



Praxis News of Worship

Supporting and resourcing the liturgical life of the Church of England

What is Praxis?

Praxis was formed in 1990, sponsored by the Liturgical Commission, the Group for the Renewal of Worship (GROW) and the Alcuin Club. It exists to provide and support liturgical education in the Church of England.

Affiliation

The sponsoring organisations do not fund *Praxis* financially. The work that *Praxis* does is supported mainly by affiliation. If you are not an affiliate, why not consider becoming one? Just get in touch with the office—details on the back page.

Website

Have you visited the *Praxis* website? View us online at www.praxisworship.org.uk

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Ancient and Modern for Anglican liturgical publications

In an announcement on Friday 8 May the Communications Unit at Church House disclosed that the Archbishops' Council is in discussion with *Hymns Ancient and Modern* with a view to outsourcing the Council's publishing services, currently undertaken by Church House Publishing.

The official liturgical publications are at the top of the CHP best-sellers, and it is envisaged that these will continue to be published under the new arrangement, alongside supporting publications, such as *Together for a Season*, *Worship Changes Lives* and *Using Common Worship*. The continuity and development of electronic publishing of liturgical texts has yet to be

determined, as have the practical arrangements to secure distinctive Anglican expertise in the editing of liturgical books, as current publications are updated or new ones produced.

Hymns Ancient and Modern Ltd, which owns *The Church Times* and publishes under its own imprints - Canterbury Press, SCM Press and RMEP - has strong links with the Church of England. It took over Church House Bookshop in 2006 and already provides customer service and distribution services to Church House Publishing. It has also provided similar services to the Methodist Church for their Epworth imprint for more than 25 years.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity - a fresh approach

Not only will the material for the 2010 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity be a little different, there is to be more flexibility concerning the dates, too: 18 - 25 January will remain the key focus, but churches are encouraged to consider praying during the octave of Peter and Paul, or the octave of Pentecost, if one of those suits local churches better.

The material is based on Luke 24, with newly-written prayers, a specially-composed poem and other original material provided for each day.

Also new: the material will be published electronically as well as on paper, and there will be a note with it to suggest how the material might be used alongside *Anglican Daily Prayer*.

Crammer (not Cranmer) prayers

Prayer resources for young people facing exams have hit the headlines of the Church press recently, and these downloadable, postcard-sized prayers, designed to be included in students' crib-card packs can be found at www.cofe.anglican.org/exams.

There are lots of other prayers on the website too. Here are a few categories:

- ◆ The current financial situation
- ◆ Zimbabwe and Africa
- ◆ The peace of the world
- ◆ Those worried about debt
- ◆ Redundancy

All these, and others, are at www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/prayers

Before I enter the exam room, **stop and pray.....**

Dear Lord,

I thank you that when I pray you **always listen** to me and **hear my prayers**.

As my exam approaches,

- set me **free from fear**
- give me your **peace**

because I know that **my future is in your hands**. Amen.

Rev'd Peter Moger, National Worship Development Officer for the Church of England

For more prayers and resources visit www.cofe.anglican.org/exams

Are we a Healing Church?

Carol Wilkinson reports on her findings in the Blackburn Diocese.

It has taken the Church many centuries even to begin the attempt to restore the ministry of healing to its rightful place as a normal and natural part of the life of the Christian community. Although in recent times a report has been produced and liturgical texts have been written (noted at the end of the article), there seems to be a reticence at parish level to address the question of wholeness and healing as being integral to the life of faith.

In my own diocese of Blackburn, efforts are being made to give the ministry of healing a higher priority. The whole of the 2008 clergy conference was devoted to this ministry, diocesan advisors have been appointed and, for my part, I have spent six months studying the theology of healing, investigating the plethora of resources available, and visiting parishes to see what services are on offer. Coming from a background in liturgy, I decided to approach this study by observing the services and talking with the ministers involved after each service.

Great diversity

As might be expected in any study of liturgical rites in the Church of England, there is a great diversity of practice and approach to the ministry of healing within the various traditions across the Church. The official rites in *Wholeness and Healing: Pastoral Services*, although not often observed in their entirety, are not without influence. Certainly, the texts for the laying on of hands and anointing are well used.

Diversity rather than uniformity is the rule and, in general, a parish's approach to the ministry of healing depends, in the main, on the incumbent. In only one parish did I hear of the ministry being instigated by a lay person. In consequence, this usually means that the ministry waxes and wanes with changes in the leadership of the community. It was interesting to hear anecdotal evidence of this from a Lay Reader, and GP, who had experienced over a quarter of a century of such changes. Each successive incumbent had changed the time and type of service at which the ministry was offered; from a quiet monthly evening service with the laying on of hands for healing, to the current practice of lay prayer ministry once a month during communion.

One incumbent of a Blackburn parish had

been much influenced by a visit to a Northern Ireland community that offered prayer ministry on the streets of Coleraine – a combination of healing and evangelism. Subsequently he had established an 'open church' session on Saturday morning. Here local people were encouraged to drop into the church for coffee, to read the newspapers, chat, and receive prayer ministry if they wished from a small team of trained lay ministers.

In one east Lancashire town there is an ecumenical initiative where ministers are available on Tuesday morning in a room at the local library where people can receive prayer ministry. In an Anglo-Catholic parish in the west of the diocese they have developed a skilled ministry team and are able to offer training to developing ministries in other parishes.

Conventional ministry

Most parishes have opted for a conventional type of ministry either within one of the main morning services or at a quiet said celebration of Holy Communion. The type of ministry offered varies. In very general terms, prayer ministry by lay ministers is more prevalent in the evangelical charismatic parishes and those of a more central churchmanship. Anglo-Catholic parishes tend towards a more formal laying on of hands and anointing using texts and services from *Wholeness and Healing*. However, the rite of anointing seems to be gaining in popularity and was observed in at least one charismatic evangelical parish. The point at which the ministry takes place varies considerably; some parishes offer prayer ministry after every service, others during communion, or occasionally after the intercessions. The parishes that held regular services for wholeness and healing tended to use the authorised texts more frequently, but on the whole these services were outside normal Sunday worship.

More questions than answers

As the research has progressed I find that I have more questions than answers. It might be assumed that training was a concern. But all the ministers I spoke to had undergone some training, and incumbents were very aware of the need to take great care in their selection and training. Unrealistic expectations, and any cult of personality I have yet to experience.

What I have met is anecdotal evidence that if the ministry is offered in one of the main services people will stay away. This raises the question of 'anonymity'; most ministry took place in full view of the congregation. One incumbent was so concerned about this that he offered no less than three types of ministry in the same service; a conventional laying on of hands and anointing at the communion rail, prayers for healing for the whole congregation (on the grounds that a person did not have to go forward to receive God's healing), and after the service private prayer ministry in the Lady chapel.

There are stories of people who specifically ask *not* to be put on the prayer list when they are ill. Incumbents have told me how difficult it can be, and how long it takes to establish a ministry of healing – so much teaching is needed before they could begin to introduce services and the training of ministers.

Out of 300 churches in the diocese only 20 or so responded to a survey of the healing ministry in their parish, and just a further 7 or 8 parishes advertise healing services or prayer ministry on their website. So I am left with this very difficult question – are we a Church in which people are *not* afraid to be vulnerable and seek the support of the Christian community when they are in need? Are we, broadly speaking, a healing Church? The evidence, so far, suggests that we are not.

Carol Wilkinson is an accountant and priest, and honorary tutor with the Lancashire and Cumbria Theological Partnership in Liturgy.

The report to which Carols refers is A Time to Heal: A contribution towards the ministry of healing (2000, London, Church House Publishing); and the liturgical text are in Common Worship: Pastoral Services (2000, 2005, London, Church House Publishing).

New all-age companion to *Times and Seasons and Festivals*

Look out for the latest in the *Together for a Season* series, with a new resource for Feasts and Festivals of the Christian year. The book (withCD) is published by Church House Publishing and costs £24.50.

Inspiring Worship

Reflections of a bishop with a liturgical past

The second extract from an address by Michael Perham
to the annual meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Committee representatives

Seven key recoveries

Over the years I have discovered several aspects of liturgy in our churches that encourage me. There are seven areas, however, where I believe there is much work to be done. It is all part of the process of formation if we are to have inspiring worship. Here some of the priorities I set before you arise from where we began (see Issue 21), with the prophet Isaiah and the vision of God.

For the first recovery, and by far the most crucial, is the recovery of expectation in worship. Expectation that worship will bring both joy and pleasure. Expectation that the words and actions of the liturgy have meaning - everything said, everything sung, everything done is unfolding a truth. Expectation of meeting Jesus - meeting Jesus in word, sacrament and fellowship in a way that is real encounter and blessing. Expectation of a glimpse of heaven - joined, like Isaiah, to the worship of the angels and the saints. Expectation of transformation - expecting the worship to change me as an individual, expecting the worship to change us corporately as a church. All these are aspects of expectation, without which we are unlikely to be open to the Spirit.

The second recovery (and it arises from the first) is the recovery of prayerfulness. 'Praying the liturgy' has always seemed to me a very important phrase. 'Going to a service' is one thing, but 'praying the liturgy' quite another. Unless there is that undercurrent of prayerfulness, with hearts and minds open to the Spirit, then all the things we do (greeting, listening, singing, receiving and much more) will lack real engagement. The channel of communication with God will not be open at our end.

The third relates to the creative use of our buildings. Large buildings and small congregations are difficult to fit together satisfactorily. We need, of course, to take on reluctant DACs and preservation societies and insist that our buildings be reordered for imaginative worship. Most church reorderings nowadays seem to be about freeing up the west end for coffee; rather fewer about freeing up the east end for bread and wine. It is liturgical reordering that we most need. But, even when that is impossible or undesirable, we need to use

the building, as it is, with all its clutter, in a new way, to identify its different 'rooms' and use well. How I long to see the little village congregation of a dozen or so on a Sunday around the font for the Gathering, sitting together near the front of the nave for the Liturgy of the Word, up in the chancel and around the altar for the Liturgy of the Sacrament, and back at the door for the Dismissal.

The fourth recovery is of confidence in music. The people of God should be frequently bursting into song. We need to draw in new instruments. We also need to regain our confidence in unaccompanied singing. It's sad to go to churches where only the hymns are sung. How any one can think that texts like the *Gloria*, the *Alleluia* and the *Sanctus* are effective when spoken, rather than sung, I can never understand. And we need to teach a new generation of clergy to be confident in their singing role. People need help in finding ways to sing simply, but movingly, and thus to find their worship lifted to a different level.

The fifth is the recovery of the visual. All too often we still see people with their heads buried in a book or hidden under a pew when all the most visual things are happening in the liturgy - the proclamation from the Book of the Gospels in the middle of the assembly, the manual acts of the Eucharistic Prayer, the making of the sign of the cross over a congregation in blessing. The old invitation to put 'hands together and eyes closed' for prayer needs to be replaced with an encouragement to open your eyes wide, to face the action, to look for the symbolism, to enjoy the colour, to see the beauty.

The sixth is the recovery of spontaneity. Of course this has happened in many churches - praise the Lord! - but they remain a vibrant minority. Few of our worship leaders have become confident enough to let the liturgy sometimes take them in unexpected directions or even to introduce a spontaneous word here and there in response to the promptings of the Spirit. There is no substitute for careful preparation, but a willingness to be surprised and to surprise others should never be excluded. Even the most skilful worship leader cannot always know in advance where the liturgy needs to move.

The final recovery is of memory. Having in our memory bank scriptural and liturgical texts is important, both in order that they may come to our rescue at moments of crisis in our lives and indeed may feed us daily as we go about our business, and also so that we can be text-free, book-free, screen-free, as we worship. Variety is good, but if there is so much of it that we have committed nothing to memory, it has become a barrier to worship and an obstacle to spirituality. Many Eucharistic Prayers may be a blessing, but not if they mean our eyes are fixed on text when they could be fixed on bread and wine. Affirmations of Faith may broaden our theological horizons, but if they mean we do not know the Creeds by heart, then we do ourselves a deep disservice. We need some texts written on our heart.

Final thought

I love the liturgy - I hope I have conveyed that, though I hope you can see I love God even more! But I don't think the liturgy is everything, nor do I believe that good liturgy alone will bring people to Christ. So I end with a warning. I worry when people say that worship is the Church's shop-window. For all its attractiveness, it is not often, I think, a tool of pre-evangelism. I want to bring people into worship and I want it to touch them deeply, but I think there is a lot of work to be done with them before worship is what will touch them. We should not claim too much for something we dearly love. It is only part of the picture. Worship is not the shop-window of the Church or, if it is, it is only one of many that every community needs.

Michael Perham is the Bishop of Gloucester.

Liturgical Study at King's College London

MA in Contemporary Worship

- studying recent trends in worship revision and development.

Doctorate in Ministry (DMin)

- with opportunity for a liturgically-based research project.

For further information please contact the Revd Dr James Steven (james.steven@kcl.ac.uk).



Musical News



A regular feature of articles and the latest news of music and worship

edited by Anne Harrison

'Touch the earth lightly'

Shirley Erena Murray (born in 1931) is a hymn-writer from New Zealand, some of whose texts are finding their way into UK publications. These include a hymn on environmental themes, 'Touch the earth lightly', which appears – paired with a tune by Colin Gibson named TENDERNESS – in *Common Ground* (the 1998 Scottish ecumenical collection) and also in the more recently published *Church Hymnary: Fourth Edition*, now also available under the title *Hymns of Glory, Songs of Praise* (Canterbury Press, 2008).

The young Los Angeles-based musician Tony Alonso has also composed a setting of 'Touch the earth lightly', which GIA publishes as a single item (G-7175) suitable for choirs, music groups or congregations. A short sample can be heard as an mp3 file on the GIA website (www.giamusic.com – enter the title into the Search box on the home page). Copies of the music can be ordered on this side of the Atlantic from Decani Music, Oak House, 70 High Street, Brandon, Suffolk, IP27 0AU (tel: 01842 819830; e-mail: Nicholas@decanimusic.co.uk).

'Touch the earth lightly' is also the subject of two short features in the Winter 2009 edition of *The Hymn: a journal of congregational song*, published quarterly by The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada. The 'Hymn Interpretation' on pages 24-26 looks at Shirley Erena Murray's text in the light of a process described by author William L. Wallace as 'the greening of hymnody'.

David Buley's 'Hymn Performance' article suggests ways of opening up the accompaniment for this hymn to 'an expanded instrumentarium'. Various websites (including www.westernsoundscape.org) are mentioned as resources for 'sound-bytes of animals and natural soundscapes'. Using bird calls or the sounds of the ocean along with the hymn would undoubtedly score fairly high on the giggle-risk scale in some contexts, but – with sensitive planning and execution – might it be worth exploring the use of the evocative percussion instrument known as a rain-stick, or some other natural sound?

WorshipConnect conference

The London School of Theology describes this summer's WorshipConnect conference (Tuesday 21 to Friday 24 July 2009) as catering for 'a wide range of interests in music and worship'. Besides workshops there will be three 'Worship Labs' designed to give participants the opportunity to experience a particular style of worship and then to reflect on it. One of these will focus on lament, for example, and another on 'multigenerational worship'.

Among the speakers will be Christopher Ellis who produced for the Baptist Union of Great Britain, with Myra Blyth, the liturgical resource, *Gathering for Worship: Patterns and Prayers for the Community of Disciples* (Canterbury Press 2005). His most recent book is *Approaching God: A Guide for Worship Leaders and Worshipers* (Canterbury Press 2009).

Ian Collinge, an ethnomusicologist who spent twelve years in Asia researching indigenous musical forms and producing worship resources, will explore some of the musical issues for congregations where different cultures are represented. He is currently based in Oldham; read his article 'Worship with a Global Smell' on the EngageWorship website run by Sam and Sara Hargreaves (www.engageworship.org/ articles).

For further information about the conference, follow the links from the Music and Worship Foundation's website (www.mwf.org.uk) or the London School of Theology's home page (www.lst.ac.uk), or ring 01923 456220.

Honorary doctorate

Durham University has announced that it will be awarding the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity to hymn-writer Timothy Dudley-Smith on Thursday 2 July 2009. The University's website (www.dur.ac.uk) describes him as 'almost certainly the most famous living hymn-writer in the world; undoubtedly the best known and most widely admired in the English-speaking world.'

Music day in Guildford

A major ecumenical event, 'One Heart, One Voice', will take place in Guildford Cathedral on Saturday 24 October 2009, between 9 a.m. and 4.30 p.m., offering the chance 'to explore new approaches, share experiences, and enjoy making music together'.

Workshop leaders include Phil Jakob (a member of the Iona Community, Music Adviser to the Roman Catholic diocese of Hallam, and Master of Music at the Cathedral Church of St Marie, Sheffield), Marty Haugen (a Lutheran musician and writer from North America) and Geraldine Latty, a versatile leader of worship who is at home with gospel music but was also on the music team for the 2008 Lambeth Conference. Katherine Dienes-Williams (Organist and Master of the Choristers at Guildford Cathedral) will lead a session called 'Sing unto the Lord a new song'. Composer Paul Field promises to explore songs that build bridges and relate to the everyday realities of life, while Andrew Maries will also introduce a range of music in his workshop, entitled 'Singing the Lord's song in a strange land'. The day will also include a 'Big Sing' for all, in the Nave.

A booking form with further information can be downloaded from Guildford's diocesan website (www.cofeguildford.org.uk). The charge, for anyone booking before 31 July, is £15 (£17 after that date).

'Musicademy' articles

The practical worship training website www.musicademy.com offers information about products for sale (e.g. instructional DVDs for musicians involved in worship bands) but also presents articles by a variety of writers, as posts on a blog. Recent entries include material from Jonny Baker (a piece on liturgy and postmodern culture which was originally written for *Christianity Today's* online leadership journal) and a reflection on some of the technical problems involved with screening lyrics from songs, by Mike Sessler, Technical Arts Director for the North American 'Upper Room' community.

Celebrating hymnody

John Henderson reports on the Pratt Green Trust's anniversary event.

In 1984 Methodist minister and hymn writer Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000) founded the trust that bears his name. His intention was to use the royalty income from his hymns for the benefit of authors, composers and users of hymnody. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Pratt Green Trust was celebrated on 28 March 2009 with a conference in Coventry Cathedral. This was advertised widely but the organisers really had no idea of what response they would get. To their surprise and delight, around 450 delegates attended, ranging from the great and the good in the world of contemporary hymnody to the ordinary churchgoer – 'I just thought it would be interesting,' one of them said to me.

The keynote speech was by Bishop Timothy Dudley-Smith, who delivered a forthright summary of hymnody: past, present and future. His thoughts for the future of traditional hymnody covered various scenarios but left us all feeling very positive. I understand the lecture will be published in due course. Workshops were held in the afternoon, led by Bernadette Farrell, Graham Kendrick, Andrew Pratt and Janet Wootton, and around 100 of us joined Paul Ledington Wright and the St Michael's Singers (enhanced by brass and timpani) to prepare for the closing act of worship.

As one might imagine, 450 delegates, all committed to hymnody, together with choir, organ and brass made a most uplifting sound. Not everything was *fortissimo*, however, and a note of reflection was provided by Graham Kendrick's rendering of his own song, 'Crucified Man'. Also on demonstration was the Pratt Green Trust's *HymnQuest* software. First developed in 2000 and constantly enhanced, it is surprising how many churches are still not aware of it – I can't imagine living without it.

Do visit the Trust's website (www.prattgreentrust.org.uk); one sincerely hopes that we do not have to wait another twenty-five years for such a splendid day.

Dr John Henderson is the Royal School of Church Music's Honorary Librarian; he lives in Swindon and is the Director of Music at Wroughton Parish Church. Some of the music recorded in Coventry will be broadcast as part of BBC Radio 2's 'Sunday Half-Hour' on 9 August; hymns by Andrew Pratt ('Best of all is God is with us') and Janet Wootton ('God calls us to the royal feast') could be heard in the programme on Sunday 24 May.

Dave Walker blogs from Minehead

An interesting comment from a blog entry written on Easter Monday, 13 April 2009, while Dave Walker (whose cartoons appear regularly in the *Church Times*) was at Spring Harvest: 'Old hymns seem to be back in fashion – the most genuine moments of worship have been when the band play these as they are the only songs everyone knows.' This appears as number six in his list of 'Things that many Anglicans might quite enjoy about Spring Harvest'.

On the other hand, number one in his list of 'Things that many Anglicans might not enjoy quite so much about Spring Harvest' is the worship: 'Singing songs is, to my mind, the least important aspect of Christianity, whereas here the 'worship' is given great prominence. Most of the worship leaders are trying to sound like

Matt Redman or the guy from Delirious. There are too many new and unknown songs every year and many of these are dreary and tedious. I think I said this last year – I've had no change of opinion.'

To see all Dave Walker's postings from Spring Harvest, including a photo of the early morning Easter service on the beach at Minehead and a couple of cartoons, go to the home page of the *Church Times* website (www.churchtimes.co.uk), find the 'blog' section from the menu and select April 2009.

Dave Walker also blogged from the Christian Resources Exhibition in May. One stand he visited was promoting *Sorted*, a magazine for 'Christian blokes'; in a recent survey, nearly 60% of its readers said they enjoy singing but prefer 'proper macho songs'.

Have you seen...? Book review



In Every Corner Sing

RSCM

£35.00 - 99 songs

I was very pleased to be given a copy of the recently published *In Every Corner Sing* a collection of songs published by the Royal School of Church Music, from a wide range of countries. My personal belief is that the music we use in our churches should reflect the diversity of our congregations and in the church which I attend about 40% of the congregation originate from or have roots overseas.

The book has been edited by Geoffrey Weaver who himself has collected many of these songs, and as well as having an index of first lines and a geographical index, the contents are arranged in a very helpful way – under a variety of descriptive titles. The book includes a CD of MP3 format recorded accompaniments for every song in the book which are varied in orchestration, often using sounds and rhythms which are authentic to that particular country. This is an excellent idea as not only can the CD be used as a backing-track where musical resources are limited, but it is very helpful in understanding the style of the songs prior to teaching them to your singers and instrumentalists. The book also has a section on suggestions for the performance of the songs. A couple of songs I particularly like are number 68 ('I lift up my eyes to the hills', a Russian

setting of Psalm 121) and 54 ('Thuma mina' - a less familiar version).

I only have one criticism of this edition – very few of the songs have chord symbols written on the music, therefore making it inaccessible to guitarists and those keyboard players who do not read music. The printed music looks, and is, eminently suitable for churches who worship in a more choral tradition (4-part harmony with piano accompaniment), but this is not the tradition of many of the songs, or of the arrangements on the accompanying CD. Music group leaders with guitars in their groups will therefore need to spend time working out the chords.

All in all, I would say if you can afford to pay £35 it is a super resource for many churches; and for those with guitarists in their music groups, I'm sure that with chords added, it will be equally useful. I can't wait to incorporate some of these songs into our church worship, just as soon as I can find time to write in the chords.

Charles Parker
Music and Worship Foundation
NorthWest Regional Coordinator

In Every Corner Sing is available from the RSCM website: www.rscmshop.com

Have you seen...?

Book reviews



Welcoming Marriage: A practical and pastoral guide to the new legislation

Stephen Lake

Church House Publishing 2009

ISBN 978-0-7151-4172-4, xi + 145pp, £7.99

I recently attended a civil wedding ceremony in a stately home and, lovely as it was, I came away grateful for the Church of England service. Familiarity breeds contempt, but Stephen Lake is right to bring us back to the treasure that we possess. *Welcoming Marriage* is first of all a wake-up call, that the clergy ought to be more welcoming of this service and ministry and of the couples who come our way. All too often a barrage of questions - 'Do you live in the parish? Have you been married before?' - spring up like thistles in front of the church door. But ample research shows that people who could go to any number of exotic locations to tie the marital knot, often want a church wedding because it symbolises something more real and serious. This is an area rich with opportunities for mission, one of the things the Church does best, and Lake offers us countless ideas for making it even better.

The book covers virtually every aspect of wedding ministry from the first interview to follow-up (nothing on foreign nationals and Home Office regulations, but that is a fast-moving target). The subtitle talks about the new legislation, but it is much more than

that and I'll bet there will be later editions without that topical reference. Since I am writing for a liturgical publication I looked a little closer at the relevant section: this is mainly a commentary on the service. The liturgy itself is dealt with in a very practical manner, where Lake basically says what he does and why. Alternative possibilities are not explored in depth, but he is a good person to compare notes with. Liturgical reflection is seen more in other parts, for example a down-to-earth but affirming piece on the importance of the parish priest who brings together in one the Bible and Christian tradition, the community and experience, the liturgical enabling and the personal relationship.

It is a book for sharing with those in the parish who are involved in weddings, but above all for clergy. The newly ordained will welcome the practical checklists. The not so newly ordained will wake up to fresh ideas and the author's wonderful optimism which will warm the stalest minister. There are not many books which are so encouraging.

Gordon Jeanes

Vicar, St Anne with St Faith, Wandsworth

Common Worship Daily Eucharistic Lectionary

Canterbury Press 2008

£30.00

This book is not a list of Bible references such as those that we find in the handy annual publications, but a provision of the texts of the Bible readings and psalms (with response) - according to the *Common Worship* Daily Eucharistic Lectionary authorised in 2005.

It is a very useful book for a church that has regular weekday communions, saving the need for two or three bookmarks in a Bible and a booklet of the lectionary references on the lectern.

The *Common Worship* Daily Eucharistic Lectionary is essentially a two-year lectionary, so the reader does need to know which year we are in (one or two). Very occasionally the lectionary designates a different reading for years A, B and C - connecting with the reading in

the three-year Sunday lectionary. This additional complication has been flagged up clearly in the publication but, again, readers do need to know their liturgical years. (This is no fault of the book - just a complication of the scheme!)

At the back of the book there is a set of Gospel acclamations for the various seasons of the year - although there is not a second ribbon for this section, which would make it even more useful.

There are no readings for Sundays - these are found in other publications; nor are there readings for the Principal Feasts, Festivals, and Lesser Festivals. These, too may be found elsewhere.

Gilly Myers

Canon Precentor at Manchester Cathedral

Spirituality in Season - Growing through the Christian Year

Ross Thompson

Canterbury Press 2009

ISBN 9781853118920, 192 pp, £15.99

This should make a good starting point for those who are looking for new ideas for approaching the liturgical year. Ross Thompson takes the reader through the liturgical seasons and catches us up historically with the origins and early development of the festivals. He then considers the differences between churches (East and West) and their underlying theology. Each chapter then teases out an underlying spiritual basis for the season, followed by reflective questions to answer, exercises and suggested further reading at the end of each chapter.

It was interesting to read it straight through, but it would be more useful dipping into each chapter as the season came along. I found it useful just before Holy Week to reflect on the emotional journey on which we are taking people during that time - both those who will be with us for the whole journey and those who will simply dip in and out. We have an all-night vigil, and there were potential ideas for those who need to 'do' something during that time, especially ideas which might encourage people to engage with the *passion* rather than the detail of what happened.

I enjoyed being reminded of the historical beginnings, as someone who has always been fascinated by that, but felt slightly irritated by the assumption that we all knew what *The Promise* was. In some places the full title *The Promise of his Glory* was used, but even so a book published in 1991 will have escaped many non-liturgists in these *Common Worship* days.

Spirituality in Season would be a good grounding for those who are, perhaps, unaware of the complexity of the Christian year. However, it was also frustrating in that inevitably each season only gets a few pages, and I was left wanting more. It is though, a book worth buying for those looking for inspiration on how we make sure our liturgies engage with our spirituality, and especially for those for whom all this is fresh and new.

Christine Hall

Curate, St Dunstan and All Saints, Stepney

A Canadian Placement

My interest was liturgical and spiritual, and the experience of First Nation (indigenous) Liturgies at the Jessie Saulteaux Centre was fascinating. It was the weekend of the autumn equinox and the Ceremonies were effectively a retreat – for us to purify ourselves, to be healed and to give thanks to the Great Spirit or Creator. There was hospitality, and God was to take whatever shape we wanted – whether God be the overtly Christian God or not. It was reminiscent of the way Paul described the unknown god (Acts 17.23).

The Jessie Saulteaux Centre is outside Winnipeg in Manitoba, and just about in the centre of Canada. The Centre trains First Nations people for Christian ministry of various sorts, but this weekend was something that was open to a wider audience (most of those training for ministry were not present).

Sweat

There was a 'Sweat' on the Thursday evening when we arrived: a physical chance to rid ourselves of all the uncleanness of our physical selves as well as our emotional and spiritual selves. We (a mixture of people mostly from Winnipeg, many of whom were First Nations) went into the Sweat Lodge. First the women, led in by an elder: we began around the fire that was just outside the lodge and then we crawled into the tent. The men followed. The lodge was, perhaps, 12 feet in diameter and there were about 22 of us, 2 deep around a pit, which would later hold heated stones from the fire.

We prayed in that small space, very aware of each other's bodies in a way that would be unheard of in an English retreat, or sauna. It was like being in the womb of the earth, and we were being re-created, healed and ready for what life might throw at us. The stones (grandfathers and grandmothers) were brought in, giving us a thread of history and timelessness; prayers towards the four directions gave us a chance to pray for young and old, and all peoples. Water, with herbs, poured over the stones gave the effect of a sauna. It was an opportunity to experience the enormity and graciousness of God. We were inside for three hours, perhaps – but it certainly didn't feel that long.

Sacred Fire

After this ceremony, the Sacred Fire was taken to a tipi and then guarded day and night by each of us taking turns. This gave us a chance to hear stories, to take time on our own, as well as to listen and be with God. I do not want to impose a Christian interpretation, because that takes away something of the authenticity and validity of the occasion, but spiritually and in terms of

a rite the next two days felt very reminiscent of Holy Saturday.

On the Sunday, we were up before dawn (which helped the analogy) for a further Ceremony. We gave thanks for the gift of life, for being created, for love, for humility, for courage and healing and for respect. It certainly gave material for an Easter sermon, albeit unusual.

Smudge

During this weekend and on a number of other occasions I experienced the cleansing of a smudging ceremony. You burn and smudge sweet grass or other herbs such as sage. You 'waft' the smoke over your mouth (asking that you speak only good things), over your ears (hear good things), eyes (see good), head (that your mind be focused and open to listen to people's stories), your heart (that you don't have a heavy heart), your legs (that your walk on mother earth is good), and your hands (as you might wash them clean). It is a cleansing ritual that some might do every morning.

Sacred Circle

There was a Sacred Circle (a gathering) during one of the weekends that I was in Winnipeg and, as part of my placement, I devised the final liturgy at the Cathedral! I included a smudge as a cleansing action – it took the place of the prayers of preparation. I can understand some people's aversion to mixing 'pagan' ceremonies with Christian ones, but in this context it seemed highly appropriate. It is something that has been done throughout Christian history. Here was a liturgy for the Christian people of God, who also happened to be First Nation or Aboriginal and it was a way of affirming and respecting their Aboriginal spirituality that has been so denigrated and removed. (In the Residential Schools, for example, the Aboriginal children were forced to speak English and their culture was dismissed. The last schools didn't close until the 1950s).

Other liturgies, especially on the Reserve, were very different. Here it was very traditional. Music was generally Country and Western or Victorian and I lost count of the number of times I sang 'Rock of Ages' and 'Amazing grace'. I was there for Harvest Festival, which was very reminiscent of England many years ago. People brought pickles and pies and these were specifically for the priest. And most pies seemed to be Lemon Meringue, Banana Cream or Pumpkin!

A fascinating experience!

Christine Hall

Curate, St Dunstan and All Saints, Stepney

Look

- no paper!

A guide to technical things in worship

by *Tim Lomax & Tim Stratford*

Number 4: keeping it simple

They say that a picture is worth a thousand words. This is both an advantage and a problem to those who replace their service books or cards with large colourful screens. Sometimes we try to do too much.

Words

When words are on the screen in worship we want people to be able to absorb them quickly. From time to time there will be rubrics and instructions, minister's words and cues, and words to be said or sung corporately. The screen frees people's hands from books, allows them to keep their heads up during worship, and can assist those with low literacy skills to follow. Words are presented best in small, easily digestible chunks; people should always have the words of the moment in front of them. The progress bar (see Issue 21) can help locate those words in a timeline of the whole event. But if the screen gets too full of information then the essential texts that are being displayed will get confused. It is important to keep the 'print' big, contrasting and clean; try not to include more than eight lines at a time; and keep the line breaks at natural points for the spoken voice.

Pictures

Pictures offer two key benefits: they add decoration and provide non-verbal learning aids. But they take a long time for the viewer to absorb and, if used carelessly, can be a massive distraction from those things to which they would be better giving their attention. A moving picture will be impossible to ignore, making demands on the eye all the time. Our brains have only a limited amount of processing power so, in worship, this technique will most often be best avoided. When using still images for decoration where the words matter, don't choose a new picture or background for every slide. Consider using the same design for a complete act of worship. Of course there are moments when pictures may become less of a distraction and more of a positive focus. For non-literary learners they can be a positive asset in sermons and provide food for reflection. Occasionally during intercessory prayer they can lift a congregation's horizons. Both Tims are parish clergy and members of the Liturgical Commission. Tim Lomax is Assistant Curate in the parish of Penn Fields, Wolverhampton; Tim Stratford is Team Rector of the Kirkby Team Ministry in Liverpool.



Colin's Column

Not the first word, but the last -
Colin Buchanan writes...

I found myself at the conference on *Scripture in Liturgy* at St John's, Durham, in March, reflecting on a 50-year period in Anglican initiation practice. I dated this back in part to the 1958 Lambeth Conference, where the subcommittee on the BCP set out possible lines for revision of Anglican liturgical texts, the first time this had really been contemplated at such a conference. But a more specific start-point for the anniversary would be the publication in Spring 1959 of the first draft texts of our C/E Liturgical Commission. The texts were entitled *Baptism and Confirmation* (SPCK, 1959), and, although they came years before any new texts could be authorized (save by going to Parliament, which was *not* in view), their impact runs on into today's *Christian Initiation* rites, and has been felt overseas also.

The trouble was that the texts were drafted by people deeply influenced by Gregory Dix (who had died in 1952). He had become the second half of the 'Mason-Dix Line', that water and the laying on of hands are the two halves of a two-part sacrament (rather as bread and wine are two halves of a two-part sacrament). His academic contemporaries, Edward Ratcliff and Arthur Couratin, were on the Liturgical Commission and were making the running there. So their draft services in 1959 broke new ground, not only in asserting that the two-part sacrament virtually stemmed from the apostles, but also in writing unprecedented Anglican texts that combined baptism, confirmation and communion for adults. It sounded exciting; it led to various bishops innovating in conducting 'integrated' rites at parish communions on Sundays (whereas until the 1960s all confirmations were stand-alone services, and prior baptism, if needed, was done in a hole-in-a-corner way in advance). And so we came into the contemporary era.

The 1959 texts were much criticized, not least for a kind of liturgical pretty-pretty in their style, illustrated by a rubric (attributed to Eric Milner-White) which said the font should be 'set in spacious and well-ordered surroundings'. But their shape persisted. So the Series 2 rites in 1967, though toning down the 1959 notion that confirmation is the individual's Pentecost, retained the structure. Since then, returning not only to the scriptures but also to ancient authors, we generally believe now (as the Reformers did) that water-baptism is sole and complete sacramental initiation. But we still have the 1959 structure for adults. Of course, it is fun for a bishop to administer – but is it best New Testament practice?

I have learned that in Canada and Wales, if not elsewhere, TARPing (see Issue 21 of *Praxis News of Worship*) was traditionally expounded as 'Taking Ablutions in the ROMAN Position'. That explanation has not increased my affection for the practice.

Oh yes, and will someone write to the broadcasting media and tell them to fine every speaker (including their own interviewers and newscasters) who say 'testament' when they mean 'testimony'?

Colin Buchanan is the former Bishop of Woolwich, and former editor of *News of Liturgy*.

Notice board



DLC reps day

This year's day for representatives of Diocesan Liturgical Committees will take place on Wednesday 30 September at St Peter's Eaton Square. The aim of the conference is to connect with the Liturgical Commission's priority in IME 1-3, IME 4-7 and CME. Diocesan Liturgical Committees will be hearing from the Liturgical Commission in due course.

Praxis Programme 2009 - 2010

Instead an annual booklet containing the programme of training events, there will be an occasional insert in *Praxis News of Worship*, flagging up forthcoming events. There is also programme information on the *Praxis* website.

Information about the Alcuin Club can be found on the club's website: www.alcuinclub.org.uk.

Look out for these forthcoming booklets in the Grove Worship Series :

No. 199 is *How to... share the leadership of Worship* by Anna de Lange and Trevor Lloyd.

No. 200 is *Liturgical Formation and Common Worship* by Phillip Tovey and Mark Earey. The booklet looks at the different meanings and uses of the term 'liturgical formation', and the way that *Common Worship*, by its very nature, demands new skills of leaders of worship.

Both are available from Grove Books at www.grovebooks.co.uk or telephone 01223 464748.

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