

that, despite Protestant theological claims about abstinence, public fast days were perhaps preserved in parts of England and Scotland as a result of the support Lenten observance gave to the fishing industry. Essays on music by Peter McCullough and Jonathan Willis similarly show the ambivalence shown to the public role of music within Protestant circles.

The real strength of the collection remain the breadth of sources used, ranging across official documents, liturgical forms, private devotional materials, as well as the architectural or silent features of 'Sunday morning' worship such as belfries, gesture and attire. The limit of the collection comes largely from Mears and Ryrie's acknowledgement that any 'view from the pew' remains curiously elusive. While this lacuna acts as the provocation for this collection of essays, it also sets a tough limit. The response to this limit remains instructive, however. John Craig's chapter in particular expands on his previous study of the sounds of the English parish church with an exemplary chapter on 'the mechanics of prayer' (p. 178), paying attention to vocal and bodily gesture, as well as the role that hats played in asserting social significance and the tensions they aroused with the biblical injunction to uncover heads in worship. As Craig shows, the Vestiarian Controversy is not all that can be said of the role of attire in worship. The final two chapters by Trevor Cooper and Judith Maltby respectively trace other negotiations over public worship. Cooper skilfully compares the private devotional practices of the Little Gidding community of the 1630s with the design of the church they used. In turn, Maltby focuses on the emerging 'Anglicans' of the 1640s and 1650s who felt a loyalty to the Prayer Book tradition and yet who were liberated by the abolition of the Act of Uniformity to adjust, amend and experiment with it.

Unlike its interdisciplinary sister volume, Mears and Ryrie's collection is predominantly written by historians and theologians. As such, this collection will prove of interest to cultural historians and theologians and exhibits solid scholarship. Yet, the collection perhaps would have benefitted from more interdisciplinary perspectives. Overall, however, this collection establishes a nuanced narrative about how public worship and conformity was embraced, wrestled with, or even subverted in the parish pew. It is also a welcome addition to the often better documented cases of nonconformity among recusants, Puritans and separatists. Indeed, the collection tells the story of how ordinary parish churches on a Sunday morning cast early modern religious conformity as a profoundly variegated phenomenon in its own right.

Paul Dominiak
Durham University

Jeffrey W. Driver, *A Polity of Persuasion: Gift and Grief of Anglicanism* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), pp. 171, ISBN 978-1-61097-403-5.
doi:10.1017/S1740355315000054

'Can two walk together, except they be agreed?' asks the prophet Amos, a refrain taken up by zealous church reformers throughout the centuries. But where many

have used the implied 'No' as a licence for schisms and secessions, Archbishop Jeffrey Driver seeks in this book to offer an emphatic 'Yes', without falling into the ditch of idealism. Whether or not he fully succeeds at this daunting task, it is certainly one well worth the effort, not merely for the sake of contemporary Anglican debates over gender and sexuality, but for the timeless challenge of living together in the unity of Christ that has always faced the Church and always will. Driver argues that the very features of global Anglican polity that have often proven frustrating – its decentralized, dialogical and inconclusive character – can be seen as a strength, a 'gift', that the Anglican Communion needs to cherish and develop.

He unfolds his argument through a careful survey of the developing polity of the Anglican Communion, in particular as expressed in the various documents that have sought to navigate the tense conflicts of recent decades – over both the ordination of women and the status of homosexuality. Chapter 1 sets the stage by arguing that the Anglican tradition has always been characterized by a responsiveness to historical circumstances and local needs. Chapters 2 and 3 offer a lucid summary and critical evaluation of the various attempts to articulate and formalize the nature of the global Communion in the course of debates over gender and sexuality, from the 1987 Grindrod Report to the 2004 Windsor Report and beyond. Driver argues that the backlash against Windsor's proposed Anglican Communion Covenant revealed the weaknesses of a centralizing, juridicalizing approach and the need to stick with the messier voluntaristic structure that had characterized the global Communion.

In Chapters 4 through 7, Driver seeks to build his own positive account of why and how this voluntarist structure can provide a way toward unity amidst conflict. Chapter 4 seeks to spell out key concepts, such as 'communion', 'reception' and 'conciliarism'. Chapter 5 draws upon the difficult experience of the Australian Anglican Church as a decentralized national church to provide a model – albeit a messy one – for the Communion as a whole to imitate. Chapter 6 develops some concrete proposals about how such a 'polity of persuasion' might be made more effective and workable, and Chapter 7 offers the outlines of a theological justification for a conciliarist approach to church unity that accepts, rather than seeking to hastily downplay, the reality of conflict in the church.

Of course, despite its strengths, many questions remain for Driver's account. I will focus here on two clusters of questions.

First, although Driver seeks to avoid false idealism, he is not altogether free from that great Anglican propensity to clothe high-minded ideals in fine-sounding phrases, without ever really touching down to earth to give these phrases any concrete substance. Consider, for instance, the grand assertion on p. 146: 'In the end, if ecclesiology is to be authentic, it must ultimately be about God and the world; about being human; about community; about the new human venture launched upon the world in Christ.' And despite attempts to ground the book in the concrete and practical, key terms like 'relationality', 'mutuality', and '*koinonia*', ideals frequently repeated throughout the text, remain frustratingly elusive.

Nor can one resist the sense that his nods to the inevitable 'messiness' of a church negotiating conflict still remain overly sanitized. When he quotes Keith Rayner to the effect that, for all its struggles, 'the common life of the Australian

church continues, albeit with an element of impaired communion' (p. 102), many Australian Anglicans may be liable to laugh. Driver seems at times seduced by the notion that if we can only keep a group of people together under one institutional umbrella, we can plausibly describe them as 'in communion', when in fact they may be living in mutual incomprehension, divided by bitter recrimination and hoping only for the wholesale defeat of the other party. The question, 'Can two walk together (in any meaningful sense) unless they be agreed?' remains.

Likewise, without ever providing concrete examples of the kind of 'healthy conflict' which he thinks should be encouraged, and the destructive conflict which should be restrained (perhaps seeking to avoid antagonizing any particular parties), he can leave us with only vague gestures at how 'healthy conflict' might build up the church.

A second cluster of questions surrounds his notion of a 'polity of persuasion'. It is an attractive picture, to be sure, though one that still must be argued for. Driver seems to blithely assume at times that this is really what Anglicanism has always been about, something that seventeenth-century Dissenters might hotly dispute. And indeed, it is not self-evident *why* a polity based on consensus rather than command should be appealing. For most of Christian history, its churches have not been nearly so democratic in their ideals. Perhaps surprisingly, then, this is one point at which Driver could have done well to mine more extensively the history of the Anglican tradition to support his contention. He frequently references the contribution of Richard Hooker to the idea of conciliarity; Hooker's theology of *persuasion*, grounded upon the fundamental Protestant idea of Christian liberty, and the early modern 'culture of persuasion' which it engendered (the subject of much recent historical research), might well have played a much larger role in his account than it does, complementing the rather abstract appeal to the Trinity and Incarnation in Chapter 7.

Moreover, it is worth emphasizing that the task of 'persuasion' has a rather clear *telos* – namely, persuading someone to adopt a particular point of view. In many modern (or perhaps postmodern) accounts of 'conversation', or 'dialogue', or 'listening', we have the sense that, even if the language of 'persuasion' is used, no real common mind, no closure to the inquiry, is ever envisioned. In this way of thinking, disagreement and difference is a good in itself, which ought never be shut down with a definitive determination. There is a case to be made for such a view, but it should not be falsely cloaked in the language of 'persuasion'. Driver is alive to this worry, to be sure, though he does not convincingly put it to rest. We might add, also, that even when we envision an ongoing conversation without any clear closure, there is still a place for provisional judgment, which, by drawing temporary boundaries to the debate, clears a breathing space for reflection and reconciliation. Here, perhaps (another point where Richard Hooker might be of use), there is more room for a 'juridical' and 'hierarchical' role in managing conflicts than Driver seems comfortable with.

Nonetheless, this remains an important book for all serious Anglicans to grapple with amid ongoing conflicts.

W. Bradford Littlejohn
The Davenant Institute