

Editor's Notes

“It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the Primitive Church to have public Prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments, in a tongue not understood of the people.” The twenty-fourth Article of Religion has been a constant touchstone in the Anglican tradition of common prayer, perhaps particularly when it has not been entirely clear what that “language” ought to be. Coverdale or Authorized Version? 1928 or 1979? English or Maori or both? To consider the language (broadly understood) of the *Book of Common Prayer* is to raise the questions of inculturation and indigenization: the extent to which the worship and the life of the church should be adapted to the cultures and times in which they take place. Anglicans pride themselves on the Prayer Book and its ability to serve not only the worthy praise of God but also the connection of Christ's body across a global communion. Yet given the multiplicity of prayer books, rituals, and music—each “understood of the people” in a particular place but not in *all* places—there is another question that complements those regarding enculturation: “What is common about common prayer?”

Richard Geoffrey Leggett has drawn together a variety of articles to address that question in this issue of the *Anglican Theological Review*. Three of these are contributions to the more theoretical aspects of liturgical studies considering the rites of initiation, the eucharist, and the daily offices. The other seven look at particular aspects of the critical interface between scholarship and practice, and do so from a number of different contexts, from Canada and Japan to England and New York, while also exploring the experience of liturgical language in Lakota communities and international consultations. I am most grateful to Richard for the thought and work he has given to this issue. I am also grateful to the various authors of these essays, each of whom has been generous with expertise and reflection about a subject that always will be important to Anglicans. I hope you find their work as interesting and provocative as I do.

In this issue, we also publish the winning poem from the first *ATR* Poetry Prize contest. To our amazement, we received nearly four hundred submissions, by a wide variety of poets from around the world. The winning poem, “Purging” by Deborah J. Shore, was chosen because its rich sustained metaphor opened up new and enthralling vistas on Jesus’ internal and external sufferings during the crucifixion. Special thanks to the judges for the contest, Tony Baker, Roger Ferlo, and Sofia Starnes, as well as to Jackie Winter and Roberto Pamatmat, who ably kept track of the entries and authors.

“Purging” is the first poem in an expanded poetry section, a regular feature of our Summer issues, when we hope all our readers have a bit more leisure in which to enjoy the particular kind of reflection the poetic prompts. May you all enjoy a slower season of re-creation.

ELLEN K. WONDRA
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