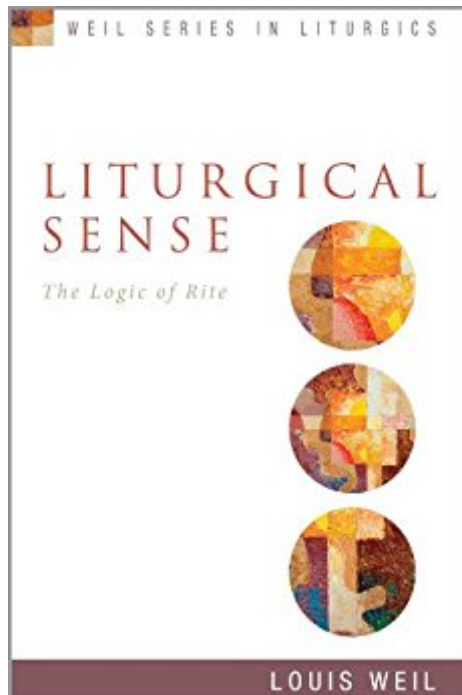




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Liturgical Sense: The Logic Of Rite (Weil Series In Liturgics)



Synopsis

Louis Weil looks back on his work shaping the liturgical life of the Episcopal Church through his involvement with the development of The 1979 Book of Common Prayer and looks forward to the future of the church and its liturgical life. Through stories and first-person anecdotes, Weil does "narrative theology" as only he can. Although most points of reference are to the 1979 BCP, the book is aiming at a more fundamental level—not just Episcopal or even Anglican liturgy, but liturgical rites as such: how do they "do what they do"? or NOT do when they are done badly! "Liturgical Sense" is two dimensional: both the "common sense" of liturgical rites and also their "aesthetic sense." It is Dr. Weil's contention that in American culture we have an inherent inability to "think symbolically." Dr. Weil seeks to encourage a return to "liturgical sense" across the church.

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Customer Reviews

"Our theology must affect what we do ritually." This simple statement underlies the central argument in this challenging book on liturgy. Anglican liturgical scholar Louis Weill challenges bishops, priests, and deacons to consider actions of the liturgy and to ask: Why am I doing this? How did it originate? What does it mean to me? What does it say to the members of the congregation who observe this gesture? From this simple premise flows a wise book that asks us consider how "a liturgy must be more than watched or heard: it must connect at the deepest levels with the reality of a worshiper's life." Weil challenges the assumption that "'I like it' is a sufficient reason to include liturgical items without a serious consideration of their purpose or lack of purpose in the rite as a whole." In the process, Weil encourages those who preside in liturgy to do so in a way that does not leave the Body of Christ gathered "worshiping on the surface of the symbols without drinking from the life-giving waters that spring from their depth." I recommend this book to my fellow Episcopal clergy as a catalyst for thinking more deeply about the theology embodied in our liturgical planning and actions.

Once again, Louis Weil pairs good liturgy with good sense and good taste. His scholarship is thorough, and supports his views. A book about how to 'choreograph' worship without illustrations is like a day without a glass of wine, and there are good ones. But the prime reason this book is worth reading is his instance that the first priority is not doing what Beloved Old Father _____ used to do, or climbing on the music director's favorite hobby horse, but doing what will bring the people in the pews closer to the Holy. Bravo, Louis!

Although this elegantly written short book will be of particular interest to clergy and laity in the Episcopal Church, its distillation of scholarship and experience by a major liturgical theologian should have a wide readership across denominational lines. Its direct language, anecdotes and lucid explanations of worship reaching back two millennia make it ideal for continuing education in parishes everywhere. It is the perfect antidote to the excesses of traditional and faddish services.

I have often questioned the need for Liturgy in churches. This book captures that idea and shows precisely the advantages of the use of Liturgy. It is clearly written and well documented. It read better than many novels.

The beauty and coherency of the liturgy are things which have been a passion of mine; I care

deeply about each worship experience I create. Weil's little book challenges me to re-think some positions I have taken for granted for a long time. It was a breath of fresh air to read and consider.

This is a superb reflection by a seasoned and wise liturgist, full of insights and challenging stories. I believe that any priest who cares about how congregations perceive what is going on at the altar will find it as helpful as I did.

Clear, concise presentation of basic liturgical issues that are often misunderstood.

Louis helps the reader to embrace the shape of liturgy and understand the history, context of liturgical principles and how you can apply them to your local community.

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