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Details of Praxis events in the coming months can be found at [www.praxisworship.org.uk](http://www.praxisworship.org.uk)

### 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 to provide and support liturgical education in the Church of England.

### Affiliation

The work that Praxis does is supported mainly by affiliation. If you are not an affiliate, why not consider becoming one?

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# Focus on Training

## worship4today

*'The worship4today course is a vital resource to train and equip leaders of worship in a mission-shaped church ... transforming the worship of individuals and congregations.'*

*(The Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, Bishop of Sheffield)*

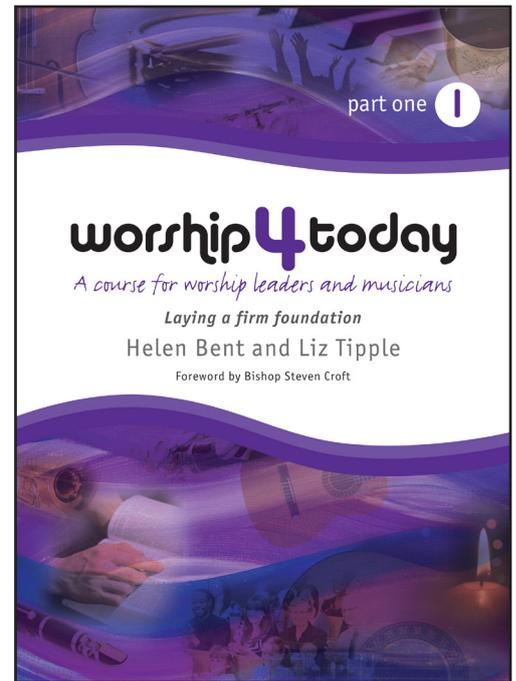
Church House Publishing, 2013, £24.99; Part 2 due October 2013; Part 3 due January 2014

This highly successful one-year course for worship leaders and musicians is now making a significant impact on parish worship across this country and beyond. Immensely practical, the course does exactly what it says. It gives a sound biblical, theological and liturgical background to worship, embracing the breadth of traditional and contemporary worship styles and developing practical skills for preparing and leading worship in a mission-shaped church. It has recently been revised further for publication in book form by Church House Publishing. Part 1 is now available.

The course comes in three separate books and contains everything you need, including full teaching notes, hand-outs and PowerPoint presentations as well as essential information for setting up a diocesan, deanery or parish course.

*worship4today* fills a void, training participants in the art of leading worship whether clergy, Readers, churchwardens, musicians or other laity. The library of *Common Worship* resources together with the wide range of hymns, songs and chants demands considerable liturgical knowledge and skill to put services together. *worship4today* develops and hones these practical skills throughout.

The course has been written and road-tested within Sheffield Diocese,



where it has run continually for over six years at diocesan level. We now have over 100 authorised worship leaders in the diocese, who are renewing and enriching their parish worship. They are particularly influential in parishes with limited resources. They also contribute to the worship life of the diocese, showcasing good practice and the best worship resources available.

*worship4today* courses are now running in many dioceses, deaneries and parishes across the country. Further afield, the diocese of Cape Town recently completed a course with over 60 participants. The material is flexible and adaptable, attracting participants from both urban and rural settings with a wide age range from 16 to 84!

Christian Schwarz (Natural Church Development) suggests that inspiring worship is one of eight key stimuli to church growth. This course will encourage personal worship and at the same time envision and empower worship in the local church.

*✉ Helen Bent is the Bishop's Adviser in Music and Worship for Sheffield Diocese*

See also the article about her role on pages 5-6.

# Reports

## Worship and Mission

### Praxis North

The training day on 27th April considered *Worship and Mission*. The keynote session, a dialogue between Canon John Sinclair (Newcastle Cathedral) and Canon David Kennedy (Durham Cathedral) considered *Liturgy: a Help or a Hindrance to Mission?* Based on their personal experiences, the speakers explained how worship should carry us into a closer relationship with God.

Three conversation groups followed. In *What is Proper Church?* David Brooke and Dan Pierce discussed modern approaches to church contrasted with traditional approaches; Dana Delap and people from St James and St Basil Fenham, Newcastle talked about how 'Back to Church Sunday' provided a mission opportunity in their situation and in *Parish Meets School*, Val Hall explained how a Eucharistic community had been built within the school. The day was generally well received, although one comment was that there was more on mission than liturgy.  
✉ *John Chamberlin, Secretary, Praxis North*

## Engaging Children in Worship

### Praxis South West

The recent launch of the Alternative Eucharistic Prayers has made us all think. What difference should the presence of children make to how we worship? As we thought about our next event it seemed the obvious choice of theme.

We were delighted to welcome Gill Ambrose as our main speaker for the day. Her wide experience of children's ministry, as well as her work as Editor of *ROOTS Adult & All Age*, on the Liturgical Commission and in publication of creative all-age resources, has made her one of the leading thinkers in the field. Gill's address was based on her core belief that children are formed in faith by worship. She outlined some important principles and talked of the challenges that we all face in encouraging children in worship. Gill also offered thinking on what exactly we mean by all-age worship, and suggested a

strategy that included an honest discussion of the issues, careful planning, considering how people learn and the visual age in which we now live.

The remainder of the day was spent on magazine-style presentations. Carl Turner, Precentor at Exeter Cathedral, gave us a lively look into creative worship with schools, including the Eucharist, and the fascinating fact that OFSTED had complained that worship in schools was not sufficiently liturgical! Jane Tibbs, Children's Adviser in the Diocese of Bath & Wells, talked about praying with children and showed us something of the wide range of excellent resources she has written. Andrew Maries, music specialist and Exeter DLC member, gave a practical guide to music in worship for children. We also heard from Gill Ambrose again, this time with her ROOTS hat on. The day concluded with a short act of worship led by Andrew Maries.

Our next event is on 8 October with Professor Paul Bradshaw entitled, 'A Celebration of the Eucharist, Ancient and Modern,' in which he will share scholarship on its earliest development and how that might inform our practice today.  
✉ *Robin Lodge, Chair, Praxis SW*

## DLC news

### Bath & Wells

The present form of Bath & Wells DLC (known as the Diocesan Liturgical Advisory Group) began in 2006 with the brief of supporting excellence in worship across the diocese, recognising its importance as the 'shop window' of the Church. We were at the heart of the celebrations of the 1100th Anniversary of Bath & Wells in 2009 and a small group of us is planning the worship for our next clergy conference in November. We recently overhauled our service for the Celebration of a New Ministry and have now added Confirmation to our 'To do' list. We were also consulted when our training department wanted to offer a course for Lay Worship Leaders.

Since the re-launch of Praxis SW we have encouraged those wanting general training events in that direction, although we are also pleased to be asked to work with a parish on particular liturgical projects. We are also developing resources

for the diocesan website under the banner *LiturgyMax*. Our team is a mixture of lay and ordained from a wide range of ministries including parish priest, Cathedral Precentor and University Chaplain as well as a Reader and Advisors for Music and Children. None of us would claim to be 'experts,' but experienced practitioners with a passion for offering to God the very best in worship across the whole breadth of spiritual tradition that is the Church of England.

✉ *Robin Lodge, Chair*

### Chester

The Chester Diocesan Worship Advisory group had been reflecting on funeral practice in the light of the growth in popularity of 'secular' funerals in the diocese. Research had been done locally on this by students at the University of Chester and meetings held by bishops and archdeacons with local funeral directors. This fed into episcopally-led training days for all those who take funerals. Discussions about IME and worship are taking place. The chair and the secretary of the group are providing an evening for curates on 'Presiding at Communion'. There has been promotion of the RSCM day at Wrekin College. The group has also had input into the forthcoming Diocesan Clergy Conference.

✉ *Colin Randall, Secretary*

### Blackburn

Set up over 20 years ago, the DLC has supported the work of the Diocese in varied ways under the strap line, 'To help people encounter the living God, by resourcing and supporting the local Church in its worship'. We organised the Bishop's Teaching Day on Liturgy and Worship, and helped with a Diocesan Music Day. We are involved in helping churches exploring the setting up of music groups; offering to guide churches through a scheme of examining whether their worship meets the needs of the community; working with the Cathedral on exploring Rogation in parishes both urban and rural and producing papers on how to 'beef up' the Eucharistic dismissal to make the transformational aspect of the Eucharist more real.

✉ *Michael Gisbourne, Clerk*

## Liturgical Commission

### Baptism

A small working party has been engaged in drafting texts of economical length and accessible register to stand as alternatives to the Decision and the Blessing of the Water in the Common Worship rite. The material that meets the demand for simplicity while avoiding condescension or travesty. Once this has passed through the House of Bishops and General Synod, it has great potential to become durable and well-used.

Simultaneously, the national Church's efforts (following the success of *The Weddings Project*) to encourage people to turn to their local churches for baptisms and funerals are gathering momentum. Sandra Millar, Director of Projects for the Church of England, gave an engaging presentation that managed to be practical, encouraging, and theologically and ecclesologically well-rooted. Her concern that the desires of families bringing children for baptism be met with the kind of understanding that nurtures continuity and belonging will strike a chord with all who wonder why baptism so often seems to be a hit-and-run affair.

### The First World War

There will be national commemorations in which the Liturgical Commission will not expect to be directly involved. The Commission will offer resources for local commemorations especially among communities that have distinctive anniversaries and losses to mark. Plans for a symposium that brings together, *inter alia*, historians, theologians, ecumenical partners, the British Legion and the Armed Forces with a view to shaping the best possible contribution are now being taken forward.

### Links

A most fruitful dialogue with the RSCM is developing, thanks to Andrew Reid's constructive participation in Commission meetings. The Commission maintains regular contact with the liturgical advisory bodies of our Sister Churches and sends representatives to the Joint Liturgical Group. They keep us alert to ecumenical interests and take an active role in writing material for use across the Churches. Resources for the *Week of Prayer for Christian Unity* often contain their work. Some members are also involved in the design of the Common Awards syllabus for ministry training.

### Praxis

Finally, the presence of the Chair of Praxis at meetings is proving to be very effective in shaping discussions of training events and, importantly, the continuing task of liturgical formation. This is arguably the greatest challenge facing the Commission in the next few years.

✉ *Bridget Nichols is Lay Chaplain to the Bishop of Ely and a member of the Liturgical Commission.*

## The Nicene Creed at the Archbishop's inauguration

Here is an afterthought to the inauguration of Justin Welby as Archbishop of Canterbury in March. The service included the use of the Nicene Creed, recited without the *Filioque* for reasons described as 'ecumenical'. Thereby hangs a conundrum, and the conundrum emerges from some odd history.

Enthronements have not traditionally included creeds, and certainly not the Nicene Creed. However, in 1980 Robert Runcie, who had previously been deeply involved with the Eastern Churches, deliberately inserted the Creed in order to say it without *Filioque*, as a particular gesture to his Eastern friends. It was simply a personal gesture – just defensible as personal, but actually ecclesially deceitful, while official texts retained *Filioque*.

In 1991 George Carey's enthronement re-used Runcie's text – without obvious personal reason (such texts reappear from the archives or the computer as each occasion comes up). However, by Rowan Williams' time in 2003 the *Common Worship* main volume included on page 140 a text without *Filioque* for 'suitable ecumenical occasions' – and it was used in his service.

And now it has come again – whether by inertia or choice. But the question is how far this is an ecumenical text at all. It is likely that any Eastern Christians at the enthronement would be pleased to see the *Filioque* phrase omitted, and not mind how the rest of the text had been put into English. But for English-speaking Christians worldwide, a text labelled 'ecumenical' should surely match the use of other denominations and other Anglicans? Conforming to Rome is admittedly impossible – they have reverted to 'being of one substance' and even to 'For us men and for our salvation'. But other English-speaking Christians generally use the text provided by the ecumenical English Language Liturgical Consultation (ELLC) in 1989, whereas General Synod affirmed in the early 1990s that it would adopt the ELLC texts – and then step by step abandoned them as each service came up.

The Synod fussed over 'was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary', and finally accepted 'from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary'. But, much more quietly, Synod retained 'and was made man' when ELLC said 'and became truly human'. Thus the text printed in our *Common Worship* eucharistic rites, while retaining the *Filioque* which recurs in many rites round the world, varies from the ecumenical text in two respects. Now go back to the text for 'ecumenical occasions' on page 140 as used at Canterbury, and it follows ELLC with 'of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary' but it retains the uniquely Church of England 'and was made man'. So the gesture to the Orthodox, if that is it was supposed to be, was sectional and unecumenical towards the rest of the world – our text for ecumenical occasions is an eclectic Church of England production. It may be a matter of manners rather than of doctrine, but ecumenism depends on manners.

✉ *Colin Buchanan is a former Bishop of Woolwich*

# Study and Training

## Liturgy at Sarum College

Situated in Salisbury Cathedral Close, Sarum College is a most congenial location for the study of liturgy. Students are attracted to this historic and creative centre for Christian learning.

### *The MA programme*

The MA in Christian Liturgy offers part-time students postgraduate qualifications at Certificate, Diploma and MA levels, awarded by the University of Winchester. This academic programme is complemented by Pastoral Liturgy courses for clergy and lay leaders of worship. These more practically oriented one-day courses provide a forum for the exchange of ideas on recent liturgical developments and to promote liturgical renewal in the local church.

The MA programme, which is ecumenical in scope, allows students to study the most significant aspects of Christian worship – the Eucharist, baptism, daily prayer, the calendar, music, art and architecture, and mission and culture. Students also have the opportunity to pursue personal interests in a guided reading module and in a supervised dissertation. The aim of the programme is to foster an informed liturgical imagination that is alert to the significance of worship for the life and mission of the Church.

Students study three modules a year, the heart of each being a four-day residential course at Sarum College. The hospitable environment of the College, which hosts a large number of guests throughout the year, is ideal for this kind of intensive and communal learning. Places are also set aside in each residential course for those who wish to attend without seeking an academic qualification.

The programme draws upon a wide network of liturgical scholars who are at the forefront of their respective fields. Visiting lecturers include Professor Paul Bradshaw (history of early Christian worship), Chris Irvine (art and architecture) and Professor John Harper (music in liturgy). Dr James Steven, the programme leader, pioneered the liturgical study courses in the Ministry and Theology postgraduate programmes at King's College London before moving to Sarum in 2011. His academic interests include the theological dimensions of

liturgical practice and empirical approaches to liturgical study.

The college has a library with an outstanding collection of more than 40,000 books and MA students have access to a wide variety of academic journals. There is also a Christian bookshop within the College with a mail order facility for specific requests. Students are given study skill guidance and advice on funding support.

Building upon the success of the MA in Christian Liturgy, Sarum College will also offer opportunities to study for research degrees (MPhil/PhD) from 2014.

### *Enquiries*

[www.sarum.ac.uk/learning/liturgy-worship](http://www.sarum.ac.uk/learning/liturgy-worship);  
Advice on admissions: Anne Jensen  
[ajensen@sarum.ac.uk](mailto:ajensen@sarum.ac.uk) 01722 424827;  
Programme Leader: [jsteven@sarum.ac.uk](mailto:jsteven@sarum.ac.uk)  
Students are invited to contact Dr James Steven with proposals for research and for further details.

## Mirfield Liturgical Institute

Mirfield, home of the Community of the Resurrection and a theological college training ordinands, has for over one hundred years been a centre of commitment to liturgical study and good practice, through teaching, research and significant contributions to the wider national, international and ecumenical contexts.

The Mirfield Liturgical Institute was founded to bring together and focus the diverse work of liturgical formation, teaching and research at Mirfield and make it more accessible to the Church of England and more widely available to the Churches of the region, nation and beyond. The College is still very much influenced by and participates in the Community's life in daily worship and study and through more informal contact. For many years, from its foundation at the beginning of the twentieth century, the College was an affiliated institution of the University of Leeds, but has now formed a new and exciting association with the University of Sheffield and its Department of Biblical Studies.

### *Ordination candidates*

At the heart of the College's work is the formation of ordination candidates, and the formation of the intellect in the classroom through the study of liturgical theology and history is integrated with the formation of the liturgical person in competence and confidence in liturgical ministries.

### *The MA programme*

The partnership with Sheffield has made possible a more distinctive concentration in liturgical studies: the MA in Liturgy. The College's MA programmes share an initial core module that introduces and encourages a range of methodologies to be applied to the range of theological disciplines, but with a specifically liturgical element for those specialising in liturgical studies. The MA in Liturgy includes a second core module, Liturgy, Culture and Context, offering the variety and deliberately broad vision that its title suggests. Thereafter the student chooses from a number of specialist modules including Liturgical Texts, Sacramental Theology, Themes in Liturgical Theology, Singing the Word, Cistercian Studies and Liturgy, Ritual and Sacred Space. All students research and write a dissertation of up to 14,000 words on an agreed topic.

The candidates for the MA include ordinands, recently ordained curates, other clergy and lay people from a variety of traditions, in the UK and overseas. To make it as accessible as possible it is increasingly taught in a series of residential weeks during which a module may be completed in the context of a gathered learning community and a structured pattern of worship, study and recreation, in comfortable facilities with full catering. The MA may be taken full-time in one year, part-time in two years, or over a three-year 'Professional Development' pathway. It is particularly suitable for those engaged in Christian ministry, lay or ordained, and includes significant consideration of practical and pastoral elements, but it may be taken by anyone suitably qualified. It consciously inculcates a range of methodologies that would be suitable preparation for someone intending to undertake doctoral work in liturgy. Indeed doctoral research is also now possible with us, and with the Sheffield collaboration comes a wider range of research areas for supervision.

# Study and Training

## **Sabbaticals and research**

There are many possibilities for sabbatical study at Mirfield, including attendance at taught modules, individually guided work, and the chance to participate in the daily life of worship and study with the College and Community. We also welcome those wishing to use our facilities for independent liturgical research: the College and Community libraries have rich holdings in liturgical studies including the papers of Bishop Kenneth Stevenson and, in the care of the Borthwick Institute at the University of York, of Walter Howard Frere.

## **The Walter Tapper lecture**

This year sees the second annual Walter Tapper Lecture, established in celebration of the completion of the re-ordering of the Community Church. Walter Tapper was the original architect of the Church. The inaugural lecture, *Building Sacraments*, was given by Bishop Stephen Platten, Bishop of Wakefield and Chairman of the Liturgical Commission. This year's lecture, on September 27, will be delivered by Richard Fabian, formerly Rector of St Gregory of Nyssa, San Francisco, USA, a well-known American Episcopal liturgist. All are welcome – please drop us a line if you are interested in attending.

## **Enquiries**

Enquiries are most welcome at any time about any of the above opportunities. Please email [liturgy@mirfield.org.uk](mailto:liturgy@mirfield.org.uk) in the first instance, or write to the Director of the MLI, the Revd Dr Ben Gordon-Taylor, Mirfield Liturgical Institute, College of the Resurrection, Stocks Bank Road, Mirfield, West Yorkshire WF14 0BW. Tel. 01924 490441.

✉ Ben Gordon-Taylor

## **Bishop's Adviser in Music and Worship in Sheffield Diocese**

Over the past eight and a half years, I have had the privilege of working as Bishop's Adviser in Music and Worship for Sheffield Diocese. This part-time stipendiary role has enabled me to combine a passion for facilitating worship with a passion for mission and church growth, whilst remaining an active practitioner firmly rooted in the local

church working alongside my husband.

I set out with the basic mission statement 'to promote excellence in worship' through a set of core values: This is worship which

- glorifies God and edifies the people;
- is Spirit-led;
- transforms through encounter with God;
- celebrates creation and holds the world before God;
- values and encourages different worship traditions and styles;
- values the gifts of others;
- inspires and draws in those who don't yet know God.

Inspiring worship draws people all by itself. This is an important mission dynamic for every worshipping community. Where people live busy lives with many pressures and stresses, worship must offer a space to find God. This begs the question: how long do we spend preparing worship (as opposed to preparing a sermon)? With the advent of *Common Worship*, leaders can no longer simply go by the book; there is a whole library of resources available. Add to this the plethora of church music available in a wide range of styles, then a greater liturgical understanding and at least some musical knowledge of hymns and songs is required to prepare worship well. Back in 2000, many parishes created a series of parish booklets in order to simplify the choices. These shut down creativity. After 13 years they are tired and disengaging, leaving congregations dissatisfied and in need of fresh impetus.

My role enshrines a vision to promote liturgical formation and good practice at every level through three main areas of work: training, parish support and diocesan provision.

## **Training**

*worship4today* forms a key part of training, refreshing worship across the diocese at parish level, but also providing resources for deanery and diocese. However, much other training goes on:

IME 4 – 7 includes sessions on 'Presiding at the Eucharist', 'Taking funerals', 'Taking weddings', and 'Baptisms', which require special skills for handling large numbers of visitors who are not used to church worship. The nature of IME 4 – 7 is now changing and expanding to accommodate the growing cohort of self-supporting ministers and pioneer ministers. This demands flexibility in the way we offer

training whilst maintaining high standards. In future the new Common Awards will also re-shape IME 4 – 7 provision.

Readers-in-Training have practical training sessions each year as well as a module on 'Elements of Christian Worship'.

CME training and stimulus is needed for clergy, readers and other authorised leaders in the area of worship. This has become a more explicit requirement under the terms of Common Tenure. Additional musical development and training is provided through RSCM events.

## **Parish support**

This can come in many guises. There is no one-size-fits-all, although an initial worship day for everyone can be a good place to start. Generally, the response is shaped by the need. However, there are two keys areas to be borne in mind here:

Sunday availability means there is freedom to visit parishes at their regular acts of worship, and over eight years I have deliberately aimed to visit every parish in the diocese at least once. This is vital in order to understand the local context, meet the congregation and discover its history, its resources and its limitations. Worshipping amongst the congregation can bring new insights, collective wisdom, and properly informed advice. Sometimes one apparently small adjustment can provide the necessary catalyst for genuine renewal of worship. This can also be the opportunity to discover and release new or hidden talent.

Enabling volunteers is also key. Often latent skills and talents are available but lack of confidence prevents them being offered. Sooner or later the majority of volunteers will mention a lack of confidence even though they may be capable and talented people in other areas of life. Lack of confidence tends to breed lack of confidence, which can undermine the gift being offered. However, suggesting simple, attainable steps accompanied by large doses of positive encouragement can release the most reluctant volunteer into a capable contributor to worship.

## **Diocesan provision**

Large diocesan services and events in the annual cycle have become opportunities

☞ *continued overleaf*

# Training

to showcase new resources and model ways of combining different worship styles appropriately. We aim for worship that reflects and respects the churchmanship of the hosting church, whilst at the same time encompassing a breadth of traditions and styles representative of the diocese as a whole.

**Ten Days of Prayer** are held annually from Ascension to Pentecost. Together with the Worship and Liturgy Committee, it has been a joy to facilitate this great outpouring of prayer as literally thousands have joined together in intentional, focused prayer. Working with the Bishops and the Communications team, publicity materials have been sent to every parish and regular bulletins have encouraged congregations to get fully involved. A wealth of downloadable prayer resources is provided on the diocesan website, introducing individuals and congregations to both ancient and well-used forms of prayer as well as new and creative ways of praying. This is an invaluable way of uniting the diocese together and enabling it to engage fully with both local community and wider world.

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## **...the negative effect of 'silo working', which hinders innovation and sets back productivity...**

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There has been much talk in the business world about the negative effect of 'silo working', which hinders innovation and sets back productivity. A silo mentality isolates and reduces efficiency, whereas good communication and joined-up thinking promote relationship and collaboration. In Sheffield Diocese, I work closely with the Senior Staff; Training Team; School of Ministry; Cathedral and Minster churches; Worship and Liturgy Committee; local RSCM; also Praxis Yorkshire; and Yorkshire Regional Training Partnership. Furthermore, I am also involved at national level with Praxis; RSCM; Group For Renewal of Worship; Leading Your Church into Growth; and Mission-shaped Ministry. Working in this 'joined-up' manner has greatly raised the profile of worship in the diocese, but most importantly, it has enabled each constituent to offer its best for the good of the whole. This can prove financially expedient and economical in a time of financial challenge. When information and knowledge are shared freely, we are all able to play to our strengths and avoid unnecessary duplication and reinventing of the wheel.

Other challenges also face us with reduction of clergy numbers, a greater reliance on volunteers, and the need for appropriate training and support for those volunteers. We are all working with limited resources, particularly in inner city and rural settings. And in a changing landscape, where we are being encouraged to broaden our perspective from a parochial mentality to re-imagine and reconfigure ministry in mission partnerships, we may also require other new skills in order to promote relevant, authentic, mission-shaped worship for a 21st century Church. There is clearly still much work to be done, but the appointment of a diocesan officer focused on this whole area of liturgical formation and good practice can be instrumental in revitalising worship and going for renewal and growth.

✉ Helen Bent

# Music News

## **The Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland**

Readers may know that *The Hymn Society* has been going since 1936, recently celebrating 75 years. As well as publishing 'Short Guides' on hymnological topics, members gather annually for a conference. Last year the conference was held in Lancaster, and this year it meets at The Hayes Conference Centre in Swanwick, Derbyshire from 23-26 July. The three day conference provides the usual opportunities for networking, conviviality and mutual support, but of course also presents a range of speakers and activities centred on the study and enjoyment of hymnody. Thoroughly ecumenical, and international, this year's conference welcomes Canon Peter Moger, Precentor of York, to speak on Cathedral Hymnody; Bishop Timothy Dudley Smith on 'Hymns, Faith and Poetry'; Martin Leckebusch on Worship Songs; Bishop Clive Young and Anne Harrison on Benjamin Britten and Hymns; while Gordon Giles and John Barnard will introduce the newly published edition of *Ancient and Modern*. Further details are available on the Society's website: [www.hymnsocietygbi.org.uk](http://www.hymnsocietygbi.org.uk).

As part of the Conference, the Society stages a 'Festival of Hymns'. This will be on Thursday 25 July at 8pm in Derby Cathedral. Anyone is welcome to come along for a good sing of hymns topical, new and anniversarial!

Even if this is too short notice to enrol for the conference, it is never too late to join the Society for a modest annual fee, and thereby be kept informed with papers, transcripts and proceedings as well as becoming a member of a friendly, ecumenical, worship-focussed network. Again, further details are available on the website: [www.hymnsocietygbi.org.uk/contactus.htm](http://www.hymnsocietygbi.org.uk/contactus.htm)

## **The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology**

Also at the Conference, Professor Dick Watson will introduce *The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology*. This is a mammoth and exciting new venture which has taken many years to produce, and now reaches fruition as a dedicated in-depth website containing thousands of articles on hymns, writers, composers, themes and other aspects of hymnology. The publication will be launched at a conference at Bristol on 19 and 20 October 2013. Registration for this is now open and you may sign up at [www.bris.ac.uk/arts/birtha/events/hymnology/](http://www.bris.ac.uk/arts/birtha/events/hymnology/).

✉ Gordon Giles is Vicar of Enfield Chase

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## **Research Request**

In the midst of a research project I have come across a number of parishes in which the Eucharist is celebrated with the Communion before the Word, i.e. an order of Prayers, Communion and then readings and sermon. I am interested to know how widespread this practice may be and the reasons why church communities have adopted this Table then Word order. If you are in a church community that is using this order and would be willing to answer a couple of short research questions I would be very pleased to hear from you. Please contact me at [harvey.howlett@gmail.com](mailto:harvey.howlett@gmail.com).

# Book Reviews

## **Developing in Ministry**

Neil Evans, SPCK, 2012, 160 pages, ISBN 978-0281063987, £12.99

Most of the diocesan CME ministry training programmes for clergy I've been invited to attend neglect the hugely important area of daily worship in the spiritual life of the church and of its members. This book is no exception and in that respect it disappoints.

Evans' concern to see dioceses putting together training and development programmes that will make fruitful and effective differences for participants is admirable. He emphasises the importance of ensuring programmes that start where the participants, their churches and church members actually are, with all their different gifts as well as their mixed motives. 'Jesus' earthly ministry is characterized by the continual and natural development of people among whom he spends his time; he never expects them to be other than the people they are, yet he helps to develop them to play their part in the spreading of the good news.' Evans' thinking starts from here and engages with a number of important themes: inherited culture and expectations, a rich mix of skills training, theological education and personal and spiritual formation, each individual and community's identity and needs, reflection and review, and the perception of Christian ministry as relational.

The great strength in this book is its emphasis on the individuals God gives to each church, clergy and laity, and its encouragement to churches to work relationally with those gifted and called individuals so that all grow together into serving the gospel calling of the church in that place.

Though there are some references to prayer and Bible study, a major weakness of the book is its omission of the essential place and gift of worship in the daily life of every church community; worship through which all our gifted and called individual church members are 'knit together into one communion and fellowship' and so sent out by God as messengers of his gospel, to build God's kingdom 'on earth as it is in heaven'.

✉ Anne Horton, Rector of Woodhouse, Woodhouse Eaves and Swithland

## **I Belong special: first Holy Communion programme for children with an intellectual disability**

Cristina Gangemi, Redemptorist Publications, 2012, Leaders and Parents' Guide ISBN 978-0852314029, £9.95

In church, as elsewhere, children with special educational needs are frequently offered a watered-down version of what is offered to everyone else, if indeed their needs are catered for at all. How refreshing and encouraging, then, to discover a beautifully presented book for children with special needs preparing to receive Holy Communion. From the opening pages with the bold affirmation 'You make God happy', this book celebrates the richness of God's invitation to us all and succeeds in incorporating those with more limited capacity without suggesting that they play anything less than a full and valued role in God's church and world. Through reference to numerous biblical stories, the journey and experience of individual children is placed within the context of God's continuing involvement in the world.

The key to this book's success is strong, effective graphics. Every page is colourful, with borders and in clear colours as well as beautiful artwork that illustrates bible stories or 'everyday life' scenarios, the liturgy and activity within church, or assists the very simple text in pictorial form. Here the collaboration with *The Makaton Charity* is especially helpful as the signs used will be familiar to many with learning difficulties and assists in making the gospel message accessible. The emphasis on the visual gives freedom to leaders to shape their use of the book around the specific abilities of the child, making it widely applicable, though this does require of the teacher a competent understanding of basic Christian doctrines and Bible stories. The book is designed for a Roman Catholic context and some elements would require careful handling to make it more widely appropriate, but this is an excellent resource to be highly recommended.

✉ Alexandra Clarke is a priest in the Papworth Team

## **Comfortable Words: Polity, Piety and the Book of Common Prayer**

Eds. Stephen Platten & Christopher Woods, SCM, 2012, ISBN 978-0334046707, 192pp., £45

Last year's 350th anniversary of the *1662 Book of Common Prayer* did not enjoy the same level of popular interest as the King James Bible did for its 400th anniversary in 2011. Yet arguably it was and is the *Prayer Book* that is the more important of the two, inasmuch as it was the *Prayer Book* that successfully popularized and embedded in British Christian culture the sonorous authority of the *Authorized Version*, and provided an entire register of language that has enabled generations to receive and live the Christian revelation. If any text has shaped and framed the religious imagination and practice of the English, it is the *BCP*.

*Comfortable Words* is an excellent collection of essays published to commemorate the anniversary, and to explore the contribution the *BCP* has made to the forming of Anglican Christian culture. *Comfortable Words* is a deep, rich, scholarly and highly accessible study of the *1662 Book of Common Prayer*. It is indispensable to anyone who wishes to get under the skin and beyond the style of the *Prayer Book* to its lasting significance.

The essays the editors have collected take the reader through the narrative. They tell a story that was once much more familiar than it is now, and which needs to be retold in a far less historically conscious age. The *BCP's* origins and evolution are charted through the tumultuous years of Henry, Edward, Mary, to the Elizabethan Settlement (in a far less settled state than popular history would have us believe), and beyond it into the storms of the mid-seventeenth century. The essays show how each generation has wrestled with the *Prayer Book* as a way of expressing a deep restlessness with the results of Reformation. The narrative takes us beyond 1662, through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (the former century being a period largely lost to most Anglicans) by which time Cranmer's religious prose was the language of faith throughout the country.

☞ continued overleaf

# Book Reviews

Anglican frustrations with the *Prayer Book* are well examined and the process of liturgical revision in the twentieth century is set out. This is immensely helpful for anyone who would like to know more about why it is that we have what we have. These things are covered with clarity and authority, and the essays examine the ways the BCP has entered the popular imagination and influenced our popular religious practice.

Thankfully *Comfortable Words* isn't a panegyric for the *Prayer Book*. It resists nostalgia and selective memory to present a robust and helpfully critical study of a complex text in which our religious language, doctrine, order, practice, and faith (both public and domestic) are all bound up. It is an invaluable contribution to our awakening to the place the *BCP* still has in the Church today.

✉ *Paul Thomas, Vicar of St James', Paddington*

## **Sounding the Seasons: Seventy Sonnets for the Church's Year**

*Malcolm Guite, Canterbury Press Norwich, 2012, ISBN 978-184825274, 9699., £9.99*

*Sounding the Seasons* is a book of prayers, in sonnet form, tracing the Christian year. A sonnet, just to brush up your memory, is a piece of verse consisting of fourteen decasyllabic lines with rhymes arranged according to one or other of certain definite schemes. The well-known seasons of Christmas and Easter are beautifully and extensively covered here, but there are others less well known, such as the Epiphany, the festival commemorating the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. The book has a helpful index of liturgical seasons.

Malcolm Guite is a poet, priest and singer-song writer, Chaplain of Girton College and Associate Chaplain of St. Edward King and Martyr in Cambridge. His book shows us many different ways in which sonnets can work, and explains their purpose within the Christian faith by use of extensive poetic material. Well-known examples from the seventeenth century have inspired Guite, and he treads in the footsteps of John Donne's 'Batter my heart three person God', and George Herbert's 'Rise heart, thy Lord is risen, sing his praise without delay'.

Guite himself describes the sonnet form

like this: 'The sonnet, which had its origins in Italian poetry in the thirteenth century, has proved a wonderfully flexible and delicate instrument... At the heart of its virtues are brevity, clarity, concentration, and a capacity for paradox, for expressing, juxtaposing, and containing contradiction, all of which are required if we are to approach the paradox and mystery that is at the heart of the Christian faith.'

By now you should be thirsty for the taste of Guite's own sonnets; so three examples:

### **The anointing at Bethany:**

Come close with Mary, Martha, Lazarus  
So close the candles flare with their soft  
breath

And kindle heart and soul to flame  
within us

Lit by these mysteries of life and death..

### **Jesus nailed to the cross:**

See, as they strip the robe from off his  
back

And spread his arms and nail them to  
the cross,

The dark nails pierce him and the sky  
turns black,

And love is firmly fastened on to loss...'

### **Easter Dawn:**

He blesses every love that weeps and  
grieves

And now he blesses hers who stood  
and wept

And would not be consoled, or leave  
her love's

Last touching place, but watched as low  
light crept

Up from the east. A sound behind her  
stirs

A scatter of bright birdsong through  
the air ...'

There lies behind Guite's poetry a passion for the gospel and its dissemination. He is urgent for the words to work in the hearts and minds of people who may not consider themselves very religious or poetic, and his skill as a wordsmith makes these religious sonnets a powerful and personal contribution to the Christian mission.

✉ *David Scott is a member of the Liturgical Commission*

## **New Grove Books**

### **W214 How to Preside at Holy Communion**

*Charles Read*

What are we doing when we preside at Holy Communion and how can we do that well? This study is not an exploration of the theology of Communion, but a practical guide rooted in Anglican and Methodist understandings.

Starting with key elements and aspects of Holy Communion, it reflects on how to get the basics right, and how to lead in a way which is creative, engaging and facilitating. It will serve both as an excellent introduction and as a continuing source for reflection. Charles Read is Vice Principal of Norwich Theology Centre

### **W216 Using Common Worship Order Two (Contemporary):**

*Looking at a different shape for Communion, Colin Randall*

For many congregations the only 'shape' they experience of the communion service is the classic four-fold shape popularised by Gregory Dix. But Anglicans have another shape, which can be seen in the communion liturgy of Thomas Cranmer. This shape has rich spiritual and theological content and promotes a devotional understanding of the atonement and all that flows from it. However it is not always straightforward to help contemporary congregations appreciate it. So this booklet shows ways in which Order Two (Contemporary) can be adapted, so that its shape can be more widely enjoyed and valued.

## **Letters**

**P***raxis News of Worship* welcomes letters on liturgical topics.