

# “Claiming the Vision: Baptismal Identity in the Episcopal Church”



Designed to help lay persons, seminarians, and clergy develop a deeper appreciation for the history and theology of the baptismal rite in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. This six hour video course is based on a set of extensive video interviews with authors of the baptismal and eucharistic rites of the 1979 prayer book.

**The Most Rev. Frank Griswold**

former Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church

**The Rev. Dr. Leonel Mitchell**

retired Professor of Liturgical Studies from Seabury-Western Theological School

**The Rev. Dr. Daniel Stevick**

retired Professor of Liturgical Studies from Episcopal Divinity School

**The Rev. Dr. Louis Weil**

retired Professor of Liturgical Studies from Church Divinity School of the Pacific

These scholars offer their fascinating remembrances and insights into the development of the baptismal rite of our prayer book and what that rite continues to mean for the church today. The program is divided into five segments. Each of these segments covers numerous related topics by providing brief five to ten minute video clips on the topic followed by a set of on-screen discussion questions. The segment and topic list is provided below.

## Baptism and the Sacramental Life

The Meaning of Baptism

The Early Church's Pattern of Baptism

The Baptism Rite

Why the Baptism and Confirmation Rites Needed to be Rewritten

The Days Set Aside For Baptism

The Relationship between Baptism and the Eucharist

The Open Table: Can Those Not Yet Baptized Receive Communion?

The Relationship between Word and Sacrament

The Relationship between Sacraments and Daily Life

The Prayers of the People

The Peace

Christ's Presence in Our Worship

The Importance of Daily Prayer

Relating To Other Faith Traditions

How the 1979 Prayer Book Has Changed the Episcopal Church

## The History and Theology of the Baptism Rite in the 1979 Prayer Book

The Process for Developing the 1979 Prayer Book

The Early Work of the Christian Initiation Committee

The Last Band-aids on Cranmer

Key Principles of the Baptism Rite: The Priesthood of All Believers

Key Principles of the Baptism Rite: Returning to the Ancient Rites

The Nature and Purpose of The Christian Initiation Committee's Work

How the Early Work of the Committee Was Received By the Church

Major Contributors to the Revisions

## Understanding the Baptismal Ecclesiology of the Episcopal Church

Baptism as Incorporation into the Body of Christ

Baptism and the Priesthood of All Believers

Clericalism in the Church

The Omnivorous Priesthood

The Meaning of Ordination

The Laity as the Ministers of the Church

What is a Priest?

What is a Deacon?

What is a Bishop?

Being an Episcopalian

Mature Faith

Life in Community

The Future of the Church

# The History of the Rite of Confirmation

Two Historical Meanings for Confirmation

The History of Confirmation in the Episcopal Church

Confirmation and Rites of Passage

Confirmation Symbols

Reaffirming Our Faith

## Advice for Those Designing Liturgies In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Innovation for Our Own Day

Important Principles In Liturgical Design: Balancing the Vertical and Horizontal Elements

Attending to Structure and to the Oral Nature of Worship

Bringing Expansive Language to Liturgy

Honoring the Needs of the Community

Creating Worship That Is Culturally Sensitive

Unbinding Episcopal Worship from Anglican Culture

The program design was created to allow individuals and congregations to enter and leave the material easily seeing one or two small discreet segments at a time and then being able to discuss them in greater detail. This gives communities the flexibility to explore the depth of the material at a pace that works for busy contemporary Christians. This design feature makes it possible for congregations to develop an Adult Formation program as short as twenty minutes in length or as long as a full day retreat. By choosing pertinent topics a congregation can create a Lenten program or other adult program that speaks specifically to their needs. While we hope that people will choose to view “Claiming the Vision” in community and participate in the discussion questions that follow, the material also works well for those who want to use it privately for their own learning and inspiration.

Our dream has been to provide all those who have not been afforded the blessing of formalized graduate level Liturgical Studies course work with the same material presented to someone in seminary but offered in a way that is accessible to every Episcopalian. We developed a window into the process of writing the prayer book, showing the profound importance of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer to the life of current day Episcopalians.

This resource can help all Episcopalians better understand the ways in which the baptismal theology and baptismal ecclesiology which came to full expression in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer have reshaped and renewed life within the Episcopal Church. By doing so, all of us who have worked so hard and so long on this project believe we are doing our part to equip the church with leaders ready and able to minister in a 21<sup>st</sup> century world.

“Claiming the Vision” helps us understand what these bold, visionary church leaders were able to express to the Episcopal Church about what it means to be a follower of Christ. They witness to their Christian faith both in the superb theological insights they are able to present to listeners in a very accessible way and also through the depth of personal faith and faithfulness we witness in their own lives and their own stories. Those who see these videos will experience them as inspiring, challenging, and provocative, inviting us as Episcopalians to embrace more fully in our day and time the vision of faith and ministry proclaimed in the theology of our prayer book. We hope that many will choose to use them in Lenten programs and other adult formation programs over the coming years.

“Claiming the Vision: Baptismal Identity in the Episcopal Church” is available free online by going to the Bloy House website [www.bloyhouse.org](http://www.bloyhouse.org) and clicking on claiming the vision. Or you can go to [www.episcopalchurch.org](http://www.episcopalchurch.org), click on what we believe, click on the Book of Common Prayer and click on Claiming the Vision. This will take you to the Bloy House website as well.

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