



Angels, Bees, and Candle Wax

The walrus and the carpenter spoke of shoes and ships and sealing wax, which is strange enough, but what are angels, bees, and candle wax doing in the Proclamation of the Easter Vigil? Isn't the church to speak of Jesus' death and resurrection?

In his enduring work on liturgy, Peter Brunner observes that "the church's worship on earth tends toward the point where it may unite in an eternal unison with the worship of the celestial hosts and also with that of the nonhuman, earthly creatures" (*Worship in the Name of Jesus* [St. Louis: Concordia, 1968] 94). Now that is "Word and world"! More than that, it is Word and cosmos, earth and heaven. It maybe that these three elements—the church's proclamation of the gospel, the voice of the world with all its creatures, and the songs of the angels—are united nowhere else as they are in worship.

Or, at least they should be so united. Claus Westermann notes correctly that, unlike the worship of the Psalter, our worship often finds no place for "small children and old people, animals, trees and mountains, work and celebration, laughing and crying, evening and morning" (typewritten manuscript of a sermon on 1 Corinthians 8:6 [Heidelberg: Peterskirche, April 17, 1977]; my translation). But is it not precisely as the church holds firmly and fully to the Word that its worship will be moved not only to speak to but to find place for the voices of the world? And the angelic choirs will provide the descant.

"Worship" is therefore a theme which works particularly well for this journal. Yet, given this introduction, it may strike the reader as strange that many of the articles in this issue seem so "in-house." Surely, more authors employ a Lutheran "we" or "our" than is common for us. That has primarily to do with the nature of the assignments: to reflect on the state of worship particularly in the light of the tenth anniversary of the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (LBW). Yet, given the ecumenical nature of LBW, we are hopeful that these reflections will have meaning beyond the Lutheran fold.

There is something else going on in the personal pronouns in these articles though: it is simply impossible to remain neutral and objective about worship. It involves more than the mind, more than scholarship. For that we do not apologize, since it forces us in the direction of theology for life and ministry, which is our purpose. "Worship," then, brings together the concerns of the title (*Word & World*) and the subtitle ("Theology for Christian Ministry") of this journal in a unique way. I am pleased to begin my term as editor with such an opportunity.

In the Perspectives section *Paul Manz* reflects on the changes in church music and liturgy during his own lifetime. He is especially pleased to be seen

now as a partner in ministry, alongside the pastor. Those who have heard Manz play will agree that the organist does indeed preach and teach, comfort and counsel, as his essay contends. Next,

Mons Teig challenges the church to think about its worship planning in the same way it thinks about its preaching. Both preacher and liturgist need to care about the hermeneutical circle connecting text and context. Teig offers some specific liturgical applications of his thinking.

Horace Allen rejoices both in the remarkable liturgical convergence found on the ecumenical scene and in the stability of ecumenical relationships which makes it possible to raise the hard questions for discussion. Allen develops several of these issues, making it clear that we have a difficult journey ahead of us. Yet he does this with a positive tone which views the challenges with hope rather than with despair.

The three articles that follow look at the Lutheran worship tradition from a variety of perspectives. As a parish pastor, *Stephen Cornils* provides an appreciative critique of LBW. He invites congregations to join in a vital liturgical dance, offering practical suggestions to make that more fully possible. *Henry Horn's* reminiscence is more than nostalgia. It serves to call the church to continue the hard work of thinking about worship at a serious scholarly level in order to inform our ongoing task of constructing meaningful liturgies for rapidly changing contexts. *Eugene Brand* suggests that, properly used, the LBW functions to shape the piety of North American Lutherans towards a more ecumenical, eschatological, and corporate expression. As director of the LBW project, his reflections are especially significant.

In a different vein, *Patrick Keifert* challenges the conventional wisdom that the warm, friendly, and intimate family is the appropriate model for a congregation that wants to be open to strangers. He argues instead that renewal of a positive sense of public space and public ritual will provide a more welcoming stance.

Gerhard Forde and *Paul Knutson* are Face to Face in the Resources section, asking what's at stake in the title for the Sacrament of the Altar (Eucharist or Lord's Supper?). Then *Michael Aune* reviews several recent offerings in liturgical literature. He invites us to think more profoundly about worship while also offering resources for doing worship.

Outside the theme, *Garrett Paul* examines several recent volumes on ethics. His review essay is especially helpful because it enables the reader to see trends and directions, rather than merely consider books in isolation. *Texts in Context* takes a different tack this time. *Michael Rogness* looks at all three lessons for the Festival of the Transfiguration of our Lord. He makes clear that a sermon must have a focus (and thus, by implication, a central text), but he shows how the message can be enhanced by using insights from the other appointed lessons.

This seminary community has already spoken its thanks to Arland Hultgren for his work as editor of this journal, but the Editorial Board and I want to do that again publicly in this space. Professor Hultgren has handed over to us a journal of quality. It is nice to begin somewhere quite far beyond square one, so I am particularly grateful. Thank you, Arland!

F. J. G.