
Liturgy and Worship in Dutch Reformed Churches

Harry Boonstra

Dutch Reformed Denominations

The "original" Reformed Church in The Netherlands is the denomination now called *Nederlandse Hervormde Kerk* (NHK). This church was begun as part of the Protestant Reformation, shaped by Calvinistic theology and world views. The NHK functioned in many ways as a state church, and was considered the *volkskerk* for most Dutch people. Its current membership is about 2,900,000. The NHK is strongly ecumenical (W.A. Visser 't Hooft represented the NHK), both nationally and internationally. The church also contains a wide spectrum of theological positions, from openly liberal to a strong segment of ultra-orthodox congregations.

The other denomination under discussion here is the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland* (GKN). These churches separated from the NHK in the secessions of 1834 and 1886 and joined as a denomination in 1892. Until the 1950s the GKN was firmly orthodox in theology, traditional in life-style, and a strong influence in the national life of the country. Since then the church has undergone vast changes, and the theological spectrum is similar to that in the NHK. The membership of the GKN is approximately 800,000.

Since the 1970s these two denominations (along with a small Lutheran church) have had discussions about reuniting. That process (*Samen op Weg*) is now well advanced. In 1993 a name was chosen for the new denomination, *Verenigde Protestantse Kerk in Nederland*.

In addition, there are a number of smaller Reformed denominations, all of which are theologically more conservative than the two discussed here, both in theology and worship practices.

Overview of Liturgical History

The liturgical history of the Dutch Reformed churches began in persecution in the second half of the sixteenth century. As the Calvinists were persecuted in The Netherlands, they fled to London; when Mary Tudor reinstated Roman worship, they fled to Frankfort, Frankenthal, and

Emden. In these refugee congregations the worship patterns and liturgies were fashioned on the run by Marten Micron, Petrus Datheen, and Johannes a Lasco. When the provincial synods were able to meet, they discussed and regulated these liturgies, at times reversing previous decisions and leaving considerable latitude for local congregations. The National Synod at Dordt (1618-1619) consolidated and codified the liturgy for all the Dutch churches. Here one finds the sermon as the center piece of the liturgy, *lectio continua* reading of Scripture, an emphasis on psalm singing, with the addition of the New Testament canticles, communion every other month, a minimal observance of the liturgical year, and a barring of organ playing during the worship service.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there was a general consolidation of worship practices, but several issues continued to divide the churches. Among these were questions about the observance of holy days, the role of organ music, and the singing of psalms and hymns. A new versification of the Psalms was adopted in 1773. (Of course, the traditionalists refused to sing from it, and riots erupted over its use; today the far right in the NHK (*Gereformeerde Bond*) still sings from this edition). Introduction of hymns came after continuous pressure from the people. Hymns were sung in homes and informal church gatherings, especially under the influence of German pietism. In 1807 the church officially adopted the *Evangelische Gezangen*. However, this liturgical advance was nearly undone by mandating that all congregations be required to sing from the collection—which became one of the reasons for the Secession of 1834.

The liturgical renewal in the NHK was part of the more general renewal in worship in the European churches. Beginning in the 1830s, both Roman Catholic and Protestant churches experienced a renewed interest in worship principles and practices.

In The Netherlands there was some liturgical stirring in the late 1800s, but the commencement of the liturgical movement is often signaled with the writings and worship services of J. H. Gerretsen and H. W. Creutzberg, beginning around 1910. They emphasized congregational responses as part of the worship, the enlargement of the liturgical calendar, and greater prominence for the Lord's Supper. The churches especially associated with the "new" worship were the Duinoordkerk and the Kloosterkerk in The Hague. Out of these early experiments was born the Liturgical Circle in 1921. The church historian J. N. Bakhuizen van den Brink was an important and long-time member, but the name most prominently associated with this circle is Gerard van der Leeuw. Some of his work has been translated into English, but most of his liturgical writings have not. His influence on the theology of worship and on the Dutch Reformed liturgy was

significant. A noteworthy aspect of his work was the controversy with the major Dutch theologian of the era, O. Noordmans. Noordmans objected to the Anglican influence of incarnational theology, which was proffered especially by van der Leeuw. He also defended the more traditional simplicity and sobriety of Reformed worship services.

Van der Leeuw responded in *Liturgie in de Crisis* (1939). True, says van der Leeuw, worship must not be ornamental, but the old Reformed worship had reduced the congregation to spectators, rather than active participants. Moreover, Calvin's wish for weekly communion justified the importance given to the Lord's Supper by the liturgical renewal.

In terms of changes at the congregational level, the original impact was limited largely to a small number of churches which considered themselves "liturgical." Moreover, during the war years the movement continued low-key, while in the immediate post-war years much effort was expended on rebuilding damaged churches. However, the efforts of the liturgical movement did bear fruit. The new *Church Order* of 1951 maintained the emphasis on traditional Reformed worship, but also allowed for greater ecumenical openness and more frequent communion. The service book (*Dienstboek, in Ontwerp*) of 1955 reflected the situation in the NHK. The book contained five orders of worship for a "regular" preaching service, in addition to five liturgies for communion services. These ranged from very traditional to highly "liturgical."

After 1955 one sees several developments—the creation of the new psalter hymnal, *Het Liedboek* (1973), published with the cooperation of several other denominations, more frequent communion, increasing emphasis on the liturgical year, the expansion of courses of study in liturgy for ministerial training (for example, at the University of Amsterdam), liturgical training for congregations, and increasing ecumenical contact among the various Dutch churches. But again, one has to recall that these changes did not pervade all of the church; many congregations were untouched by any of these developments.

I can be more brief about liturgical developments in the GKN. Here there was no contemporary parallel to the liturgical renewal in the NHK. From 1882 until 1950 one sees very little attention paid to liturgical questions, either in publications or in congregational development. But one must mention a work of theologian-statesman Abraham Kuyper. From 1897-1901 he published a long series of articles in *De Heraut*, which were later published in book form as *Onze Eeredienst* (1911). Kuyper protested the liturgical chaos in the churches which placed congregations at the mercy of the local pastor. This situation had developed under the influence of English Puritanism, pietism, and Zwinglianism—all of which created

liturgical paucity and individualism. Kuyper wanted to return to Calvin, where he found more liturgical integrity, and at times he was sympathetic to the Anglican tradition. He even spoke of the Lord's Supper as "the central aspect of worship" (523), although he does not advocate communion more often than four or six times per year. Although Kuyper's views were not particularly radical, it is noteworthy that he thoroughly discussed all aspects of worship, raised many questions, and was open to reform. However, the GKN generally ignored his concern, and discussions on worship and liturgy remained minimal.

After 1950 one sees considerably more interest. G. N. Lammens is to be singled out as both a liturgical scholar and a moving force behind much recent interest in liturgical study and development. In 1956 came the formation of the *Gereformeerde Werkgroep voor Liturgie*. In 1965-66 the Synod of Middelburg released the new *Orden voor de Eredienst*. The *Orden* has one basic order for the morning service. The structure of this liturgy contains most of the elements of traditional Reformed worship, but is shaped intentionally into: Procession, Confession, Service of the Word, Service of Offering, and Celebration of the Lord's Supper. The "current situation" described below developed largely since 1960.

Current Liturgical and Worship Situation

When describing the liturgical practices in contemporary Reformed churches in The Netherlands, one hears the warning, "Anything you say can and will be used against you . . .!" The worship practices in different Reformed congregations, even those within the same denominations, vary so tremendously, that any generalization is bound to elicit examples of different practices. Nevertheless, it is worth making the effort to describe and analyze some common patterns.

Training and Education in Liturgy

As in North America, it is certainly possible for Reformed pastors to finish their ministerial education without any exposure to liturgical training. However, for those interested, there are excellent opportunities for liturgical development. The finest training is probably provided at the Instituut voor Liturgiewetenschap of the Theological Faculty at the University of Groningen. Courses in various aspects of liturgy and hymnology are offered by two full-time professors (both of whom are members of Reformed churches). The Free University and the Theological University in Kampen have provided liturgical training at regular times, and liturgical courses at other universities are readily available.

Liturgical scholarship by Reformed scholars is substantial, both in historical studies and in theological reflection on worship and liturgy. An ongoing concern has been the question: "How can the broadening of liturgy and worship, especially the use of the liturgical treasures of the early church and from other Christian traditions (Anglican and Roman), be integrated with the tradition of Reformed theology and worship?"

Informal training for clergy, church musicians, and other members is impressive and plentiful. Workshops and conferences offer solid liturgical and musical education and are well attended. Among these conferences the *Liedboekdagen* (for further training in singing from the *Liedboek*) are the best known and attended.

In addition to conferences and workshops one finds an abundance of published materials for a general church audience. The official liturgical services of the GNK and NHK (such as *Orden van Dienst . . . van de GNK*, *Dienstboek voor de NHK*, and *Onze Hulp*) are carefully crafted orders of worship. The "standard" order of entrance, confession, Word, prayers, and Lord's Supper is generally followed, with variations both for local options and for adaptations for the liturgical year. Other titles offer a large menu of historical, theoretical, and practical discussions. The recent *Liturgiek* by M. A. Vrijland is one example of a fine presentation of liturgical developments from a Reformed perspective.

Annuals and periodicals are also well represented. *Jaarboek voor het Liturgieonderzoek* (Groningen) is a fine scholarly contribution. *Eredienstvaardig* presents a monthly offering of articles, mostly of a semi-popular nature. Other periodicals include *De Eerste Dag* and *Mededelingen . . . van der Leeuwstichting*. Regular church periodicals also pay attention to worship. For example, during 1992-1993 a provincial paper, *De Friese Kerkbode*, carried a series of more than sixty short articles dealing with all aspects of worship.

We must now turn to the question, "What takes place on Sunday?" As noted above, the spectrum of worship practices in the Reformed churches is very wide. The description that follows is largely of those congregations and services which are attuned to "liturgical renewal."

Worship Space

To begin with: What are the places of worship like? Church buildings vary from ancient churches built in the thirteenth century to plain, one-story meeting halls. Overall, one can safely assert that church architecture in The Netherlands has been much more thoughtful and imaginative than in North America. The Dutch themselves are at times somewhat critical of some of

their churches, which they refer to as "preekshuren" (preaching barns), but virtually all cities have examples of both old and modern buildings of exquisite design. (See, for example, D. J. Bruggink, *Christ and Architecture*; R. Steensma, *Honderdvijftig Jaar Gereformeerde Kerkbouw*). One unusual arrangement deserves mention. In Zeewolde and in Almere, two brand new "planned cities," one church building contains worship spaces for both a Reformed and a Roman Catholic congregation. Church music will be discussed below, but let it be noted here that virtually all churches have pipe organs, and the floors uniformly consist of wood, flagstone, or ceramic tile. These two features produce wonderful congregational singing.

Churches have also (re) arranged the liturgical furnishings with care. In many churches the pulpit, table, and baptismal font are arranged on the same platform in a "liturgical center"—giving more visual prominence to the sacraments than formerly. In other churches the table and font are placed in the midst of the congregational space—to highlight that the sacraments are truly celebrated by and for the people.

Color is also more noticeable than previously. Paraments in the proper liturgical colors adorn the pulpit and table. Additional banners are sometimes displayed, but not as commonly as in many North American churches. Preaching robes are also common. Some pastors still prefer the "Genevan gown" (black robe with white tabs), while others use grey or white robes, usually with a stole for the liturgical season. The use of one large candle is also common—usually called the *Paaskaars* (paschal candle), and renewed at Easter.

As the liturgical colors indicate, the liturgical year is observed by many churches. The Reformed churches in The Netherlands have always observed a modified liturgical year by observing the principal holy days, but today the seasons of, for example, Advent, Lent, and Easter are kept faithfully. As a part of this observance many pastors use the lectionary for text selection. (The old "lectionary" of the Heidelberg Catechism is generally neglected by these churches).

Order of Worship

Having indicated above the general order of worship of the churches—sometimes called "the ecumenical order"—I now offer a few comments about the typical service.

Unlike the common practice in American churches, one is usually not greeted upon entering the church. Most people bring their own Bibles and song books, although extra copies are available at the entrance. The time

before the service is often a noisy one. People converse freely and few seem to listen to the prelude.

The service begins with a word of welcome (usually by an elder or deacon) and a time of announcements. Printed news bulletins are rare; printed orders of worship are present in some congregations. The pastor is then escorted to the pulpit by one of the elders and given a handshake.

The "Lord's greeting" was traditionally called the *votum*, and always included the verse "Our help is in the name of the Lord, maker of heaven and earth." The verse is still used, but is now often designated as the *bemoediging*, (encouragement). Mutual greeting or passing the peace is generally absent.

The service of confession can take somewhat different forms and may include the *kyrie* (unless this is sung during the Lord's Supper). If the Scripture lessons follow the lectionary, they may be punctuated by choral or congregational responses. The sermons one hears in various churches will, of course, differ enormously, but the old Reformed tradition of careful Scripture exposition remains in most pulpits.

Het Heilig Avondmaal (the Holy Evening Meal) is celebrated more frequently than previously. The Dutch Reformed churches commemorated the Supper four to six times a year for nearly four centuries. However, since the liturgical awakening and renewal the frequency has increased. Historical studies of the early church and of Calvin's desire for weekly communion, as well as the model of other Christian churches, have prompted more frequent celebration. Monthly observance is common, with some congregations celebrating the Supper every other week or even weekly.

"Celebrating" is a key word here. The older practice of the Supper being conducted in the context of self-examination and remorse, accompanied by the reading of a heavily didactic formulary, has changed. The spirit of thankful celebration, of being nourished, of experiencing the presence of Christ—these are the hallmarks of the communion service. The long explanatory form has generally been replaced by the classical eucharistic prayer (*tafelgebed*), the words of institution, and sung responses of the *sanctus*, *doxology*, and other set responses.

The elements usually still consist of strips and cubes of white bread and wine. However, some congregations use a whole loaf of grain and a small number of churches have begun to use grape juice. The practice of using small, individual cups is virtually unknown, since the symbolism of the common cup is still valued highly. (Telling people that in North America some churches use little plastic cups, elicits groans of liturgical disbelief). The distribution can take any of four forms. Sitting around a table in

groups (the traditional custom) is still practiced in some congregations. The practice of distributing the elements while the people remain in the pews is also very common. In the more liturgically aware churches the congregation come forward to receive the elements ("walking communion"). Fewer congregations use a circle, either in the liturgical center or around the perimeter of the sanctuary.

Music

Description and analysis of music in the Dutch Reformed churches deserves treatment in a separate essay. Nevertheless, a few notable aspects may be singled out.

The NHK was an exclusive psalm-singing church (with the addition of "Several Hymns," such as the Song of Mary) until 1800. By then hymns had been sung so regularly in non-official-worship settings, that the tide of hymns and hymn singing could no longer be halted. The church adopted the *Evangelische Gezangbundel* in 1807. A psalter hymnal was published in 1938, *Psalmen en Gezangen voor de Eeredienst*. Plans for a new psalter hymnal were begun soon after this, but did not see fruition until 1973, with the appearance of *Liedboek voor de Kerken*. The *Liedboek* was an interdenominational psalter hymnal. The GKN had maintained near-exclusive psalm singing until 1964, when they began to use *119 Gezangen*. They later joined the NHK in the creation and acceptance of the *Liedboek*. Today some in the churches say that the *Liedboek* is becoming dated and that a new psalter hymnal is needed.

Most congregations sing a judicious combination of psalms and hymns. (One must note that many conservative congregations still do not sing hymns at all). A relatively large number of congregations make use of a *cantorij*—a group of singers to support congregational song. They seldom sing anthems, but sing either "service music," or serve as song leaders for the psalms and hymns. Congregational singing is usually robust, with greatly varying tempos among congregations.

The organ is still the nearly exclusive instrument in Reformed churches. Virtually all of these are pipe organs and many of them are marvelous instruments. The playing ranges from adequate to excellent. Training courses for organists are readily available, and a national Committee for Church Music regulates the issuing of diplomas.

Differences and Variations

The portrayal above may suggest that all or most of the Reformed churches have adopted a worship style which is responsive to liturgical

renewal. Colors, movement, cantors, observance of the liturgical year—these appear to dominate Reformed church life. But, as suggested above, that picture is a very incomplete one. Even among those congregations which are touched by liturgical awareness, one finds many gradations and variations. At one end of the spectrum one hears part of the service chanted and most of the singing consisting of responses between the cantor and the congregation. At the other end one will find congregations which are just beginning to increase their communion services from four to six times a year. One congregation will use the paschal candle but will not use liturgical paraments; the next congregation will do the reverse. In one church the local liturgical committee will be actively involved in planning services, in another the pastor will make all worship decisions.

In addition to this denominational spectrum one finds much disagreement at the congregational level. Some parishioners want to sound and look like an Anglican church in short order, while others have no desire to change one iota from their traditional service. Some wish to sing mostly hymns, others mostly psalms. Some love the choir, others claim that it usurps the role of congregational singing. The placement of the communion table, clapping during the children's song, the institution of children services, the young people's demand for a combo with drums, black preaching robes or white or none, the length of the sermon—these and dozens of other issues often form the battleground of congregational life. Readers in North America will, no doubt, recognize these liturgical wars and rumors of wars.

Moreover, many Reformed congregations have not been touched by any liturgical change. Some retain their old worship style without much thought, merely out of tradition. The familiar represents a firm ground of security and stability in a society in which everything is changing. Others have decided deliberately not to change their worship style. To them the traditional style of worship best represents the Reformed faith, and liturgical change is a sign of either liberalism or latent Romanism. For example, the conservative Hervormde congregations represented in the *Gereformeerde Bond* resolutely resist any changes in worship. So do many congregations in the GKN, and the more conservative denominations such as *Vrijgemaakte Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken*. In all these congregations the liturgy is lean and sparse, the sermon dominates the service, (slow) psalm singing is dominant or exclusive, and the communion table may be deliberately absent (except during communion Sundays), because its presence might detract from the importance of the sermon.

Comparison and Critique

There is much in the portrayal above that will resonate with North American readers. Both Presbyterian and Reformed churches will recognize a similar liturgical inheritance, parallel developments, and the same diversity in current practice. However, one also notes a number of minor and major differences.

A major historical difference lies in the impact of the modern liturgical renewal. Under the leadership of van der Leeuw and others the NHK was strongly influenced by the liturgical discussions and developments. This awareness and discussion did not substantially influence the GKN until after 1950. The Reformed Church in America (RCA) was only marginally influenced by the liturgical movement before 1950; later, especially under the influence of Howard Hageman, many liturgical ideas and practices began to infiltrate the RCA. The Christian Reformed Church (CRC) was even more isolated from this liturgical stream. The 1968 "Report of the Liturgical Committee" (*Acts of Synod*) is the first document that shows any awareness of twentieth century liturgical renewal. Since these belated developments, both American denominations have shown rather vigorous interest and development in worship issues.

A related issue is one of training. Although liturgical scholars in The Netherlands bemoan the lack of rigorous liturgical training, the situation is certainly stronger than in America. The seminaries of the RCA and the CRC have virtually ignored liturgical studies, and academic scholarship in this field (with a few notable exceptions) has been very meager. Only very recently has there been a growing interest. Church music is taught in the colleges of these denominations, but, again, the interest and the programs lag far behind those in The Netherlands.

One also finds differences in worship practices. Several of these are obvious in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. As noted above, serving the elements in one or more circles, while practiced in a number of American Reformed and Presbyterian churches, is very rare in The Netherlands. "Coming up" for communion may be in imitation of Roman Catholic or Anglican practice, but since the communicant barely pauses for receiving the bread and wine, such "walking communion" smacks too much of fast-food style. One would wish that more congregations would try standing in circles, but the shape of the building or the large size of the congregation may make this impractical.

Furthermore, the use of the common cup is nearly universal in The Netherlands, while it is seldom used in Reformed and Presbyterian churches in America. Fear of influenza caused North American churches to dispose

of the common cup in the early twentieth century, and the greater fear of AIDS will only support that decision. The practice of tincture would alleviate most danger of contagion, but fears and a tradition of almost a century will not likely change the practice. Wine is the predominant "fruit of the vine" in The Netherlands, grape juice in North America. (CRC congregations in Canada, with a more recent Dutch connection, frequently use the common cup and wine.)

The use of colors and visual symbols is part of the liturgical awareness in both countries, but seems more restrained in The Netherlands. Paraments and banners are carefully and tastefully constructed, but one misses the splashy, exuberantly colorful banners present in many North American churches. Less Dutch decorum and a bit more child-like and daring color would heighten the sense of celebration.

Conversely, American churches could learn much from Dutch church architecture. There are some humdrum buildings, but generally one finds strong historical sense in the older churches and imaginative design in new ones. Both the scholarly writing on church architecture and the implementation of solid principle into creative space are enviable. And, of course, the millions of yards of carpeting in American churches ought to give way to stone and wood.

Another difference lies in the extent of worship leadership. In most Dutch churches the whole service is conducted by the pastor, whereas in American churches two or three different members (including young people) may read Scripture or lead in prayer and singing. Again, the emphasis on decorum and order may count more than the priestly worship service of all believers. (It is a bit *rumoerig* to have various people go up to the pulpit area). So with the planning of worship. Worship teams and committees operate in a number of Dutch congregations, but less so than in North America. Considering the rather widespread availability of training in church music and liturgy, there is a (potentially) large cadre of knowledgeable and interested lay members. The talents of these members could be used with great benefit.

Related to this preacher dominance is the general difference in the tone and "feel" of worship. American congregations tend to be more informal, at times chatty, and usually more friendly. The friendliness may be superficial (as is often noted by Dutch visitors), but at least there is the attempt to greet strangers and to welcome visitors. In most Dutch churches the best one can hope for is a "Good morning" from an official greeter. Worship is still the one area of Dutch life where its vaunted friendliness has little place, and visitors will often experience aloofness and coldness. A part of the aloofness results from the emphasis on dignified decorum. This

decorum is seen as reverence, but it seems to me that it often may be no more than bourgeois properness (*deftigheid*). In biblical worship one finds not only reverence, but also expressions of great exuberance and hospitality. The Dutch Reformed have to a great degree ignored that biblical motif.

(In passing let me also comment on the sociological makeup of Dutch Reformed churches. Dutch visitors to America regularly comment on the lack of racial diversity in most American congregations. Although visitors may not be aware of the attempts on the part of many congregations to change this pattern, it is a point well taken. Moreover, my observation is that the tremendous influx of people of color into The Netherlands is not very well reflected in the worshiping congregations. But here, it may be my observation that is too limited).

Two other differences can be seen in the related terms "evangelical" and "evangelism." "Evangelical" is an amorphous term, intractable to definition. In an American church context it usually includes elements of theological conservatism, personal piety, and concern with winning souls. In terms of worship it often includes informality, folksiness, spontaneity, altar calls, and a long tradition of "gospel music," both old revival songs and new choruses. The new music is often tagged as "contemporary Christian," and its roots are frequently in either Tennessee or California. Another segment of this evangelical music is the recent Scripture song development. In North America one finds a long history of pressure to introduce the evangelical worship tradition into Presbyterian and Reformed worship. For example, the introduction of choirs and "special music" came largely in imitation of choirs in fundamentalist churches. So with hymnody. The musical heritage of revivalism and evangelicalism has found its way into various denominational hymnals, including such recent ones as the *CRC Psalter Hymnal*, *The Presbyterian Hymnal*, and *The Trinity Hymnal*.

In The Netherlands one sees a minor strain of this influence in the inclusion of German pietistic hymns, the songs of the Johannes De Heer collections, and, in more recent times, songs borrowed from the Youth for Christ and charismatic traditions. A general designation of the latter genre is *Opwekking* songs. These songs are very popular among various evangelical groups, especially those under the *Evangelische Omroep* umbrella. However, this music has hardly found any entrance into the regular worship of Reformed churches. Both traditional and liturgical churches have largely rejected this musical tradition on the grounds that it is too individualistic and emotional, as well as aesthetically weak.

A full explanation of why pietistic and evangelical hymnody has found its way into North American Reformed worship, but hardly at all into the churches in The Netherlands would take us far afield. No doubt the greater

ethnic and social diversity in American society, as well as a strongly developed denominationalism (with frequent borrowing among denominations) are partly responsible. Moreover, the history of religious revivals in America and the impact of fundamentalism have contributed to the greater impact of this music.

A final point of comparison concerns the North American preoccupation with the relationship between worship and evangelism—which is hardly broached in Dutch Reformed discussions on liturgy. In America one finds an ongoing concern for how the liturgy and the worship practices of a congregation will affect guests, visitors, and "seekers." One frequently hears discussion of the basic question whether a worship service is (primarily) a meeting of the covenant people to bring their God glory, or an opportunity to present non-Christians with the gospel. Various discussants give different answers but the question itself arises out of concern about evangelism and how the local congregation can most meaningfully present unbelievers with the gospel. Moreover, the pastoral team or worship committee of a congregation will often deliberately shape a service to speak to visitors or unbelievers. One may not appreciate the fact that this concern has led to such extreme measures as, for example, the removal of baptismal font or communion table because these may not speak to the non-Christian visitor. Still, the concern about speaking to the religious seeker in the context of worship is a crucial one.

The general absence of this concern in Dutch Reformed liturgy and worship is noticeable. Here again, one is faced with many complex issues and questions. Is the American predilection for joining worship and evangelism an (unfortunate) product of revivalism? Has the concern about numerical growth produced a style of worship that caters to secular criteria? Conversely, does the Dutch worship pattern show a lack of concern about neighborhood evangelism? Is the loss of Dutch youth to the church partly a result of a worship style which often neglects an evangelistic motif? This is one area which requires diligent searching and reflection on both sides of the Atlantic.

Conclusion

By the end of the nineteenth century the liturgical life of the Reformed churches was not strong. In the NHK one often still found a wooden concern with traditions developed in the course of the 1700s and 1800s—traditions which were often at a remove from both the early church and from Calvin's concepts of worship. The newly formed Secessionist churches were concerned mostly with purity of doctrine and the devotional

life—not with questions of historical liturgy. The whole Reformed tradition had been unduly influenced by English Puritanism, with its dread of forms, colors, rituals, and gestures. To quote Kuyper again: "The pseudo-spiritual influence of Anabaptism had ruined too much, and later the Puritan influence from Scotland intruded too much into our church life The formal worship of Rome called forth too strong a reaction, and we still suffer from this continually nettlesome reaction" (p. 39).

The changes wrought since then have generally been laudable. Here and there one may see an unnecessary infatuation with Canterbury or Rome. Now and then the form seems to have deadened the spirit. However, one more often sees a thoughtful concern with worship, careful attention to biblical motifs and the sweep of Christian worship history, fuller use of God's creation reflected in worship, and a sensitive combination of the history of Reformed worship with the liturgical treasures of the universal church.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Nearly all literature on worship in the Reformed churches in The Netherlands is in Dutch. Those conversant with Dutch can consult the bibliographies in the standard works. The following titles constitute a (very short) representative list of essays and books.

Brinkman, M. E. "Het Sacrament in de Gereformeerde Geloofsbeleving," in *100 Jaar Theologie*, ed. M. E. Brinkman, Kampen: Kok, 1992, 211-247.

Dankbaar, W. F., "Middleeuwse Oorsprongen van Gereformeerde Liturgie," *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 30 (1976), 1-16.

Dijk, K., "Liturgische Vragen in de 'Gereformeerden Kerken,'" *Kerk en Eredienst*, 11 (1956), 204-218.

Jaarboek voor Liturgieonderzoek. Groningen: Instituut voor Liturgiewetenschap, 1985-. [A rich source for both historical and contemporary material].

Kamp, G. C. van de, "Liturgische Bewustwording in de Gereformeerde Kerken," in *100 Jaar Theologie*, ed. M. E. Brinkman, Kampen: Kok, 1992, 161-210.

- Kuyper, Abraham, *Onze Eeredienst*. Kampen: Kok, 1911.
- Lammens, G. N., "Het Kerkelijk Jaar en de Liturgische Jaarorde," *De Eerste Dag*, 1 (1977-78), 1-28.
- Leeuw, G. van der, *Liturgiek*. Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1946.
- Leeuw, G. van der; O. Noordmans; W. H. van de Pol. *Liturgie in de Crisis*. Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1939.
- Lescrauwaet, J. F., *De Liturgische Beweging onder de Nederlandse Hervormden in Oecumenisch Perspectief*. Bussum: P. Brand, 1957.
- Psalmzingen in de Nederlanden vanaf de Zestiende Eeuw tot Heden*, ed. Bruijn, J. de and W. Heiting, Kampen: Kok, 1991.
- Schoot, E. van de, *Hervormde Eredienst*. The Hague: Boekencentrum, 1950.
- Staples, Peter, *The Liturgical Movement in the Netherlands Reformed Church, 1911-1955. With Special Reference to the Anglican Dimensions*. Utrecht: Interuniversitair Instituut voor Missiologie en Oecumenica, 1983.
- Vrijlandt, M. A., *Liturgiek*. Zoetermeer: Meinema, 1987, 1992.

recent BOOKS

HUMAN RIGHTS AND RELIGIOUS VALUES

An Uneasy Relationship?

Edited by Abdullahi A. An-Na'im, Jerald D. Gort, Henry Jansen, and Hendrik M. Vroom
0506-X, paper, \$26.99

RESSOURCEMENT: Retrieval and Renewal in Catholic Thought

THE LETTER ON APOLOGETICS and HISTORY AND DOGMA

Maurice Blondel
0819-0, paper, \$18.99

THEOLOGICAL DICTIONARY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

VOLUME VII k^s-ly^s

Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry
2331-9, cloth, \$39.99

FROM CHRIST TO THE WORLD

Introductory Readings in Christian Ethics

Edited by Wayne G. Boulton, Thomas D. Kennedy, and Allen Verhey
0640-6, paper, \$24.99(s)

TREMBLING AT THE THRESHOLD OF A BIBLICAL TEXT

James L. Crenshaw
0720-8, paper, \$10.99

FROM OLD REVELATION TO NEW

A Redaction-Critical and Tradition-Historical Study of Temporal Transitions in Prophetic Prediction

Simon J. DeVries
0683-X, paper, \$29.99

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IN CALVIN'S THEOLOGY

Third Edition

Edward A. Dowey, Jr.
0107-2, paper, \$18.99

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

A New Testament Perspective

James D. G. Dunn
0796-8, paper, \$10.99

THE JUSTICE OF GOD

A Fresh Look at the Old Doctrine of Justification by Faith

James D. G. Dunn & Alan M. Suggate
0797-6, paper, \$9.99

INTERSECTIONS

Post-Critical Studies in Preaching

Edited by Richard L. Eslinger
0714-3, paper, \$12.99

THE FIRST THEOLOGIAN

A Study in Early Christian Prophecy

Thomas W. Gillespie
3721-2, cloth, \$24.99

MODELS FOR SCRIPTURE

John Goldingay
0146-3, paper, \$19.99

BEYOND POVERTY AND AFFLUENCE

Toward an Economy of Care

Bob Goudzwaard & Harry de Lange
Translated and edited by Mark Vander Vennen
0827-1, paper, \$14.99

ETHICS AFTER CHRISTENDOM

Toward an Ecclesial Christian Ethic

Vigen Guroian
0128-5, paper, \$12.99

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARY ON THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

Chapters 18-50

Victor P. Hamilton
2309-2, cloth, \$39.99

JESUS AND ISRAEL

One Covenant or Two?

David E. Holwerda
0685-6, paper, \$12.99

A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN AFRICA

Elizabeth Isichei
0843-3, paper, \$19.99

SEASONS OF GRACE

Reflections from the Christian Year

James F. Kay
Foreword by Thomas G. Long
0783-6, paper, \$9.99

A HANDBOOK TO BIBLICAL HEBREW:

An Introductory Grammar

Page H. Kelley, Terry L. Burden, and Timothy G. Crawford
0828-X, paper, \$17.99

THE SONG OF MOSES

A Theological Quarry

George A. F. Knight
0599-X, paper, \$12.99

THE DECALOGUE AND A HUMAN FUTURE

The Meaning of the Commandments for Making and Keeping Human Life Human

Paul L. Lehmann
0835-2, paper, \$17.99

THE FEMINIST QUESTION

Feminist Theology in the Light of Christian Tradition

Francis Martin
0794-1, paper, \$29.99

THE UNRELIEVED PARADOX

Studies in the Theology of Franz Bittfeldt

Edited by Martin E. Marty and Jerald C. Brauer
0745-3, paper, \$14.99

from EERDMANS

THE RESPONSIBILITY PEOPLE

Eighteen Senior Leaders of Protestant Churches and National Ecumenical Agencies Reflect on Church Leadership

Edited by William McKinney
0744-5, paper, \$24.99

THE CHURCH'S PEACE WITNESS

Edited by Marlin E. Miller and Barbara Nelson Gingerich
0555-8, paper, \$14.99

CREDIBLE CHRISTIANITY

The Gospel in Contemporary Society

Hugh Montefiore
3768-9, cloth, \$19.99

THE NEW INTERNATIONAL COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

Revised Edition

Leon Morris
2504-4, cloth, \$39.99

CONSULTING THE FAITHFUL

What Christian Intellectuals Can Learn from Popular Religion

Richard J. Mouw
0738-0, paper, \$6.99

THE OPEN SECRET

Revised Edition

Lesslie Newbigin
0829-8, paper, \$12.99

THE SCANDAL OF THE EVANGELICAL MIND

Mark A. Noll

3715-8, cloth, \$19.99

THE REFORMATION

Roots and Ramifications

Helko A. Oberman
0825-5, paper, \$29.99

SCIENCE AND THEOLOGY

Edited by Murray Rae, Hilary Regan, and John Stenhouse

0816-6, paper, \$29.99

CHRISTIANITY AND ECONOMICS IN THE POST-COLD WAR ERA

The Oxford Declaration and Beyond

Edited by Herbert Schlossberg, Vinay Samuel and Ronald J. Sider
0798-4, paper, \$10.99

PREACHING CHRIST TODAY

The Gospel and Scientific Thinking

Thomas F. Torrance
0799-2, paper, \$5.99

TEXT, CHURCH, AND WORLD

Biblical Interpretation in Theological Perspective

Francis Watson
3774-3, cloth, \$34.99

GOD IN THE WASTELAND

The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams

David F. Wells
3773-5, cloth, \$19.99

STUDYING WAR — NO MORE?

From Just War to Just Peace

Edited by Brian Wickert
0823-9, paper, \$15.99

THE BOOK OF ACTS

IN ITS FIRST-CENTURY SETTING

Edited by Bruce W. Winter

VOLUME 3: THE BOOK OF ACTS AND PAUL IN ROMAN CUSTODY

Brian Rapske
2435-X, cloth, \$37.50

VOLUME 4: THE BOOK OF ACTS IN ITS PALESTINIAN SETTING

Edited by Richard Bauckham
2436-6, cloth, \$37.50

FIRST-CENTURY CHRISTIANS

IN THE GRAECO-ROMAN WORLD

SEEK THE WELFARE OF THE CITY

Christians as Benefactors and Citizens

Bruce W. Winter
4091-4, paper, \$18.99

THE TEXT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica

Second English Edition

Ernst Würthwein

Translated by Erroll F. Rhodes
0788-7, paper, \$19.99

Eerdmans ISBN Prefix: 0-8028-
Prices subject to change without notice.
"s" after the price indicates a limited
discount.

For more information on these or
other Eerdmans titles, or for details
about our textbook examination policy,
contact the Eerdmans Textbook
Department at 1-800-253-7521 (FAX
616-459-6540) and ask for a copy of our
most recent Academic Catalog.

475  WM. B. EERDMANS
PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503