

# Eucharistic Prayers for Children submission to Revision Committee

Submission to the General Synod Revision Committee: 12 August 2011, Adrian Vincent

In my report on the July 2011 meeting of the General Synod, I wrote that two draft Eucharistic Prayers had been written, designed for use in Primary Schools. The Synod voted for the draft Eucharistic Prayers to proceed to the next stage, which is revision by a committee. Synod members were given until 12 August to write to the Revision Committee with their suggestions for improvements to the prayers.

Attached is my submission to the Revision Committee.

Mr Adrian Vincent  
 16 Faris Barn Drive  
 Woodham  
 Surrey  
 KT15 3DZ  
 email: [avwebsite@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:avwebsite@hotmail.co.uk)  
 website: [www.adrianvincent.org.uk](http://www.adrianvincent.org.uk)

12 August 2011

To: The Clerk to the Synod,

**Suggestions to the Revision Committee on Additional Eucharistic Prayers**

In the left hand column of the table, I have the text as it went to the July 2011 General Synod in GS 1822. On the right hand column I have a critique of the text (where appropriate) followed by my suggested amendments.

The suggested amendments are taken from Eucharistic Prayers in current use elsewhere in the Anglican Communion, and the page references given are from Colin Buchanan's, *Anglican Eucharistic Liturgies 1985 – 2010*, Canterbury Press 2011.

A general comment is that I do not think that we need two additional Eucharistic Prayers, and Prayer 2 can be dispensed with. When we desire "Common Prayer" it is better to have one prayer that, by repetition can become ingrained in our hearts.

I have not commented on the response options in square brackets ("Amen, Amen, Amen" in Prayer 1 and "...Listen and you will hear" in Prayer 2) because I have not had the benefit of experiencing them performed in practice, which I feel I would need to do in order to give an informed comment.

<b>GS 1822 text</b>	<b>Suggested revision</b>
<p><u>Prayer One</u></p> <p>The Lord be with you  <b>and also with you.</b></p> <p>Lift up your hearts.  <b>We lift them to the Lord.</b></p> <p>Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  <b>It is right to give thanks and praise.</b></p>	<p>Critique:          Some children do not know what "lift up your hearts" means. Also the phrase "to give thanks" is not in modern usage.</p> <p>Suggestion:          "God is here  <b>We praise God together.</b>          Let us say thank you to God  <b>who has done so much for us."</b>          (Source, Buchanan, p.304)</p>
<p>[Holy, Holy, <b>Holy</b>]</p> <p>It is always right          to give you thanks,          God our Father,          holy and strong,          king for ever.</p> <p>You made us</p>	<p>Critique:          If the above suggestion is followed, then it would be illogical for this section to begin with "It is always right..."</p> <p>Suggestion:          Delete this section.          Or, replace "to give you thanks" with "to thank</p>

<b>GS 1822 text</b>	<b>Suggested revision</b>
<p>and the whole universe. and filled your world with life.</p> <p>[Holy, Holy, <b>Holy</b>]</p>	<p>You”</p>
<p>You sent your Son to live among us, Jesus, Saviour, Mary’s child.</p> <p>He suffered on the cross; he died to save us from our sins; he rose in glory from the dead.</p> <p>[Holy, Holy, <b>Holy</b>]</p>	<p>Critique: “Saviour” and “suffered” are difficult words for young children. And “died to save us from our sins” is a difficult theological concept for children to understand.</p> <p>Suggestions: “he died to take the blame for all the bad things I have done” (Source: Graham Kendrick, <i>I’m special</i>)</p> <p>“You sent your Son to live among us, to give us life life in all its fullness” (see John 10:10)</p> <p>“We give you thanks that you sent your Son to share our life; you gave him up to death that the world might be saved, and you raised him from the dead that we might live in him and he in us.” (Buchanan, p.69)</p> <p>“Obedient to your will he died upon the cross. By your power you raised him from the dead. He broke the bonds of evil and set your people free to be his body in the world” (Buchanan, p.70)</p> <p>“Jesus lived as one of us; he died on the cross for us; Jesus is alive because you gave him life again; Jesus is with us now.” (Buchanan, p.71)</p> <p>“even when we turned away from you, you never ceased to care for us, but in your love and mercy you freed us from the slavery of sin,” (Buchanan, p.81)</p> <p>“Father, Lord of all creation; we praise you for your goodness and your love. When we turned away you did not reject us. You came to meet us in your Son, [and] welcomed us as your children” (Buchanan, p.83)</p> <p>“Father, you have loved the world so much that in</p>

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	<p>the fullness of time  you sent your Son to be our Saviour.  [...] To fulfil your purpose Jesus gave himself up to death;  and, rising from the grave, destroyed death, and made the whole creation new.  And, that we might no longer live for ourselves, but for him who died and rose for us, he sent the Holy Spirit, to accomplish his work in the world,” (Buchanan, p.124)</p> <p>“In love you gave us Jesus your Son to rescue use from sin and death” (Buchanan, p.169)</p> <p>“In your great love, your only Son Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, so that whoever believes in him would not perish but receive eternal life” (Buchanan, p.250)</p> <p>“We thank you that on the cross Jesus took away our sin,” (Buchanan, p.269)</p> <p>“Through him you saved us from being slaves to sin,” (Buchanan, p.277)</p> <p>“God gave us new life by raising Jesus from the dead” (see 1 Peter 1:3)</p>
<p>You send your Spirit to bring new life to the world, and fill us with power from on high.</p>	<p>Critique:  “power from on high” many children will think it is referring to something literally “high up”, rather than appreciate that it is power of a divine origin.</p> <p>Suggestion:  Change “power from on high” to “your power” or “your heavenly power” or “power from heaven”.</p>
<p>And so we join the angels to celebrate and sing:</p> <p><b>Holy, holy, holy Lord,  God of power and might,  heaven and earth are full of your glory.  Hosanna in the highest.  [Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  Hosanna in the highest.]</b></p>	<p>Delete the option “[Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.]”  Reason: if it is printed, it will always cause confusion as to whether it should be said or not. (In ‘adult’ services there is always a nervous pause as the congregation wait to see whether or not the priest will say this line in which case they quickly join in. And sometimes the priest will not say it and a member of the congregation, not spotting the significance of the square bracket will start to say it and then stop half way through embarrassed. We</p>

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	can manage without that tension causing distraction. Also, in a children’s service when we should aim to keep things short and simple, this is something that can be removed without real loss to the message.
<p>Father, on the night before he died, Jesus shared a meal with his friends.</p> <p>He took the bread, and thanked you. He broke it, and gave it to them, saying: Take this and eat it; this is my body, given for you. Do this to remember me.</p>	
<p>After the meal, Jesus took the cup of wine. He thanked you, and gave it to them, saying: Drink this, all of you. This is my blood, the new promise of God’s love. Do this to remember me.</p>	<p>Critique: “the new promise of God’s love” is a bit wishy- washy and too far departed from being shed for the forgiveness of sins.</p> <p>Suggestion: “... This is my blood, given so that we might be forgiven. ...”</p>
<p>Jesus Christ has died. <b>Jesus Christ has died.</b> Jesus Christ is risen. <b>Jesus Christ is risen.</b> Jesus Christ will come again. <b>Jesus Christ will come again.</b></p> <p>(or)</p> <p>Great is the mystery of faith: <b>Christ has died.</b> <b>Christ is risen.</b> <b>Christ will come again.</b></p> <p>Father, as we remember his death and resurrection, send your Holy Spirit, that the bread and wine we bring before you may be for us Christ’s body and his blood.</p> <p>[Amen, Amen, <b>Amen.</b>]</p>	
<p>Pour your Spirit on us that we may love one another, as we work for the peace of the earth, and wait for Jesus to come in glory.</p>	<p>Critique: a.) “Pour your Spirit on us” children might think of a literal pouring and not understand. b.) “as we work for the peace of the earth”. Firstly, “of the whole world” would be better, as for some</p>

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<p>[Amen, Amen, <b>Amen.</b>]</p>	<p>“earth” means “mud”.</p> <p>Secondly, GS 1841, <i>Relations with the United Reformed Church</i>, paragraph 66 says that evangelism, social justice and church unity should all be presented, and to only present one is to “abridge the gospel”. This passage presents social justice “work for the peace of the earth”, and possibly church unity “love one another”, but the task of evangelism is absent. We should not shy away from the duty to spread the gospel message, a message that is so challenging it can even have a dividing effect (Matthew 10:34-39).</p> <p>Suggestions:  “Help us to trust you,  bring us closer together and welcome us,  with all your people,  into Jesus’ glorious kingdom” (Buchanan, p.72)</p> <p>“Renew us through your Spirit,  that together with your worldwide church,  we may serve our neighbours in your love,  draw all people to you,  and reveal your glory.” (Buchanan, p.142)</p> <p>“And now, Father, send us out  to do the work you have given us to do,  to love and serve you  as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord”  (Buchanan, p.183)</p>
<p>For honour and praise belong to you, Father,  with Jesus your Son, and the Holy Spirit:  one God, for ever and ever.</p> <p>[Amen, Amen] <b>Amen.</b></p> <p><i>The service continues with the Lord’s Prayer.</i></p>	<p>Critique:  “honour and praise belong to you”, the word honour isn’t in children’s current usage, and the line could be expressed more simply.</p> <p>Suggestion:  “We thank and praise you, Father...”</p>
<p><u>Prayer Two</u></p> <p>The Lord be with you  <b>and also with you.</b></p> <p>Lift up your hearts.  <b>We lift them to the Lord.</b></p> <p>Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  <b>It is right to give thanks and praise.</b></p>	<p>Critique:  Some children do not know what “lift up your hearts” means. Also the phrase “to give thanks” is not in modern usage.</p> <p>Suggestion:  “God is here  <b>We praise God together.</b>  Let us say thank you to God  <b>who has done so much for us.</b>”  (Buchanan, p.304)</p>

<b>GS 1822 text</b>	<b>Suggested revision</b>
<p>[Question Why is it right to give thanks and praise? Answer Listen and you will hear.]</p>	
<p>Lord of all life, you created the universe, where all living things reflect your glory. You give us this great and beautiful earth, to discover and to cherish.</p>	<p>Critique: “reflect your glory” is a difficult concept, and “cherish” is not a word children normally use and therefore might have difficulty understanding.</p> <p>Suggestion: “You have created us to hear your Word, to do your will and to be fulfilled in your love.” (Buchanan, p.301)</p>
<p><i>One of the following or another Short Proper Preface may be used</i></p> <p>You give us the starry sky above, the sun and the moon, and everything that gives us light, light for our eyes and hearts and minds.</p> <p>(or)</p> <p>You give us the fish in the sea, the birds of the air, and every plant and tree; the life that sleeps in the earth in winter, and awakens again in the spring.</p> <p>(or)</p> <p>You give us parks and schools, and places to play, shrieks of laughter and safety in your arms.</p> <p>(or)</p> <p>[in times of sadness] You give us your love, even when things go wrong. Jesus knew hurt and pain. Through him you wipe away our tears, and fill us with your peace.</p> <p>(or)</p> <p>[at times of celebration] You give us happy times and things to celebrate. In these we taste your kingdom, a feast for all to share.</p>	<p>Critique: Most of these prayers are lacking in depth. In a week when there are Primary School children before the Courts for rioting and looting, a prayer about stars, fish and trees is unlikely to speak into the harsh reality of modern childhood. These prayers should be replaced by a single prayer that remembers what Jesus has done for us and the transformation that should bring in our lives.</p> <p>Also: “starry sky” is babyish with echoes of the Playschool song <i>Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star</i>; “Light for our eyes hearts and minds” is difficult to understand; “shrieks of laughter” is not a phrase children tend to use or understand; “taste your kingdom” will imagine literal tasting and not understand.</p> <p>Suggestions: “Father, you never forget us or turn away from us, even when we fail you. You sent your Son Jesus who gave his life for us. He healed those who were sick, cared for those who were poor, and cried with those who were sad. He forgave sinners and taught us to forgive.” (Buchanan, p.61. Reason: focus is on Jesus; teaches us about him; covers a range of our emotions and conditions; reminds us of the changes we should make in our lives).</p> <p>“You have always loved us but people have not always loved you. You sent Jesus to show us how to live</p>

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	and to bring us back to you again.” (Buchanan, p.304)
<p>You made us all, each wonderfully different, to join with the angels and sing your praise:</p> <p><b>Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. [Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.]</b></p>	<p>Delete the option “[Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.]” Reason: if it is printed, it will always cause confusion as to whether it should be said or not. (In ‘adult’ services there is always a nervous pause as the congregation wait to see whether or not the priest will say this line in which case they quickly join in. And sometimes the priest will not say it and a member of the congregation, not spotting the significance of the square bracket will start to say it and then stop half way through embarrassed. We can manage without that tension causing distraction. Also, in a children’s service when we should aim to keep things short and simple, this is something that can be removed without real loss to the message.</p>
<p>We thank you, loving Father, because you sent Jesus, your Son. He gave his life for us on the cross and shows us the way to live. Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine may be for us Christ’s body and his blood.</p> <p>[Question Why do we share this bread and wine? Answer Listen and you will hear.]</p>	
<p>On the night before he died, when darkness had fallen, Jesus took bread. He gave thanks, broke it, and shared it with his disciples, saying: ‘This is my body, given for you. Do this to remember me.’</p> <p>After they had eaten, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and shared it with his disciples, saying: ‘This is my blood, poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins.’</p> <p>So Father, with this bread and this cup we celebrate his love, his death, his risen life. As you feed us with these gifts, send your Holy Spirit,</p>	



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<p>and change us more and more to be like Jesus our Saviour.</p> <p>[Question How do we follow Jesus Christ? Answer Listen and you will hear.]</p>	
<p>Help us, Father, to love one another, and to work together for that day when the whole world is fed, suffering is ended, and all creation is gathered in your loving arms.</p>	<p><b>Critique:</b> This is just the social gospel, of working to feed people and remove suffering. We also need to tell others what Jesus has done for them and give them the opportunity to accept him, so that they can be on the right side when Jesus separates the sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:32)</p> <p><b>Suggestions:</b> “Help us to trust you, bring us closer together and welcome us, with all your people, into Jesus’ glorious kingdom” (Buchanan, p.72)</p> <p>“Renew us through your Spirit, that together with your worldwide church, we may serve our neighbours in your love, draw all people to you, and reveal your glory.” (Buchanan, p.142)</p> <p>“And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord” (Buchanan, p.183)</p>
<p>And now with [N and] all your saints we give you glory, through Jesus Christ, in the strength of the Spirit, today and for ever. <b>Amen.</b></p> <p>The service continues with the Lord’s Prayer</p>	