



exploring worship today

Supporting and resourcing the liturgical life of the Church of England

Praxis News

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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.

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Getting in touch

For general enquiries, affiliation and programme

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Alternative Collects: ready for 2004

After the February Synod debate, the draft text of *CW Additional Collects* went to Revision Committee. Although the collection as a whole had been welcomed by the Synod, number of points of a general and particular nature were considered by the committee. Of particular note was the observation by Peter Williams (House of Clergy, Sheffield) that the doctrine of atonement was largely missing from the Commission's text. The revision committee addressed this by either rephrasing or writing new collects from scratch. A number of other detailed points were attended to by the committee. As a result more than half of the sixty-nine collects were either altered or replaced by the revision committee, although in many cases the change was only minor.

The bigger changes of note affected the following collects: Advent 4 ('wait with Mary' – rephrased), Christmas Night ('Word leapt down' – rephrased), 3rd before Lent ('salt of the gospel' – collect replaced), Ash Wednesday (rephrased to make explicit reference to sin), Good Friday (recast to make reference to atonement), Pentecost (redrafted), Trinity 11 ('pearl that has no price' – rephrased), Trinity 14 (replaced with new collect referring to atonement and justification), Harvest (replaced).

There was a bit of a battle over the use of 'Magi' in the collect for the Epiphany. Some members wished it to be replaced by 'Wise Men', but the committee

decided to retain the original Greek name: Matthew's gospel is deliberately using an unusual, exotic-sounding Greek word to emphasise the exotic nature of the visitors. Furthermore, the (Authorized Version's) phrase 'wise men' is now regarded as a poor translation, as there is nothing about the word which implies wisdom. It was the technical word used for the functionaries of the Persian court. There's no implication that they were necessarily 'men' either!

One new feature of the Revision Committee text is the use of asterisked 'seasonal' collects, which can be used throughout a season to enhance their familiarity, especially in a non-book culture. There are also some asterisked collects for use during Ordinary Time.

The July Synod has accepted the Revision Committee's text, which will now pass to the House of Bishops, prior to Final Approval next February. With a following wind, the collects should be authorised and available by early Autumn 2004. In the meantime, the Revision Committee's text which the July synod approved is available as a Word file on the web at:

<http://www.cofe.anglican.org/synod/GS1493A.doc>

Paul Roberts

What has happened to Visual Liturgy 4 ?

All those who paid up several months ago in order to take advantage of Church House Publishing's special advance offers may well be wondering when the goods are going to appear.

Church House Publishing promises that the release will be shortly after 4 August so readers of this issue of *Praxis News* should have it in their hands already. The delay has been partly due to the sudden and serious illness of a key software developer on the project, although the release was already behind schedule because of glitches that needed to be ironed out before the programme could be put into the public domain.

It's a helpful and user-friendly product (the editor has had a go) - so let's hope that there are no more delays.

To try out VL4, go to the Visual Liturgy web site at www.vislit.com

New Praxis Programme

An imaginative programme of training events for the year 2003/2004 has been issued with this edition of *Praxis News*. The wide ranging selection of days included within it cover such varied topics as 'Writing for worship', 'Godly Play', 'How has early liturgy changed since college' and 'On another Planet II— worship and postmodern culture'. There is also a residential course organised jointly with the RSCM - 'Living Liturgy', which will be held at Whirlow Grange, Sheffield.

If you are reading this but have not had a copy of the Praxis Programme and would like to obtain one, please get in touch with the *Praxis* administrative office (details in the side-panel on this page).

A Seasonal Taster from 'Times and Seasons'



suitable words

Dear Friends, the people of God in ancient times presented to the Lord an offering of first fruits as a sign of their dependence upon God for their daily bread. At this Lammastide, we bring a newly-baked loaf as our offering in thanksgiving to God for his faithfulness.

Jesus said, I am the bread of life; those who come to me shall never be hungry and those who believe in me shall never thirst.

The Lammastide is brought to the president

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
you bring forth bread from the earth.
As a sign of your fatherly care
in giving us the fruits of the earth in their seasons,
we bring before you this loaf
which we made from the harvest of your goodness.
Accept it, we pray,
as we offer to you our thanks and praise.
Blessed are you, Lord our God,
to whom it is good to give thanks.
Blessed be God for ever.

Harvest

Surprisingly, perhaps, Harvest thanksgiving—as an identifiable event in the Church's calendar—is a relative newcomer, compared to Lammastide and Rogation, having been introduced in only the 19th century. Here is a yet more recent contribution:

Kyrie Confession

God has blessed us:
but still God's children go hungry.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

God has blessed us:
but still the poor cry out for justice.
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

God has blessed us:
but still we see inequality and oppression in the earth.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Further material

The 'Agricultural Year' section of the *Times and Seasons* provision also includes material for Creation, Plough Sunday and Prayer in times of Agricultural Crisis. *Praxis* hopes to put more examples of the material onto the *Praxis* Website.

What do you think? Letters to the editor are welcomed on this or any other worship-related matter.

The seasonal resources to accompany the Common Worship material that has already been published are still very much in draft form and are not expected to appear in print until 2005. However, the Liturgical Commission has given *Praxis News* permission to print a few samples of the draft liturgy from a bank of resources for 'Seasons and Festivals of the Agricultural Year'. Read on for snippets of Rogation, Lammastide and Harvest Thanksgiving.

Rogation

A combination of prayer for God's blessing on the land and 'beating the bounds' is regularly observed in many communities. The traditional type of biddings in the Rogation Litany are supplemented by some of a more contemporary feel:

The Opening of Section V of the Litany

For the world of work in all its diversity.
Hear us, good Lord.

For the industry and work places of this *parish/community*.
Hear us, good Lord.

For the right ordering of work in time of technological change.
Hear us, good Lord.

For communities which have lost traditional industries, and for their regeneration.
Hear us, good Lord.

For all expanding industries and for the promise of new jobs.
Hear us, good Lord.

For small businesses and co-operatives.
Hear us, good Lord.

For local trade and commerce.
Hear us, good Lord.

For all service industries which provide for our daily needs.
Hear us, good Lord.

Lammastide

The introductory notes to the provision explain that Lammastide (Loaf-mass, from the Anglo-Saxon 'Hlafmaesse') is an English feast in origin, held as a thanksgiving for the first-fruits of the wheat harvest, in which a newly-baked loaf from the harvest is presented at the beginning of the eucharist (which may then be used as the eucharistic bread—although other suggestions are also made regarding the use of this bread). The ceremony ceased after the Reformation—although reference to Lammastide continued in the Prayer Book Calendar, and the practice has recently been revived in some places. Here is an excerpt:

The Presentation of the Lammastide Loaf
(after the Greeting)

The President introduces the service with these or other

Second funerals?

Practical liturgical advice for ministers dealing with retained body parts



At a recent conference organised by the *Churches Funeral Group* there was consideration given to the liturgical response to the burial or cremation of retained body parts. Revd Peter Speck, formerly Senior Chaplain to Southampton General Hospital, spoke of the heightened emotion that has surrounded the discovery that body parts of loved ones have been retained.

The controversy surrounding the practices of Alder Hey and Bristol hospitals has raised the public consciousness with regard to organ retention. It is expected that there will be further publicity shortly as all hospitals come in line with present recommended best practice. Peter Speck stressed the need for clarity on the part of ministers that what was being offered by way of liturgical services was not a 'new' funeral service, but a service that was completing the service which had already taken place: be that through a re-uniting with the previously buried body of those parts not available initially or a completion of the act of cremation of the rest of the body. The *Order of Christian Funerals* does not directly address this matter. However, the following extract from *Cremation or Burial of Body Parts*, an article by Peter Speck, may be helpful to those assisting families faced with such a situation:

"In keeping with good practice for the conduct of any funeral, these ceremonies call for careful preparation by clergy and others. The prime object of this event is to try and bring some healing to a family deeply distressed by recent events. The last thing

that one wants is for a major mistake in the spelling of names, the use of a perceived insensitive phrase, or for the personal feelings of professionals regarding the issue of organ retention to get in the way of the prime focus of the event.

Body parts should not be handed directly to a family but only via a nominated funeral director. The erosion of trust following Alder Hey may lead some families to demand proof. This could be supplied by the director, their solicitor or some family members, who may wish to view the tissues or organs to assure themselves that what they have been told actually is there. In most Trusts the organ would be handed to the funeral director via the mortuary for placing into a suitable wood casket or other opaque container. There should be a small name-plate with a brief description such as 'heart of baby *N.N.* etc'. Burials should preferably be in the grave space adjacent to the coffin of the deceased, i.e. on top or at the head end of the coffin. Opening the coffin should clearly be avoided whenever possible as a Home Office Licence is required and families may not fully appreciate the degree of disturbance to the body of the deceased and the added distress. At the crematorium a tiny casket on the very large catafalque can look miniscule. It can be helpful if a small floral display can be placed about 18" or half a metre from the front edge and the casket placed in front of that. The parent or other family member may wish to carry the casket, especially if they carried the coffin. By necessity the ceremony is short as, in ef-

fect, it is a committal. The words chosen by whoever conducts the ceremony are important. The following are suggested forms of words:

God of time and eternity, we remember *N.N.* who has died and been laid to rest. As she remains in our love, though parted from us, we pray that you will keep her in your infinite and perfect care; and that one day we shall enjoy friendship with each other in your presence, where every tear shall be wiped away. Amen.

This young life will always be part of us because *N.N.* was part of our family's dreams and hopes. She shared God's mystery of life and inner warmth. We honour her memory now and we lay her to rest completely as we re-unite her brain with her body, knowing that she is already complete in your presence.

Lord God, we thank you for *N.N.*'s life. We pray that you will bring healing to her family and all those who mourn her death, that they may experience your healing love and feel supported at this difficult time."

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Have you seen...?

Book review

Alternative Worship

Jonny Baker and Doug Gay with Jenny Brown
SPCK 2003

This is well thought out little book which will help many who are a little distanced from the - often esoteric - style of alternative worship. The introduction puts alt.worship into its liturgical context as the major development of the late 20th century and as a post-modern phenomenon, by helpfully tracing the various strands from which it emerged.

The book is helpfully structured, organising the material first seasonally and then in subdivisions of Resources (meaning texts) and Rituals (meaning things to do). I am not convinced that



the use of the word *ritual* is totally appropriate here as ritual, by its nature, is repeated action, but so long as one understands that here it means things to *do* rather than say in worship to criticise any further would be churlish.

Short essays on some of the major themes on the alt.worship agenda (Renewing Culture, Reframing Tradition etc) are scattered through the book. These offer insight into some of the theological issues that the emergence of alternative worship raises for liturgy and worship.

The authors have also included a CD containing songs, images and videos which will help those with few resources to have a bank of useful

material to get them started.

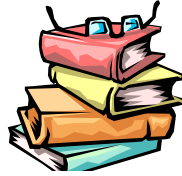
My one sadness about this book, and much writing on alternative worship, is that it concerns itself solely with alt.worship and does not allow their ideas to act as a critique of the ordinary (in every sense of the word) worship that takes place in most Churches week by week. Much of the material in this book could be used to startling effect to bring new life to a tired and familiar liturgy. In that sense the material here is not just for alt.worship but for ord.worship too.

This is an excellent little book that I commend unreservedly. It leaves me more confirmed in my conclusion that until ord.worship learns the lessons of alt.worship the Church will always find itself speaking a different language from the people it is called to serve. I remember something being said about that around the Reformation...

Peter Craig-Wild

Have you seen...?

More book reviews



Come Worship with Me – a Journey through the Church Year
by Ruth Boling, illustrated by Tracey Dahle Carrier
Geneva Press 2001

Children at Worship – Congregations in Bloom
Caroline S Fairless
Church Publishing Inc 2000

For children, worship can be a word-dominated experience. These two books challenge church boredom, the first for children and the second for adults working with children. Narrated by a cute mouse, *Come Worship with Me* uses pictures and words to explain the signs, crosses and symbols of the Christian year, and gives children things to look for in their own churches. The exciting sense of journey through the Christian story is helped by the beautiful detailed illustrations but the words are clearly Episcopalian, and sometimes jar in an English setting. This book is useful to those teaching and leading children in worship – and according to my 7 year old son, is really interesting because it told him things about God. The resource section at the back is particularly eye-catching, and I shall be using it to enhance all age talks.

Caroline Fairless has captured the frustration felt by many of those adults leading worship who want to engage children in worship without patronising them or alienating adults. With many practical suggestions, as well as theological insight, she encourages us to include all members of our congregation in appropriate worship. It is exciting to explore the possibilities for full participation of children in corporate worship, providing a congregation is willing to make compromises.

Dana Delap

Seasonal Worship from the Countryside
The Staffordshire Seven
SPCK 2003, 239 pages, £16.99 (hardback)

I'd been waiting for this book ever since one of the authors told us it was on the way, at a Praxis event two or three years ago on worship for rural churches. What's more, I'd even submitted an item for inclusion. So I had a double interest, which was not disappointed. I approached the book first from my personal 'rural suburban' worship-leading perspective. I discovered plenty of 'we might do that' material, as well as being stimulated into some useful lateral thinking. There was also a hark-back: 'I wish I'd had this book when I was asked to do that Riders' service last summer!'

All the 'Staffordshire Seven' authors have rural 'street cred.' As a team, they offer an attractive mix of Anglican/Methodist and lay/ordained perspectives on worship. The book contains material for seasonal worship and community occasions, appropriate for all ages. It includes some suggestions for children's activities, some sensitive worship possibilities in times of tragedy and loss, and a bonus in the useful appendix listing Christian Rural Organisations.

Overall, the book offers 'special services' and ideas to complement the local church's regular pattern. I found myself dwelling, for example, on the possibilities of worship 'out and about' – on one or other of our farms, or in one of the villages, - and 'by invitation' – with the town council, say, or the bell ringers or school, at 'open gardens,' and even, if I dare, with our animal lovers!

I commend 'Seasonal Worship from the Countryside' as a stimulating resource to all who lead worship – in town as well as in country.

R Anne Horton, Rector of Woodhouse, Woodhouse Eaves and Swithland, Leics.

Notice board



Michael Vasey—in memoriam

The Stone

A stone commemorating Michael Vasey has been laid outside the south wall of the sanctuary of St John's College Chapel in Durham. Marking the fifth anniversary of Michael's death, a simple office was led by Revd Steve Croft, Warden of Cranmer Hall, and the stone was dedicated. Visitors to Durham will find the Chapel opposite St John's College in South Bailey - it is the little church of St Mary-the-Less. Anticipation of the ceremony had the characteristic of a yo-yo. St John's College planned it, then postponed it, and then put it on again as originally intended!

The Lecture

The Michael Vasey Memorial Lecture was also unexpectedly postponed by St John's at almost the last minute and with little publicity. The lecture, to be given by Bridget Nichol with the title 'Heaven our Homeland', has been rescheduled for the evening of Wednesday 29 October 2003 at 7.30 pm (at St John's College). This time, readers of *Praxis News* are advised to contact St John's before they set out, to make sure that it really is still happening.

The most recent booklet in the Grove Worship Series is No. 175: Scripture-Based Liturgies—a fascinating collection of services, demonstrating various ways in which the Bible can be used as the basis of creative liturgy. Coming up later this year: 'Sing it again': The place of short songs in worship by Anne Harrison and How to read the Bible in worship by Anna de Lange and Liz Simpson. All available from Grove Books at www.grovebooks.co.uk or telephone 01223 464748.

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