



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

Inside this issue of Praxis News of Worship

Ordination services	2
Correspondence	2
Group for Renewal of Worship	3
Joint Liturgical Studies	3
Common Worship texts online	3
Musical News	4 & 5
Book Reviews	6 & 7
Colin's Column	8
Notice Board	8

Aspects of Worship

Mixing words and feelings: using the Psalms in worship

Christopher Irvine reflects on how the psalms can be a source for prayer

Can you recall those times when you have felt tongue-tied, when you have found yourself in a situation when your feelings are so strong that words seem beyond your reach? The failure to match words and feelings often occurs when we find ourselves in emotionally fraught, significant, or stressful situations. Ordinarily, most of us manage, most of the time, to find the right words for whatever situation. And any effective communication rather depends on it. But what of our prayer, when we pray with others, or indeed alone? For some of us, this is precisely where the book of Psalms comes into play.

The prophet Hosea declared that when we approach God we should not come empty-handed, but (and here's the unpredictable bit) with *words*. And to that we might add, words that need to be physically voiced. Simply put, we are to approach God with words that are to be 'read aloud'. Such giving 'voice' is itself a physical act, requiring the use of our lungs, tongue and lips for the physical sounding of words. To give voice to the words printed on a page requires the coordination of thought and speech, and further, every utterance requires thought. In his *Rule* for monks, Benedict says that when we gather to offer our prayer and praise, the mind should be in harmony with the voice. Benedict is giving directions concerning the conduct of the daily offices, that prayer of a Christian household marking the hours of the day and night, which consisted largely of psalmody.

In Daily Prayer and at the Eucharist, some of us are familiar with the selected use of psalmody, of

individual psalms chosen to mark time in another way by setting the mood, or theme of a special day or feast in the Christian calendar. But why did the book of Psalms become such a singular source book in the developing traditions of Christian worship? One answer, given by Athanasius, a writer of the early church and reiterated in modern times by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, is that it contains the whole terrain and texture of biblical writing. The usability of the Psalms resides, I think, in their poetic form.

The Psalms are the *songs* of Israel, and each individual psalm, as well as the whole book, has its own complex origins and literary history, linking the present performer of these texts to a succession of worshipping communities stretching back to a variety of communities, groups of pilgrims, and countless individuals who have found words to bring before God. As the songs of the people of God, the Psalms provide us with a libretto for worship. And the point to be drawn here is that the libretto is not primarily to be silently cogitated by the solitary reflective individual, but *performed*, and performed along with others in worship. The words of the Psalms literally need to be sounded in order to bring their meaning to expression and to weave together our liturgy and our life.

The Psalms (or selected verses from individual psalms) can serve to express different types of prayer. As in Psalm Litanies, words from the Psalter can serve to carry our petitions. Other psalm verses,

(Continued on page 2)

Praxis administration relocates to Salisbury

The *Praxis* office is on the move. In May this year the administrative base, operated on our behalf by the Royal School of Church Music, will be transferring from Dorking to Salisbury as part of the RSCM's relocation to Sarum College.

During the period of the move service will undoubtedly be a little disrupted, as boxes and equipment are packed up and unpacked again. Normal service will be resumed as quickly as possible, but please be patient with us in the meantime.

At the time of going to print we are unable to announce the name of the person who will be at the other end of the phone at Sarum College, but we extend our warm thanks and good wishes to Martin Smithers and his colleagues, who have been looking after the administration of *Praxis* at Cleveland Lodge for the past years.

The new address and telephone number can be found on the bottom of the back page. The email and website addresses remain the same.

such as Psalm 25.6-7, provide words for confessing individual and corporate sin. But the social, national, and international dimension of sin also cries out for recognition, and the Psalms of lament (such as Psalm 10, or 14) are an apt vehicle to use in times of tragedy, perplexity and distress.

The varied vocabulary of psalmody provides words for a variety of experiences and moods. It can not only express our search for God, but can also help us to express the fullness of our humanity, our rage as much as the most serene trust. In some of the Psalms the vocabulary might well offend our refined sensibilities, but what we find there is a full and realistic honesty about how we sometimes are and even how we sometimes feel. In this sense the Psalms enunciate our full humanity, providing as they do words to voice the whole gamut of human moods and feeling, ranging from dark despair to delight and hope. Here, indeed, are words which resonate with every human thought and feeling, fear and aspiration.

Christopher Irvine is the Principal of the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield.

The *Common Worship* Ordination Services are put through their paces

The first ordinations have been taking place using the *Common Worship* Ordination Services and, according to eyewitness reports, the services are being interpreted imaginatively and are being well-received.

Training Days

Bishops, senior staff, cathedral precentors and ministry advisors - representatives of every diocese in the country - attended a series of Liturgical Commission training days that took place in five venues around the country during February. The day included an introductory presentation on the tensions and trends in the history of ordinations, a look at the features and choices in the *Common Worship* rites, a practical look at the preparation needed and an exercise in the implementation of an ordination, whether in a cathedral or parish Church.

An Ordination Guide

The Ordination services will be available in a book from Church House Publishing in 2007. These will be part of a larger publication including an introduction and good practice guide and much of the useful material from the training days will be included in this, so that the information can be more widely disseminated.

Are you staging an ordination?

In order that this guide may be as comprehensive as possible, the Liturgical Commission is inviting those who stage ordinations throughout 2006 to feed back their comments. If you have held an ordination service and have observations to make (things that worked well, as well as things that did not) please send them to the National Worship Development Officer (peter.moger@c-of-e.org.uk).

Orders of Service are available now

In preparation for the training days, Peter Moger prepared Word versions of the ordination of Deacons, Priests and Bishops, and also a sample service for use on an occasion when Deacons and Priests might be ordained together. These are available by sending an e-mail to Peter (peter.moger@c-of-e.org.uk).

These services are also on the Church of England website - see the article on the following page.

Editor

Letter to the editor



From the Revd Bob Hopper, In response to the editorial thought in the last issue. Bob is the Vicar of Hillside - a 're-branded' Anglican Church on the edge of Gateshead.

Dear Gilly,

Liturgy or Mission???

The Church of England is dying! If a company lost 'customers' at a similar rate the chief executive would have been sacked, new products developed and the whole company re-branded. There are those who would say that we have a major new product - *Common Worship*. Others claim the 'new product' is at fault and we should go back to the BCP.

Although I have no firm data, I think there is sufficient evidence to ask serious questions about the use of liturgy - at least as we know it. In many churches the best attended service is "Family Worship". Usually held monthly, such services are informal with modern worship songs and a high level of participation. The other

noticeable feature of "Family Worship" is that it attracts a much wider age group. In many parish churches there is no one under 30 (or even under 50!) at a main service.

So is anyone 'bucking the trend?' What are they doing and is there anything others can learn from them?

One of the biggest Anglican churches in the UK is Holy Trinity, Brompton - home of the 'Alpha Course'. Worship is not heavily liturgical - the emphasis is on informality and on seeing God at work. The same pattern is followed in their 'church plants' all over London.

Many of the churches in the fast growing 'New Wine' network have a similar format - where informality and freedom have replaced liturgy and structure. Outside Anglicanism, there are several congregations which are growing rapidly. One of the best examples is the London 'Hillsongs' church - the congregation (over 6000 in total) meets in 3 separate Sunday

services held at the Dominion Theatre. Some friends of mine paid a visit and remarked on the large number of 'twenty somethings' in the congregation - the age group missing from most Anglican churches.

There are still lots of people who feel that liturgical worship, robes, hymns and even choirs and a weekly Eucharist are all part of what it means to be 'Anglican'. Others are asking how long do we go on offering more of the same when 'the same' clearly isn't working?

These are questions, which must not only be faced but also be answered - or the church we love will not survive.

BOB HOPPER
All Saints' Vicarage
Rowanwood Gardens
Lobley Hill
Gateshead
NE11 0DP

Correspondence to the editor is welcome. Please include your full postal address if you are writing by email.

The Group for Renewal of Worship (GROW)

The second in a series of three articles about *Praxis*'s sponsoring organisations

The Group for the Renewal of Worship is one of the primary sponsors of *Praxis* and thus of *Praxis News of Worship*. For thirty-five years the group has been publishing a variety of books on worship, particularly looking at the Church of England.

The regular publications of GROW have been:

- The Grove Worship Series – still continuing, with four booklets issued each year;
- Liturgical Studies - these subsequently became the Joint Liturgical Studies (see Colin Buchanan's article, below);
- *News of Liturgy*;
- *News of Hymnody*.

The last two of these have now been absorbed into *Praxis News of Worship*.

GROW has also been involved in running conferences, and individuals in the group have written further on liturgy and worship. Some members have been on the General Synod and the Liturgical Commission. Some have also contributed to the International Anglican Liturgical Consultations.

Colin Buchanan chaired GROW for many years and, since Colin's retirement, this position has been taken over by Phillip Tovey. Members are evangelical Anglicans with a variety of perspectives, who are interested in the development of the worship of the church. Membership is by invitation. The membership of the group has inevitably changed over time and currently consists of about 30 people who meet twice a year to discuss and plan the group's work.

Essentially, GROW operates as the editorial board for its publications. Many of the current publications in the Grove Worship Series have been looking at the new *Common Worship* services, for our aim has been to produce a commentary on all the material as it comes out. We have also been trying to develop an emphasis on mission and 'emerging church' in our writing, and our occasional 'How to...' books in the series have proved to be popular training guides for those who lead various aspects of worship in parish churches, lay people and ordained, alike. In 2001 we produced a major commentary on the new material in

Common Worship Today and the original editors are now working on getting this reprinted. We are also preparing a major publication about Baptism for Church House Publishing.

Contact with GROW can be made through the group's secretary, Revd Liz Simpson: The Vicarage, Orchard Place, Westbury, Brackley, Northants NN13 5JT.

Phillip Tovey
Chair of GROW

Praxis has three 'sponsoring' organisations (although none is able to give any financial support!): the Liturgical Commission, Alcuin and GROW - the Group for Renewal Of Worship. Donald Gray wrote about the Alcuin Club in Issue 8. We shall hear more about the Liturgical Commission in the next issue.

Joint Liturgical Studies

- Colin Buchanan provides the background history

It is over thirty years since Grove Books (via the group of authors who soon after became GROW) initiated the Grove Liturgical Studies, and these ran at four per annum for twelve years. Two of the early ones – no.7 by Colin Buchanan, *What did Cranmer Think he was Doing?*, and no.8 by Geoffrey Cuming, *Hippolytus: A Text for Students* – have been regularly reprinted and are still going steadily today.

In 1986 the Alcuin Club Council approached GROW, at a point where their Alcuin Collections were about to cease, to ask whether we could not do a joint series. The new series went up from 32 pages to 48, and gained a green spine. They began in March 1987 as 'Alcuin/ GROW', and provided four titles a year until, around 1993, Alcuin restarted their Collections. Even then, Alcuin sustained three per annum, later reduced to two. Until 2004, these were still published by Grove Books Ltd. The Company finished its involvement at Christmas 2004 with JLS/58, Trevor Lloyd and Phillip Tovey (editors), *Celebrating Forgiveness: An Original Text drafted by Michael Vasey*.

The Joint Editorial Board advertised their readiness to give the contract to another publisher, and an agreement was reached with SCM-Canterbury Press. The second edition to come off the press from the new publishers was no.60 in December 2005 by Donald Gray - the first of a two-part study of the 1927-28 Prayer Book Crisis.

The Board consists of Colin Buchanan (convenor), Paul Bradshaw, Donald Gray, Christopher Irvine, Trevor Lloyd and Phillip Tovey. Copies of back-numbers can still be obtained from Grove Books Ltd in Cambridge. (The Alcuin Club and Colin Buchanan also usually carry stocks and lists of titles). The SCM price per copy is £5.95, but copies come cheaper by subscription (either to Alcuin, membership of which includes the annual Collection, or larger monograph, Ty Nant, 6 Parch Bach, Denbighshire LL16 4YE; or by direct application to Subscription Manager, SCM-Canterbury Press Ltd, 16 Blyburgate, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9TB).

More *Common Worship* texts on line

Daily Prayer and the Ordination services are now available for download (Daily Prayer in pdf and html; Ordination in html). Simply go to <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/worship/liturgy/commonworship/texts/>

There is quite a range of material:

- Holy Communion, Morning and Evening Prayer, A Service of the Word
- Daily Prayer
- Pastoral Services
- Initiation Services
- Ordination Services
- New Patterns for Worship
- Other material found in the main volume of *Common Worship* and tables of information.

Word documents

Fully laid-out Microsoft Word versions of the Ordination Services are also available from Peter Moger, the National Worship Development Officer (peter.moger@c-of-e.org.uk).



Musical News



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

edited by Anne Harrison

Hymnal centenary celebrations

David Leeke reviews, on the opposite page, the commemorative volume of essays we mentioned in Issue 8, celebrating the publication one hundred years ago of one of the most influential of English hymnbooks, *The English Hymnal*. To mark the centenary there will also be a series of illustrated lectures in June and July on Wednesday evenings at St Martin's Church, Dorking (Ralph Vaughan Williams, the hymnal's music editor, lived in Dorking for many years). Lecturers include Alan Luff, who will talk about the so-called 'hymn explosion' of the later 20th century, and John Bell, who will explore the Iona Community's contribution to contemporary hymnody, which includes raising people's awareness of the riches of congregational song from many parts of the world. The final lecture was due to have been given by Michael Fleming, the eminent church musician who sadly died earlier this year; he was one of those responsible for the *New English Hymnal* of 1986, and contributed the fine tune 'Palace Green'. For further information about the Dorking lectures, ring the church office (01306 884229).

Another lecture, this time at St Mary's Church, Primrose Hill (where Percy Dearmer was the vicar while working on *The English Hymnal*), will be given by Donald Gray on Saturday 27 May at 2.30 p.m. This event is organized by the Guild of Church Musicians. The Gregorian Association will be marking the hymnbook's centenary at the same venue on Saturday 10 June, and Alan Luff will be speaking to delegates on the theme of 'That chunky green book' at this year's conference of the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland (25-27 July, University of Surrey, Guildford).

New English Praise is the title of the supplement to the *New English Hymnal*, due to be published this summer. Some details can now be seen on the website of SCM-Canterbury Press (www.scm-canterburypress.co.uk). Hymns both old and new are included, along with music for several psalms and canticles, plus liturgical settings for various seasons of the church's year.

Website Hitch

The website which was set up to continue some of the work of the quarterly pamphlet *News of Hymnody* (www.newsofhymns.co.uk) has unfortunately not been able to function since mid-February. The company hosting the website was forced to alter some of its procedures, due to an increasing incidence of fraudulent sites being set up and spam e-mail being generated. It is hoped that the problems the changes have caused will not be terminal for the 'News of Hymns' website, which was created with assistance from the Pratt Green Trust and the support of

the Jubilate Group.

Meanwhile the website of the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland (www.hymnsocietygbi.org.uk) contains much fascinating material. Of particular interest may be the 'Seventy Treasures' section, offering selected articles from the Society's bulletin over the last seven decades. As yet relatively few are available to download, but work on this continues; Professor Dick Watson's 'Farewell to the Twentieth Century' is well worth reading.

An unusual Festival

Since August 1956, the role played by music in worship has been celebrated annually in the 14th century Priory Church of St Mary, St Katherine and All Saints, Edington, by a week-long Festival of Music within the Liturgy. Last year a television crew filmed various aspects of the week's events, and the resulting programme was shown in early April as part of the BBC2 series, *A Passion for Churches*.

Edington is a small village in Wiltshire, on the northern edge of Salisbury Plain – for those who would like to attend any services, this year's festival dates are 20-26 August. As usual each day will begin and end with Matins and Compline, beautifully sung to plainchant by the Schola Cantorum directed by Andrew Carwood, who describes this austere music as 'the heartbeat of the festival'. BBC Radio 3 regularly broadcasts Choral Evensong from Edington on the Wednesday afternoon, and there is a

daily Sung Eucharist as well as one special evening service of readings and music on the theme of the week. Another tradition has been the commissioning of new choral music and a congregational hymn on the week's theme; a number of the latter have been produced over the years by Jubilate Group member Paul Wigmore, with music written by John Barnard.

The festival's underlying aim is to offer well-ordered liturgy and intelligent preaching enhanced by a careful choice of music; all the musicians (including some distinguished professionals) participate in a voluntary capacity, and many return year after year. For details, contact the Information Secretary: John D'Arcy, The Old Vicarage, Westbury Road, Edington, Westbury, BA13 4QF (Tel: 01380 830512).

Another centenary

The Church Music Society was founded in 1906, following a meeting in the Deanery of St Paul's Cathedral in March of that year. A celebratory Evensong at St Paul's on Saturday 27 May 2006 will include the first performance of a new anthem, 'Touch'd by heavenly fire', commissioned from Judith Bingham in honour of the centenary. Fifty years ago

Herbert Howells wrote one of his fine sets of evening canticles to mark the Society's Golden Jubilee; his Magnificat and Nunc dimittis in B minor are among the choral works published by Oxford University Press on behalf of the Society. Details can be found on the Church Music Society's website (www.church-music.org.uk).



Pipe organ campaign

A threat to the future of European builders of pipe organs has been the subject of a vigorous campaign this Spring. The implications of new EU directives designed to reduce the amount of lead in landfill sites could mean the end for a number of distinguished British firms which build organs for schools, churches,

cathedrals and even private homes around the world. To find out more about the legislation and to register support for a petition pleading for an exemption for pipe organs, visit the campaign's website (www.pipes4organs.org).

Book review



Strengthen for Service: One Hundred Years of the English Hymnal, 1906-2006

Edited by Alan Luff
Canterbury Press, 2005
£19.99

There is little doubt that 1906 was a significant year for hymnody in England, with the publication of *The English Hymnal* a particular landmark. Now, a century later, Alan Luff has edited a book produced by the English Hymnal Company to which several eminent folk have contributed. *Strengthen for Service: 100 years of the English Hymnal 1906-2006* is a collection of essays commenting on its history.

In his Foreword, the Archbishop of Canterbury takes a very different view from Randall Davidson, the incumbent of that See in 1906, boldly stating that this remarkable hymnbook gave him 'a conviction that excellence in worship was not an elitist or dilettante thing, but a matter of taking seriously what God's people deserved'. The hymnal, he says, has 'represented that vital strand...in the Anglican Church which saw the faith and the liturgy as transforming and critical elements in an otherwise static society'. High praise indeed for any hymnbook, and *The English Hymnal* is certainly an enduring example which continues, in one or other of its revisions, to be used in countless churches and cathedrals in Britain and throughout the world.

So, in the eyes of Dr Williams and many others, the book should be suitably commemorated. In general *Strengthen for Service* does this, but it is certainly not a book to be read in the general historical sense. The writers all make their contributions in their own inimitable way, and it does seem that there was never an overarching editorial scheme as to exactly what should be covered and how each strand should be presented. This is clearly a collection of individual writings, and is best used as a book into which one dips for particular and valuable insights into different and complementary opinions.

For me, one of the most interesting features was discovering the way liturgical thinking changed between the original edition (1906) and the revision of 1933.

Everything in the book was originally intended to be sung by the whole of the worshipping assembly, but after 27 years a significant amount of the material (and especially the plainsong, which had newly written accompaniments by J.H. Arnold) had been transformed to be sung from the chancel only. This gives a fascinating insight into the thinking of the church in these years, and how a hymnbook can reflect these fashions.

Of course as a current church musician I must stress the gratitude that we all owe to Vaughan Williams for insisting on high standards and on such an eclectic selection of music within the book. Who can imagine life now without his wonderful tune *Sine Nomine*, written for *The English Hymnal* and now universally sung to Bishop Walsham How's 'For all the saints'. The inclusiveness of the book is obvious; as it enters its second century the trick is to continue these high ideals along with pastoral realism and acceptance of what is musically possible in each particular parish.

I now await the impending supplement to the *New English Hymnal* with hope and optimism: I am told that the passing of Michael Fleming, who was making his unique contribution to *New English Praise*, has delayed it a little. No matter – anything which has been touched by his immense gifts and skills can only be worth the wait. Having grown up with *The English Hymnal*, I look forward to the future of this great book with undimmed enthusiasm, rekindled in no small way through *Strengthen for Service*, a useful reference book and a must for the shelves.

David Leeke,
Master of the Music, Shrewsbury Abbey

Global Praise

The Wild Goose Resource Group has just announced that it is starting to import a series of song books and CDs from the United Methodist Church (USA). The *Global Praise* resources feature songs from the world church, some of which have been used at the Greenbelt Festival in the UK. Contact the Wild Goose Resource Group in Glasgow by telephone (0141 332 6343) or e-mail (wgrg@gla.iona.org.uk) for details.

Ecumenical conference

The National Network of Pastoral Musicians is encouraging day visitors to come to Worth Abbey, Sussex, on Saturday 22 July for a variety of workshops and worship. The limited amount of residential accommodation for the full weekend conference has already been taken. Workshop leaders represent several different denominations and include Andrew Maries, Alison Adam and Christopher Walker. For information, ring Sue Dean (0845 456 8392).

Summer courses

Musicians and other worship leaders within reach of the London School of Theology (Northwood) may be interested in one of the short courses being run in mid-August. Topics include 'Planning and leading worship that connects', 'Creative musicianship' and 'Playing the keyboard in worship'. Details are posted on the Theology, Music and Worship pages of the college's website (www.lst.ac.uk/music).

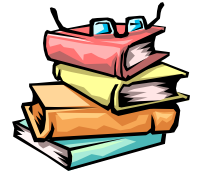
Honour for musical theologian

The Royal School of Church Music has announced that it is to confer an honorary fellowship on the Revd Professor Jeremy Begbie, Associate Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge. He is also the Director of the *Theology Through the Arts* research project, based at the University of St Andrew's, and has written extensively on music from a theological perspective. New Zealand hymn-writer Shirley Erena Murray and Canon Lucy Winkett, Precentor of St Paul's Cathedral, are among the other recipients of this year's honorary awards, announced in the March issue of *Church Music Quarterly*.



Have you seen...?

Book reviews



Death Liturgy and Ritual Volumes 1 and 2

Paul P.J. Sheppy
Ashgate 2004

£15.99 each paperback pp 140 + 208

In Sure and Certain Hope

Paul P.J. Sheppy
Canterbury Press 2003

£12.99 paperback pp 106

These are two very different books, inspired by the same passion and insights. Paul Sheppy, a Baptist minister who is a member of the Churches' Funerals Group, has put the whole church in his debt. The first volume of *Death Liturgy and Ritual*, subtitled *A Pastoral and Liturgical Theology* analyses the contemporary situation, looks in depth at theological, medical, legal and philosophical issues ranging from the gap between expectation and performance to the nature of the soul, and relates these to the development of the funeral liturgy.

Practical illustrations and the author's own experience earth this book and ensure that it is not simply theoretical. Volume 2 is simply a masterly and thorough commentary, from the angle of the expectations laid down in volume 1, on the funeral rites of twenty churches,

including the Church of England's *Common Worship*.

If *Death Liturgy and Ritual* demonstrates Paul Sheppy's grasp of all the social and academic issues around funerals, *In Sure and Certain Hope* show him as a minister with a real understanding of the needs of the bereaved. It provides resources on a parallel framework to those in the *Common Worship* funeral services, sometimes not so extensive (eg prayers at the Time of Death), sometimes leading in new directions, like the helpful liturgy ('Affirmation of the Living') for those who have decided the intense period of their grieving is over. More than half the acknowledgements come from the last section of the book, readings for use in the service or funeral visit from authors as diverse as Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Joyce Grenfell and Dylan Thomas. This shows how much refreshing 'new' writing there is in the core of the book. His comment on the importance of preaching at funerals shows where his heart is: 'If we do not offer Christ's answer to the questioner, in what sense has the funeral been a Christian one?'

Trevor Lloyd

Mothering Sunday

Em Coley

Grove Books

Worship Series no 185, 2006

1 85174 603 X

This Grove booklet is crammed full of ideas – there is much to say and such little space in which to say it. It covers many of the important theological issues, in an attempt to avoid a secular, sentimental view of 'Mother's Day'. It also offers a practical response, seeking to explore, 'how the church can observe and celebrate Mothering Sunday without alienating those for whom it is a painful day.'

The three main theological emphases of Mothering Sunday are, Coley believes, Mother Church, Mary the Mother of God and God as Mother. The first of these offers more scope for 'doing' Mothering Sunday, with its emphasis on the Church, and all its members as a family: nurturing, empowering and loving. While Mary the Mother of God does need to be re-discovered by Protestants, 'not just as a virgin and mother' there is a long way to go and care needs to be taken along the

way. In the chapter on God as Mother, Coley seems to suggest that there is grace and forgiveness for mothers who fail because God is also a mother. However, Coley does not thoroughly explore what it means to be a mother, so not moving beyond the suggestion that the shadow of the happy, fulfilled, self-sacrificial mother is a woman who is 'barren'. This leads to some contradictions and, when developing or choosing prayers for use in a service, suggestions which seem subject to the pitfalls she seeks to avoid.

Of course, there is more to say: thinking about motherhood needs to be sharper, the mothers of the Old Testament need to be better acknowledged, it would help to have a broader selection of prayers. However, this is a useful and overdue 'first word' on the subject of Mothering Sunday.

Allison Fenton,
mother, teacher, Reader and ordinand

Hear our Prayer

Raymond Chapman

SCM-Canterbury Press, 2003

This second neat little book of intercessions from Raymond Chapman for each of the lectionary years A, B and C is a useful addition to the bookshelf of anyone who regularly leads the prayers in public worship and doesn't always have time to create beautifully crafted original prayers of their own.

The style is elegant and concise, and each set of prayers draws on the gospel for the corresponding Sunday, Principal Feast or Holy Day. The form of each set follows the now well-established pattern:

- *The Church*
- *The world*
- *The community*
- *The sick and suffering*
- *The communion of saints*

Despite the claim that the prayers are for Sundays, Holy Days and *Festivals*, don't be misled. Most of the saints' days designated as festivals in *Common Worship* are not covered and, although there is a general form for a saint's day, it would have been even better to find a range of forms to cover a range of different types of saint (religious, martyr, apostle, bishop, teacher of the faith...). One or two of the more widely celebrated festivals do get a look in, however - such as Rogation and Harvest, Thanksgiving for Holy Communion and the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed - and there are some additional forms for particular occasions that will come in useful from time to time - such as prayers for Peace, the Guidance of the Holy Spirit, Mission and Evangelism, Social Justice and Responsibility. For such a slim little book, there is a tremendous amount inside.

Those who are uncomfortable with prayers for the departed may have to change the occasional phrase - although many of the intercessions in the final sections would be acceptable to anyone. In any case, having to change the odd word is a small price to pay.

The book is topped and tailed by informative introductory remarks and coaching on the leading of intercessory prayer.

Editor

A Sociological History of Christian Worship

Martin D Stringer

Cambridge University Press, 2005

In Martin Stringer's recent book *Christian Worship* is viewed across its 2000-year span (for narrative convenience divided into 300 year 'slots') not as an analysis of surviving texts but as experienced event, understood and approached from a wide variety of starting points across time and geography. Being an essay on academic sociology/anthropology, the general reader has to penetrate a modicum of technical 'jargon', but the small effort is well rewarded by a *tour d'horizon* of how Christians have and do worship in families and in less well-known traditions, from Georgia and the Ukraine to Ethiopia, from South India to Tanzania, South and North America. Stringer addresses the variety of self-understanding of the activity we call worship, from the first Christians in Corinth to the Toronto Blessing via Imperial Constantinople, medieval pilgrimage, a leper colony in Africa to the emergence of *Common Worship* – to name but a few of the many stepping places on the journey.

Such a wide canvas is necessarily 'broad brush', but that is perhaps precisely what is needed as antidote to ever more and more detailed textual analysis of surviving fragments. The cumulative effect of each three hundred year survey is to build up an awareness of the variety of 'discourses' that inform Christian worship; all of them are still current, though some are deeply unfashionable in our post liturgical movement world.

Stringer is not, however, wholly the dispassionate academic ('comfortableness and the illusion of intimacy is the gravest danger faced by contemporary Western liturgy'). He detects in Paul's address to the Corinthians two basic strands – the shared meal and spirit-filled praise (already out of kilter in the New Testament). Both have been eclipsed in much subsequent history, both have been reinvigorated, but are yet to come together. 'If or when they do... we will see something very significant.'

I found in the book a mine of out-of-the-way information, a salutary antidote to the parochialism of much British attitude to current Church-going trends and encouragement that, even if what the future brings is unlike anything we have ever seen before, we need not be fearful.

J David Hebblethwaite
former Secretary to the Liturgical Commission

Liturgy and Architecture for a Pilgrim People

Peter Doll

*Affirming Catholicism,
New Booklet no. 1, 2005*

52pp., no price given and no ISBN

I start with a prejudice in favour of Peter Doll, as the Alcuin/GROW Joint Editorial Board published his *After the Primitive Christians: The Eighteenth-Century Anglican Eucharist in its Architectural Setting* (Joint Liturgical Study no. 37, 1997). Here he has broadened his purview, deepened his analysis, and moved into advocacy. If his thesis can be summarized in one line it is that we have got it wrong in moving communion tables and presidents around, and we should instead have been moving the congregation (for which the Standcliffe project in Portsmouth cathedral and the Ric Fabian dance routine of St Gregory's of Nissa in San Francisco are exemplars). His negative side comes out, as he reflects on Richard Giles' treatment of a 'forward altar' as '*de rigueur*', in adversarial tones, almost even in a snarl:

'Whenever people start talking in such rigid, absolutist terms, it is a sign that a received orthodoxy has taken the place of creative thinking... There is little suggestion that there is any other way of doing things. To all appearance, the Liturgical Movement has come to a halt. The only question is whether this conclusion marks the triumph of sound scholarship and ecclesiastical progress or a cul-de-sac of scholarly and populist inertia.

A Touching Place: The ministry of healing in the local church, a practical handbook

J. Gunstone

Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2005
pp. 88, £7.99.

This is an excellent little book written by one who has had much experience in this aspect of Christian ministry. His accumulated practical wisdom shines through on page after page.

The various chapters look at beginnings, setting up a team, training, intercession, boundaries, services of healing, ministry during services, and sacramental ministries. In each, various proposals are made based on experience which will make plenty of sense to those hoping to start or develop this ministry. It became particularly clear to me that the team would be an evolving organism with people coming and going, and so some basic issues would need to be revisited

My own fear is that in our worship, our pilgrimage has come to a dead end.' (p.18)

But what does Peter Doll want? At first sight, he wants everyone facing east – a reversion to something early, primitive, and actually favoured by many of our inherited buildings. He has a romantic attachment to facing east, and cites Sarah Coakley in aid. But he also admires St Paul's, Bow Common, and gives high marks to its architects, Murray & MacGuire – to which I would add, *sotto voce*, that these architects (who also built St John's College, Nottingham) once told me that they advised people to view St Paul's at any time except during the liturgy (but I had already been there with students). The point here is that there is no way the clergy and congregation can all face east in a building like that (let alone at the conclusion of the dance in a thick packing standing round a central altar at St Gregory of Nyssa), and it is unclear to me what common principles he is actually recommending.

There are several other points where I would like to probe him – the locating of 'sacred space' in the New Testament, the certainty that no-one has addressed any change in the seating of the congregation (a bishop has more opportunity to see a different church interior each week, and he has frankly got it wrong), and even his idiosyncratic spelling (or it is 'Aff Cath's'?) of 'eschatological'. I do not know the price, but if you want a kind of literary hairshirt – and good Catholics should – then do try this on.

Colin Buchanan

and ongoing training would always be necessary. This is not a book about the ministry of deliverance that would require something different.

The book fits in very well with the Wholeness and Healing material in *Common Worship Pastoral Services*; however Canterbury Press have also produced a companion volume of services, which would also be helpful to study.

Thinking of developing a team in your church, or revitalising an older team that has changed composition? This could be a very helpful book to set up such a ministry and be an important one for the team to study to get them going. I thoroughly recommend it.

Phillip Tovey,
Director Reader Training in the Diocese of Oxford



Colin's Column

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

I gave notice that I was wanting to address the use of oil in worship. I begin with the New Testament, where anointing with oil is part of the ministry of healing Jesus enjoins on his disciples (Mark 6.13), and, bracketed with prayer, is central to exercising that ministry as ordered in James 5.14. There is metaphorical reference to believers 'having an anointing' in 1 John 2.20 and 27. And that would seem to be the lot.

Ah, but was not Jesus the Messiah, the 'anointed' one? Yes, he was – but that does not determine whether or not we should treat it as a unique and inalienable feature of his person and mission. If we do want to make a connection, then we must note that the two texts about healing probably have to be set aside – for the Greek word there is not from *chrizo*, the 'Christ' and anointing stem, but from *aleipho*, which is very nearly 'embrocate'! Does that affect our understanding of it?

So will those 1 John verses warrant a use of oiling at, say, initiation? I cannot see it. It is possible, with the Acts of the Apostles before us, to urge that a laying on of hands should follow, or even complement, baptism in water. That view has faded in the last 35 years – but a genuine biblical discussion about it is possible. This is not so with anointing – there is not a single verse in the New Testament to suggest that baptism in water was accompanied by anointing. There are nine instances of actual baptisms recorded in Acts, and probably as many references (some are allusive) in Paul's letters. There are references by Jesus himself in the Gospels, and a mention in 1 Peter (far more if it is actually a baptismal homily). And there is not a hint of oil. Nor is there oil in the Didache, in Ignatius, or in Justin. Somebody further down the line started doing it, and the romantic appeal of 'the early church' has stirred an imitation.

The Liturgical Commission in the 1970s said we were open to it – when a theological basis was established. It never has been. Instead anointing has been steadily intruded as an option without a rationale, and it has become part of the romanticized ratcheting up of liturgical ceremonial. We are not helped by it coming as an option now in ordination also. Let the bishops beware.

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

Notice board



Preaching at Weddings

This is the title of a Grove Book by Rod Symmons in the Pastoral Series (P 103) and, as the wedding season fast approaches, readers may find it a refreshing aid to writing all those wedding sermons. The book looks at the context of the sermon - in a changing society, a new liturgy and a framework of marriage, and moves on to practical aspects of preaching. Also included are sample sermons and a list of apt Bible passages for use in the service.

Society for Liturgical Study

The SLS summer conference will take place at the College of the Resurrection, Mirfield, between 22 and 24 August, inclusive on the theme *Behind the scenes: Research and Liturgical Reform*.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of the society, or requiring further information about the conference, should contact Dr Carol Wilkinson, 52 Lowick Drive, Poulton le Fylde, Lancashire FY6 8HB.

Help with hymns

Did you know that *Sunday by Sunday* (the quarterly liturgy planner sent to affiliates and Individual Members of the Royal School of Church Music) contains occasional supplementary material in addition to the lists of music for each Sunday? For example, Issue 36 (March 2006) has several pages of suggestions suitable for services of commissioning for ministry, while Issue 37 (due out in June) will include a feature on music connected with social justice themes. More information can be found on the RSCM website (www.rscm.com).

The most recent booklet in the Grove Worship Series is No. 187, *Restoration and Reconciliation*, by Andrew Atherstone.

No. 188, due out in August, is on the subject of Methodist and United Reformed Church worship, written by Phillip Tovey and Charles Read.

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

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