

Kimberly Bracken Long, ed. *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year B, Volume 2, Trinity Sunday Through Reign of Christ*. Louisville, KY: WJK, 2015. 300 pages. \$32.98.

The latest volume from the *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion* series completes liturgies made available for Year B. It also concludes the entire three-year cycle of prayers and poetry based upon the Revised Common Lectionary edited by Kimberly B. Long and published by Westminster John Knox. The introduction to *Liturgies for Year B, Volume 2* (an introduction appearing in the five other volumes but worth another look here) swiftly informs the reader that the series intends to supplement denominational resources and not to supplant them (ix). Methodist, Episcopal, United Church of Christ, African American Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Lutheran authors form a primary ecumenical collective aiming for liturgical language that rings with clarity and expresses not only human work but also the Word of God (ix, xi). “Other contributors” are also listed and bring African-American, Latina, and Asian racial diversity. Liturgies do not include author attribution. It is therefore conceivable that multiple perspectives inform each page of prayer. Perhaps another iteration of a worship series by *Feasting on the Word* might advance liturgies composed in other languages (or even prayers, meditations, reflections, and questions from other religious traditions).

Like the second volumes for Year A and Year C that inject ordinary time (the liturgical season following Pentecost) with liturgical verve, the liturgical material in *Year B, Volume 2* comprises “Opening Words to Blessing—for every Sunday and holy day from Trinity Sunday through Reign of Christ (Year B),” a baptismal thanksgiving, prayers for celebration of “Communion, or Eucharist,” reflection questions based upon lectionary passages, and lectionary-based household prayers. The prayers may be adapted for personal, corporate, and congregational use for morning and evening devotions throughout a given week. An included CD-ROM presents an electronic version of the book. After registering contact information with Westminster John Knox, which may cause some readers to sigh, the liturgical content may be widely copied and pasted with the following reference: “Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion*. Copyright 2015” (x).

Also similar to the second volumes of Year A and Year C, *Liturgies for Year B, Volume 2* offers for each Sunday and holy day semicontinuous and complementary liturgical “tracks” to account for the differing “Old Testament” and Psalm lections that appear alongside unchanging Epistle and Gospel readings. Semicontinuous liturgies “read continually through a book of Scripture from week to week.” Complementary liturgies expound upon “Old Testament” readings that complement the Gospel selections of the day (xi). The Vanderbilt University common lectionary website is also mentioned as a resource to help students understand liturgical intricacies—<http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/>. *Year B, Volume 2*, like its counterpart monographs, therefore has flexibility operating at many levels with regard to spiritual and practical dimensions of using the material for worship, aligning it with the liturgical calendar and related lections, and connecting the volume’s content to other portals of learning.

Without disclosing too much about the liturgical writing specific to *Year B, Volume 2*, the language has a strong “verticality” to it, even when it dives into the depths of human suffering. Consider the question for reflection from the semicontinuous liturgical offerings of Proper 8 (Sunday between June 26 and July 2 inclusive): “In this week’s readings, various people bring their suffering to God, through lament and the search of healing. How does Christ enable you—and how might you enable others—to be honest with God in doubt and pain?” (56). Candor

oriented heavenward toward God puts our earthly pain into relief. Some liturgical phrasing also has a New Age quality to it. The *Thanksgiving for Baptism* states, “Praise to you, O God, for the gift of water...for creating this blue orb and giving it to us as a home” (265). However one hears the meditations, they are current and name problems such as the dulling of attention from “too much Web surfing” (69). And with creative application, a household evening prayer like the one below might be shifted in register from a tone of calm to a vicarious and cynical cry of lament on behalf of the unarmed victims of racist violence:

God of the embracing darkness,
thank you for dwelling in my heart.
I was able to accomplish some things today and not others.
Thank you for letting me rest in the promise
That you are able to accomplish abundantly more in my life
Than all I can ask or imagine.
I will sleep in peace. Amen.

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