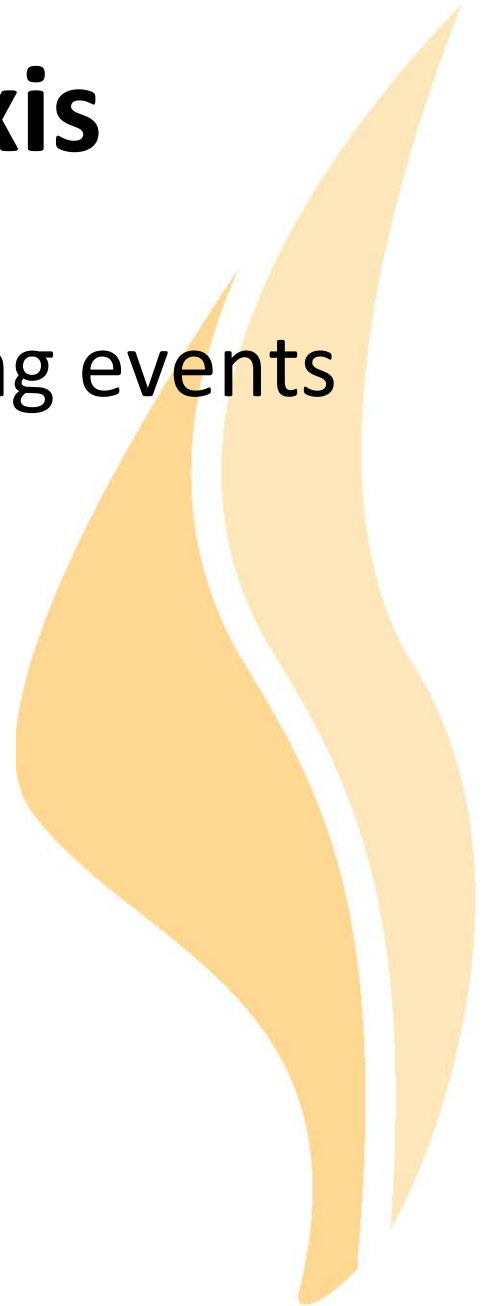


# Good Praxis

A guide to organizing events



## **Foreword**

**by the President of Praxis**

Over the years I seem to have organised countless lectures, conferences and training days. I cannot imagine how many times I have said to the speaker on arrival: "I've no idea how many there will be there - the weather's bad and it's probably not the best time in the week for a training day". On most occasions things have turned out reasonably happily, but I am sure that that has almost always been because others have given me good advice and help in planning the day. Good preparation, some market research and careful planning make all the difference. Peter Furber's guidelines here are of great assistance to all of us in Praxis as it enters on a new phase of its life. There is a renewed energy around within Praxis and these guidelines will help us to harness that energy to produce the very best training in liturgy and liturgical formation.

+Stephen Platten

## **Preface**

This guide is not intended to teach people what they already know, but should be treated like a manual or check list, a resource for the regions and anyone else who will organise an event, particularly if they are new to it. Hopefully our regional committees have a constant flow of new blood, people to whom it is a new experience and need to learn. On the other hand, I think that we can all continue to discover new and better ways of achieving a successful event. It follows there is no way that this guide can be considered to be the complete or the only way of proceeding. If anyone finds errors, alternatives, or something which could be usefully added, then I shall be delighted to hear.

I dedicate Good Praxis to everyone who has imparted their wisdom and guidance along the way.

Peter Furber (November 2012)

## **Introduction**

Organizing an event can be daunting, particularly for those doing it for the first time. My experience with Midlands Praxis and now Praxis has taught me a great deal in this respect, and I am still learning. I am grateful for the wisdom and guidance given to me by those from whom I learned, especially in the early days. That is perhaps the first point. When setting out, it is helpful to do it in partnership with a more experienced person. I have the time, now that I am retired, but there is so much to consider, that it is always a good idea to share the organization with someone else and somebody with whom to exchange ideas, perhaps someone whose skills compliment yours.

There is no one fixed system; events and regions have their own special requirements. Although the contents of this document are based on organizing events for Praxis, the principles are valid in general.

## **In Advance**

### **Decide on a subject for the event and planning**

The subject and title for an event will normally be agreed well in advance by the (regional) committee along with possible dates. So the next step will be to find suitable speakers - two are better than one, as there will be a change of voice to help keep attention and the two might well be speaking from rather different approaches. They can also share the load during plenary sessions. Obviously it is best to decide on your keynote speaker first. The second, you may decide could be from a different tradition. Sometimes the keynote speaker will have good ideas about a second speaker, if you are having difficulty in thinking of one. Also, it has been known for one speaker to drop out at the last minute, so the other speaker, along with support from the local committee (perhaps covering a slot), can carry on to avoid the disappointment of cancelling the event. A cancellation would be very negative and have an adverse affect on bookings for future events.

Agree a date which is suitable for the speakers as well as your members and the venue. This can be a tricky balancing act.

Decide on a suitable venue for the subject and the numbers expected to attend. If you are expecting larger numbers than you usually have, your normal venue might not be large enough.

Check the cost of the venue for the times you require and what facilities you and your speakers will require; e.g. sound system, lectern, projector and screen, tea/coffee making equipment - these all come at a cost; and don't forget to think of what will be needed for any worship etc. You will soon build up an idea of the total cost of the event and approximately how many bookings you will need to cover it.

### **Planning your Publicity**

Design an attractive **flyer** which should contain the title and details of the event, not forgetting, of course, the date, time and place. To ensure that you and your speakers are on the same wavelength, agree with them a **short summary** (perhaps 100 words) of the event to include. In addition, a brief **write up of the speakers** helps to create interest, as does information of anyone special who is going to introduce the day (a bishop, perhaps). In these days of Sat Navs it is very helpful to include a **post code** for the venue, along with **travelling directions** and a **map** (easy with Google etc.); **parking** information should also be included.

A **booking form** should be positioned at the bottom of your flyer, so that it can be easily detached and returned to you. Be clear about the **charges**; e.g. £15.00, £10.00 for Praxis affiliates, and no charge for Ordinands and Readers in Training. Where appropriate, ask if they wish you to claim against their **CME allowance**, as is possible in the Praxis Midlands region, but not in all others. Do say whether **lunch** is included in the cost of the day, or if they should bring their own. In some regions they can **book on-line**. A **provisional programme** for the day also gives them an idea of what to expect. Mention any relevant **web links** - especially to the main Praxis site and the regional one. Mention if there is any other feature, such as a **bookstall** on the day (which should include any books by the speakers), which gives added value to the day. There are still local Christian bookshops around, who would be only too willing to provide a stall. Our events can make a large difference to their business. Wesley Owen took £400 at a recent Midlands day.

All these details should be included on the **website pages** for maximum exposure, rather than just a link to download a form.

## **Publicity in action**

Ensure that event details go on the Praxis and regional **websites**, along with a link to **download** your flyer/booking form. Each region could usefully **build up lists** over time of those to whom you can send your flyer/booking form. Among them are likely to be CME, IMD officers, Diocesan Wardens of Readers; diocesan websites; any nearby theological colleges and non-residential training schemes.

Do feel free to ask me for an up to date list of **Praxis members' e-mail addresses** for your region; it would be helpful for me and the regions to be able compare notes about up to date (e-mail) addresses etc.

Be **flexible**. If, for example, you are having an event about death and bereavement; circulate funeral directors and agencies like CRUSE. If the subject is to do with education, then why not circulate the schools, with the help of Diocesan Directors of Education? Your colleagues on the committee have a vital part to play in all of this by ensuring the event is well publicised within their dioceses.

## **Receiving Bookings**

I feel that you cannot **record** too much information about those who book for events. I always try to obtain the following: Surname, Christian Name, Title, whether or not an affiliate, how much they have paid or are to pay, whether they wish you to claim against their CME allowance, their Diocese, full address details, phone number and e-mail address. It is helpful for those booking to receive an e-mailed **acknowledgement** of their booking. All the details just mentioned are helpful in what can be a busy registration period on the day (see below) and for future reference. For

example it can be useful to see how many booked from each diocese, which might show you where the publicity distribution within the dioceses could be improved.

If you keep all these details in the same order each time, then it is easier to add them to an existing spreadsheet/list of contacts for future events. Knowing who isn't an affiliate can help the **recruiter** (see below).

## Communications

Keep everyone who is going to be involved **up to date**, especially your speakers. Ensure they know that you will provide them with lunch and their reasonable travelling costs. They will probably like to know the likely numbers attending, especially if they are preparing handouts.

Involve all members of your regional committee, **delegating** where possible and ensuring that they all have a job to do on the day in setting up the venue and, just as importantly, **clearing up** again afterwards. See Appendix 1 for a couple of examples.

## On the day

### Aims

The main aim of the day is to have a **successful event**. However, this shouldn't be the only aim. You need to **look to the future**. Prepare an **evaluation form** (see Appendix 2 for examples that have been used) to distribute, perhaps at lunchtime, so that it can be completed and handed in before people leave. The replies and comments can be very informative and help towards rectifying areas that those attending notice, but you might not, and can improve upon for next time. It is also encouraging to know what people felt went well. However, be prepared for the fact that you won't please everyone.

Still looking to the future, Praxis, and hence the regions, needs a constant flow of **new affiliates**, so ongoing recruitment is vital. See more below.

### In practice

Try to have committee members there at least **45 minutes before** delegates start to arrive, to ensure that the registration process goes smoothly, the hot water urn is switched on, the sound system working, and everything is set up as required. Make sure that there are **sufficient people** on the door for registration for the numbers expected; not forgetting that some will just turn up

on the day without having booked. Whoever is involved with **registration** will need to be properly briefed with a list (in alphabetical order of surname - easily done from a spreadsheet - to speed up the process) of those who have booked and whether or not they have paid, and what the prices are. Ensure that they have a float from which to give change where necessary. They will also need cash bags in which to put the cash and cheques received. Some of those paying may require a receipt. It is useful to have a separate **programme** for the day to give out when people arrive. It may have changed from the provisional one you put on the flyer and people may well not have brought the original flyer with them.

You may also want a set of pre-printed **badges** with names and dioceses. These can help people to network and also gives the committee a head start in recruiting people from specific dioceses for the committee.

Have someone whose specific job is to be a **recruiter** for Praxis, and ensure that this person has up to date application forms and publicity material, including back numbers of **Praxis News of Worship** to give away. These are often available if you ask. Also it is useful to ensure that people are aware of the national and regional websites. The URLs for these could be on small posters, scattered around the building. They can be kept for future use.

If **parking** is limited, you might need to reserve spaces for committee members, speakers, and other helpers, not to mention any requests for disabled parking.

Have some **signs** outside for the event. People will then know that they have found the right building or the correct entrance. This also helps to promote Praxis to anyone passing.

Have someone to **look out** for the visiting speakers and welcome them and ensure that has **bought** the speakers' lunches.

Have sufficient **expense claim forms** with you for the speakers and committee members; also **receipts** for those who need to claim back from their PCC treasurer, or college bursar. There should be official regional versions available. Using these makes you look more professional.

You may wish to have someone taking **photos** for the Praxis or regional website. Regular updates of photos on a website keep it looking interesting and dynamic.

It is nice to have someone organised to give a **vote of thanks** to the speakers at the end.

## **Afterwards**

There is still much to do after the event

Bank the money taken on the day, or send it to treasurer if (s)he hasn't had it on the day.

Analyse the feedback forms and distribute them well before the next committee meeting so that members can look at them in advance and take any necessary action before the next planned event.

Send a book token of perhaps £25.00 to the speakers as soon as possible after the event as an expression of gratitude.

Send your 80p per capita payment to Praxis

Claim any CME money from the various dioceses

Add the details of anyone who just turned up on the day to your region's master list, for future communications

Do the accounts for the event. Hopefully the results will be in line with your expectations.

Pat yourself on the back when you have achieved all this.

## Appendix 1a

### PRAXIS SW CONFERENCE: MAKING A SPLASH

#### Exeter Cathedral – 4.9.12

TIMETABLE FOR THE DAY	
<i>Event</i>	<i>Responsibility/Notes</i>
09.15 Team Arrival and set up	<b>All.</b> Table with 4 chairs set out at front of room + seating for delegates. 2 x tables with chairs at entrance (GB + PF). 2 Tables + chair(s?) for bookstall. <b>AM</b> to organise projector etc..
09.45 Coffee & Arrivals	<b>AM</b> to supply coffee et al. <b>MC</b> to supply biscuits. <b>MC &amp; RL</b> to serve. <b>GB</b> Check-In desk. <b>MC</b> to supply brochure for the day. <b>Peter Furber</b> on check-in desk promoting Praxis Affiliation & book offer
10.15 Welcome & Introductions	<b>RL</b> to begin and introduce <b>Carl Turner</b> to welcome, then <b>RL</b> to outline day and to Exeter to Chair the morning
10.30 Keynote Speaker: Tim Stratford	+ <b>Exeter</b> to introduce <b>Tim Stratford</b>
11.45 Break	
12.00 The Panel in Conversation : Baptism as an event as as a life-long journey...current issues in Initiation	+ <b>Exeter (Chair)</b> <b>Carl Turner</b> <b>Anna Norman-Walker</b> <b>Tim Stratford</b>
13.00 Lunch	<b>AM</b> to link with Cathedral catering team
13.45 Introduction to National Praxis + Launch of Praxis SW	<b>RL</b> to introduce <b>Jo Spreadbury</b>
14.00 Stational Confirmation: Demonstration in Cathedral	<b>PG</b> working with Carl Turner
15.00 Transfer time	
15.15 Questions/Reflections	<b>PG</b> to lead. <b>RL</b> to close with vote of thanks.
15.45 Closing Worship	<b>CL</b> to lead & liase with <b>CT</b> as necessary/ <b>AM</b> music <b>RL</b> to print & bring order of service.
16.00 Close & clearing up	No additional words – let liturgical dismissal dismiss us. <b>All.</b>

- Richard Greatrex to accompany Bookstall brought by **MC**.
- Car passes for Cathedral – arrange with Andrew. For SatNavs enter EX1 1HS (!)
- All tasks now integrated with these notes

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## Appendix 1b

<b>Additional Eucharistic Prayers (Saturday 23 June 2012)</b>			
<b>Task</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Person/People Responsible</b>	<b>To be done by</b>
Plan the event	Praxis to provide speakers	Jo Spreadbury	ASAP
Book Cathedral		Janet	Done
Praxis advertising Other advertising	Flyer	Jo to provide details to Richard	asap
Receive bookings	Website – Richard	Richard/Jayne	Ongoing
Additional Equipment		Jo to ask speakers and report back to Janet	At least a week beforehand
Arrange Lunch for speakers	Janet		On the day
Book Wesley Owen	Also agreed that Sandy Millar could bring her own books to sell	Priscilla	A month before
Update badges committee		Janet	By the day
Labels with attendees names	Lists by diocese	Jayne	By the day
Worship	HC at Middy	Praxis	Send anything needing photocopying to Janet 3 days before
Booking desk on the day		Priscilla, David, Jayne	Arrive by 9.45am
Arrange Coffee	Approach DLC to do this	Janet	
Booking form for next event	Done	Richard	
Take responsibility for clearing up		David & Janet	Don't depart until venue happy!

## Appendix 2a

# Praxis

## *exploring worship today*



\*N.B. Make sure you use up to date logos!

### Evaluation Form

*Praxis is interested to know how useful this day has been for you. Your comments will help us in our design and preparation for future events.*

Title of event:

Date:

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, CIRCLING THE NUMBER YOU FEEL APPLIES BEST (please continue on the back of this sheet if you wish):

**1 = very good/well    2 = good    3 = average    4 = poor    5 = very bad/no**

1) Did the event meet your expectations?    1    2    3    4    5  
If answering 3,4 or 5, please explain why:

2) Please rate:

Venue    1    2    3    4    5

Facilities (eg loos, equipment)    1    2    3    4    5

Catering/refreshments    1    2    3    4    5

Material used (eg handouts)    1    2    3    4    5

If answering 3,4 or 5, please explain why:

3) Something you would have liked to have seen included?

4) The best part of the course was:

5) Are there any other observations you wish to make?

*Thank you for taking the trouble to fill in this evaluation sheet. Please hand it in before you leave.*

## Appendix 2b



### Please let us know what you felt about the Praxis day on ....

How did you hear about the event?

How easy was it to find information about the event?

Where did you travel from?

How was the venue for convenience of travelling?

Did you know of the Praxis website at [www.praxisworship.org.uk](http://www.praxisworship.org.uk)?

*Please rate your response to the following components of the day from 1 to 5, with 1 being the best and 5 the worst. Feel free to add comments.*

Registration/Administration	1	2	3	4	5
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Can you say why?

The timing of the day	1	2	3	4	5
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Can you say why?

The venue	1	2	3	4	5
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Can you say why?

#### **The Programme**

The main sessions	1	2	3	4	5
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Can you say why?

The workshops	1	2	3	4	5
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Can you say why?

The worship	1	2	3	4	5
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Can you say why?

Was the day good value for money?	1	2	3	4	5
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Can you say why?

Did the day help you with your ministry role?	1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---	---

Can you say why?

*Bearing in mind that our remit is liturgical formation, what subjects would you like to see addressed in future Praxis events?*

**Thank you for taking the trouble to fill in this evaluation sheet. Please hand it in before you leave.**

## Appendix 3a

An example of simple accounts.

The known costs are entered in the spreadsheet in advance of the day.

### Exciting Praxis Day 1

#### Expenditure

Hire of St. X's	130.00
Sound System	30.00
Drinks	
Lunches	

#### Speakers' Expenses

Speaker 1  
Speaker 2

Gifts to Speakers	50.00
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#### Individuals' Expenses

Committee Member 1  
Committee Member 2  
Committee Member 3  
Committee Member 4

<b>Total Expenditure</b>	210.00
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#### Income

Cash in Advance	
Cash on the day	
<b>Total</b>	0.00

#### Refunds

#### Grand Total Income

#### BALANCE

## Appendix 3b

An example of more complicated accounts, with CME claims involved waiting for completion.

### Exciting Praxis Day 2

<b>Expenditure</b>	
Hire of St. X's	140.00
Drinks	30.00
Lunches	28.35
Gifts to Speakers	
<b>Speakers' Expenses</b>	
Speaker 1	31.80
Speaker 2	63.50
<b>Workshop Leaders' Expenses</b>	
Leader 1	21.00
<b>Individuals' Expenses</b>	
Committee Member 1	75.00
Committee Member 2	108.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>497.65</b>

<b>Income</b>				
<b>CME</b>	<b>Numbers Claimed</b>	<b>Amount Claimed</b>	<b>Value Claimed</b>	<b>Amount Received</b>
Diocese 1 @ £15.00	11	15	165.00	165.00
Diocese 1 @£12.00	4	12	48.00	48.00
Diocese 2	1	12	12.00	
Diocese 3	2	12	24.00	24.00
Diocese 4	1	12	12.00	12.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>261.00</b>	<b>249.00</b>
Cash in Advance			185.00	
Cash on the day			360.00	
<b>Total</b>			<b>545.00</b>	
<b>Refunds</b>				
<b>Grand Total Income</b>				<b>789.00</b>
<b>BALANCE</b>				<b>292.35</b>

## **Appendix 4**

### **A basic check list**

#### **Planning**

Subject  
Date  
Speakers  
Venue  
Venue cost  
Venue facilities

#### **Publicity**

Flyer  
Flyer distribution  
Advertise on websites

#### **The Day**

Evaluation forms  
Recruiter  
Registration  
Catering  
Parking  
Signs  
Expense claim forms  
Receipts

#### **Afterwards**

Banking  
Analysis of evaluation forms  
Banking  
Claim CME  
Book tokens to speakers  
Per capita payment to Praxis  
Update master list for future events  
Accounts

## **Appendix 5**

### **Praxis SW Treasurer – Job Description**

Basic Role – Administering the finances of Praxis Southwest

Term of Office – As agreed with the Praxis Southwest Committee

Reporting to – the Chair of the Praxis Southwest Committee

#### Duties

1. Ensure received income is recorded and banked
2. Monitor all items of income and expenditure
3. Pay and record all items of expenditure
4. Administer the Committee's bank account
5. Keep proper books and records
6. Prepare annual accounts each year to present to the Committee and to the Treasurer of Praxis Council
7. Provide general financial information to the Committee
8. Attend meetings of the Committee either as a full member, or, as agreed to assist it in its discussions