

**THE WHITLEY LECTURE
1999**

**A SHARED MEAL
AND A COMMON TABLE**
Some reflections on
the Lord's Supper
and Baptists

Keith G. Jones

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The Whitley Lecture

The Whitley Lectureship was first established in 1949, in honour of W.T. Whitley (1861-1947), arguably the first systematic modern Baptist historian. Whitley was a notable scholar and servant of the Church of Christ. He had pastorates in England and Australia. He served the denomination in both countries in many ways, including pursuing historical studies.

Whitley was a key figure in the formation of the Baptist Historical Society (1908). He edited its journal which soon gained an international reputation for the quality of its contents. Altogether he made a particularly remarkable contribution to Baptist life and self-understanding, providing an inspiring model of how a pastor scholar might enrich the life and faith of others.

The establishment of the Lectureship in his name was intended to be an encouragement to research by Baptist scholars into aspects of Christian life and thought and to enable the results of such research to be published and available to the denomination and beyond.

The Whitley Lectureship's Management Committee is composed of representatives of the Baptist Colleges, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Baptist Missionary Society, the Baptist Ministers Fellowship and the Baptist Historical Society.

Through the years the encouragement towards scholarship has taken different forms, from the full support of the writing of lectures for publication by a designated Whitley Lecturer to the making available of smaller grants to those working at particular research interests.

In 1996 the Management Committee of the Whitley Lectureship began a new initiative in keeping with the original purpose. It was agreed to appoint each year a Lecturer to write and deliver a lecture as a contribution to scholarly Baptist thought. Each lecture will be published.

We are delighted that the Revd Keith Jones gives the third lecture in this new series. He was a pastor in Barnoldswick from 1975 until becoming the Secretary of the Yorkshire Baptist Association. In 1991 he was appointed Deputy General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain. He is presently Rector of the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Prague. His lecture topic, while focusing on Baptist thought and practices, is one of concern for all Christian people.

Brian Haymes
on behalf of the Management Committee

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The organ notes died away. We had just finished singing a fine hymn of commissioning. The minister pronounced the benediction and walked down the right hand aisle to greet any worshippers leaving evening worship. The deacons, the men in their dark Sunday suits, all made of good West Riding woollen cloth, the women in smart coats with sober hats, left their seats and went into the vestry. The organist began to play 'When I survey the wondrous cross'. Some worshippers scurried away, anxious to leave the chapel. Others moved from their seats in the side aisles to the centre, every alternate row. There was no talking, just the sombre organ music.

The minister walked back down the aisle, through the vestry door and emerged moments later with the deacons who went and sat on the platform behind the communion table, equal numbers either side. One lady deacon, always a lady, took a large white cloth from the communion table to reveal two trays of tiny glass cups filled with diluted Ribena blackcurrant juice and two silver plates containing small cubes of white processed bread.

The minister 'fenced the table' with scriptural sentences and a reading from the Letter to the Corinthians about those who ate and drank unworthily. One deacon then stood and offered a general prayer about the bread. In fact, my memory recalls those prayers as being varied, moving between adoration, confession and intercession with

dexterity, though not always clarity. The deacons distributed the bread passing up and down the rows of pews. Each person present took a small cube and ate it. The silence was profound, broken only by the occasional sound of a cough. Then another prayer: occasionally this might take the form of a poem, or insight from a popular Christian writer. Thereafter the trays were handed round. Perhaps the organist would play something from 'Olivet to Calvary'. We would be instructed to drink the cup 'until He comes'. The Ribena often irritated the back of a dry throat and there would be a bout of coughing. Remaining seated and singing quietly we would conclude the service with a hymn such as that by Horatius Bonar, 'Here, O my Lord'.¹

As a teenager I came to several conclusions from this experience. The occasion was a sombre one. Some people did not like to be present. It was an adjunct to the main service. There was a very strong accent on memorial, on death and on discipline. I also perceived a lack of clarity about the focus of the prayers, which often mirrored those in the 'main', or preceding service, which had been uttered by the minister. I was told, of course, during my discipleship training, that the meal was primarily for believers. It was best not to consume 'the elements' until after baptism and that the meal was a time to remember the death of Jesus on the cross - a 'mere memorial' as earlier Baptist writers had declared.²

Now, I hasten to say this is my recollection; the images which impressed themselves on my mind as a new first-generation Baptist coming to terms with faith in the 1960s. I am sure some who were present on those occasions would soon bear testimony to facets I have missed and which would present a more accurate and rounded picture. But I do not think it is untrue of a typical post-war communion

service amongst Baptists, save possibly in the participation of women deacons, which was not so common. Indeed, there are still churches where that pattern exists. Elsewhere, the effects of the work of the late Dr Ernest A. Payne and the Revd S.F. Winward³ had begun to have the effect of encouraging churches to partake of the 'Supper' in the main act of worship. Today, though the music in the rest of worship may have changed, the 'communion' part of many services has simply been incorporated into a monthly event in the morning. Where an evening service still exists, there might also be a second celebration. All this, despite some significant attempts by leading scholars to open up the debate and encourage a more rounded act of corporate worship.⁴

In this Whitley Lecture I cannot hope to address the whole biblical, historical, theological and liturgical debate about the Lord's Supper. I have, therefore, attempted to limit myself to exploring some of the historical roots from which our traditional understanding comes. Then I hope to open up some new insights and to reflect on our theology and practice in the contemporary world. This, in the light of what we are constantly discovering as we engage in dialogue with other parts of the Christian tradition and in the process of reception of ecumenical discussions such as *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.⁵

It is often claimed that Baptists follow the 'third man of the reformation', Huldrych Zwingli, in being 'mere memorialists'. As Dom Gregory Dix said in his monumental work:⁶

His doctrine of the sacraments, like that of his colleague of Basle, leaves them no force or efficacy of their own whatsoever. They are bare signs or

ceremonies by which a man assures other people rather than him of his saving faith in Christ's redemption. In the Eucharist there is but plain bread and wine, a reminder of the salvation achieved long ago on Calvary. In other words, the Eucharistic action consists in a vivid mental remembering of the passion as the achievement of 'my' redemption in the past...

Now, this view of Dom Gregory Dix has often been taken as accurate in its portrayal of Zwingli. The comment has reverberated amongst Christian scholars who have presumed it could be safely applied to Baptists in general. My teenage impressions may seek, on first reflection, to bear out the assertion. However, it may be inaccurate and premature to assume either point is right. Was Zwingli really Zwinglian in his Eucharistic theology and have Baptists always been Zwinglian in their understanding of the meal?

As to Zwingli, more recent research by scholars, especially around the time of the 500th anniversary of his birth, have re-examined the work of this reformer who was, unfortunately, cut down in his prime, and unlike his illustrious successor, Calvin, was not able to write up his theology in a systematic way. Dr Wayne Pipkin, a noted Zwingli scholar, has suggested several key values from the Eucharistic thinking of Zwingli.⁷

Firstly, the Eucharistic theology of Zwingli developed over a nine-year period. He was constantly concerned to build his theology in conformity with Scripture. From the original challenge to the prevailing catholic theology, he turned to a careful examination of what scripture actually implied. This led him to have a consistent insistence on the priority of divine activity. For Zwingli, the Eucharist

pointed to the redeeming work of Christ, not to the human ability to recreate that sacrifice. Indeed, without that divine gift of faith it is not the Eucharist.

Zwingli is often accused of subjectivity, but actually he sees the role of the Holy Spirit as being far more important than human activity when related to the Eucharist.⁸ Perhaps we might safely say that Zwingli began the task of rediscovering the Holy Spirit in western Eucharistic theology, which was, of course, more adequately developed by Calvin. For Zwingli, congregational participation in the Eucharist was essential to the drama. Unlike medieval Catholicism he draws the congregation from being witnesses at the drama, to centre stage. The congregation do not, as Locher suggests, come up out of their seats:⁹

like being served at the post office: according to rows, one after another; no togetherness.

To be handled there by officials who alone are qualified to dispense the Eucharistic goods. In fact, of course, the worship room itself was transformed to express the centrality and not the peripheral nature of the meal. Zwingli planned a long table so that worshippers could sit down around the table and eat and drink together. The accent was on sharing in the common meal – true *koinonia* – and the transformation of the people rather than, simply, the bread and wine.¹⁰ Zwingli saw the sacrament as having an aspect of a community oath of loyalty, a response as well as a reception. This resonates with the pattern of oath taking in late medieval cities and gives to the meal a profound ethical implication and a social impact.¹¹

Commenting on 1 Corinthians 10. 17, Zwingli has this to say¹²

We eat bread so that we are made into one bread. We do not know what Paul is saying here. Festive and full of heavenly eloquence are these words of Paul, my good sir, whoever you are. He calls bread what we eat and he calls bread what we become by eating such. But what we become by this eating, provided we have first digested by faith in our closets the suffering of Christ for us, not his flesh and sinews and bones – what we become, I say, is the body of Christ. And who are the body of Christ? They of whom he is the head, while they are his members.

In the letter to Matthew Alber, from which that quotation comes, Zwingli moves from a typical medieval Roman Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist and defines himself apart from the position of Luther as he develops his own highly spiritual sacramental understanding. Throughout his writings Zwingli is concerned to emphasise the priority of divine activity. In this dimension the accusation that he is a ‘mere memorialist’, with all the emphasis on our simply recalling events, is most unjust. For him, the Eucharist points constantly to the redeeming work of Christ, not to our human ability to recreate an event.

In the fragment quoted above note his use of the word ‘festive’. The key shift from the community observing a drama played out by the ‘priests’, to the gathering of the community of faith in *koinonia* around the table has a festive dimension as that community, itself, becomes the subject of the celebration. So the Body of Christ comes together to confess and pledge its loyalty to Christ in a setting where Zwingli seeks to emphasise the priority of the Eucharistic action. For Zwingli, as Wayne Pipkin points out,¹³ there is a deep concern with the way that the

liturgical action of the Eucharist is celebrated. The very word he uses, to which I will return in due course, is not the Lord's Supper, but the Eucharist, or 'thanksgiving'. Indeed, re-reading his writings one is struck by his strong desire to give the Eucharist a more important place in the worship of the whole people of God compared to the practice of his day. His emphasis, like that of Calvin later in Geneva, was on more frequent celebration by all the people, not less.

So, following the insights of Locher and Pipkin, I am drawn to suggest that Zwingli was no 'mere memorialist'. He is concerned for the people of God to encounter here and now the presence of the Risen Christ and not simply look back to his death upon the cross. Locher draws our attention to the understanding of *Memoria* in Augustine with his accent on the soul's power of realisation and of consciousness in general, perhaps paralleling the Hebrew notion of 'zikkaron', the cultic call to remembrance which is much more than looking back, rather to participate in the present sacred order.¹⁴

It has been suggested by Pipkin that we might best describe Zwingli's Eucharistic theology as 'transignification'. The bread and wine become transformed in meaning and in significance by Christ's gift, and the Eucharist commemorates that, as he writes:

By this commemoration all the benefits which God has displayed in his Son are called to mind. And by the signs themselves, the bread and wine, Christ himself is as it were set before our eyes, so that not merely with the ear, but with the eye and palate we see and taste that Christ whom the soul bears within itself and in whom it rejoices.¹⁵

It seems transparent that Zwingli had a highly developed Eucharistic spirituality, with an accent upon the importance of the celebration, the increased frequency of the celebration, and the liturgical pattern of the meal where, through transignification, that is the change in significance and meaning of the symbols of the bread and wine, the faithful believers encounter the Risen Christ who is present in the Eucharist. Theological reflection on transignification is helpfully explored by Horton Davies¹⁶ who regards it as one of the most interesting developments of contemporary theological reflection on the Eucharist. The position adopted in the 1948 Baptist Union document 'The Lord's Supper: a Baptist Statement', goes beyond the language of commemoration to take this higher view and states:

Here the real presence of Christ is manifest in the joy and peace both of the believing soul and of the community.¹⁷

This echoes very much the emphasis of Zwingli and the believers gathered in community.

If Baptists, then, are followers of Zwingli in these matters and not 'mere Zwinglians' some issues of our understanding and practice need to be re-examined.

This brings me to a second area of contention. Of course, the followers of Zwingli soon divided. Those who worked logically with him at his unpacking of scripture were driven towards the vision of the believers' church. This was the logic of the reformation journey as it began to unfold in Zürich. However, the politics of the reformation produced a certain caution in Zwingli. He desired to maintain the link between the cantonal authorities and the oversight of the emerging reformed church. Some of his

friends did not and, out of that maelstrom, the Swiss and south German Anabaptists emerged. Here we enter another realm where scholars are divided. Are those Anabaptists to be seen as communities from whom Baptists gained insights and to whom, in a way, we are subsequently related? The last two Whitley lecturers¹⁸ have been adherents to the school of thought championed by E.A. Payne that 'ideas have wings'.¹⁹ I identify with that position as well. Perversely, of course, this was not a position congenial to W.T. Whitley!

Therefore, in my own pursuit of appropriate insights into developing a contemporary Baptist understanding and practice of the Eucharist, I have sought to explore the beliefs and actions of at least some Anabaptist communities.

Now, it has to be acknowledged that there was a wide variety of both belief and practice amongst the early Anabaptist communities. Most Anabaptist communities called for a 'pure' church made up of a community of voluntary believers – what we often describe today as the 'believers' church tradition', or as systematic theologian James Wm. McClendon, Jr, argues, the baptist, with a small 'b' tradition.²⁰ Eleanor Kreider, in her fascinating book, *Given for you*, draws out some of the ways Anabaptist theology shaped their Eucharistic practice²¹; though it is James Rempel who has sought to look carefully at the Christology of Balthasar Hubmaier, Pilgram Marpeck and Dirk Philips in an attempt to draw out key themes in their understanding of the meal and its place amongst Anabaptists.²² He comments:

It is no longer plausible to assert, as many do, that all Anabaptist Eucharistic teaching is derived from Zwingli and that its exclusive original setting is the

Zurich reformation... In both the Magisterial and the radical wings of the Reformation the Lord's Supper was integral to the identity and development of the contending parties. That this is so for Anabaptism may be seen by examining within it the interdependent relationship of the Eucharist, baptism and ecclesiology.²³

Here Rempel has hit a very important nail on the head. That is to say, for Zwingli, the Anabaptists and Calvin (all of whom might be argued to have influenced, if not totally shaped, Baptist views of the Gospel, the church and doctrine) the Eucharist is one of a handful of central pivotal points. This makes it all the more necessary for us, engaged in our own day in radical reformation, to re-examine the Eucharist – both in our theology and in our practice. As we might expect, from our earlier reflection on Zwingli, the Anabaptists focused very much on the gathered community of faith, the body of the believers as being the focus of the presence of Christ at the Eucharist. Rempel contends that much of the debate in this area was primarily Christological. If Christ has ascended then he cannot be physically or essentially in the bread and wine of the Supper. At this point we are drawn into the heart of philosophical discourse in the light of humanism.

However, Anabaptists did have a profound sense of the incarnational nature of Christian believing and there was an almost general assertion that the community of faith, bound together in *koinonia*, was in a significant way the human body of Christ. As Eleanor Kreider comments:

Strongly drawn to the Gospel of John, they tended to conflate Christ in his divinity with the spirit. Because of their understanding of a limitation upon

the possible earthly activities of the ascended Christ, their emphases fell on the action of the spirit in the Lord's Supper. The faithful community would demonstrate in all of its relationships, with brother, neighbour, and enemy, the incarnated love of Christ.²⁴

These early Anabaptists assumed that the normal form of gathering for worship on the Lord's Day, would be the setting of the Eucharist meal. In a form of service for the Eucharist which Balthasar Hubmaier prepared²⁵ there is the fascinating pledge of love where the brothers and sisters are urged, before the 'bishop' prayed the prayer of thanksgiving and the people shared together the bread and wine, to recite and respond to several questions and commitments which linked the meal firmly to their lifestyle and actions. One stanza of the text reads:

If you will practise fraternal admonition toward your brethren and sisters, make peace and unity among them, and reconcile yourselves with all those whom you have offended, abandon all envy, hate, and evil toward anyone, willingly cease all action and behaviour which causes harm, disadvantage, or offence to your neighbour, love your enemies and do good to them and exclude according to the rule in Christ, Matt 18, all those who refuse to do so, then let each say individually: I will.²⁶

For Hubmaier, the meal and the lifestyle of the believer were inextricably linked. He used the service in his church at Nikolsburg, Moravia, and it expresses several key Anabaptist emphases. Plain words and inward feelings are not enough. The Eucharist draws us into the sacrificial love

of Christ and places its own demands upon us, so we are dismissed into the world to live that loving lifestyle.

Ruth Gouldbourne, in her 1998 Hughey Lectures,²⁷ draws our attention to this Pledge of Love as being a significant element, not only for a Eucharistic theology which places the community (both women and men) at the heart of the action, but also for shaping our ecclesiology.

A third stream should rightly inform our concern to develop a contemporary Baptist understanding and practice with regard to the Eucharist. Michael Walker contends that English Baptists did not begin their theological journey with the Lord's Supper.²⁸ Rather they:

Began with men and women whom, they believed,
Christ had called to be his church on earth.²⁹

In his study of the theology of the Lord's Supper amongst English Baptists in the nineteenth century he seeks to draw attention to the influence of Calvin. He draws particular attention to the teaching of Robert Hall who stressed the nature of the Eucharist as a participation in the sacrifice offered by Christ:

To consider the Lord's Supper... as a mere commemoration of [our Lord's death and passion] is to entertain a very inadequate view of it. If we credit St Paul it is also a federal rite in which, in token of our reconciliation with God, we eat and drink in his presence: it is a feast upon a sacrifice, by which we become partakers at the altar, not less really, though in a manner more elevated and spiritual, than those who under the ancient economy presented their offerings in the temple.³⁰

Again, note the emphasis of this third 'well' from which Baptists have claimed to drink. To partake of the meal is not about the 'real absence' of Christ, a jibe hurled by some at Baptist theologies of the Eucharist. No, for Hall there is an uncompromising claim that to share in the meal is really to participate in the body and blood of the Risen Lord. It was the active agent of the Holy Spirit, which raised the believer into the presence of the ascended Christ where the people of God fed upon him by sharing in his risen and glorified life. This theme too needs to be remembered, for in drawing out lessons for today we are transported far from the memory of the death of Jesus on the cross (the overbearing image of the scene I depicted at the beginning of this lecture). Here, there is the recalling of the passion, but the event is seen to be an experience of the ascended Christ also. We draw near to the verge of the heavenly banquet. We, too, make the affirmation:

Christ has died
 Christ is Risen
 Christ will come again.³¹

In these early Baptist communities there was a strong emphasis on everything being done decently and in good order. In particular, presidency at the table was important:

On May 2 1771 Hague (of Scarborough) administered the Lord's Supper for the first time. Few eighteenth century Baptists thought it fitting for any but an ordained pastor to preside at the Lord's table.³²

Again, at the height of Catholic Revival in England, Michael Walker reminds us that the *Baptist Magazine* of

1857 carried six articles under the general title 'Sacramental Meditations'. Though anonymous, Walker suggests we should look no further than Samuel Manning, the influential editor of the magazine.³³ That doyen of Baptist preachers, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, adhering to the theology of Calvin, for all his attacks upon Catholicism nevertheless had a deep and profound understanding of the meal:

Here, at the communion table, we are at the centre of truth, and at the well-head of consolation. Now we enter the holy of holies, and come to the most sacred meeting-place between our souls and God.³⁴

In marked contrast to Spurgeon, John Clifford, the outstanding figure in the nineteenth century from the tradition of the General Baptists of the New Connexion, appeared to have little time for any deep understanding of the meal. However, as Michael Walker has pointed out, three positive points emerge from his writings on the Communion. He was very conscious that it fostered devotion in the heart of the Christian. Secondly, it was a witness to the historic acts of the faith. Thirdly, and, for him most significantly, it was a celebration of the central fact of love in the Christian experience.³⁵

Michael Walker goes on to assert that, though Baptists honoured and revered Spurgeon, it was increasingly from Clifford that they took their theology of the meal. As I have already suggested, this Zwinglianism, which Clifford believed he espoused, was more 'Zwinglian' than Zwingli and certainly represents only an extreme view amongst some Baptists from the late 1800s onwards. Therefore, my own concern has been to remind us of the other historic streams which influence Baptist Eucharistic theology,

liturgy and practice. Now, we need to explore other relevant insights where, with a measure of reception, we may begin to construct a Eucharistic theology and liturgy for Baptists today which draws from the authentic wells of the past and seeks insights from the wider ecumenical community.

Throughout this lecture I have been using, without further definition, three words for the meal – the Lord's Supper, Communion and the Eucharist. This has been quite deliberate on my part. The Reformers and the Anabaptists appear to have quite willingly used the word 'Eucharist', or thanksgiving, as a New Testament word for the meal.

The Reformers also used references to the *Lord's Supper*. Later, Baptists have sometimes, in an English setting, talked about 'Communion', though rarely, if ever, the more Anglican 'Holy Communion'. Each phrase has both a positive and a negative aspect. The Lord's Supper reminds us of the one who calls us to the meal and stresses the link with the meal in the Upper Room. This biblical and historical dimension is important to us. However, as we are aware, there is a proper debate about focusing too much on the Upper Room and neglecting the other occasions when Jesus shared a meal with his followers.³⁶

The *Eucharist* reminds us of the importance of thanksgiving and celebration. The meal is related to the past and draws us to recall painful events in the pursuit of our salvation. The word recalls our Lord giving thanks in the Upper Room³⁷ but too, the meal celebrates the triumph of the ascended Christ and is a foretaste, an *arrabōn*, of that heavenly banquet around the throne of grace. As A.J.B. Higgins comments:

Thus the Church's Eucharist is at one and the same time a remembrance of the death of Christ, and an expectation of perfect joy with him in the Kingdom, which is already in measure anticipated at each celebration by the experience of his risen living presence. There is no doubt that too often the first element... has been allowed to exclude the other two, and that the modern Church has largely lost that forward-looking expectancy and eschatological joy and hope which were characteristic of the early communities.³⁸

The earliest records of the pattern of the meal in the early church found in the *Didache* are prayers of thanksgiving. The word Eucharist is a biblical word, which has a strong and many-sided meaning. Of course, Jesus himself used the term at the Last Supper. The word, unlike some others for the meal, is relatively free from doctrinal undertones.

Communion draws us into the concept of *koinonia* and contemporary ecumenical theological discourse with its multi-layered aspects of community, whereby there is a communion, or participation in Christ and in him with all the members of the congregation.³⁹ Here is the event which draws believers together in unity, as Brilioth comments:

The act of communion was from the very beginning the chief expression of the sense of Christian fellowship, and the act itself was more expressive than any words.⁴⁰

Sara Covin Juengst comments:

The early church seems to have celebrated the Lord's Supper every day. Their joy over the resurrection, coupled with their excitement over being part of a special company made their shared meals a happy anticipation of things to come.⁴¹

Thus, having examined three historic streams which might lay claim to influencing Baptist Eucharistic theology and practice and having sought to explain why my tendency is to opt to use the word 'Eucharist' more frequently than 'Lord's Supper' or 'Communion', I want to try to explore what could be appropriate patterns of Eucharistic celebration for those in the believers' church tradition today.

At this point two further areas ought to be examined. Firstly, the diversity of Baptist practices across the world. John Skoglund, the North American Baptist liturgist comments:

Baptist worship has been largely conditioned by the culture in which it has found itself... On the American frontier the characteristic Baptist worship was the revival meeting... In England as well as New England, Baptist worship has been strongly influenced by the plain and decorous character of the chapel service... While the Lord's Supper is highly regarded by Baptists it is not frequently practised.⁴²

Skoglund, writing nearly thirty years ago, is certainly correct about the importance of the cultural context and offers an accurate description of worship patterns with regard to north America and the British Isles in the late 1960s, but across the world-wide Baptist family immense

variety exists. English Baptists must be aware of the cultural accretions which have been added to our worship patterns, often obscuring a key biblical insight. In other parts of the world Baptists have differing emphases. For instance, Baptists in Central America place great emphasis on sharing the Eucharist in the setting of a meal. Physically gathering around the table, as Zwingli planned in his Zürich churches, is a common feature. To Central Americans communal meals are very important activities, involving all ages.⁴³ The linking of the Eucharist to issues of liberation and social justice is very profound.⁴⁴ The emphasis is on inviting all to accept the grace of Christ and to share in the meal.⁴⁵ In Bohemia, where the followers of Jan Hus obtained Papal permission to re-introduce the chalice to the laity in the Prague Compacts of 1433⁴⁶, Baptists use the single chalice to distribute the wine, as do Baptists in many of the Slavic countries. In the Ukraine many Baptist churches have a weekly celebration. In North America some Baptists are moving away from infrequent to more regular celebration. The practice of intinction (dipping the bread in the wine) for distribution has grown so that the common cup can be used, but the health phobia is addressed. Matzoth crackers or a home-made loaf is often used. New generations of theology students are looking at the issues in a post-modern way and there is much greater concern for the visual in the service.⁴⁷ These brief illustrations help to remind us that culture has shaped our actions and that we can be in danger of applying theology to explain pragmatic cultural changes in our celebration of the Eucharist. This contrasts with the model of building our Eucharistic theology and practice from the basic biblical and theological framework we claim – our so-called Baptist identity.

A classic illustration of how a pragmatic response to advertising pressure of earlier this century, which was later given a theological coating, is exposed by Paul Beasley-Murray with regard to our use of individual communion glasses:

It was the Free Churches' emphasis on total abstinence which led to the non-use of alcoholic wine, which in turn made many feel that small cups are more hygienic. However, if truth be known, the use of small glasses was due more to advertisers than doctors. Earlier Baptists shared a few large cups and thereby emphasised the fellowship with the Lord and with one another in the shared cup (see 1 Corinthians 10:16). The same considerations apply to the bread: hygienic scruples have led to the serving of small pieces of bread, but Paul assumes the use of the single loaf, symbolising Christ and his church (1 Cor 10:17).⁴⁸

So, when we come to examining the shape of the Eucharist in the light of our re-examination of our roots, we will attempt to avoid succumbing to too many cultural byeways.

Then, we live in a generation of ecumenical theological dialogue, liturgical renewal and a re-discovery of the third person of the Trinity. These three factors have all influenced the approach of many people into how we think about and celebrate the meal. There is no better example of the exploration of ecumenical theological dialogue than the World Council of Churches' Faith and Order Commission report, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, the so-called Lima document.⁴⁹ The section on the Eucharist is one which

strikes chords with our understanding, as Morris West says:

Baptists would agree with the Lima 'Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry' document when it says: Christians see the Eucharist prefigured in the Passover memorial of Israel's deliverance from the land of bondage and in the meal of the Covenant on Mount Sinai. It is the new paschal meal of the Church, the meal of the Covenant which Christ gave to his disciples as the anamnesis of his death and resurrection, as the anticipation of the supper of the lamb. In and through the acted creed of the holy meal Baptists reaffirm their baptismal faith...⁵⁰

In fact, the official Baptist Union response welcomed the careful way in which the Lima report seeks to define some traditional Eucharistic emphases such as sacrifice and real presence in a manner which contributed to the removal of historic misunderstandings between Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants and the believers' church traditions. The Lima report went on to emphasise a biblical framework and argued the case for a process of reception to bring churches closer together in both understanding and practice. In the section on practice I am drawn to two paragraphs which resonate with Zwingli, the Anabaptists and with our Calvinistic influences, at least as understood by Zwingli and Calvin, if not always by their followers:

30. Christian faith is deepened by the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Hence the Eucharist should be celebrated frequently...

31. As the Eucharist celebrates the resurrection of Christ, it is appropriate that it should take place at least every Sunday. As it is the new sacramental

meal of the people of God, every Christian should be encouraged to receive communion frequently.⁵¹

Likewise, the charismatic movement has opened up aspects of worship and reflection upon the Eucharist, which have begun to affect some Baptist practices in certain parts of the world. The renewal movement has occurred across the boundaries of denominations and Roman Catholic charismatics, such as Ian Petit, have spoken widely in Baptist and Free Church groups, often bringing with them insights from their own liturgical traditions.⁵² Douglas McBain, a Baptist leader amongst those involved in charismatic renewal within the British Isles, offers these comments:

The only service which carries the direct mandate of Christ is the Lord's Supper, or Eucharist. It is the great act of thanksgiving when through bread, wine and word Christ draws near to us to preside in our midst. So let it be the best home-baked bread and the finest wine, not home brewed vinegar! Why an oversweet Ribena substitute without body and bouquet? Let the Eucharist be celebrated weekly and let it be a time for corporate absolution and mutual reconciliation... we need to free the service from the heritage we have sometimes received of a sense of dismal nostalgia for a long-absent Lord, or from the equally disturbing trite flippancy into which it has sadly declined...⁵³

The development of Local Ecumenical Partnerships between Baptists and, particularly, Anglicans has also led to some interesting insights, one noteworthy example being St Thomas' Local Ecumenical Partnership, Crookes,

Sheffield. A former curate there, John Leach, has also entered the field of writing about worship renewal from a charismatic experience.⁵⁴

Bringing together these strands of our three historic roots and three contemporary themes, I am drawn to the conclusion that my experience of the celebration of the Lord's Supper as a teenager was not true to any of our historic insights. Rather, it represented the diluted experience which is exemplified in the approach of John Clifford. Since then, many Baptists have experienced renewal in other aspects of worship - in our music, in the introduction of symbol, especially at festivals,⁵⁵ the development of worship teams and the like. Unfortunately, in all too many cases, there has not always been, as Paul Beasley-Murray suggests,⁵⁶ a clear sense of direction. In some traditions the worship of the church has been reformed under the twin focuses of the charismatic or renewal movement, and the liturgical movement. For many Baptists there has been change, but not always grounded in a clear framework.

From our own theological inheritance of Zwingli, the Anabaptists and Calvin we can draw out a strong emphasis on the Eucharist as an event in which we experience the Real Presence of God with the accent on transignification. The focus for us being the Holy Spirit at work within the gathered body of believers. Here the actions themselves are given an importance based not only on the events of the Upper Room, but by the lakeside, in the village of Emmaus and on the hillsides of Palestine. The elements surrounding the meal, such as the foot-washing of the feet of the disciples and the role Jesus adopts as the server, a role usually taken by women, all are worthy of further reflection. All these provide us with biblical insights into

the power of the meal, when conducted according to a clear form and theology, to break down boundaries and create a dynamic believers' church intent on engaging in mission in the world.⁵⁷

Here I recognise that I have not engaged in a detailed exploration of a theology of sign or symbol which might be a necessary component to develop our understanding more adequately, but I believe further reflection in this area will yield rich results.

Much has been written on the overall liturgical structure of the Eucharist. Suffice it to say here that it ought, on the basis of our own principles, to be celebrated principally in the context of a worshipping community as the main act of community worship. The Magisterial Reformers and the Anabaptists encourage us to celebrate frequently and there is only special pleading to suggest it should be other than the principal act of worship on each Lord's Day. Such worship should be a rounded experience of the breaking of the Word and the breaking of the bread.⁵⁸ When we have finished addressing the practicalities and the concerns about familiarity, which might be applied to all worship, we ought not to avoid what appears to be the biblical norm and to have been the historic standard of the gathering churches.

The setting of this drama is likewise important. Zwingli saw the need to break away from the pattern of the word and the action taking place at one end of a worship space, whilst the people watched from a distance. Baptists, generally, for all our accent on the people of God, the priesthood of believers, still construct our worship spaces on the observer model. For those in the Spurgeonic tradition it was the creation of the Greek auditoria to listen to the Word expounded, with everything else of secondary

importance. For the manufacturers and entrepreneurs engaged in chapel expansion in the 1800s it was the worship of the organ and choir with balconies, as if at a theatre, separating the people as spectators and not participators. In more recent times the platform for the worship group and the space for the banks of speakers has often been more important than gathering people around the word and the table. The architectural style has often been reminiscent of a health authority clinic or the local Scout hut.⁵⁹

Baptists, as a people of the Word and a community of faith, ought to gather naturally round the Word and the table. We are intended to be a true human community and we ought to be much more cognisant of how groups naturally gather together around important things.⁶⁰ It should be anathema to our ecclesiology and Eucharistic theology to sit in serried ranks of pews or chairs looking at some distant performance and only participating marginally.

The celebration of the meal itself should be within the seamless robe of the adoration and general thanksgiving of the people, the opening and proclaiming of the Word, the response of commitment and of working at the calling to be intercessors. The complicated story of how the community meal became the contemporary breaking and sharing is well explained by others.⁶¹ For us, the possibility is there of setting our communion in either the more traditional actions, or recovering the full meal within an act of breaking open the Word.⁶²

Who should come to the meal and partake has been a traditional point of tension for Baptists. The litany of splits, debate and breaking of fellowship on this issue presents a reminder that important issues are at stake here. Is participation in the meal reserved for those who have

professed faith in Christ through baptism and are part of a covenanted believing community? Should the table be open, with no discipline, save that of the conscience of the individual, to all 'who love our Lord Jesus Christ and desire to be his true disciples'?⁶³ The issue, the dilemma and the tensions are shared across the Christian community.⁶⁴

The debate often focuses around children and much reflection is taking place on this at the present time.⁶⁵ I cannot offer any easy resolution of this complex issue, though I urge churches to give serious consideration to being clear in their teaching and practice. I also commend providing appropriate acts of recognition where the church takes the decision to 'fence the table' to baptised believers. This can include greetings, blessings and the offering of a foretaste, or aftertaste of the meal.⁶⁶

The Eucharist is, essentially, a community experience. My teenage memory is of the accent on individualism, but as I have sought to show, that is an entirely false assumption for those of us who claim to belong to the radicalised evangelical believers' church tradition. The 'privatisation' of communion with God, perhaps exemplified in the handful of worshippers at an Anglican early morning communion is not ours to emulate.⁶⁷

I have written elsewhere about the overall shape of the meal.⁶⁸ Crucial to the actions of the meal are the emphasis not simply on recalling the meal which preceded the death of Christ, but the resurrection meals and the foretaste of the heavenly banquet. So the style, the music, the language will hold in a creative tension both the proper remembrance of the painful cost, but also the joyous anticipation of the ultimate triumph.

The ancient church practised what today we call 'the Kiss of Peace'. Hubmaier developed for Anabaptists the 'Pledge of love'. These two historic elements deserve a considered place in our contemporary celebration. Scholarly arguments abound as to the right place. Justification of a range of options is possible, but for me it has always seemed appropriate to engage in some act of mutual recognition and affirmation after the Word has been broken, as a proper response to the Word and before we are united in the activity around the table. Typical northern European reserve encourages a handshake or clasp. In the Ukraine contact between men and women at this point can be a challenge to cultural sensitivity. In charismatic circles the bear-hug seems almost mandatory. Whatever the form,⁶⁹ the affirmation of the togetherness of the community, the coming to the table in solidarity and the mutuality of acceptance and the implied forgiving of wrongs done to one another can be a cathartic experience.

It is important that the language and actions help people understand the theology and the drama of the event. Certainly, Baptists believe there is no special 'priestly' office which indelibly sets some people aside to 'perform the rite' as if by magic. However, equally, we ought to reflect on the apostolic injunction to do everything decently and in good order. So I am clear that the church meeting ought to designate the one, or the many, that the gathered community wish to preside. Such a person, or people, ought to be properly instructed and be sensitive to the leadership of women and men in this Christ-commanded act. Therefore, I believe it is principally a task for the duly appointed minister of the church - one of the very few specific tasks the minister has. It also seems right that that

person leads in the central Eucharistic prayer, the great prayer of thanksgiving.⁷⁰

Those deacons who may feel redundant at this point ought to take seriously their own role within the church and become much more responsible for the intercessory work of the community and see that adequate prayers of intercession for the church and the world are developed within the total framework of the worship.

Our theology will help us make much of the prayer of thanksgiving before the bread is broken. Here is the occasion for the rehearsal of the mighty acts of God in creation and redemption, for the recalling of the events of the upper room and the words of institution, the past, present and future dimensions of the meal and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, upon the people gathered to eat the particular meal. Whilst Baptists have a rich heritage of extempore prayer, all those who seek to offer such a prayer can prepare themselves better by looking through the excellent resources of the Church which can enrich both our language and our theology.⁷¹ As much as anything else, we need to learn what not to include, for there is still a tendency amongst many to address issues of the community, to foster introverted personal piety and to recall saccharine-coated experiences, rather than offering thanks for the creative and redemptive activity of our sovereign God.

The authentic Baptist roots draw us to a contemporary sharing by breaking the loaf and drinking from the common cup of blessing. We have explored earlier some of the influences which led to the modern practice of diced bread and diluted Ribena in individual glasses. If that is the route we should make the whole journey to fairly traded coffee and a bite of a fast-food hamburger.

If there is something about the sign and symbol of the broken bread and fruit of the vine, then the greater part of Baptist experience, from the sixteen-hundreds to the nineteen-hundreds is a better guide and leads us once more into convergence with the vast majority of the world Christian family.

Gathered round the table and assisted in some way by the deacons or others appointed, as a believing community we really ought to serve one another. Neither the 'post office queue' of Locher, nor the shuffle of the plate round the serried ranks of pew-dwellers captures our theology of the believing community gathered around the table. However unless our architectural setting permits such an option whether standing or sitting, we may well find it difficult to act out our theology in a satisfactory way.

Yet though the theological structure, certainly from the Anabaptists, places the emphasis on the Gathering Church drawing round the Word and the table and their experiencing *koinonia*, we recall our earlier reflection of the eschatological and 'kingdom'⁷² dimension of the meal. No such gathering is truly reflective of our theology unless there is a distinct accent on the world beyond and in our prayers and in our departing for the 'Liturgy after the Liturgy', as the Orthodox describe it.⁷³ Failure to keep these two elements in tension – gathering and dispersing – has been a recurrent problem for the Christian church which must be addressed in the light of the Gospel accent and the eschatological dimension of our worship.

In this lecture I have sought to open up vistas for further examination by those who are concerned. The central thrust of my argument has been that whilst contemporary Baptist life and worship in the British isles, and to varying extent in Western Europe and North America, has been revitalise

and renewed by experiences from recent movements of renewal and reform, to a large extent the Eucharist within our churches has largely remained the same.⁷⁴ This 'remaining the same' is based on an inadequate recall of the sources we claim as normative. Whether we approach our understanding of the Eucharist from a Zwinglian, Anabaptist or Calvinistic standpoint, we have generally missed the depths of the theology and the richness of the experience.

We have much to learn from the insights of the liturgical movement, charismatic renewal and the modern ecumenical movement. However, the recovery of deep-rooted insights from the Gospels and from our Anabaptist and early Baptist heritage will refresh us with deep wells to help us on the journey of faith.⁷⁵ May it be that this Whitley Lecture will be a timely clarion call to engage in such a task.

Eternal God, you have graciously accepted us
 As living members of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ,
 And you have fed us with spiritual food
 In the sacrament of his body and blood.
 Now send us into the world in peace,
 And grant us strength and courage to love and serve you
 With gladness and singleness of heart,
 Through Christ our Lord. Amen.⁷⁶

Keith G. Jones

Praha

8 November 1998

The anniversary of the battle of Bila Hora when the people of the bread and the chalice were defeated by the reactionary forces of the Papacy.

NOTES

- 1 Horatius Bonar, 'Here, O my Lord, I see thee face to face', 316 in *The Baptist Hymn Book*, The Psalms and Hymns Trust, London 1962.
- 2 For an examination of Baptist attitudes and the persistence of 'mere memorialism' see R.L. Child (ed.), *The Lord's Supper: a Baptist statement*, Carey Kingsgate Press, London 1951.
- 3 Set out principally in E.A. Payne and S.F. Winward, *Order and Prayers for Church Worship*, Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, London 1960, especially the introductory essay.
- 4 I draw attention particularly to two 'popular' books by Baptists in the past twenty-five years, which have sought to engender fresh reflection amongst British Baptist Christians. M.H. Taylor, *Variations on a Theme*, London 1973; and Paul Beasley-Murray, *Faith and Festivity*, Eastbourne 1991.
- 5 *WCC Faith and Order Paper 111: Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, Geneva 1982, together with six volumes of responses from different member bodies of the WCC, a book of essays *Ecumenical Perspectives on BEM*, Geneva 1983, and a book of orders of service *Baptism and Eucharist: Ecumenical Convergence in Celebration*, Geneva 1983.
- 6 Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, London 1945, p.632.
- 7 H. Wayne Pipkin, *The Positive Religious Values of his Eucharistic Writings*, Leeds 1984, especially pp.22, 23.
- 8 On the role of the Holy Spirit in Zwingli's theology see Gottfried W. Locher, *Zwingli's Thought: New Perspectives*, Leiden 1981, especially pp.178-80; W.P. Stephens, *The Theology of Huldrych Zwingli*, Oxford 1986.
- 9 Locher, *op.cit.*, p.335.
- 10 On this point see Julius Schweizer, *Reformierte Abendmahlsgestaltung in der Schau Zwinglis*, Basel 1954, pp.84ff.
- 11 Otto Brunner, *Land und Herrschaft*, Baden bei Wien 1939.
- 12 Zwingli, *Letter to Matthew Alber, 16 November 1524*, translated in H. Wayne Pipkin, *Huldrych Zwingli Writings*, Volume II p.141, Allison Park, Pennsylvania 1984.

- 13 Pipkin, *ibid.*; *On the positive religious values of his Eucharistic writings*, p.24.
- 14 Locher, *op.cit.* 1981, pp.222-3. See also G.J. Botterweck and Helmer Ringren, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Grand Rapids 1980, pp.77-9.
- 15 Zwingli, *An Exposition of the Faith*, translated in G.W. Bromiley (ed.), *Zwingli and Bullinger*, Library of Christian Classics, Philadelphia, p.248.
- 16 Horton Davies, *Bread of Life and Cup of Joy: Newer Ecumenical Perspectives on the Eucharist*, Grand Rapids 1993, p.220ff.
- 17 R.L. Child (ed.), *The Lord's Supper: a Baptist Statement*, London 1951, p.9.
- 18 Whitley Lectures 1996-1997: Nigel G. Wright, *Power and Discipleship: towards a Baptist theology of the State*, and 1997-1998: Ruth M.B. Gouldbourne, *Reinventing the Wheel: Women and Ministry in English Baptist Life*.
- 19 On this point see Keith G. Jones, *A Believing Church: Learning from some contemporary Anabaptist and Baptist Perspectives*, Didcot 1998, p.11; E.A. Payne, 'Contacts Between Mennonites and Baptists', *Foundations* Vol.4, No 1, January 1961, pp.3-19.
- 20 For an outline of some key themes in this tradition see James W. McClendon, Jr, *Systematic Theology: Ethics*, Nashville 1986, pp.27-41.
- 21 Eleanor Kreider, *Given for you: A fresh look at communion*, Leicester 1998; personally I prefer the American title *Communion Shapes Character*, Herald Press, Scottdale, PA, 1997.
- 22 John D. Rempel, *The Lord's Supper in Anabaptism*, Scottdale, PA, 1993.
- 23 *ibid.*, p.33.
- 24 Eleanor Kreider, *op.cit.*, p.70.
- 25 The order is found with accompanying essay in H. Wayne Pipkin and John H. Yoder, *Balthasar Hubmaier: Theologian of Anabaptism*, Scottdale, PA, 1989, pp.393-408.
- 26 *ibid.*, p.403.

- 27 Ruth M.B. Gouldbourne, *Ecclesiology and Gender: The Hughey Lectures 1998*, Prague, Czech Republic, 1998. Web site www.ibts.cz.
- 28 Michael J. Walker, *Baptists at the Table*, Didcot 1992, p.1.
- 29 *ibid.*
- 30 Robert Hall jun., *On the terms of Communion*, 1815, in Olinthus Gregory (ed.), *The Works of Robert Hall, AM*, 1832, Volume 2, pp.63ff
- 31 For this and other variants within the Christian traditions see Max Thurian and Geoffrey Wainwright (eds), *Baptism and Eucharist: Ecumenical Convergence in Celebration*, Geneva 1983, p.163.
- 32 E.A. Payne, 'A Yorkshire Story (Hague of Scarborough)', *Baptist Quarterly* XIX Number 8, London 1962.
- 33 Walker, *op.cit.*, p.11.
- 34 C.H. Spurgeon, *Till He Come*, London 1894, p.148.
- 35 Cf Walker, *op.cit.*, p.182ff.
- 36 John Macquarrie, *A Guide to the Sacraments*, London 1997, p.104ff.
- 37 J.G. Davies, *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, London 1972, p.174. Also Alan Richardson (ed.), *A Dictionary of Christian Theology*, London 1969, pp.116-8.
- 38 A.J.B. Higgins, *The Lord's Supper in the New Testament*, London 1952, p.54.
- 39 J.G. Davies, *op.cit.*, p.142.
- 40 Yngve Brilioth (translated by A.G. Herbert), *Eucharistic faith and Practice: Evangelical and Catholic*, London 1965, p.32.
- 41 Sara Covin Juengst, *Breaking Bread: The Spiritual Significance of Food*, Louisville, Kentucky, 1992, p.85.
- 42 John E. Skoglund, 'Baptist worship' in *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*, ed. J.G. Davies, London 1972, p.66.
- 43 I am grateful to the Faculty of SEBLA, the Central American Baptist Theological Seminary in Santa Anna, El Salvador, for the opportunity to spend a day with them during my sabbatical discussing these, and related, issues.
- 44 Latin America is not the only area of the world where this insight has been explored. See, for instance, the Sri Lankan

theologian, Tissa Balasuriya, *The Eucharist and Human Liberation*, New York 1979.

- 45 The whole issue of the Eucharist as Liberation and Social Justice is one of great concern in Latin America. Jon Sobrino at the University of Central America, and others, have helped me to see afresh that true *koinonia* has this dimension. Horton Davies, *op. cit.*, has a helpful introductory chapter in his book, pp.180ff.
- 46 This pre-reformation reform has great symbolism for Czech people and the chalice is one of the national symbols and features still as an external decoration on Hussite churches.
- 47 cf William H. Brackney, 'Sacrament, Ordinance or Both? Baptist Understandings of the Lord's Supper', in *The Lord's Supper: Believers' Church Perspectives*, Herald Press, Pennsylvania, 1997. I am also most grateful to Dr Paul Duke and his colleagues in the MacAfee School of Theology at Mercer University for taking time to reflect with me on this whole topic.
- 48 P. Beasley-Murray, *Faith and Festivity*, Eastbourne 1991, p.68.
- 49 *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, Faith and Order Paper 111*, World Council of Churches, Geneva 1982. See also the four volumes of responses from the churches. The response of British Baptists is contained in *Churches Respond to BEM*, Volume 1, Geneva 1985, p.70. Also, *Eucharistic Worship in Ecumenical Contexts: The Lima Liturgy - and Beyond*, Thomas F. Best and Dagmar Heller (eds), WCC, Geneva 1998.
- 50 W.M.S. West, 'How do your churches, which practise only the Baptism of adults and accept only the Scriptures for the Creed, understand the Holy Meal as a Confession of Faith?', A draft paper for a proposed Roman Catholic reference book. I am grateful to Dr West for his helpful comments and for the sight of this document.
- 51 *BEM op. cit.*, p.16.
- 52 For a popular reflection on the Eucharist by a leading Roman Catholic charismatic see Ian Petit OSB, *This is My Body*, London 1991.
- 53 Douglas McBain, *Fire over the Waters: renewal among Baptists and others from the 1960s to the 1990s*, London 1997, p.178.
- 54 John Leach, *Liturgy and Liberty: Combining the best of the old with the best of the new in worship*, Eastbourne 1989.

- 55 I am thinking of the widespread introduction of banners hanging in our worship rooms; of the use of Advent wreaths; liturgical dance; the Paschal candle; Palm crosses; Easter eve services for the renewal of baptismal vows with symbols of water and of fire; the use of oil to mark the forehead at healing services; Baptist Assembly sessions with the handing out of nails and ribbons etc.
- 56 He warns against freedom without form and a human centred emotional experience which does not actually meet human need, *op.cit.*, p. 10.
- 57 On the issue of foot-washing see John Christopher Thomas, 'Footwashing within the Context of the Lord's Supper'. On Jesus adopting the role of women, see 'Mary, please pass the Bread – Social Implications of the Lord's Supper in the Early Church'. Both are in *The Lord's Supper: Believers Church Perspectives*, Dale R. Stoffer (ed.), Herald Press, Pennsylvania 1997. On social and cultural issues see also Dennis E. Smith and Hal E. Taussig, *Many Tables: The Eucharist in the New Testament and Liturgy Today*, Trinity Press, Philadelphia 1990.
- 58 Amongst British Baptists this view was classically expounded by E.A. Payne and S.F. Winward, *Order and Prayers for Church Worship*, London 1960, p.ixff. However, this firm position appeared to suffer a measure of retreat in the structure of *Patterns and Prayers for Christian Worship*, Oxford 1991. See also *The Renewal of Worship*, R.C.D. Jasper (ed.), London 1965, and *Getting the Liturgy Right*, R.C.D. Jasper (ed.), and other publications of the Joint Liturgical Group in which British Baptists have taken a prominent role. See also the books by Paul Beasley-Murray and Michael H. Taylor, cited earlier.
- 59 On the architectural issue see Keith G. Jones 'Architecture and Christian worship' in *Christian Worship: Some contemporary issues*, K.G. Jones and W.E. Whalley (eds), Leeds 1984.
- 60 For an architectural reflection on this see Professor Peter F. Smith, *Third Millennium Churches*, London 1972.
- 61 Michael H. Taylor, *op.cit.*, does this in a very readable way. The work of Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, and Josef A. Jungmann, *The Early Liturgy to the time of Gregory the Great*, London 1960, provide more detailed accounts.

- 62 There is a growing practice of sharing the Eucharist on Easter morning in the context of a breakfast meal and some churches do celebrate with community Eucharistic lunches. Paul's strictures on our attitude at the meal and the quantity of food are always worth remembering (1 Corinthians 11.21). The old Methodist *agape* meal is a form of half-way house.
- 63 For other examples of the way the table is 'fenced' amongst Baptists see *Patterns and Prayers for Christian Worship*, Oxford 1991, p.67ff.
- 64 Note the pain within the Roman Catholic community addressed in *One Bread One Body*, Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, Ireland and Scotland, London and Dublin, 1998.
- 65 I understand the next Whitley lecturer will address the issue. I draw your attention to Eleanor Kreider, *op.cit.*, p.169ff. Also *Worship and the Child*, R.C.D. Jasper (ed.), London 1975.
- 66 One Baptist church offers bread dipped in milk and honey to those who do not receive the bread and wine, especially children. The Orthodox church often uses the antidoron - the blessed bread distributed after the liturgy - in this way.
- 67 Helpful insights into the contemporary social and cultural dimensions are contained in Rodney Clapp, *A Peculiar People: the church as culture in a post-modern society*, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1996, p.105ff.
- 68 Keith G. Jones 'The Lord's Supper' in *Baptist Basics*, Didcot 1993, and 'Presiding at the Lord's Supper' in *Preaching Today*, Volume 38, No.3, Didcot 1995.
- 69 My own preference is to use something like the Graham Kendrick song 'Peace to you' and encourage the congregation to move round and shake hands with one another as they sing.
- 70 Traditionally many Baptists have had the two prayers. One for the bread and one for the wine. This is an archaism from the previous multiple actions around a meal. If a full meal is envisaged the two prayers are appropriate at the beginning and towards the end when the cup of blessing is served. In the standard truncated form common to the great part of the Christian church it seems perverse not to have the single prayer as part of our reception of the Lima process.

- 71 See, for instance, Horton Davies, *Bread of Life and Cup of Joy*, or Max Thurian and Geoffrey Wainwright, *Baptism and Eucharist: Ecumenical Convergence in Celebration* for a wide range of resources from throughout the world.
- 72 I use the word 'Kingdom' here as one reflective of the Biblical themes in the Synoptic Gospels. I recognise the difficulty of this language for us in contemporary society where 'Kingdom' speaks of male patriarchy and where some of the human models are not helpful. I note, as Dr Martin Scott has reminded me, that the accent in the Gospel of John is on 'community'. In the limits of this Whitley Lecture I have been forced to use some words which may convey a less than Gospel vision to contemporary people because of other associations.
- 73 Ion Bria, *The Liturgy after the Liturgy: Mission and witness from an Orthodox Perspective*, Geneva 1996.
- 74 For analysis of contemporary British Baptist worship practice see the statistical data collected by the Baptist Union of Great Britain in 1996. 23% of churches celebrate the Eucharist monthly, 64.3% twice a month; 17.8% practice the 'Kiss of peace'. As the Revd C.J. Ellis comments 'This regularity of Eucharistic celebration is based on the cycle of a month, rather than the weekly cycle of the day of the Lord's Resurrection and is symptomatic of an organising of the calendar on a secular basis rather than the dynamics of the Liturgical year'.
- 75 Used in John D. Rempel 'Towards an Anabaptist Theology of the Lord's Supper' in *The Lord's Supper: Believers Church Perspectives*, Dale R. Stoffer (ed.), Herald press, Pennsylvania, 1997.

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APPENDIX 1

ECUMENICAL PERSPECTIVES
ON BAPTISM, EUCHARIST AND MINISTRY

Edited by Max Thurian

THE EUCHARIST

Liturgy of Entrance

1 ENTRANCE PSALM (with antiphon and Gloria Patri; or hymn)

2 GREETING*

P. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the
communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.C. *And also with you.*

3 CONFESSION

C. *Most merciful God,**we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves.**We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we
have done and by what we have left undone.**We have not loved you with our whole heart;**we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.**For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,**so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways,**to the glory of your holy name. Amen.*

* * P = Presiding Minister

C = Congregation

O = Another Celebrant

4 ABSOLUTION

P. Almighty God gave Jesus Christ to die for us and for the sake of Christ forgives us all our sins.

As a called and ordained minister of the Church and by the authority of Jesus Christ,

I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C. *Amen.*

5 KYRIE LITANY

O. That we may be enabled to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace and together confess that there is only one Body and one Spirit, only one Lord, one faith, one baptism, let us pray to the Lord. (Eph.4:3-5)

C. *Kyrie eleison.*

O. That we may soon attain to visible communion in the Body of Christ, by breaking the bread and blessing the cup around the same table, let us pray to the Lord. (1 Cor.10:16-17)

C. *Kyrie eleison*

O. That, reconciled to God through Christ, we may be enabled to recognize each other's ministries and be united in the ministry of reconciliation, let us pray to the Lord. (2 Cor.5:18-20)

C. *Kyrie eleison*

6 GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,

- and peace to God's people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,

- We worship you, we give you thanks.

We praise you for your glory.

- Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,

Lord God, Lamb of God,

- You take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;

You take away the sin of the world: receive our prayer;

- You are seated at the right hand of the Father: have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,

- You alone are the Lord,
- You alone are the Most High: Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
- In the glory of God the Father, Amen.

Liturgy of the Word

7 COLLECT

P. Let us pray: Lord God, gracious and merciful,
you anointed your beloved Son with the Holy Spirit at his baptism
in the Jordan, and you consecrated him prophet, priest and king:
pour out your Spirit on us again that we may be faithful to our
baptismal calling, ardently desire the communion of Christ's body
and blood, and serve the poor of your people and all who need our
love, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and
reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever one God,
world without end.

C. *Amen.*

8 FIRST LESSON (Old Testament, Acts or Revelation)

9 PSALM OF MEDITATION

10 EPISTLE

11 ALLELUIA

12 GOSPEL

13 HOMILY

14 SILENCE

15 NICENE/CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED (text of 381)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty maker of heaven
and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, Light from Light, true God from

true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the
Virgin Mary and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried;
on the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven.

He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
he will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his
kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who
proceeds from the Father;

with the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified;
he has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

16 INTERCESSION

O. In faith let us pray to God our Father, his Son Jesus Christ and the
Holy Spirit.

C. *Kyrie eleison.*

O. For the Church of God throughout all the world, let us invoke the
Spirit.

C. *Kyrie eleison.*

O. For the leaders of the nations, that they may establish and defend
justice and peace, let us pray for the wisdom of God.

C. *Kyrie eleison.*

O. For those who suffer oppression or violence, let us invoke the
power of the Deliverer.

C. *Kyrie eleison.*

O. That the churches may discover again their visible unity in the one
baptism which incorporates them in Christ, let us pray for the love
of Christ.

C. *Kyrie eleison.*

- O. That the churches may attain communion in the eucharist around one table, let us pray for the strength of Christ.
- C. *Kyrie eleison.*
- O. That the churches may recognize each other's ministries in the service of their one Lord, let us pray for the peace of Christ.
- C. *Kyrie eleison.*
(Spontaneous prayers of the congregation)
- O. Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C. *Amen.*

Liturgy of the Eucharist

17 PREPARATION

- O. Blessed are you, Lord God of the universe, you are the giver of this bread, fruit of the earth and of human labour, let it become the bread of Life.
- C. *Blessed be God, now and for ever!*
- O. Blessed are you, Lord God of the universe, you are the giver of this wine, fruit of the vine and of human labour, let it become the wine of the eternal Kingdom.
- C. *Blessed be God, now and for ever!*
- O. As the grain once scattered in the fields and the grapes once dispersed on the hillside are now reunited on this table in bread and wine, so, Lord, may your whole Church soon be gathered together from the corners of the earth into your Kingdom.
- C. *Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus!*

18 DIALOGUE

- P. The Lord be with you.
- C. *And also with you.*
- P. Lift up your hearts.
- C. *We lift them to the Lord.*
- P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- C. *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

19 PREFACE

P. Truly it is right and good to glorify you, at all times and in all places, to offer you our thanksgiving O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God.

Through your living Word you created all things, and pronounced them good.

You made human beings in your own image, to share your life and reflect your glory.

When the time had fully come, you gave Christ to us as the Way, the Truth and the Life.

He accepted baptism and consecration as your Servant to announce the good news to the poor.

At the last supper Christ bequeathed to us the eucharist, that we should celebrate the memorial of the cross and resurrection, and receive his presence as food.

To all the redeemed Christ gave the royal priesthood and, in loving his brothers and sisters, chooses those who share in the ministry, that they may feed the Church with your Word and enable it to live by your Sacraments.

Wherefore, Lord, with the angels and all the saints, we proclaim and sing your glory:

20 SANCTUS

C. *Holy, Holy, Holy....*

21 EPICLESIS I

P. O God, Lord of the universe, you are holy and your glory is beyond measure.

Upon your eucharist send the life-giving Spirit, who spoke by Moses and the prophets, who overshadowed the Virgin Mary with grace, who descended upon Jesus in the river Jordan and upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost.

May the outpouring of this Spirit of Fire transfigure this thanksgiving meal that this bread and wine may become for us the body and blood of Christ.

C. *Veni Creator Spiritus!*

22 INSTITUTION

P. May this Creator Spirit accomplish the words of your beloved Son, who, in the night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take, eat: this is my body, which is given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

After supper he took the cup and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them and said:

Drink this, all of you: this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Great is the mystery of faith.

C. *Your death, Lord Jesus, we proclaim!*

Your resurrection we celebrate!

Your coming in glory we await!

23 ANAMNESIS

P. Wherefore, Lord, we celebrate today the memorial of our redemption: we recall the birth and life of your Son among us, his baptism by John, his last meal with the apostles, his death and descent to the abode of the dead;

we proclaim Christ's resurrection and ascension in glory, where as our Great High Priest he ever intercedes for all people;

and we look for his coming at the last.

United in Christ's priesthood, we present to you this memorial: Remember the sacrifice of your Son and grant to people everywhere the benefits of Christ's redemptive work.

C. *Maranatha, the Lord comes!*

24 EPICLESIS II

P. Behold, Lord, this eucharist which you yourself gave to the Church and graciously receive it, as you accept the offering of your Son whereby we are reinstated in your Covenant.

As we partake of Christ's body and blood, fill us with the Holy Spirit that we may be one single body and one single spirit in Christ, a living sacrifice to the praise of your glory.

C. *Veni Creator Spiritus!*

25 COMMEMORATIONS

O. Remember, Lord, your one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of Christ.

Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace.

Remember, Lord, all the servants of your Church: bishops, presbyters, deacons, and all to whom you have given special gifts of ministry.

(Remember especially....)

Remember also all our sisters and brothers who have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to you alone:

guide them to the joyful feast prepared for all peoples in your presence, with the blessed Virgin Mary, with the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and martyrs.... And all the saints for whom your friendship was life.

With all these we sing your praise and await the happiness of your Kingdom where with the whole creation, finally delivered from sin and death, we shall be enabled to glorify you through Christ our Lord;

C. *Maranatha, the Lord comes!*

26 CONCLUSION

P. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, all honour and glory is yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

C. *Amen.*

27 THE LORD'S PRAYER

O. United by one baptism in the same Holy Spirit and the same Body of Christ, we pray as God's sons and daughters:

C. *Our Father, ...*

28 THE PEACE

- O. Lord Jesus Christ, you told your apostles:
Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you.
Look not on our sins but on the faith of your Church;
In order that your will be done, grant us always this peace and
guide us towards the perfect unity of your Kingdom for ever
- C. *Amen.*
- P. The peace of the Lord be with you always
- C. *And also with you.*
- O. Let us give one another a sign of reconciliation and peace.

29 THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

- P. The bread which we break is the communion of the Body of Christ,
the cup of blessing for which we give thanks is the communion in
the Blood of Christ.

30 LAMB OF GOD

- C. *Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.*

31 COMMUNION

32 THANKSGIVING PRAYER

- P. In peace let us pray to the Lord:
O Lord our God we give you thanks for uniting us by baptism in the
Body of Christ and for filling us with joy in the eucharist.
Lead us towards the full visible unity of your Church and help us
to treasure all the signs of reconciliation you have granted us.
Now that we have tasted of the banquet you have prepared for us in
the world to come, may we all one day share together the
inheritance of the saints in the life of your heavenly city,

through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

C. *Amen.*

33 FINAL HYMN

34 WORD OF MISSION

35 BLESSING

P. The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face to shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favour and give you peace.

Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,

bless you now and forever.

C. *Amen.*

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APPENDIX 2

THE BREAKING OF BREAD

A pattern - primitive, contemporary, communitarian - for 'baptists' and other Christians, prepared by Professor James Wm. McClendon, Jr. Used with his permission.

NOTES

P = presiding minister

S = serving minister (as many as needed)

underlined parts involve all participants

CAPITALS indicate theological essentials of the action

It is desirable that words assigned here to one participant (eg P) be said by others as well (eg by P or S) or by all.

Beforehand a TABLE is covered with a white cloth; on it beneath another cloth the BREAD and WINE may be placed. Suitable lighting and seating are provided. As CELEBRANTS (ie WORSHIPPERS) arrive, they place their offerings in a basket located near the entrance. Now there is a rehearsal, especially of the singing, sufficient to free each for full participation.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Entrance Hymn of Praise (Hymn of Faith) -

(During this hymn, all stand, and the ministers (P and S) who will serve come to the table, facing the others; all remain standing)

Invocation (P):

Come, Holy Spirit, come.
 Come as the fire and burn;
 Come as the wind and cleanse;
 Come as the flood and fill us all
 Till we are altogether yours.
 Convict, convert, consecrate,

Make ours the prayer that the disciples prayed,
saying [here all join in] Our father etc.

God's Word from the OLD TESTAMENT and from the NEW TESTAMENT

Reader may stand in place, or come to table. Reader may begin by saying 'Listen for God's Word from _____ and from _____.'

Reader may end by saying 'And God has more light and truth yet to break forth out of his holy Word.' [from John Robinson's sermon to the departing *Mayflower* congregation in Leyden.]

SERMON

Silence

LITURGY OF THE TABLE

Remembering song -

During this song, all circle the table. Those presenting themselves at this time for reception into membership, and the offering if any, (and the elements of bread and wine if these are not already on the table) are brought forward. If the elements are in place already, the cloth covering them is now removed (by S), and as the song ends, the offering is PLACED UPON THE TABLE (P), new members are received, and, remaining standing, all join in the

Prayer of Reconciliation:

Here, Lord we return the fruit of our labour;
here the bread we have earned by the sweat of our brow.
Refresh us now with your presence, as we remember again, in these
gifts, the gift without money and without price.
If we have wronged anyone, we pledge to restore what can be
restored;
we here forgive any who have wronged us;
and we humbly ask that with these gifts you receive us at this table,
your repentant children,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Peace (with intercessory prayers)

P or S may say, 'Greet one another with a kiss of charity' [I Pet.5:14]. Those near one another exchange a handclasp or embrace.

P or S may say, 'Being at peace with one another, let us widen the circle of love

- interceding for the **church**,
- for God's great **kingdom**,
- and for our **enemies**."**

(Here petitions are made (1) for this community, (2) for the people of God and the kingdom of God in all creation, and (3) for the enemies of that kingdom and our enemies. These prayers may be written for concise expression [samples below**]; in any case, they are offered by members of the community. ALL JOIN IN THE 'AMEN' AFTER EACH PRAYER.)

Table Hymn [or Hymn of Christian Love] -

(During this hymn, toward its end, P and S approach the table, and may gird themselves with plain white aprons, as for serving food or washing feet.)

[Optional: Children's Agape meal]

The Ceremony of the BREAD**The STORY retold**

The Narrator (P or S) now **RETELLS THE STORY** of salvation, invariably including the story of **ISRAEL AND ITS COVENANT** and of **JESUS AND HIS WAY**, culminating in **THE CROSS** and **THE RESURRECTION**. Recalling the Last Supper, P now **TAKES THE BREAD** and repeats I Cor. 11:23f.:

'For I received of the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it....'

P then says, 'Let us give thanks.'

The THANKS over the Bread (P or S)

The prayer that follows here may be extempore, but is carefully worded to acknowledge the saving story just recalled. [see sample prayer below**]

The BREAKING and DISTRIBUTION of Bread (S, may be assisted as needed by P)

(Remembering song may be sung by all during this action. When all have been served, P last, there is silence.)

P then says 'And Jesus said,' and P (who may be joined by all) says

THIS IS MY BODY, BROKEN FOR YOU,
THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

Then all EAT the bread.

The Ceremony of the CUP

The THANKS over the Cup

After a moment of silence, P takes a cup, saying IN LIKE MANNER ALSO THE CUP, AFTER SUPPER, SAYING, THIS CUP IS THE NEW COVENANT IN MY BLOOD.

The brief prayer of thanks that follows (S or P), again extempore, may begin with the Jewish blessing. Typically it remembers especially the shed blood and broken body of the Lord. It may include I Corinthians 10:16f.:

'Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.'

The SHARING of the Cup

(Remembering song is again sung by all during this action.) If there is table service for it, P now pours a symbolic cup; in any case the

cup is served to all (by S, assisted as needed by P) in the same order as the bread, When all have been served, P last again, P now lifts the cup and (joined by S) says,

FOR AS OFTEN AS YOU EAT THIS BREAD,
AND DRINK THE CUP,
YOU PROCLAIM THE LORD'S DEATH
TILL HE COME.

Then all DRINK, and cups are returned to the table.

The 'Maranatha' Hymn [for Hymn of Gospel Hope] -

The one who leads this may say, 'And when they had sung a hymn, they went out' (Mark 14:26).

During the hymn, the aprons, if worn, are removed and folded, and any remaining elements are covered with a cloth (S, assisted by P). There may be a brief scriptural blessing at this hymn's end, perhaps from Number 6:24-26:

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make face to shine upon you
and be gracious unto you.
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you
And give you peace.

***for the READER**

Standing in place, the Reader says 'Hear the word of the Lord from _____ and from _____.' After reading the two passages, Reader says, 'And God has more light and truth yet to break forth out of his holy Word.'

****Sample Intercessions:**

Intercession #1

'Lord, you loved the church and gave yourself for it; hear our prayer for the community gathered here: fill it with your Spirit, furnish it with gifts according to your purpose, so that every gathering of your People in all the world may show forth your wisdom and knowledge and power and love.'

Intercession #2

'O God, the earth is yours, and all its fulness, the world and those who dwell in it; rule and overrule in human affairs, so that peace and justice may prevail, and the suffering of this present time be overcome, by the glory to be revealed in us through Christ Jesus.'

Intercession #3

'We pray for those we believe to be our enemies, whether at home or abroad; provide for their good, melt their hearts with your love, and use us each one as instruments of your peace, O God of peace.'

End



Keith G. Jones is Rector of the International Baptist Theological Seminary of the European Baptist Federation in Prague.

He ministered in Yorkshire, his home county, from 1973 until 1990 when he became Deputy General Secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain. Trained at the Northern Baptist College and the University of Manchester, he has done postgraduate work in the Universities of Bradford and Leicester and at the International Theological Seminary in Rüschiikon.

He is married to Denise, who presently works as a Personal Assistant in Churches Together in England. They have two sons, Alex and Tim, both in full-time education.

The Trustees of the Whitley Trust invited Keith to deliver the 1998/99 Lecture on the theme of the Eucharist, in which he has taken a long and particular interest.