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CHURCH MUSIC

About This Issue

This issue of CHURCH MUSIC features a few of the important aspects of music in Matins and Vespers, a topic that is in need of increasingly wider exploration. *Charles L. McClean,* Addison, Ill., describes some of the broad basic concerns of worship along with the general structure of these services. The special problems related to congregational singing of the canticles are analyzed by *Kurt Eggert,* Milwaukee, Wis., while certain esthetic aspects of concerted canticles for the choir are offered in an article by *Richard Benedum* of Ohio State University, Dayton.

The validity of traditional office hymns in contemporary worship is discussed by *Herbert Lindemann,* Valparaiso, Ind.; a specially prepared guide to their use is added. A special feature offers new tunes and settings of traditional office hymns in English translation, written for CHURCH MUSIC by six distinguished composers: *Alan Stout,* Evanston, Ill., *Carlton R. Young,* Nashville, Tenn., *Ludwig Lenel,* Allentown, Pa., *Walter L. Pelz,* Lindsborg, Kansas, *Gerhard Cartford,* St. Paul, Minn., and *Richard Wienhorst,* Valparaiso, Ind.

An interview with *William G. Storey,* Notre Dame, Ind., by *Mark Bangert,* St. Louis, Mo., offers insights into current worship practices at Notre Dame University. The progress of the projected new Lutheran worship book is reviewed in the first of a series by *Eugene L. Brand,* New York City.

Reappraisal of Eric Werner's famous book on liturgy and music, *The Sacred Bridge,* is presented by *M. Alfred Bichsel,* Rochester, N. Y. Reviews of the liturgical music from *Contemporary Worship 5* are offered by *Arthur Halbardier,* Glen Ellyn, Ill., *Herbert Gotsch,* River Forest, Ill., and *John Becker,* Philadelphia, Pa. New organ music is examined by *Harvey Hahn,* Elmhurst, Ill., and *Philip Gehring,* Valparaiso, Ind., and some recent choral publications are reviewed by *John Folkening,* Hales Corners, Wis. The report for *The Current Scene* was prepared by R. Harold Terry, Philadelphia, Pa.

A ten-year anniversary index of CHURCH MUSIC is another special feature of this issue.

The choral music included is a recent work by Austin C. Lovelace, *Go in Peace,* presented with the compliments of Augsburg Publishing House.

The cover was designed by *Walter Martin,* River Forest, Ill., especially for this issue.

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Supplementary Feature

Ten Year Index

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"Disregard of the accepted liturgy of the church . . . not only violates the integrity of the rite, but also robs the congregation of the protection the liturgy is intended to give them against the often arbitrary whims of the clergy."

MATINS AND VESPERS IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

CHARLES L. MCCLEAN

Matins and Vespers are descendants from the daily services of the pre-Reformation church. They can be traced back through the ancient Christian church to Jewish customs of prayer at the time of Christ.

The daily office of the Western Church emerged in its classic pattern in the sixth-century monastic rule of St. Benedict. The office consisted of eight services. Matins, sung during the night, consisted mainly of three sets of psalms and lessons, and was characterized by meditation on the Scriptures. Lauds followed at dawn. Essentially an act of praise, Lauds took its name from Psalms 148—150 which were invariably sung at that office. Prime was said at the beginning of the day's work. Terce, Sext, and Nones—said at nine o'clock in the morning, at noon, and at three o'clock in the afternoon—consisted chiefly of the praying of Psalm 119. Vespers, sung at sundown, was an act of praise for God's mercies during the day drawing to its close. At Compline, prayed before retiring, Christians commended themselves to God's keeping for the hours of darkness.

In the course of these services the entire psalter was prayed each week. In fact the heart and core of the divine office was praying of the psalter, the Spirit-given prayer book of the people of God. The offices were sung daily in cathedral, monastic, and collegiate churches. The clergy were increasingly obligated to say the offices privately if they were unable to be present for the public singing of the offices; the laity were encouraged to be present whenever possible, and not uncommonly attended Lauds and Vespers, especially on Sundays and festivals.

At the time of the Reformation the Lutheran (and Anglican) reformers reduced the offices to two in number.[1] In the Lutheran Church a morning office, called Matins, was formed of elements of Matins and Lauds. An evening office, called Vespers, was formed of elements of Vespers and Compline. Although nearly all of the Lutheran Church Orders of the six-

[1]Luther's suggestions for morning and evening services are found in "Concerning the Order of Public Worship," "An Order of Mass and Communion for the Church at Wittenberg," and "The German Mass and Order of Service," *Luther's Works* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 53, pp. 11-40, 53-90.

teenth century made provision for Matins and Vespers, they were chiefly maintained in the schools. Large portions of the services were sung in Latin. As a result the offices gradually disappeared from congregational use. The disintegration brought about by the Thirty Years' War and the inroads of Pietism and rationalism all contributed to the disappearance of the offices from Lutheran use. The survival—perhaps more accurately, the revival—of the offices of Matins and Vespers in Lutheranism today is a result of the confessional-liturgical renewal of the nineteenth century.

The Structure and Character of Matins and Vespers

The basic structure of both Matins and Vespers is identical: psalmody, lection, canticle, prayers. Massey Shepherd comments that "though not intended to be dramatic services like the sacramental rites, the Daily Offices are not lacking a certain rhythm and careful design of movement."[2] In the opening versicles we implore God's help, apart from which we cannot draw near to Him in worship. Then we join ancient Israel and the new Israel—the church—and our Lord, Himself the Israel of God, in offering prayer and praise to the Father in the words of the psalter. In the psalmody we speak to God, in the lection God speaks to us. Then we respond in the canticle which constitutes our thankful response to the Word of God read (and proclaimed). The canticle is in a real sense the "climax" of the offices. In it we thank God above all for the gift of salvation in Christ. *Benedictus* (the song of Zechariah, the Father of St. John the Baptist) and *Magnificat* (the song of the Blessed Virgin Mary) are daily memorials of the incarnation. Sung morning and evening, they daily express the thankful wonder of Christian people that God has indeed "visited and redeemed His people" in the Child born of Mary. In the prayers we bring before God, morning and evening, not only our own needs, but the needs of the whole church and the whole world.

Matins and Vespers differ in "atmosphere." As creation awakes to a new day, the Christian praises his Creator, consciously and deliberately giving the new day to God whose gift it is. The rising sun is a daily reminder that "the Dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" *(Benedictus)*. Before the busyness of the day has distracted us, we offer praise and adoration to God. Through His Word God speaks to us and provides guidance, direction, and strength. We ask God's help and protection; we pray that He would keep us from sin and harm.

As the day draws to its close, the Christian community again gathers to praise God for the blessings of the day that is ending, to hear again that Word which both judges and pardons, to rejoice again in the redemption which places all our days securely under the forgiveness of our crucified and risen Lord, and to commend into His gracious hands ourselves, the whole church, and the whole world. The evening of the day brings with it an awareness of the steady approach of the evening of life, when we hope to fall asleep in Christ's peace and awake to His glory. Of the two daily offices, Vespers—although not lacking the element of adoration and praise—is the more quiet and reflective service.

The daily offices are rooted not only in Christian tradition but also in our humanity:

> Our physical, emotional, and social systems follow a twenty-four hour cycle. This cycle normally provides an alternation of fatigue and rest, hunger and eating, work and leisure, which becomes basic to our consciousness of ourselves and our world. Man must relate himself to the day and accept the discipline of it. We must begin every day with the will to make it a meaningful and useful day; but we must also be content to accept the close of the day in spite of the awareness that we may have accomplished little. We must be able to sleep with reasonable confidence that we will not be attacked by enemies, beasts, dreams, or demons—yet we must be wise enough to take reasonable precautions for ourselves and others. Finally, we must not be surprised that a day will come when we do not awake. A balanced and fully human life thus demands that we accept the discipline of living day by day, while not forgetting the necessity of long-range planning in many particular matters. We must have the faith that the day is good, and thankfully receive the daily bread our heavenly Father gives.[3]

The daily office "takes seriously this daily cycle of life, and embodies it in a daily cycle of prayer."[4]

The Place of Matins and Vespers in the Life of the Church

The place of Matins and Vespers in the life of our Lutheran congregations is a problematic one. By tradition and intention Matins and Vespers are the *daily* services of the Christian community, the Holy Eucharist being the chief service, celebrated on Sundays and festivals. The ideal of corporate worship—daily Matins and Vespers, with a celebration of the

[2]Massey Hamilton Shepherd, *The Oxford American Prayer Book Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 1.

[3]"The Daily Office," *Prayer Book Studies* (New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1970), XXII, 33 f.

[4]Ibid.

Holy Eucharist every Sunday and holy day (and as often on weekdays as the devotion of communicants may require)—is rarely realized in our parishes today; it is rarely realized in the colleges and seminaries of our communion. While we find a very full schedule of activities all week long in most parishes, the regular celebration of the daily office is almost unheard of. We are so accustomed to this state of affairs that it is very difficult for us to face the important question of priorities. Dom Gregory Dix once wrote that while it is very easy to disparage the formalism and sometimes downright irreverence of medieval daily worship, "there is this much to be said: Society at large . . . was then convinced that God *ought* to be assiduously praised and thanked for the redemption of the world through our Lord Jesus Christ."[5] One wonders if a recovery of daily corporate worship might not go far in contributing to the renewal of our church life, balancing and bringing into proper perspective the frenetic activism that characterizes American Christianity. It is certainly not to be expected that large numbers of people would be willing or able to come together for daily worship, yet regardless of how few might come, those few would in praying the office be representative of the whole Christian community in that place.

"The daily office is rooted not only in Christian tradition but also in our humanity . . . and embodies it in a daily cycle of prayer."

In congregations that maintain a parochial school, there should be no great difficulty in arranging for the morning office to be prayed a half hour or so before the opening of school. (When spoken, Matins requires no more than fifteen or twenty minutes.) The daily office could be a source of genuine spiritual strength to those who attend; it would especially be a source of strength to those who find themselves confronted with sickness, death in the family, and other difficult circumstances. If the sick of the congregation and those about to undergo surgery are remembered at the office, if anniversaries of Baptism, marriage, and death—which for Christians is entrance into the larger life—were to be commemorated, members of the congregation might make the effort to be present on days important in their own lives. All of this would require patient teaching and encouragement from the clergy.

Given present-day conditions, it may not be possible to maintain both morning and evening prayer. Yet every congregation has evening meetings during the week. A possible way to arrange for the praying of the evening office would be to schedule Vespers fifteen or twenty minutes before the meeting begins. In time individuals coming to a meeting might be willing to make the additional effort necessary to join in the evening prayer of the church. And who knows what might happen if our church meetings were preceded by the reverent praying of the church's evening office rather than by the (sometimes perfunctory) ex corde prayer that so frequently opens them?

Restoration of daily worship will not be an easy thing. Moreover, Matins and Vespers in their present form may not be the ideal vehicle for the daily morning and evening prayer of the church today. Certainly the Elizabethan English of our present offices—especially the language of the psalter in the Authorized Version—presents a real problem for many worshipers today. Yet these problems are not really insuperable. A far more basic problem may be a lack of clarity concerning the nature of the daily office, which is primarily adoration, praise, and prayer, and only secondarily edification. We Lutherans seem to have a real problem at exactly this point, and I suspect that it is the result not only of the progressive protestantizing of our churches over the years, but also of the Lutheran Reformation itself. Reading Luther's prescriptions for daily worship, it is almost impossible not to realize that he is reacting very strongly to the mechanical formalism that medieval daily worship had largely degenerated into. Luther—and the other reformers—strongly stressed the need for edification, that the Word of God might have free course among God's people. Luther's emphasis was a desperately needed corrective to a deplorable state of affairs. Yet after four centuries that have seen the rise of Lutheran scholasticism, Pietism, rationalism, and the present secularizing influences in the church, our Lutheran understanding and practice of worship all too often suffers from an almost hopelessly didactic approach. Corporate worship should be *edifying;* the Word of God *should* be heard in judgment and mercy. But that is not all that there is to corporate worship. Genuine corporate worship also involves adoration, praise, thanksgiving, and intercession. And it is just these elements that are so often conspicuously absent from whatever remains of daily worship in our homes, our schools, and in the colleges and seminaries of the church. Yet "the catholic faith is this: that we *worship* one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity." God *"ought* to be assiduously praised and thanked for the redemption of the world through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Our Lutheran difficulty with the daily office may also involve a reluctance to take seriously enough the fact that what we actually *do* makes a far greater im-

[5]Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London: Dacre Press, 1945), p. 604.

The Structure of Matins*

Hymn
Versicles and Gloria Patri

THE PSALMODY
- The Venite
  - Invitatory
  - Psalm 95: 1-7
  - Gloria Patri
  - Invitatory repeated
- The Hymn
- Psalmody
  - Antiphon
  - Psalm
  - Gloria Patri
  - Antiphon repeated

THE LECTION
- Lesson(s)
- Versicle after the Lesson ("But Thou, O Lord")
- Responsory

(Sermon)
(Offerings)

THE CANTICLE
- Antiphon**
- Canticle
- Gloria Patri***
- Antiphon Repeated

THE PRAYERS
- The Kyrie and Our Father *or* The Litany, *TLH* p. 110 (through the Our Father)
  Suffrages, *TLH* p. 113 (through "Hear my prayer, O Lord," p. 114)
  Bidding Prayer, *TLH* p. 116 (through the Our Father)
- The Salutation
- The Collect for the Day and other collects
- The Collect for Grace

The Benedicamus
The Benediction

*Based on *TLH*, pp. 32 f. The *Service Book and Hymnal* Matins is located on pp. 129 f.; the Litany and Suffrages are at pp. 153 f.
**An antiphon is not used with the *Te Deum*
***The Gloria Patri is not used after the *Benedicite Omnia Opera*

pression than what we *say*. If worship is in fact central in the church's life, then the ordering of the church's daily life should reflect that fact. Our difficulty with the daily office may also involve a failure to take sufficiently seriously the theological truth that, as long as the Old Adam is with us, worship is not something which happens spontaneously but requires discipline and effort.

While by tradition Matins and Vespers are the *daily services* of the church, by common usage Matins and Vespers are in fact *occasional services* of the congregation. Some people question the role Matins and Vespers presently play in the life of our congregations, especially the use of Matins as a principle Sunday service of the congregation. They hold that Matins is not an adequate vehicle of worship for that purpose; Matins is only the daily morning office, the Holy Eucharist being the Sunday and festival service. They believe that where the Eucharist is not celebrated as the principle service (or services) of the Lord's Day, there The Order of Morning Service Without Communion is the (regrettably necessary) appropriate substitute. While some might strongly disagree with this opinion, there is much to be said in its favor. There really is nothing wrong per se with a Service of the Word of God. Before the daily celebration of the Eucharist became customary in the Western Church, a Service of the Word of God—a "half-Mass"—was held on certain weekdays.[6] Historically, and to the present day, The Morning Service Without Communion is the normal Lutheran Sunday service whenever the Eucharist is not celebrated. Until relatively recent times, the normal Sunday morning service in the Anglican Communion consisted of Morning Prayer (the equivalent of our Lutheran Matins), Litany, and Ante-Communion (the equivalent of our Morning Service Without Communion). One of the most telling indications of the difficulty of using Matins as a principle service on Sunday is the fact that in many congregations what is called "Matins" is in fact assimilated to The Order of Morning Service Without Communion. In the worst cases, all that is left of the office are the opening versicles and the Venite, both pastor and people being happily oblivious to the incongruity of singing, "Let us make a joyful noise unto Him *with psalms*"—and failing to pray even one psalm in the course of the service!

Despite some valid arguments against the use of Matins as a principle service of the Lord's Day, many congregations continue to use Matins for that purpose. Until the day comes when all of our congregations return to the confessional ideal of the Holy Eucharist as the principle service (or services) of every Sunday and holy day, congregations will need some

[6]Dix, pp. 36 ff. The absence of the Eucharist from the church's worship on Good Friday is not so much a deliberate omission as it is a survival of the time in the church's life when every Friday was an "a-liturgical" day, that is, without the celebration of the Eucharist.

other vehicle for Sunday worship. Matins—used intelligently and creatively—has been, and can continue to be, a good—if not ideal—order for that purpose.

The use of Vespers presents less of a problem. Many congregations continue to use Vespers for their midweek Advent and Lenten services. Although Sunday evening services have died out almost completely in our churches, perhaps the time has come to make some effort to revive them. There is something very satisfying about ending the Lord's Day in the Lord's House: "With Thee began, with Thee shall end the day." A well-kept Sunday gives a peace which this world can neither give nor take away.[7]

The Use of Matins and Vespers

Until new rites are proposed for trial use, or as more or less permanent revisions of the office, some effort should be made to maintain the integrity of the offices as they are given in our present service books. While it is true that the present rites can be followed in a mechanical, deadening fashion—with pastoral concerns subordinated to the perfect fulfillment of rubrical prescription—I have seen little evidence of the danger of such ritualist legalism in American Lutheranism. In my experience the danger seems to be that of a disregard of the accepted liturgy of the church which not only violates the integrity of the rite, but also robs congregations of the protection of the liturgy is intended to give them against the often arbitrary whims of the clergy. To follow rite and rubric in mechanical fashion is deadening; to disregard them not only frequently produces liturgical impoverishment; more seriously, it indicates a failure to appreciate the fact that corporate worship—while rightly expressing *local* concerns and fully exploiting *local* possibilities—should also be a reflection of the worship of the larger church in space and time. In a time of high mobility such as the present, pastoral concern itself suggests that parishes strive to provide services that have some similarity to the services people are familiar with in other places. This is not to advocate dull uniformity or a striving after the lowest common denominator; it is to advocate a respect for the basic structure of the rite.

Matins and Vespers may be either sung or said. Although it is frequently ignored, there is good reason for observing the rubric that "The officiant shall chant those portions of the Service to which the Choir or the Congregation responds with chanting."[8] There is something very artificial (and grating) about our common practice of the minister speaking his part

[7]Assuming that the evening worshipers will have attended a morning service, there would be no absolute necessity for preaching a sermon at Sunday vespers. The Word of God is essential in every Christian service, but the Word of God is proclaimed not only in the form of preaching. Our traditional Lutheran insistence that there by no public service without a sermon probably grows out of the sixteenth century situation where so little adequate attention had been given to the ministry of preaching, and where masses of people were so hopelessly ignorant.

[8]*The Lutheran Liturgy* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, n.d.), p. 419.

The Structure of Vespers*

(Hymn)
Versicles and Gloria Patri

THE PSALMODY
- Antiphon
- Psalm
- Gloria Patri
- Antiphon repeated

THE LECTION
- Lesson(s)
- Versicle after the Lesson ("But Thou, O Lord")
- Responsory

(Sermon)
(Offerings)
The Hymn

THE CANTICLE
- Versicle
- Antiphon
- Canticle
- Gloria Patri
- Antiphon repeated

THE PRAYERS

The Kyrie and Our Father *or* The Litany, *TLH* p. 110 through the Our Father)
Suffrages, *TLH* p. 113 (through "Hear my prayer, O Lord," p. 114)
Bidding Prayer, *TLH* p. 116 (through the Our Father)

The Salutation
The Collect for the Day and other collects
The Collect for Peace

The Benedicamus
The Benediction

*Based on *TLH*, pp. 41 f. The *Service Book and Hymnal* Vespers is located on pp. 141 f.; the Litany and Suffrages are at pp. 153 f.

of the service and the people responding in song. The chants of Matins and Vespers are so simple that most clergymen should have very little difficulty in singing them. If, however, the minister speaks his part of the service, the people should also speak the responses. The longer chants of the office (the Venite, the canticle) *would still be sung* since these are not, strictly speaking, responses to words said by the minister. The whole office is normally spoken when prayed daily by small groups of worshipers. It is perhaps desirable to speak the office from time to time even when used as a general congregational service—for example, on Sundays in Advent and Lent. In that case the whole service would be spoken, with the exception of the hymns and, perhaps, the *Venite* and canticle.

Matins

Matins begins *with the Versicles and Gloria Patri.* It is preferable to omit the "opening hymn." It is difficult to ascertain the sense of the opening versicle, "O Lord, open Thou my lips," when "my lips" have already been "open" in song. Hallelujah is omitted during (pre-Lent) Lent.[9]

The psalmody is introduced by the invitatory psalm, Venite (Psalm 95), and the Office Hymn. Before and after the Venite, the Invitatory is sung.[10] On ordinary Sundays and weekdays the common invitatory is sung; on festivals, and during certain seasons of the church year, a proper invitatory is sung.[11]

"The Hymn" is the so-called office hymn. In the festival seasons of the church year the Office Hymn should reflect the thought of the day or season; on nonfestival days the Office Hymn should normally be a morning hymn or a general hymn of praise. Together with the Venite, the function of an office hymn at Matins is to introduce the praying of the psalter.[12] The Office Hymn should—except during Lent—be a strong hymn of praise and adoration.[13]

Since the psalter is the core of the divine office, more than one psalm should be prayed.[14] This may be difficult or impossible in some situations. If it is to be done, some imagination is required if monotony and boredom are to be avoided. There are many ways of using the psalms in the office.

In our congregations the psalms are ordinarily said responsively between pastor and congregation. There is nothing wrong with this practice, but a livelier way to pray the psalter is to pray it responsively *between the two sides* of the congregation—the main aisle of the church being the dividing line between the two sides. This is not only a livelier way of praying the psalms; it also preserves the old tradition of singing the psalms antiphonally between the two sides of the choir.[15]

The choir may sing the psalm to a simple Gregorian psalm tone or to some other chant setting, or the choir may sing a metrical version of the psalm.[16] The congregation may also sing a metrical version of the psalm; many of our great hymns are such metrical versions of the psalms.[17]

Monotony and boredom will be avoided if each psalm used in a service is prayed in a different idiom. So, for example, in a great festival service the choir might sing a psalm in a chant setting; then the congregation might sing a metrical version of a psalm; finally, the choir might sing another psalm in still another musical idiom. On an ordinary Sunday two or three psalms might be used in this way: a psalm might be prayed responsively between the two sides of the congregation, another psalm sung in metrical form, and another psalm chanted or sung by the choir.

[9]"Hallelujah" is the church's cry of Easter joy. Where the calendar of *The Lutheran Hymnal* is followed, Hallelujah is omitted beginning with Matins of Septuagesima Sunday; where the calendar of *Contemporary Worship 6: The Church Year, Calendar and Lectionary* is followed, Hallelujah is omitted beginning with Matins of Ash Wednesday. Anciently, Gloria Patri was omitted on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. This was not really a deliberate "omission" of an element regarded as "too festive" for the last three days of Holy Week. It is simply another example of the principle involved in the absence of the Eucharist from the church's Good Friday worship: the solemnity of these days resisted whatever was felt to be an innovation. The "Omission" of Gloria Patri on these days simply recalled the time in the church's life when Gloria Patri had not yet come into use. E. C. R. Lamburn, *Behind Rite and Ceremony* (London: W. Knott and Son Limited, 1961), pp. 4 f.

[10]The Invitatory is in reality an antiphon. An antiphon is simply a brief sentence taken from Holy Scripture, or a liturgical text, sung before and after psalms and canticles (with the exception of *Te Deum Laudamus*) which serves to "focus" the thoughts of the worshiper as he prays the psalm. For example, on Christmas Psalm 2 might be prayed with the antiphon, "The Lord hath said unto Me: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." Proper antiphons for the seasons of the church year are found on pp. 95 ff in *The Lutheran Hymnal.*

[11]The proper invitatories are given in *The Lutheran Hymnal,* pp. 95 ff; *Worship Supplement,* pp. 78 f. Proper invitatories can be sung to the melody of the Common Invitatory where the musical setting of *The Lutheran Hymnal* is in use. The proper invitatory to be used in a given service should be printed in the service folder. It is very difficult for worshipers to page around in their hymnals for the small, variable parts of the liturgy. Adequate, clearly printed service folders are rather important for good corporate worship whenever variations from the customary rite are used.

[12]Traditional office hymns included in current hymnals are listed in *A Guide to the Use of Office Hymns,* located elsewhere in this issue of CHURCH MUSIC.

[13]The traditional office hymns—provided with Gregorian melodies and other tunes—appear in *The English Hymnal* (London: A. R. Mowbray and Co., Ltd., 1933).

[14]Although this may seem excessive to present-day churchmen, the use of three psalms was actually a considerable reduction of what had been pre-Reformation usage. The use of three psalms was suggested by Luther in "An Order of Mass and Communion for the Church at Wittenberg," *Luther's Works,* 53, p. 38.

[15]The traditional way of praying the psalter responsively is as follows. The antiphon up to the colon is intoned by the cantor or said by the minister; the entire choir and/or congregation sings or says the remainder of the antiphon. The cantor then intones, or the minister says, the first verse of the psalm up to the colon; his side of the choir and/or congregation then completes the first verse of the psalm. The opposite side of the choir and/or congregation sings or says the second verse; the third verse is sung by the cantor's or minister's side of the choir and/or congregation, and so on to the end. The Gloria Patri is rendered as if it were two verses of a psalm. Then the choir and/or congregation repeat the antiphon. In practice, it will be difficult for a congregation to join in singing the antiphon unless the musical setting is very simple.

[16]At St. Paul's Church, Addison, Ill., on Thanksgiving Day 1974, three psalms were sung. The senior choir sang Psalm 117 in a setting by Heinrich Schuetz, the people sang the metrical version of Psalm 103 (*TLH* 34), a children's choir sang a metrical version of Psalm 136 (*TLH* 570).

[17]A table of metrical psalms found in *TLH* and *WS* appears in *WS,* p. 240. Metrical versions of the psalms are found in William Storey, *Morning Praise and Evensong: A Liturgy of the Hours in Musical Setting* (Notre Dame, Indiana: Fides Publishers, Inc., 1973).

Discretion should be exercised not only in the choice of several psalms for a given service but also in the *sequence* in which the psalms are used. There should (ideally) be some progression of thought. The first (two) psalm(s) used in the service might well be either more penitential or meditative in tone; the last psalm, a psalm of praise, adoration, or thanksgiving.[18] In selecting psalms for the office, it is useful to consult the schedules of psalms for the church year in our present service books, and in *Contemporary Worship 6: The Church Year, Calendar and Lectionary. Contemporary Worship 6* provides a psalm for use at the Eucharist on every Sunday and holy day. This psalm might also be used at Matins.

When Matins is used as a principle service on a Sunday or festival, it is probably pastorally desirable to read the appointed lessons from the eucharistic lectionary—either the standard pericopes or the lessons from the new three-year cycle of readings.[19] The daily lectionary of *The Lutheran Hymnal* (pp. 161 ff.)—particularly the lessons appointed for evening—is difficult to use. The lessons frequently have no connection with the Sunday or season of the church year and appear to rest on no rationale beyond that of continuous reading *(lectio continua)* of the Scriptures. A more useful daily lectionary—in connection with the use of the standard pericopes—is that of *The Minister's Prayer Book* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, n.d.), pp. 61 ff.

It is extremely difficult to sustain attention when three lessons are read uninterruptedly, one immediately after the other. Singing in response to the Word of God read is one of the very oldest patterns of corporate worship, having its roots in the worship of the synagog. It is also eminently practical! Our service books provide that a responsory may be said or sung after the lesson or lessons have been read.[20] A responsory consists of verses of Scripture and the first half of the Gloria Patri. It is a very beautiful element of Christian liturgy and provides opportunity both for singing by choirs and for creative composition by church musicians. Another way of making possible response on the part of the people—and for introducing a "break" in the reading of the lessons—is the singing of an appropriate stanza or stanzas of a hymn. There is also something to be said for observing a period of silence after each lesson is read. If silence is kept after the lesson(s), it should be a substantial period of silence that actually gives worshipers time to meditate on what has been read. Because we are so accustomed today to almost constant "background music" (or noise) and because many of us are not accustomed to silent meditation on the Word of God, the use of silence may in practice prove very difficult at first.

If a hymn is sung before the sermon or address, it should be brief and reflect some aspect of the teaching of the lessons. When used as a principle service of the congregation, Matins may include the gathering of an offering after the sermon or address.

"The nature of the daily office is primarily adoration, praise, and prayer, and only secondarily edification."

It is desirable to vary the canticle from time to time. *Te Deum Laudamus* is proper at Matins on all Sundays except during Advent and Lent; it is also proper on feasts and festivals and during their seasons. *Benedictus* is the proper canticle for Sundays in Advent and Lent, and is also proper for daily use. *Dignus Est Agnus* (*TLH,* p. 122) is suitable during Eastertide. *Benedicite Omnia Opera* (*TLH,* p. 120) is suitable for festivals and during Eastertide. The present writer questions the use of the other canticles (*TLH,* pp. 120-122) for *the canticle* at Matins. Historically, these canticles were used as psalms in the morning office; in content they do not seem to fulfill adequately the function of the canticle in the office.

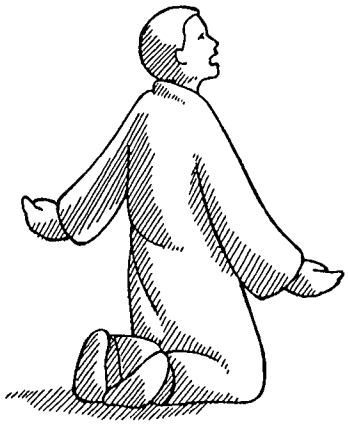
There is no reason why congregations should be subjected week after week, year after year, to the settings of the canticles found in our service books. It is just such monotony that destroys vital liturgical worship amd makes of it a deadly, dull routine. From time to time the choir may sing the canticle in a more elaborate choral setting. The *Worship Supplement* (745) now provides us with Luther's version of the *Te Deum. TLH* 250 ("Holy God, We Praise Thy Name") is a metrical version of the *Te Deum.*

After the canticle has been sung, the minister and congregation immediately continue with the Kyrie and the Our Father, *or* the Litany, *or* the Suffrages, *or* the Morning Suffrages, *or* the Bidding Prayer. (The title, "The Prayers," does not indicate

[18]For example, at midweek Lenten Matins or Vespers, the congregation might pray responsively Psalm 51. Then the congregation might sing the metrical version of Psalm 32, "Blest Is the Man, Forever Blest" (*TLH* 392). There is a tradition in some places that an uneven number of psalms should be prayed, but this tradition is not supported by universal precedent and a good reason for it has—to my knowledge—never been given

[19]It is true that the rubrics of *The Lutheran Liturgy* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, n.d.) explicitly forbid the use of the Epistle and Gospel for the Day at Matins (*The Lutheran Liturgy,* p. 422). This rubric, however, seems to rest on the assumption that Matins is used as a minor office, and that those who attend Matins will also be present at the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at which the Epistle and Gospel for the Day would be read. Since Sunday Matins as used in our congregations is a principle service of the day—those attending Matins not normally also being present at the Holy Eucharist—there is no real reason for observing this rubric.

[20]The responsories for the seasons of the church year appear on pp. 95 ff. of *The Lutheran Hymnal.* The responsories appear on pp. 95 ff. of the *Worship Supplement;* a musical setting of the responsory used "throughout the year" appears on p. 95 of the *Worship Supplement.*



a separate item in the service; it is the title of all that follows through to the Benedicamus. The minister, therefore, does not insert "prayers" between the canticle and the Kyrie. If there are special intercessions, the proper place for these is after the Collect for the Day and before the Collect for Grace. After the Kyrie and the Our Father—*or* the Litany, *or* the Morning Suffrages, *or* the Suffrages, or the Bidding Prayer—have been prayed, the office continues with the Salutation, the Collect for the Day, other collects, and the Collect for Grace. (See the charts on the structure of Matins and Vespers.)

According to tradition, the Kyrie and the Our Father are the form of prayer used on Sundays and festivals. Wednesday and Friday were the traditional days for praying the Litany both before and after the Reformation, but there is no reason why the Litany may not be prayed on Sundays in Advent and Lent and on Sundays after Pentecost. Luther's evaluation of the Litany as being next to the Our Father the best prayer on earth will certainly commend itself to those who have come to know and love the Litany. The widespread neglect of the Litany—a beautiful and comprehensive form of general intercession—in our churches today is one of the most regrettable instances of the impoverishment of corporate worship.[21] The Suffrages are a somewhat more poetic form of general intercession. The Suffrages are the prayers that traditionally were said at Lauds on weekdays; the Morning Suffrages are taken from Prime. There is, however, no compelling reason why the Suffrages or the Morning Suffrages may not be prayed on nonfestival Sundays at Matins. During Lent it might be very appropriate from time to time to use the Suffrages (which at Matins include Psalm 130, *De profundis*—at Vespers, Psalm 51, *Miserere*) at Matins. The Bidding Prayer is the ancient form of general intercession concluding the Service of the Word of God on Good Friday; there is much to be said for restricting its use to the Good Friday liturgy.

The first collect at Matins is always the Collect for the Day; in that way Matins is related to the specific day or season. The last collect is always the beautiful Collect for Grace. Other (intercessory) collects may be prayed before the Collect for Grace; this is the place for special intercessions.

Matins concludes with the Benedicamus and Benediction. According to tradition and rubric (*TLH,* p. 4) the Benediction is omitted if an ordained clergyman is not present to give it.

Vespers

What has been said above about the versicles and Gloria Patri, the psalmody itself, the lection, the responsory, and the prayers, applies also to Vespers. The last collect at Vespers is the singularly beautiful Collect for Peace. Obviously, the Evening Suffrages—taken from Compline—would be used at Vespers instead of the Morning Suffrages.

At Vespers the office hymn precedes the canticle and is a response to the Word read (and proclaimed).[22] A proper versicle may be sung before the canticle, *TLH,* pp. 95 ff.[23]

The proper Vesper canticle is *Magnificat. Nunc Dimittis*—used at Compline in the pre-Reformation rites—is suitable when Vespers is said or sung late in the evening. An antiphon may be sung before and after the canticle. The canticle provides an opportunity for singing by choirs and for creative composition by church musicians. *The Lutheran Hymnal* provides a metrical version of *Magnificat* (275). Luther's metrical version of *Nunc Dimittis* is Hymn 137 in *The Lutheran Hymnal.*[24]

Following Jewish custom, the church's day begins at sunset of the day before. Sundays and festivals, therefore, begin with Vespers of the evening before; the psalms, hymns, lessons, and collects appropriate to the Sunday or festival should be used at Vespers of the evening before, considered the "First Vespers" of the Sunday or festival.

The Ceremonial of Matins and Vespers

Matins and Vespers actually require no ceremonial whatever. All that is strictly necessary is the Bible and a book with the text of the office. When Matins and Vespers are prayed privately or in very small groups during the week, the office can be prayed with utmost simplicity. For Sundays and festivals some minimal ceremonial is desirable. The altar candles should be lighted.[25] The officiating clergy (and lay

[21]Luther Reed wrote of the Litany: "The *Te Deum* scales the heights, and the Litany plumbs the depths of our common humanity" (Luther D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959], p. 623). Reed quotes Percy Dearmer as saying that in using the Litany "we can turn to the whole world, Christian and otherwise, and say, 'This is how we pray, this is how we are taught to think of life and death, of God and man' " (Reed, p. 624). Martin Luther introduced a revision of the Latin Litany in view of the peril of the Turkish invasion in 1529. See Arthur Carl Piepkorn, "Let Us Pray for the Church," *Response,* VI, St. Michael and All Angels, 1964, pp. 69 ff.

[22]Traditional Vespers office hymns are listed in *A Guide to the Use of Office Hymns,* located elsewhere in this issue of CHURCH MUSIC.

[23]If a proper versicle is to be used, it should be printed in the service folder.

[24]A metrical version of *Nunc Dimittis*—with the beautiful melody "Consolation" (*Kentucky Harmony,* 1816) *WS* 707—appears in William Storey, *Morning Praise and Evensong,* p. 11.

[25]The origin of the custom of lighting the two altar candles only for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist is difficult to trace. It apparently appeared only in the Catholic Movement within the Anglican Communion during the nineteenth century. The older custom seems to have been that the number of candles was increased for the more important festivals (Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy,* pp. 419 ff.).

readers) should be vested in surplices.[26] Matins and Vespers are historically "choir offices"—that is, they were prayed or sung in the *choir,* the portion of the church between the nave and the sanctuary. Where local circumstances permit, it is probably desirable that we remind ourselves of the historic roots of these services by leading them from a chair and prayer desk within the chancel, rather than at the altar. The altar is essentially the table for the eucharistic meal; if the minister refrains from using the altar for other purposes its real purpose will be more clear in the minds of the people. If the office is led from a chair and prayer desk, the minister stands and sits at his chair throughout the office—he goes to the lectern to read the lessons and into the pulpit to preach the sermon. When standing at his chair he faces directly across the chancel; he does not turn to the altar. He does turn to the people when greeting them with the Salutation and pronouncing the Benediction. Before and after the office he kneels at the prayer desk for silent prayer.

It is desirable to invite competent lay people to read the lessons. Each Christian has some particular gift to be exercised for the good of the whole Body. This Biblical truth is better expressed when the services are not merely a "duet" between the pastor and the congregation, but involve visible lay participation. It goes without saying that lay readers must be adequately prepared to read the lessons audibly and intelligibly.

Contemporary Challenges

By pastors' and church musicians' careful choice of—and by their paying due attention to the "mood" and progression of thought in—psalms, lessons, hymns, and prayers, our congregations can be drawn into vital and varied worship at Matins and Vespers. The simplicity of Matins prayed quietly by a group of two or three Christians early in the morning of a weekday in the long season after Pentecost; the sense of expectancy in Advent Vespers—the *evening* office has a powerful appeal in the Advent season which makes so much use of the imagery of evening and the approach of the midnight hour—as the church awaits the commemoration of the dawn of salvation in Bethlehem, and looks forward to that day which has no evening; the pentitential earnestness of Lenten Vespers; the exultant hymns of the resurrection, the "Alleluias" of Matins during the Great Fifty Days of Easter, when with the daily rising of the sun, Christians are especially mindful of the Risen Son—each of these services has its own special impact in shaping Christian piety. Each lends us to the throne of grace in prayerful, thankful awareness of some other facet of God's revelation of Himself in our Lord Jesus Christ. Matins and Vespers present pastors and church musicians with the challenge of providing almost endlessly varying opportunities for solid, Biblical, liturgical worship.

The revision of the liturgy in process today provides opportunity for shaping the office to present needs. We need a great deal of help from Old Testament scholars, translators, liturgiologists, and church musicians in appropriating the psalter for use today. We need a good daily lectionary and a lectionary for Sunday Matins and Vespers that would complement the teaching of the new three-year cycle of lessons. We need more explicit and varied forms of general intercession for use in the office.[27]

Our Anglican fellow Christians here in America have included in their proposed revision of the evening office—as an introduction to the psalmody analogous to the Venite of the morning office—a very ancient part of the church's evening worship which has found continuous use in the Eastern Orthodox Church: the ancient Christian hymn, *Phos Hilaron.* I would welcome the inclusion of this hymn in any proposed revision of our evening office both because it would be a link with ancient and ecumenical usage, and because of the intrinsic beauty of the hymn:

> O gracious light,
> pure brightness of the everliving Father in Heaven,
> O Jesus Christ, holy blessed!
> Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
> and our eyes behold the vesper light,
> we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
>
> You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
> O Son of God, O Giver of life,
> and to be glorified through all the worlds.[28]

[26]There is a tendency in some places today to use some form of the alb for every service. This is a curious development in view of the fact that we repeatedly hear appeals for variety in worship. Retaining the use of the surplice for non-eucharistic services is certainly a harmless piece of ceremonial that does provide some visual variety in our services. Historically, the surplice originated as the need was felt for a vestment which could more easily than the alb go over the fur coat *(super pelliceum)* worn by monks and canons during the long night offices in the cold northern European winters. The stole is properly reserved for sacramental and quasi-sacramental rites. On great festivals a cope of the color of the day may be worn over the surplice. Where even more ceremonial elaboration is desired for the great festivals, acolytes carrying the processional cross and torches, and incense, may precede the choir and/or lectors and officiating minister. During the singing of the canticle the officiating minister may cense the altar, and an acolyte then cense the other acolytes, the lectors, the choir and congregation. If a simpler use of incense is desired, an acolyte may simply stand in the middle of the chancel, swinging the smoking censer while the canticle is sung. The offering of incense morning and evening is very ancient; it is mentioned in the Old Testament at Exodus 30:1 ff.

[27]Prayers in litany form for use at the morning and evening office are given in William Storey, *Morning Praise and Evensong.*

[28]"The Daily Office," *Prayer Book Studies* (New York: The Church Hymnal Corporation, 1970), XXII, 97. Metrical versions of *Phos Hilaron* appear in *Morning Praise and Evensong* (p. 190) and in *The Lutheran Hymnal* (101, "O Gladsome Light, O Grace").