that *coetus* is 'virtually a synonym' of *congregatio*, which corresponds to *ekklesia* (p.77). But *ekklesia* refers primarily to two levels, the universal church (e.g. Eph 1: 22-23), and individual congregations (e.g. Galatians 1: 2). The New Testament writers tend to talk of churches when referring to a region (Galatia or Macedonia) and a church when referring to a town. One exception to that is Acts 9: 31 when the church singular is used for the church in Judea, Galilee and Samaria. Certainly earlier commentators on the article viewed it as referring to the congregation and church universal (Griffith Thomas, 1930, 1979). This would bring us back to the congregational level and so to ask: what is the ecclesiological dimension of a service of extended communion?

A number of those interviewed stressed various understandings of eucharistic community.

B3   Well here, because we're such a Eucharistically centred church, and people really wouldn't think that they were being Anglican or it wasn't proper church unless they went to communion on a Sunday so, rather than having Matins or Family Services we would normally have Communion by Extension (lines 63-66).

Another bishop said:

B2   I have a strong eucharistically based spirituality and indeed ecclesiology, so I do believe it's very important that the Eucharist is at the heart of Christian worship and Christian community, I think it does need to be the Eucharist, not Communion by Extension (lines 55-58).

Curiously eucharistically centred here leads to two different conclusions, one to accepting communion by extension and another to rejecting it.

Of significance in the second quotation above is the phrase 'eucharistic ecclesiology'. This has been a strand in recent ecclesiological thinking. Henri de Lubac talked of 'the eucharist makes the church' in the sense that in the eucharist the people of God feed on their Saviour and in that action are realised as the church (McPartlan, 1993). This rests in part on the comment of Augustine, 'He

[Christ] himself is the Body whose food those who eat it become' (p. 78). This is complemented in the work of Zizioulas (2001) who says, 'She [the Church] is what she is by becoming again and again what she will be' (p. 187). Zizioulas sees the unity of the church in one eucharist under the bishop. This was maintained in the later development of presbyteral eucharists by praying for the bishop in the service.

McPartlan (1995) points us to Vatican Two and other writers for a similar vision. *Lumen Gentium* (Flannery, 1981) calls the eucharist, 'The source and summit of the Christian life' §11 (p.362), and it also says:

> As often as the sacrifice of the cross in which Christ our Passover was sacrificed, is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemption is carried on, and, in the sacrament of the eucharistic bread, the unity of all believers who form one body in Christ is both expressed and brought about. §3 (Roman Catholic Church, 1964).

All of this might be seen to strengthen eucharistic ecclesiology and thus leave no space for extended communion. However, the danger is to stress eucharistic ecclesiology to the point of making all other services redundant. Therefore it is important to hear *Sacrosanctum Concilium* which says:

> The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed: and it is also the fount from which all her power flows §10, (p. 6).

And:

> From the liturgy, therefore, and especially the eucharist, grace is poured forth upon us as from a fountain §10. (p. 6)

This makes the liturgy the primary focus closely followed by the eucharist. The liturgy includes matins, service of the Word, eucharist, extended communion. It also gives further strength to what we have already seen, growing criticism of the parish communion movement from a mission perspective.

Conclusions

As in other chapters there are a number of issues that arise form the research data. There are strong arguments against extended communion and any ecclesiology that might arise by looking at this service in isolation. It could not be said that extended communion makes the church. Extended communion only exists as a derivative of the eucharist and thus the eucharistic community is being stretched by way of such administration of the elements. This would seem to be the good reasoning behind the House of Bishop's requirement that one place does not become a permanent satellite. The danger is that outmoded parish structures have masked the situation that some congregations have not existed as viable self-sustaining congregations for many years, and many benefices are in reality now the eucharistic unit. This might be evidenced in the positive view of extended communion unifying the parish. However, ecclesiology seemed to come secondary to issues of eucharistic consecration in the symbolic hierarchy of theologising about extended communion.

In a new pastoral context the danger is that economy, or pastoral necessity, or pragmatism provides an opportunity for temporary expedient to become the norm. This can then be justified by a reflective process using what has now become the precedent. This can perhaps be seen in the letter of Basil (Jackson, 1996, 1997) where he says 'long custom sanctifies the practice' (p.442). There seem to be at least two examples where this has begun to happen. At which point the ecclesiological concerns about extended communion come to be justified. This feeds back to figure 7.1 where different feedback loops influenced the development of the practice.

Much writing on ecclesiology seems to hold a model of a single congregation being the eucharistic community. This may well have been the assumption of the Church of England in the past, but increasingly churches are adapting to more of a circuit model with one minister overseeing a number of units. This raises profound ecclesiological questions that are still being debated.

However, the research shows that there are a set of such questions being discussed in parishes who have to deal with the day to day implications of such developments.

This chapter completed the examination of the topics of ministry, liturgical practice, and ecclesiology. The next will develop conclusions from the qualitative research.

Chapter 14

Part 2 - Conclusions

Part three has been a qualitative enquiry into the practice of extended communion in the archdeaconry of Berkshire in the Diocese of Oxford. This chapter will review some of the detailed conclusions of this part of the thesis, discuss relevant theoretical discourse, and point to wider issues for the final concluding chapter.

The initial investigation of the archdeaconry uncovered 19 parishes that had used the service. One significant finding was that this was almost equally divided between urban and rural parishes, a finding that contradicts the conventional wisdom, as seen in chapter six, of extended communion being primarily a rural phenomenon. Of course both urban and rural could be further qualified, cf. Russell (1986), who identifies four types of rural contexts. However, even on a simple contrast this is sufficient to modify the myth of the primarily rural setting of extended communion. The aggregation of the quantitative data from the service registers suggests that whatever reasons are brought forward from the parishes in theory, one of the major uses in practice is cover for clergy holidays. This gap of theory and practice will be discussed later. The major narrative for the origins of the service was the reduction of stipendiary clergy numbers, although locally some completely alternative discourses were discovered. Again a theoretical discussion of diverse narratives is of significance.

Hypothesis testing

A number of theses were developed in chapter six to be tested against the empirical data. These were based on the Synod discussion and the House of Bishops' Guidelines. If these indicate the ideal scenario at policy-making level, the theses test out what is actually happening in the parishes examined. First, it has already been indicated above that the thesis 'extended communion is

primarily a rural phenomenon' is incorrect. Second, it was also found that only 50% of the parishes had followed the correct process of authorization. Third, a parish priest raised the issue of the boundary between extended communion and ministry to the sick, and there is sufficient evidence to show that in practice the distinction between the two is misunderstood. Fourth, there were no examples of using extended communion in home groups, proving one of the theses. Fifth, the thesis that 'lay people easily misunderstand it' is too simple. By nature the interviews were of the 'informed reader' and thus these were the people who understand. However, in one case this was clearly not so and in a number of cases there were questions to check the subject under discussion, not least in relationship to communion of the sick. Looking at the issue from another perspective it was clear that there is a body of laity in each of the churches sampled who clearly understood and this group was highly articulate about the issue. This makes proposals to stop the practice based on a fear of lay ignorance deeply problematical. This conclusion significantly contradicts the approach of some liturgists and authorities outlined above. The other theses will be summarised in relation to the three previous chapters.

In the theology of ministry chapter the sixth thesis that 'lay presidency was no longer an issue of significance in the parishes' was disproved. There was considerable acceptance of the idea from a broader spectrum of church members, more than might be considered from the church media. Indeed, current letters in the Church Times show its continuing significance e.g. by Thomas (2006) and Cuff (2006). Seventh, the liturgical practice chapter showed that some leaders of the service had no training, but not 'many' as the thesis proposed. Eighth, while the current liturgy was satisfactory in the minds of some, there were many with questions and so the research does not support the thesis 'the current liturgy is satisfactory'. Ninth, there was at least one example of the elements being treated in a way that Synod would have described as 'unseemly'. This disproves the thesis that 'element are always transported correctly'. Tenth, in the ecclesiology chapter it was noted that there is only one debatable example of a congregation

being 'dependent on extended communion', so the thesis that this has happened is not proven. These theses test the relationship between theory and practice. Not surprisingly the research shows a gap between the two, not only between Synod and parish, but also in one instance between parish justifications and their own practice. The significance finding of the research is not an existence of a gap between theory and practice, but identifing the particular points where such a gap exists.

Theory and practice

Gaps between theory and practice raise important methodological issues in theology. Schleiermacher's view of applied theology, as a unidirectional theory to practice model, might minimise such gaps, see Farley (1983). For if no errors are found in the logic of the theory, then the fault is in the process of application. A more interactive approach would posit the possibility of practice challenging the theory in 'mutual critical conversation' (Pattison, 2000). More recently Swinton and Mowat (2006) have argued for a modification to such conversational models to give a priority to the theological dimension in reflection. This discussion overlaps with a methodological debate about the relationship of empirical findings and theological enquiry. This will be returned to in the final conclusions.

Such gaps between theory and practice are also important in organizational studies. Stokes (1994) comments that:

> While an organization may have one publicly stated idea of its primary purpose or mission, there are often also hidden conceptions at work (p. 121).

In this case such a discrepancy is found at a number of levels, in the application of the national policy, the House of Bishops' Guidelines in the parish, but also in the gap between espoused practice in the episcopal correspondence, and what actually happens as is indicated by the service registers (figure 10.7) with its holiday peaks. One role of qualitative research is to critically attend to such discrepancies.

If the research were on a different scale and integrated into the organizational structure, it might have been possible to begin to change policy and thus this inquiry would be an exercise in action research (McNiff, 1988). However, extended communion policy is formulated on a national level, which makes change a more complex process. For change to occur there has to be political will. So the question arises as to how far such gaps have to develop and be identified before an organization reconsiders its policy, see Robson (1993).

Diverse narratives

In his seminal work on congregational studies Hopewell (1987) classifies congregational narratives as comic tales, romantic tales, tragic tales, and ironic tales. This he adapts from the subject of literary criticism. While the narratives presented may have some of these elements in them there has been an implicit development of an alternative classification in this thesis. Stroup (1981) also emphasises the importance of narrative:

> The community's common narrative is the glue that binds its members together. To be a true participant in a community is to share in that community's narratives (p.133).

Perhaps the important point is the move from a narrative singular to narratives plural in the last sentence, for this research finds diverse narratives in the parish setting that the search for a common narrative is in danger of overlooking.

In the examination of the case studies a root narrative was discerned. This is a narrative that underpins all the others being frequently mentioned or behind the phenomena discussed. In the case of extended communion the root narrative is the decline in stipendiary clergy and pastoral reorganization. However it has been clearly demonstrated that some people work with alternative narratives, ones that do not connect to this root narrative giving participants alternative motivations and stories. V1 was an example of one such person. Another type is subversive narratives, stories of gender questions or use of power that dominated the local context, examples were found in parish 3. This parish also had examples of

overlapping narratives, or partial narratives, nobody quite having the same perspective on the parish context, with some parts of the story hidden from others. I have also called some narratives neglected. This of course depends on one's perspective; however, I conclude that the narratives about an agape are neglected from official perspectives.

These five types are not an exhaustive classification of narratives in a parish setting. It does however begin to analyse the diverse elements that create the 'thick' narrative of the parish. Their significance in a wider theological discussion is included in the next section.

Local theology

The methodology of this section has been to allow the people to articulate their own theology of extended communion. This is an example of 'local' (Schreiter, 1985) or 'ordinary'(Astley, 2002) theology and whereas theoreticians have argued for the significance of this level of theological discussion this thesis has begun to take it seriously in practice. Key points that have emerged can now be summarized. The research has uncovered a number of critical themes. In the previous chapter the relationship between the theology of consecration and community was shown as of importance in a discussion of ecclesiology. Various boundaries were articulated in a discussion of the transportation of the elements. Two foci emerged, the koinonia of the parish and the consecration of the elements. Some people stressed the former and were uneasy about going outside of the benefice. Indeed they saw the practice as strengthening koinonia. Others put a stress on the consecration of the elements and were less concerned about geographical boundaries. This might strengthen concerns that extended communion reinforces the eucharist as a thing, the consecration of the elements, not an action, the celebration of a community. However, it is mitigated by the koinonia theology, which is more eucharist as community-action based.

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The practice of the agape, with all its complexities, emerged in chapter 12 as a significant category, attested to in a number of narratives. This was discovered in the research process. It was not that literature review produced this as a category and that practical enquiry then sought it out. Rather a more iterative process was followed. The practice was discovered in the qualitative research and then further literature review uncovered various layers of history, of which the Methodist experience was of particular relevance. The different parish instances of the agape are not connected in any way. They appear to be a series of independent occurrences in a wide variety of contexts, ecumenical, educational, and community. Underneath this variety is a practical articulation of an unrecognised need at the official level, that of meal-based fellowship resources for lay-led worship.

In the chapter on ministry a theology of extended priesthood and a discussion of the priesthood of the laity became important. These are complex issues of significant discussion in the church and academy. The value of the qualitative research is to demonstrate that this discussion is not one solely for inter-church dialogue or discussion in the academy, but is also one that is being forged in the parish experience.

Local theology may be in a disparate and unsystematic form but it exists and is sometimes very lively. This research project has purposefully allowed this theology to emerge, in contrast to its absence from previous discussion of extended communion. In a lecture on theological reflection Monika Hellwig (1982) asked 'Whose Experience Counts in Theological Reflection?'. It would appear so far in a discussion of extended communion that the voice of the laity has not been counted. Perhaps the scary thing to some is that there is a body of laity who think that extended communion is justifiable in the present context and are beginning to articulate a theology of their experience. This may not be the desire of some of the powers that be.

Theory development

One of the implications of a deductive top-down view of practical theology and liturgical studies is that such an approach does not allow for practice to be the crucible of theory. A more inductive bottom-up, interactive (Pattison, 2000) or even dialectical approach (Cartledge, 2003) situates practice in such a way that theory may emerge from practice and practice may criticise theory. This is an aspect of the thesis that will be developed in the final conclusions.

Part 3 Thesis Conclusions
and Bibliography

Chapter 15

Thesis - Conclusions

The starting point of this research was the introduction of a similar service in three different churches; *Sunday Worship in the absence of a Priest* in the Roman Catholic Church (Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, 1988), *Extended Communion* in the Methodist Church (Methodist Church, 1999), and *Public Worship with Communion by Extension* in the Church of England (The Archbishops' Council, 2001). These services were received with great criticism in the liturgical literature and in the case of the Church of England passed through General Synod with the closest of margins. They continue to be of controversy, particularly in the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England.

A series of research questions have been investigated in this thesis. A key point of debate has been the validity of these services. There is considerable criticism of them by liturgical theologians. Thus a detailed consideration of the development of the texts themselves, which formed part one. However, in critically examining the debate in the Church of England a number of assumptions were noted which had been discussed and incorporated into policy documents. These were developed into hypotheses to test 'in the real world'. Part two was a small-scale qualitative research project focussing on the Archdeaconry of Berkshire in the Diocese of Oxford. This in part tested the hypotheses elaborated previously but also aimed to discover and evaluate popular local liturgical theology. The literature on the services was mostly written by policy makers and theoreticians. One voice that was missing was of those who had to lead and worship with these services. This part of the research uncovered a rich but unsystematic vein of local theology. Underpinning this enquiry were methodological questions both in liturgical studies as a subject and concerning the utility of approaches incorporating reader response and empirical research

methods in practical theology. Another key set of methodological questions is the relationship between theory and practice, or put another way between theology and empirical research. This chapter draws together these strands of enquiry as journey's end is reached.

Terminology

Part one used a fruitful heuristic from reader response to scrutinize the new liturgies. Of particular benefit was the model of Umberto Eco (1979) for reading a text, explained in chapter two. The dictionary discovered 49 terms for the phenomenon under investigation, indicating its newness and instability. The confusion of terms resurfaced with the differences between Methodist and Anglican terminological usage. It is a valuable finding of this research to uncover these differences and thoroughly investigate alternate contextual meanings. One besetting problem of ecumenical dialogue is of different ecclesial communities using the same term for slightly different phenomena. This research has clarified and qualified the terminology in this particular area of liturgical and practical theology.

The contemporary services

Another line of enquiry was an investigation as to the origins of the contemporary services and to the cause of their introduction. This was completed by an in-depth historical investigation into the texts of the services. All of the services followed the process of beginning with a pastoral need, local experimentation, and then official provision. The Methodist service while having a title similar to Anglican use was found to concern a different pastoral context. However, examples were uncovered of Methodists using extended communion in the Anglican sense of the term. The method of this section was historical and textual, including investigation of primary sources of policy-making bodies' reports, texts, and discussions.

In this part of the thesis a network of intertextual links between the denominations was discerned. Methodists and Anglicans had shared terminology, even with different meaning. There was also some sharing of texts in the services themselves. Anglicans seemed particularly knowledgeable of the situation of the Roman Catholic Church in France, examples from France being cited a number of times in the synod debates. All of the churches had engaged in a complex process of authorization of the liturgies even if the structures of the churches disperse power in different ways. The liturgical text with the most inclusive development and carefully nuanced sensitivity to the practice of extended communion is the Canadian Roman Catholic Provision *Sunday Celebrations of the Word and Hours* (National Liturgy Office, 1995).

In the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England the texts have been controversially introduced with a resulting pluriformity where some bishops allow the practice and others prohibit such events. Such a situation indicates only a partial reception of this new phenomenon. Its roots are partially in declining clergy numbers, and pastoral reorganization. For the Roman Catholic Church the reforms of Vatican Two led to greater lay reception of communion, and a reuniting of the theologies of sacrifice and reception in the eucharistic action. Decline in the number of priests threatens this development. For the Church of England the parish communion movement has produced a greater expectation of receiving of communion on a weekly basis, while at the same time decline in clergy numbers is unable to satisfy this desire. This research supports the thesis that a liturgical solution is being used for a ministerial problem.

Part one included a detailed investigation into the genesis of the service of the Church of England. As a policy-making body the General Synod, and with it the House of Bishops, has produced liturgies and Guidelines for use. A major question arises of the relationship of theory and practice in this area of enquiry. It is not unusual to find a gap between these two factors but what is significant is to identify particular gaps, especially if they are the result of false assumptions and

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bogus mythologies in the visioning of practice. To the end of unmasking such gaps in practice ten theses were developed which were to be tested in the third part of the research.

The qualitative research project

This thesis gradually refines the focus of its research as it develops. It begins with a wide brush looking at a number of historical practices, it then concentrates on three particular modem services; finally the spotlight is directed to a small scale quantitative research project in the Diocese of Oxford, focused on the Archdeaconry of Berkshire. The research included a wide range of data collection and analysis including documentary analysis, observation, fieldwork, interviews, and electronic data gathering. 32 interviews were conducted, producing 80,000 words of transcript. A number of methodological approaches were integral to the research including open enquiry to discover what is happening (previously unknown or only related by anecdote), hypothesis testing to identify gaps between theory and practice (not tested before with academic rigour), and narrative inquiry to identify and evaluate the development of local theology (an area theoretically discussed but given contextual flesh in this thesis).

The open enquiry contended with incomplete records, inaccurate recording, and a climate of sensitivity concerning the topic. Nevertheless 19 cases were discovered. This produced a significant result in that occurrences of extended communion were found to be both rural and urban in an approximately even split. This was completely contrary to the mythology of the policy-making level, which saw the provision as primarily for the rural parish. This crucial finding was incorporated into the design in the selection of parishes for case studies. Significant gaps were found between theory and practice. In an action research project this would lead to the modification, monitoring and evaluation of practice in an iterative process. However, this research is not integrated into denominational review processes and so can only commend the research for consideration by policy-makers.

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The research discovered a considerable theologising by those involved at local or parish level. People perceived that they were establishing a new category of minister. This occurs in a context of the promotion of ministry teams, which raises the complex question of the relationship between ordination and leadership. In the Roman Catholic Church the theological position appears to be that ordination is for leadership and lay leaders will always be subordinate to a parish priest. In the Church of England teams are seen as having ministerial responsibility. In this context a theology of laity in the team sharing in ministerial priesthood was discovered. This is a complex area and needs further study. Liturgically, practitioners were theologising about the practice with meal metaphors from modern culture, concerning meal provision by distance. Implicit in this is an essential connection to ecclesiology, where factors such as consecration and community were significant. An alternative model of the parish was also seen to be emerging. Theological discussion was seen therefore to be multi-layered, at both the national and local level. The political question is: whose voice counts?

The validity of extended communion

In this penultimate subsection the critical question of the validity of extended communion must be addressed. This question is behind much of the discussion of the topic in the academy, in Synods, and at the local level. The arguments in both directions have received detailed consideration at many points in this thesis. Even if the proposed precedents are rejected as justifying the present practice, the position of this thesis is that this does not necessarily exclude extended communion. It could be argued as a valid development within the framework proposed by Newman (1845, 1974) in his 'Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine'. However, this in and of itself would produce another set of problems.

The church has worked on developing criteria to assess developments almost since its beginnings. As yet these are not fully agreed and other

contemporary disputes show some of the difficulties in agreeing the criteria to assess any development, even before any conclusion can be reached on the development itself. On the topic of extended communion there is no clear agreement on its validity as a development. Its reception is not unanimous, and it is a policy development that is being reversed in some places. Its interconnectedness with issues of ministry and ecclesiology show the complexity of what in a first examination might seem a simple pragmatic development. After detailed and exhaustive examination of the topic this thesis at least demonstrates that this is anything but a 'simple development'.

Discussions about validity often are set in a bipolar framework, i.e. either more priests or extended communion. This thesis rejects such a bipolar position pointing out a rich variety of strategies and liturgical resources for the present context, that of a shortage of priests in a complex situation of pastoral reorganization. The conclusion of this thesis after in-depth research, both theoretical and practice, is that extended communion may be appropriate in emergency situations, as was discussed in chapter seven, and its authorization needs to be set within a long-term plan of ministry development, cf. Dunedin (n.d.). However, the empirical investigation suggests that this will need critical ongoing assessment of both the practice and of policy, if an emergency is not to become a norm.

One overlooked aspect of the validity debate is the contrast between the almost universal questioning of theorists from a variety of theological disciplines and from a number of denominations, and the practical response of bishops and Synods in producing texts for the laity to lead these services. In some instances this leaves theoreticians who are against the practice sitting on liturgical committees charged to produce texts for authorization. This indicates a sharp divide between theory and practice, even at times within particular individuals.

Theory and practice

A final set of methodological questions cluster around a critical methodological consideration of theory and practice. These include the relationship between theology and empirical research, the place of empirical discovery in practical theology, and the locus of theory development. These are interrelated questions underpinning the methodology of this enquiry, the nature of practical theology, and liturgical studies within that discipline.

The relationship between theology and social science has long been debated. Such debate can be seen in the time of scientific development e.g. with the theories of Newton, then in the famous example of Bishop Wilberforce of Oxford's debate with Thomas Huxley on the theory of evolution, to the present disputes with Stephen Hawking on cosmology. Similarly there have been debates over the place of social science and theology e.g. Gill (1996) and Martin (1997). Some have argued for theological propositions to be of a distinct order from those of science and have retreated into a fideistic position. This would seem to deny any place for empirical research in theological enquiry. Applied theology, as the application of theological truth, is then seen as the model for the practical side of religion. Others emphasise the church and individuals' beliefs as the locus of research. These can be discovered with social science research methods. While such research projects are increasingly important in the churches, the danger of this approach is that it reduces theology to the sociology of religion. This debate particularly concerns the discipline of practical theology and liturgical studies within it.

Schleiermacher's vision for the place of theology in the academy included applied theology particularly as professional clergy training. The renaissance of practical theology in the academy since the war has led to a broadening of the subject with three loci, the individual (not just the clergy), the church, and the world. Methodological debate has centred on 'theological reflection', which has developed into a number of modalities (Graham et al., 2005). In this, various

positions are given to 'experience'. While in many models it is the starting point, many want to use Tillich's model of critical correlation to interact with the theological tradition. One position is to see this interaction as truth discovery with priority on the truth and not on the source of knowledge: other models give a priority to revelation. The latter has been particularly argued recently by Swinton and Mowat (2006). While the presupposition of priority to revealed truth may be essential for theological enquiry, it is nevertheless vital that the results of empirical research be allowed to challenge espoused theological positions, at the level of both theory and practice. Revealed truth must correlate with practice, if truth is one, and truth is accessed through interpretation, which always has a provisonality and potentiality for development. This thesis has shown within its particular focus on extended communion that there are positions to be challenged.

The applied theology theory-to-practice model leaves the locus of theory development in the academy or with an ecclesiastical expert. Current methodologies of practical theology, and the one advocated in this thesis, locate theory development in a number of places including the parishes, cf. in the methodological work on theological reflection as in Ballard and Prichard (1996, 2006) and Graham et al. (2005). It is an important methodological inference that practice may be the locus of theoretical development, and this entails a close cooperation between academy and ecclesial bodies. This thesis establishes that extended communion is one such development with origins in local practice and theologizing at a number of levels, local, national, and academic. This can be clarified by some final comments, set as a fabula.

Extended Communion

Extended communion is a post war development of a number of churches in Britain (and across the world). In light of the shortage of ministers, churches have allowed lay-led services with the distribution of previously consecrated elements. This new occurrence is a controversial theological and practical development. New forms of ministry are emerging with lay teams and lay ministers of extended

communion. The new liturgical practice threatens theory and practice developed from Vatican Two and the Parish Communion movement, perhaps returning to older models of receiving 'my communion' and of the elements 'as a thing'. Ecclesiologically new models of parish are emerging that are lay-led with clergy overseeing a number of such parishes. Extended communion is one area in the life of the churches where practice challenges espoused theology, not always in desired ways, and if nothing else this thesis demonstrates the significance of practice as a location of theoretical development.

Chapter 16

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Appendix

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CD ROM of Transcripts