

Expansive Language Eucharist - Trial Use

Guidance from The Episcopal Diocese of Texas *Diocesan Liturgical Commission*

By action of Resolution 2018-D078, The General Convention authorized The Holy Eucharist: Rite Two (Expansive Language) for Trial Use, including expansive language versions of Eucharistic Prayers A, B, D, and by action of Resolution 2024-A114, expansive language versions of Eucharistic Prayer C.

Formation, education, and conversation is key in the congregation, before using liturgical changes. The people should be given an opportunity to consider the power of words and word choices, especially in our references to God and to people. Opportunity may also be given for feedback, in exploring how new expressions change or do not change the worship experience. Context is also important in contemplating liturgy, by discerning the congregational context, as well as the context of the wider community.

There is caution upon usage, based upon expansive and inclusive language choices that are inconsistently applied throughout the liturgies.

The diocesan Liturgical Commission also recommends using the Expansive Language Eucharist in its entirety for the whole worship service, to maintain its integrity, rather than “cherry picking” from 1979 BCP language.

The removal of the title of “Lord” for Jesus can be problematic, as it is against scriptural witness and history, especially in the Hebrew Scripture / Old Testament, where the usage of “LORD” is a specific witness and allegiance to God. Proclaiming that “Jesus is Lord” contains extensive scriptural, theological, historical, ecumenical, and political depth.

The removal of references to “kingdom” and “king” is an issue, as we under authority in a true and real kingdom, which Jesus references in the Lord’s Prayer.

Although God is not male, the removal of the usage of the term “Father” can be problematic, as Jesus calls God “Father,” especially in the Lord’s Prayer. Also, care should be given not to minimize the vocation of fatherhood or the role of fathers.

Jesus was male, and in trying to not refer to him as “he” or “him,” we lose sight of the fact that he was fully human.

In the Sanctus, changing “Blessed is he...” to “Blessed is the one...” can imply that we are the ones who are blessed, not Jesus. A suggested substitute, which is from biblical Palm Sunday accounts is: “Blessed is the King...” Yet that also brings up the issue of the word “king.”

In the Eucharistic words of Institution, changing “poured out for many...” to “poured out for all” (Eucharistic Prayer C) can foster a robust discussion, on many levels.

The removal of the *filioque* in the Nicene Creed provides an opportunity for robust formation, including a discussion regarding history, theology, and ecumenical relationships, especially with the Orthodox traditions.

There are several other word changes from the 1979 BCP which foster some exploration, namely:

Changing “Blessed be God’s kingdom” to “Blessed be God’s reign.”

Changing “The Lord be with you” to “God be with you.”

Changing “God and Father of all” to “God and maker of all.”

Changing “That we may be acceptable to him” to “Through whom we are acceptable to you.”

By declaring that certain words are unusable in our liturgy, we may be implicitly stating the certain traumas, histories, and situations are unredeemable.

The seemingly “cut and paste” approach to the development of these liturgies is problematic. They are also obviously not composed by the finest writers.

In Spanish, both the masculine and feminine expressions may be needed for words (ie. “hijos y hijas”), as it can be difficult to translate into more inclusive and expansive language.

For further inquiry, please consult with Bishop Fisher, chair of the diocesan Liturgical Commission.

The General Convention resolutions and related liturgies can be located on the Episcopal Common Prayer website:

<https://www.episcopalcommonprayer.org>