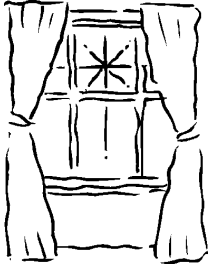


Looking Out My Window, July 29, 2022



Last week's paragraph ended with this quote from Brian Wren, a British poet, scholar, and hymn writer.

"Language, like tobacco, is habit forming. Some patterns of writing and speaking are addictive and may damage both the user and others who breathe the same linguistic atmosphere. If we see the damage being done and decide to kick the habit, we may get withdrawal symptoms and hostility or derision from other smokers. But, in the end, we shall enjoy breathing fresh air." [Brian Wren, *What Language Shall I Borrow?* (New York:

Crossroads, 1993), pp. 82-83.]

We do form language habits, and that especially holds true for the language of worship. Our experiences of the Divine get linked to those language habits and make them especially dear. Some cannot envision worshipping meaningfully using any other language. *The Book of Common Prayer* recognizes that by preserving Elizabethan English in Rite 1.

But, the preface to that same *Book of Common Prayer*, written in 1789, says, ". . . in his worship different forms and usages may without offence be allowed, provided the substance of the Faith be kept entire." And, those forms and usages, "may be altered, abridged, enlarged, amended, or otherwise disposed of." (*BCP*, p. 9.)

Our tradition advocates for worship in the language of the people, a language that continually shifts and changes, thus requiring revision. If we get addicted to a particular worship language and allow no other, we automatically exclude those who cannot identify with that particular language. Better to keep revising while also offering worship that preserves more traditional forms. Otherwise, we exclude the more traditional worshipper.

We have been using an approved Episcopal resource for inclusive language in the noon folk mass. The source, *Enriching Our Worship: 1* offers three eucharistic prayers in language less dominated by masculine language. For the next two Sundays, we will use one of those prayers in the 10 am service to introduce you to that resource, one your new rector may want to drawn on.

God's peace,

David+

David W. Perkins+
Interim Rector