Roots that refresh: historical-theological engagement with Jewish meal traditions and the celebration of the Eucharist in the Anglican Church

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Different theologies have sprung up around the celebration of the Eucharist. Consequently at the very point where Christians should be most united there is often controversy, bitterness and division. This is true of the writer’s own social location within the Anglican Church. The central question of this thesis is therefore how an engagement with Christianity’s Jewish roots helps us to reframe Eucharistic theology. In this regard a historical theological approach is employed to track how Eucharistic theological emphases have changed over time in relation to Jewish meal traditions, Jesus’ meal parables and table fellowship. The implications to reconnecting with the essence of Jesus’ social location are somewhat radical and potentially discomforting. Yet there are several obstacles to connecting with roots of our faith. The 1rst obstacle examined in this thesis is the problematic interpretative gap of history, between the strangeness of the past and the familiarity of the present. A second obstacle only brie4y touched upon is the attitude of anti-intellectualism in some churches today and an ignorance of the histories of Christianity. However, given the thesis question, the primary focus is on the obstacle of Christian anti-Semitism and the de-Judaising of Christianity. To seek greater continuity with Judaism is, in some ways, to Christianize Christianity.

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ENGLISH ABSTRACT: Questions and problems concerning church membership are plenty and surface regularly in church meetings. The way in which the church operates reflects a particular concept of the church. The ideal ...