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**What is Praxis?**

See [www.praxisworship.org.uk](http://www.praxisworship.org.uk)  
 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.

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**Affiliation**

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

# Praxis at 25

**NOW** *The first Head of Ministerial Training, Helen Bent*

I stand on the threshold of becoming the first Head of Ministerial Training, a new joint initiative between the RSCM and Praxis. In many ways this new post is a natural progression from my role as Bishop's Adviser in Music and Worship within Sheffield Diocese, giving me the opportunity to promote excellence across the country and to contribute to the formation of worship leaders, both ordained and lay.

In 1927, Sir Sydney Nicholson, founder of the RSCM, identified the importance of clergy and lay ministers who understood the value of music in worship. Later, Michael Vasey, a founder of Praxis, envisioned a Church where a broad range of people would become confident in developing liturgy and leading worship. Over the past ten years, I have pioneered much training in Sheffield including the *Worship 4 Today Course* (published by CHP), enabling those across the spectrum of churchmanship, tradition and style to worship and learn together. Building on this, my new role will involve the creation of further programmes, events and resources.

I have been a church musician; I am a priest and active practitioner, modelling liturgy and music in a variety of styles and settings. I combine a passion for worship with a passion for mission and church growth, whilst remaining firmly rooted in the local church alongside my husband, a Team Rector in Sheffield Diocese.

Inspiring worship 'glorifies God and edifies the people' (Canon B1.2); it draws people into God's presence and grows the Church. There is no such thing as ordinary time! Each act of worship is a unique opportunity to encounter God, to grow in discipleship, and to go back out into the community to make a difference. The vision for this new role is both exciting and challenging and I look forward to helping to encourage, equip, resource and establish those who are called to lead God's people in worship.

**THEN** *First days for the Praxis Education Officer, Mark Earey*

On a snowy day in November 1996, I left Chatham not sure if I would make it to Salisbury for a meeting at Sarum College where the new Praxis National Education Officer post was to be based. It was all a bit vague: funding was uncertain and Sarum College had just emerged as a new sort of ecumenical theological education resource, primarily for lay Christians. I was to be based at the Institute for Liturgy and Mission and its role was uncertain. Just about the only clear thing was that I was to work with Chris Walsh, a distinguished Roman Catholic liturgist, and with Robert Fielding, a gifted musician.

When I moved to Salisbury in May 1997, the Praxis part of the role was as unclear as the rest. There was a lot of excitement that we'd got the post up and running, but no clear idea of what I would do. There had never been a national liturgical officer, Praxis had never had an employee before, and there were interesting questions about accountability (Praxis Council), line management (the Principal of Sarum College) and support (the Bishop of Salisbury).

Thankfully, the first part of *Common Worship* appeared (it wasn't yet called 'Common Worship'), the Lectionary and Collects, and people couldn't get their heads round them, so a project had emerged – a training pack to explore the reasons behind the change and what it meant. It proved to be the first of a series.

The other key challenge was how to 'add value' to Praxis affiliation. *Praxis News* (as it was before joining with *News of Liturgy*) began - a liturgical newsletter for non-anoraks - offering information about events and help available.

I still meet people who remember the 'pipeline' diagrams which helped keep people in touch with *Common Worship's* flow through the Synodical system. It was a good way for me to keep connected to my own background as a sewage engineer...

# Celebrating 25 years of Praxis

## How Praxis began

with thanks to Colin Buchanan, Philip Chester, Christine Hall, Richard Hines and Michael Perham.

The movement towards Praxis began in the late 1980s as the ten authorised years of the ASB 1980 were coming to an end. A group of clergy and lay people, longing for a new, more liturgical future for Church of England worship, began to buzz ideas around. Richard Hines (then Oak Hill liturgy lecturer) remembers initial meetings at King's College, London with Philip Chester, Christine Hall and the late Michael Vasey. 'My main memory', says Christine, 'is of people who were experimenting and writing new liturgies. Things changed hugely when Praxis became a 'training' organisation. We were leading new thinking. This was a group who could do, think and say things that the Liturgical Commission couldn't say officially. And we wanted both wings of the Church involved.'

'I was the one who thought of the name!' recalls Philip. 'Michael Vasey was initially resistant but came round.' Michael Perham, of whom Richard Hines says, 'once he was involved, we began to get more focussed', describes Michael Vasey as 'the visionary'. 'Others,' he says, 'including me, quickly caught his vision.' For Vasey, notes Richard Hines, the priority was that Praxis take a practical and hands-on approach. 'Our main aim was to stimulate and enable better liturgical understanding and practice among Church of England parishes.'

Colin Buchanan is 'pretty hazy about the stages by which Michael Vasey *manipulated* us (I choose the word carefully) into forming Praxis, and also got a four-figure sum almost by mistake from Winchester diocese via the Bishop, Colin James, then chair of the Liturgical Commission, who (rightly) valued Michael highly'.

According to Michael Perham, 'Michael Vasey's instinct was to give Praxis a dual management structure to cover both policy and action. A national committee would consist of people who had a name in the liturgical world and were representative of the three sponsoring bodies; a more hands-on London group headed up by Philip would act as the training arm. I was the chair from day one. I was not democratically elected. Michael, I suspect without consultation, decided that I should be, and asked me. I protested at first, saying I thought I could not take on any more at that point. I have always remembered

his reply, "We don't need you to do any work, we just need your name!" It was the first time anyone had suggested my name was worth having and I accepted. He was wrong, of course, he did need me to do some work and I did so willingly and spoke at many of the early London gatherings. But I think my own particular contribution was to encourage and to some extent shape the regional approach.'

Richard Hines also recalls that supportive publications were an early priority for Praxis. 'Perhaps the main contribution I made personally then was to suggest the title of our first publication, *At All Times and In All Places: a Syllabus for Liturgical Formation in the Church of England*, for which I also did a lot of the secretarial and editorial work and wrote some of the units.'

✉ Anne Horton is a member of the Praxis Council.

## The Praxis Visionary



### Michael Vasey 1946-1998

Who was Michael Vasey? Older readers will know the answer to this question, of course, but for those who have begun to lead and study worship more recently, his contribution to the development of our worship, both in writing texts and in training people to use them, is obscured in the mists of time.

Born in Africa, of a Jewish mother, Michael Vasey became a Christian as a university student in England, and after ordination to a curacy in Kent, taught liturgy at Cranmer Hall in Durham until his untimely death. During that time his indefatigable energy and remarkable creativity contributed to the words we have today in *Common Worship*, and to growing a Church where a much broader range of people would become confident in developing liturgy and leading worship. He did this through work across a huge range of organisations, national, international

and ecumenical. In the appreciation which he edited<sup>1</sup>, Colin Buchanan cites no fewer than sixteen areas of work, suggesting he had 'a finger in every pie'. He recalls that 'In February 1990 representatives of the Liturgical Commission, of the Alcuin Club and of GROW put their hands to a jointly-sponsored Anglican agency for the promotion of liturgical understanding – and actual praxis. He secured funds from friends both willing and reluctant; he provided a constitution; he enthroned successive chairmen; and he firmly became secretary from the start. He was then willing and able to throw great energies into nurturing the enterprise, which both needed his creativity and due course flourished through it.'

<sup>1</sup> *Michael Vasey, Liturgist and Friend*, edited by Colin Buchanan, Grove Books, 1999.

## Chairs of Praxis Council

1990-1996	Michael Perham
1997-2001	Stephen Oliver
2001-2006	Paul Roberts
2006-2011	David Kennedy
2011-date	Jo Spreadbury

## Secretaries

1990-1998	Michael Vasey
1998-2004	Gilly Myers
2004-2013	Michael Rawson
2013-date	Richard Curtis

## Editors of Praxis News

1998-2003	Mark Earey
2004-2009	Gilly Myers
2009-2011	Tim Hone
2011-date	Gill Ambrose

## Publications

- *At All Times and In All Places*, Michael Perham, Continuum, 1995
- *Understanding Worship, A Praxis Study Guide*, Mark Earey, Perran Gay and Anne Horton, Mowbray, 2001
- *Using Common Worship: Practical Guides to the New Services*:
  - *Holy Communion*, Mark Beach
  - *Initiation*, Gilly Myers
  - *Marriage*, Stephen Lake
  - *Funerals*, Anne Horton
  - *A Service of the Word*, Tim Stratford
  - *Daily Prayer*, Gilly Myers;
  - *Times and Seasons: part 1*, David Kennedy
  - *Times and Seasons: part 2*, David Kennedy

# Praxis Timeline

- 1990** Official launch, Westminster Abbey; first public event, on *The Promise of His Glory*, at St Martin-in-the-Fields.
- 1991** First annual programme: Liturgy and Liberty, Eucharistic Prayers in 'Patterns', The Funeral of the Future.
- 1992** Aims: to enrich the practice and understanding of worship in the C of E; to serve congregations and clergy in their exploration of God's call to the church to worship; to provide a forum in which different worshipping traditions would meet and interact.
- 1993** First constitution. Council includes some regional representation and RSCM.
- 1994** Michael Vasey paper: *Regional Networking among the Dioceses*. Events offered in Midlands, East Anglia, North West, Wales.
- 1995** First publication: *At All Times and In All Places – a guide for study courses*. Michael Vasey urges liturgical stock-taking exercise with an ecumenical agenda.
- 1996** 12 'day' conferences; 3 'residential'.
- 1997** Mark Earey becomes National Liturgical/Praxis officer; launches *Praxis News* and Praxis training packs. Consultation by invitation on 'lay worship leaders'.
- 1998** Sudden death of Michael Vasey.
- 1999** Praxis/CHP collaborate to produce *Using Common Worship* series: first volumes to be launched with *Common Worship* in 2000.
- 2000** *Common Worship* launched; *Using Common Worship: Eucharist, Funerals, Initiation, Marriage*, published. 10th birthday party at St Paul's Cathedral.
- 2001** Planning of 2002 residential consultation between Praxis and its sponsoring bodies, the Liturgical Commission, Alcuin Club and GROW.
- 2002** New Liturgical Commission Formation Group hopes to work 'collaboratively with Praxis, which should 'continue to play the lead role in providing high quality education through events and resources'.
- 2004** *Praxis News of Worship* launched in March, Gilly Myers editor, replacing *Praxis News*, *News of Liturgy* and *News of Hymnody* publications.
- 2006** Liturgical Commission announces 5-year formation strategy, 'Transforming Worship'; Praxis to play a major role.
- 2009** New constitution. Syllabus work continues with hope that it will be used as base for national liturgical training IME4-7.
- 2010** National Worship Development Officer post ends. Peter Furber becomes treasurer.
- 2011** Jo Spreadbury new Chair of Council. Gill Ambrose new *PNOW* editor.
- 2012** Membership numbers and finances improve significantly.
- 2013** Praxis seeks grant funding from Hymns A&M to promote liturgical development in dioceses. Richard Curtis becomes secretary. 40th issue of *PNOW*.
- 2014** Conversations with RSCM about supporting a joint RSCM/Praxis training post.
- 2015** Helen Bent heads ministerial training. 25th anniversary.

# Music

## 25 years of Music

**How has music in worship changed over the twenty-five years since Praxis was formed? Anne Harrison surveys developments.**

Diversity and technology: these two themes compete and yet complement each other as I try to sum up, for this anniversary issue, some of the significant changes and developments in music within worship over the last 25 years. New hymn books are still being produced – and recent publications like the latest *Ancient and Modern* and the Methodist collection *Singing the Faith* have sold remarkably well – but they're also available electronically, and the mixture of musical styles found within would surprise church musicians from a quarter of a century ago. The inclusion of simple liturgical settings is also increasingly common, alongside hymns, songs and short chants. Several hymns, remarkably, appear in official *Common Worship* publications, including a metrical creed and gospel canticle paraphrases for *Daily Prayer*.

All kinds of material for sung worship is available online – most praise bands download as necessary rather than buying printed music. Many congregations would now be surprised to be handed books rather than singing words from a screen, and audio-visual technicians have become key members of worship teams. Organists still have a hugely-valued place in the Church of England, but both acoustic and amplified instruments of various kinds are commonly found in many churches. Copyright schemes (CCLI and Calamus) help people keep within the law while negotiating the extraordinary abundance of sung material which continues to be produced. The RSCM's quarterly liturgy planner (*Sunday by Sunday*, first published in 1997) is a valued guide to music – from many sources – suggested by lectionary readings, and the *HymnQuest* CD-ROM database is a marvellous resource. All this is glorious but daunting for those with the awesome responsibilities of planning and leading worship!

# Music News - Anne Harrison

## Big Sing Live CD

A chance to enjoy and be inspired by a new musical repertoire or familiar material with a fresh twist: Geoff Weaver's arrangement of a song from Cameroon ('He came down that we might have love'), Martin Leckebusch's beautiful Maundy Thursday hymn 'A bowl of water and a towel' and Roger Peach's setting of 'Lamb of God' are just three of the fifteen items on a new CD available from the Jubilate Group ([www.jubilate.co.uk](http://www.jubilate.co.uk)).

The music was recorded at two national 'Big Sing' events held in London, with amateur singers under the direction of Noel Tredinnick, Director of Music at All Souls, Langham Place. Roger Peach, Jubilate's Editorial Co-ordinator, arranged these hugely enjoyable days and has worked with others to produce a high-quality recording.

Roger, along with Nigel Groome of the Royal School of Church Music, will be leading a regional 'Big Sing' entitled 'Sing through the year' in Keynsham, near Bristol, on Saturday 16 May 2015. Participants will be charged £6 (£5 for Jubilate subscribers) and the afternoon will include practical tips for singers and conductors, plus the opportunity to look at and buy resources from Jubilate and the RSCM. For further details contact Roger Peach ([roger@jubilate.co.uk](mailto:roger@jubilate.co.uk)).

The next national Jubilate 'Big Sing' will take place on Saturday 27 February 2016 at St Paul's Church, Robert Adam Street, London.

## Words and music for Holy Week

Richard Hubbard of the Cantus Firmus Trust, whose aim is to encourage creativity in worship through music and the arts, led an event with the Cantus Firmus Choir in Ipswich on Sunday 29 March 2015. *Palms and Thorns*, a reflection for Holy Week in words, images and music, took place at Burlington Baptist Church. The music included 'Hosanna to the Son of David' by Orlando Gibbons, extracts from Handel's *Messiah* and works by contemporary composers including John Bell of the Iona Community. For further information, visit Richard's website ([www.cantusfirmus.org.uk](http://www.cantusfirmus.org.uk)) where you will also find some imaginative ideas for worship drawn from his *Worship without end* workshops at last year's National Network of Pastoral Musicians' conference in Chester.

## Hymn-writing weekend

Are you – or do you know – a budding or experienced hymn-writer? Why not share in or spread the news about a workshop to be held at the Windermere Centre from Friday 30 October to Sunday 1 November 2015, led by members of the editorial group of *Worship Live*? The booking form, along with further information, can be found online ([www.worshiplive.org.uk](http://www.worshiplive.org.uk)); alternatively ring Gillian Warson on 01869 324645 ([gillianwarson@lineone.net](mailto:gillianwarson@lineone.net)).

The organisers say, 'Hymns have been important in the worship of God for many centuries, and many old hymns enshrine important truths for us today. However we also need new hymns to express our changing understanding of the world around us and God's activity within it. At a more individual level, the act of wrestling with words or music can stimulate us to explore what it is we really believe about God and about God's world, and when we do this in the company of fellow Christians the resulting dialogue can be extremely fruitful. There is also nothing like having constructive criticism on hand for a whole weekend, particularly as many of us work on our hymns in isolation from other hymn writers most of the time.'

## Church music 'Oscars'

The Royal School of Church Music has announced its honorary awards for 2015, to be presented by Lord Brian Gill – Scotland's most senior judge and chair of the RSCM's Council – at the charity's Celebration Day service in Bury St Edmunds on Saturday 3 October.

Three significant church musicians based in prestigious establishments will become Fellows of the RSCM: Martin Baker (Master of the Music at Westminster Cathedral), Andrew Nethsinga (Director of Music at St John's College Chapel, Cambridge) and Andrew Millington (Director of Music at Exeter Cathedral).

The Dean of Hereford, Michael Tavinor, Helen Bent – currently Bishop's Adviser in Music and Worship for the Diocese of Sheffield but newly appointed by Praxis and the RSCM as Head of Ministerial Training – and Glasgow-based Alan Tavener of Cappella Nova are among those who will be made honorary RSCM Associates. New Zealand hymn-writer Colin Gibson will become an Honorary

Member of the RSCM. Full details of the awards may be found in a press release dated 27 February, available via the RSCM's website ([www.rscm.com](http://www.rscm.com)).

## Retreat for songwriters

A four-day retreat for worship songwriters is to be held in the gracious surroundings of Wydale Hall, North Yorkshire, from 5 p.m. on Sunday 28 June to 2 p.m. on Wednesday 1 July 2015. Led by Joel Payne and Matt Osgood of RESOUNDworship.org (the Jubilate Group's song project), the retreat includes core teaching sessions, opportunities for group critique, one-on-one clinics with tutors and private writing time (alone or with others).

The cost is £315 per writer, with a discount for couples sharing a room; en-suite accommodation and all meals are included in the price. Perhaps a local church nurturing its own songwriters might subsidise one or more places on this retreat? Further details are available online ([www.resoundworship.org](http://www.resoundworship.org)) or from Joel Payne ([joel@resoundworship.org](mailto:joel@resoundworship.org)).

Joel will also be taking part in a Christian Aid day at Emmanuel Church, Loughborough, on Saturday 25 April from 10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. 'Worship. Justice. Creativity' is a day for artists, songwriters and musicians, those planning and leading worship and anyone working with children and young people, 'to explore, discover and create tools for themes of justice in the worshipping life of the local church.' For further information contact Martin Gage of Christian Aid ([mgage@christian-aid.org](mailto:mgage@christian-aid.org), 01509 265013).

## Church Music Future

Birmingham-based Jon Payne is among those setting up a new organisation aiming to provide individual, tailored support to churches who wish to develop their music. There will be advisers to contact directly with music-related queries, in relation to staffing, repertoire, rates of pay for church musicians, advice on legal or contractual issues, etc. Masterclasses led by experienced, professional musicians will be on offer for choirs and worship bands. Membership will be free – sign up online ([www.churchmusicfuture.com](http://www.churchmusicfuture.com)) to be kept informed of training events and workshops. Jon Payne also has his own website ([www.jonpayne.co.uk](http://www.jonpayne.co.uk)).

# Michael Saward RIP

A service was held in St Faith's Chapel ('the OBE Chapel') in the Crypt of St Paul's Cathedral on Wednesday 18 March 2015 to celebrate the life of Canon Michael Saward (1932-2015), who died suddenly in Switzerland on 31 January. Michael was one of the founders of Jubilate Hymns Ltd (now the Jubilate Group, [www.jubilate.co.uk](http://www.jubilate.co.uk)) and served as a Director from 1980 to 2006. He was also a member of the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland and his larger-than-life presence will be missed at this year's annual conference, to be held in Cambridge in July.

Michael Saward's activities in the world of hymnody are too many and varied to list in their entirety, but he played an important part in encouraging the creativity of others (through the Millennium Hymn Competition, for example, sponsored by St Paul's Cathedral while Saward was Canon Treasurer, and won by Hilary Jolly for her text 'Through the darkness of the ages'), as well as writing himself. His most widely-sung hymn is 'Christ triumphant, ever reigning', first published in *Youth Praise* in 1966. At the thanksgiving service organist Noel Tredinnick improvised a medley of tunes connected with Saward texts written at various stages of his life. Michael also edited – alone or with others – a number of published collections, achieving a certain notoriety when defending the updating of 'archaic' texts in *Hymns for Today's Church* (1982), and he was a passionate advocate of the importance of hymns in Christian faith and worship, especially among Evangelicals.

Michael Saward's most recent publication, *Come Celebrate* (Canterbury Press 2009, with a Foreword by Rowan Williams), gathered hymns by twenty contemporary British writers who were asked to select what they felt were their finest texts, but not necessarily the best known or most widely published. It would be a fitting tribute to the editor's memory if it continued to hold an honoured place as a resource both for editors of collections of congregational song and for students of recent hymnody.

✉ Anne Harrison

## Events

### Act Justly...

**Saturday 25 April 10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.**  
**Cullompton Community Centre, Devon**  
**Praxis Southwest**

Speaker: Bernadette Farrell

In this event we will be making connections between the liturgical life of the assembly and its task of 'doing justice'. Contact [gillbehenna@me.com](mailto:gillbehenna@me.com)

### Making Way: Labyrinths and sacred moments

**Saturday 25 April 10.30 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.**  
**Wakefield Cathedral Praxis Yorkshire**

Speakers: Andi Hofbauer, Precentor of Wakefield Cathedral and Helen Bent, Bishop's Adviser in Music and Worship, Sheffield Diocese  
Praxis Yorkshire and Wakefield Cathedral join together to offer a day of walking and praying the labyrinth in and around the Cathedral and sharing ideas for creating sacred moments. Workshops will make use of the Wakefield labyrinth and give opportunity to create different sacred moments inside and outside the building. Leave with a labyrinth to go.  
Contact [helen@thebents.co.uk](mailto:helen@thebents.co.uk), 01709 363850

### Liturgy for the unchurched

**Friday 8 May 10.30 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.**  
**Southwark Cathedral Praxis South**

Speakers: Jessica Martin and Dave Tomlinson

How to communicate with the 'unchurched' and the renewal of baptized Christians have become primary concerns for almost every Christian denomination. How can we in the Church of England address this in the words of our liturgies and how we perform them, so that someone with limited or no church experience will not be confused or perhaps even embarrassed?  
Contact [peter@furber.me.uk](mailto:peter@furber.me.uk), 01202 296886

### Is Preaching to the Choir Enough?

**Preaching and Worship in an Age of the Unchurched**  
**Tuesday 2 June, 2 p.m.**  
**St Michael's, Cornhill, London, EC3V 9DS**

Ed Foley, Capuchin  
Duns Scotus Professor of Liturgy and Music, Catholic Theological Union, Chicago  
A lecture to mark the inauguration of the Centre for Theological Education at St Michael's, Cornhill.  
Bank underground station. Booking is not necessary.

### NOT all over by Christmas

**Commemorating World War One: 2016-2018**

**Thursday 8 October 10 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.**  
**St Chad's Roman Catholic Cathedral, Birmingham Praxis Midlands**

Speakers: Maggie Andrews, Michael Snape, Andrew Wickens  
We hope the day will help churches plan worship to commemorate key events from the final two years of World War 1. Our speakers will focus on 'What it means to remember', 'War: Church and Clergy' and 'Women and the Home Front'. We plan to share some local church thinking from across our region and to create an act of worship which will incorporate images and music as well as words.  
Contact [jayne.crooks@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:jayne.crooks@blueyonder.co.uk)

### Make a splash! Jumping into the waters of baptism!

**Thursday 5th November**  
**10.30 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.**  
**St. Michael's, Cornhill, London, EC3V 9DS Praxis South**

Speakers: Sandra Millar, Head of Projects and Development for the Archbishops' Council, and Anders Bergquist, a member of the Liturgical Commission.  
What does a baptism mean to a family that brings a child to church to 'be done'? The Baptism Project followed on from the highly successful Weddings Project, and Sandra Millar will talk about its progress. Anders Bergquist will detail the thinking behind the new baptismal texts and how they are designed to make the service more accessible.  
Contact [peter@furber.me.uk](mailto:peter@furber.me.uk), 01202 296886

## Liturgical Commission

The Liturgical Commission meeting in January at Hitchin Priory in Hertfordshire was characterized by significant changes of personnel. The Bishop of Sodor and Man, who had been acting Chair, ensured a smooth handover to the new Chair, the Bishop of Exeter. Phillip North, awaiting consecration as Bishop of Burnley, had left the Commission.

Members discussed the changes made by the General Synod Revision Committee to the *Alternative Baptism Texts*, hoping that the Synod would accept the Revision Committee's work in February so that the texts can be available in the summer. Moving to The Christening Project (note the variation of title – soon these events will be called 'christenings' again), the Revd Dr Sandra Millar gave a spirited account of the statistics and research the Christenings Group has done. She brought along some excellent hand-outs and explanatory materials, which should be generally available in the spring. After that excitement, attention moved to the work Dr Millar and her team have been doing on funerals. Again, thought-provoking research has contributed to an excellent range of leaflets that churches will soon be able to access as this third occasional office is opened up to our communities.

The Commission discussed the possibility of YouTube films for the Transforming Worship website, drawing upon the IT experience of Church House and the success of *Worship Workshop*, which has been so useful for people leading assemblies.

Moving into the area of education, Julian Hubbard, Director of Ministry in the C of E, suggested ways in which the Commission might support liturgy tutors in the training institutions. Nigel Genders, Chief Education Officer and Secretary of The National Society, talked about how best to welcome children into church worship and how to support clergy and governors in their work in schools. The report from the RSCM was heartening. Good numbers of people have applied for the post of Head of Ministerial Training created jointly with Praxis.

Hitchin Priory does not have a dedicated worship space, so members attended the midday Eucharist in Hitchin Parish Church, a beautiful light-filled medieval church where the regular half dozen worshippers were astounded to see two bishops and the rest the of the members trouping in to treble their numbers.

After lunch, the Commission started to plan its future work in the light of the Archbishops' priorities and said goodbye to Tim Hone, its Secretary, who moves to a new post at York Minster. He was thanked particularly for his hard work in finding logical and thoughtful ways forward for the Commission.

✠ *Christine McMullen is a Reader in Derby Diocese and a member of the Liturgical Commission.*

## Music and Liturgy

On 5 March, Midlands Praxis members enjoyed an inspirational day on music and liturgy with worship consultant Andrew Maries (Keynote Trust), and Jon Payne (RSCM Birmingham). Our new venue, adjacent to St Chad's RC Cathedral in Birmingham, worked well for us too. The initial 'testimonies' from Andrew and Jon were surprisingly powerful; both speakers described simply and helpfully how their experiences had enlarged and deepened their appreciation of both music and worship. 'If we rubbish other people's joy in music, we rubbish both them and God' (I think I quote Andrew Maries correctly).

In the morning sessions, Andrew addressed music in worship. Quoting (he thought) George McPhee, 'Let me listen to your songs and I will write your theology', he asked, 'What message is our week-by-week music repertoire doing to our theology?' He led us to reflect on how music can help us grow spiritually, as individuals and as congregations, and on criteria for choosing music, encouraging us to look beyond what we currently know and like. Jon Payne then spoke of the importance of music in mission, giving lots of examples as to how the music of our churches and the ministry of our musicians can 'open doors' into church and faith (or keep them shut!)

After lunch, both speakers went practical. Andrew taught us 'simple skills' to enable our congregations to sing and to learn new music. We enjoyed learning how to use our hands to teach new songs and hymns, and as we did, we learnt new and simple songs ourselves. We also re-visited plainsong, Gelineau and responsorial psalms. Jon Payne then explored with us the ways in which we could 'take our congregations with us.' The closing worship helpfully picked up and used many of the new music and skills that we had learnt, and we found that our words, our silences and our singing really did move 'from our mouths to our hearts'.

✠ *Anne Horton is a member of Praxis Council.*

## ***At All Times and in All Places: Prayers and Readings for Themed Celebrations of the Eucharist***

Simon Jones, Canterbury Press, 2014, ISBN 978-1848250437: pp xvi + 174, £25

The purpose of this slim volume, the fruition of a project started when the author was a curate, is ‘...to help the Church to regain its confidence in celebrating the Eucharist in every circumstance and for every need.’ He explains that it ‘...draws on the western tradition of votive masses’.

Jones explains, in his introduction, when and how a votive mass might be used, suggesting that in churches where The Eucharist is not celebrated daily, using readings from the weekday lectionary sometimes results in a disjointed feel. Each proper is provided with an introductory note explaining the votive and suggesting the liturgical colour.

The book then falls into three parts. *The Church and its Life* provides propers (collect, reading, psalm, acclamation, gospel, prayer over the gifts and post-communion) for fourteen occasions, including The Holy Trinity, The Holy Spirit, Holy Cross, Holy Baptism, The Holy Eucharist, The Blessed Virgin Mary (and Our Lady of Walsingham).

*The Global and Local Community* contains material for nine occasions. These include The Environment, World Peace, Those in Authority, Social Justice, The Sovereign and our National Life, and Reconciliation.

*Pastoral Ministry* provides for seven occasions; these are Thanksgiving for Marriage, The Sick and Suffering, The Bereaved, The Homeless, Victims of Natural Disasters, Victims of War and Conflict, and The Departed.

There is an imaginative choice of texts; the readings fit the occasions well; the prayers generally run smoothly though there are several collects, particularly among those from *Opening Prayers*, (the ICEL translations of the collects intended for the English translation of the second edition of *The Roman Missal*, and never authorised), that do not flow as well and which would be tricky to sing.

This book, designed to provide material for an Anglican rediscovery of the votive, will offer material for judicious

experimentation and possibly for long-term use in some places. In others, with a long-standing practice of repeating the Sunday readings during the week, it would pay to look at this book and try its options. In places where the votive is commonplace, and where adapted material from other sources is generally used, this book provides an opportunity to re-examine and enrich provision.

✉ *John Chamberlin is Secretary of Praxis North.*

## ***Eighteenth-Century Anglican Confirmation: Renewing the Covenant of Grace***

Alcuin/GROW Joint Liturgical Study 79  
Phillip Tovey, SCM-Canterbury, £7.95

The latest Joint Liturgical Study has an interesting background, in that Phillip Tovey had published last year a major study of the same topic, *Anglican Confirmation 1662-1820* (Ashgate, £60), but during his research unearthed far more evidence than could be used in the main study, and he has provided from it a *Study* which both supplements the major work, but also stands as useful research in its own right. And he predictably pursues and reinforces his own thesis that the nineteenth century Tractarians had a vested interest in playing down the spiritual life of eighteenth century Anglicanism, demonstrated not least by the alleged indolence of the bishops. This prejudice exalted by contrast the impact of the Anglo-Catholic movement, and became the received account by Anglo-Catholics of their predecessors – exemplified particularly in the essay by S L Ollard in the 1925 SPCK volume on *Confirmation*, and never seriously questioned or rewritten since. However, Phillip Tovey has gone untiringly to primary sources and has emerged with a much brighter account. One of his highlights is the detailed description of the first-ever visit of a Church of England bishop to the Channel Islands in 1818. And the overall thrust of his historical evidence is to show how confirmation was valued in that century, but was neither reckoned a sacrament nor, in the last analysis, was deemed absolutely necessary for admission to communion. This is a most down to earth Liturgical Study!

✉ *Colin Buchanan*

## ***Peace at the Last: leading funerals well***

Robert Atwell, Canterbury Press, 2014, ISBN 978-1848256668, £16.99

This book is not to be confused with the engaging children’s book of similar name, by Jill Murphy, about Mr Bear who can’t find a good place to sleep. *Peace at the Last*, on the other hand, is a helpful volume by the Bishop of Exeter, for anyone involved in the preparation and conduct of Christian funeral services, honestly drawing on his own experiences of bereavement and ministry.

In the early chapters the writer draws on recent research material to look at the funeral from the perspectives of the funeral director and the bereaved. A couple of pages are given to the practice of viewing of the deceased, with appropriate caveats. A helpful chapter about death and children includes some of the difficult questions that children ask, with possible answers: you may want to answer differently, but these suggestions are good starting points.

Later chapters deal with the theology and practicalities of funerals, with due regard to the *Common Worship* provision and Canon Law, and recognising the diversity of music requested. Some tips here will be useful to those engaging with funerals for the first time, and may encourage others to review the way that they do things. On the question of committing the body to burial or cremation before the main service in church, the author is sympathetic to the practicalities, but prefers to see the coffin in church.

The book concludes with further advice and food for thought, about caring for the bereaved and our own mortality. The appendices include a glossary of funeral jargon and a selection of non-biblical readings.

The price for a modest-sized paperback may seem steep, but the ix+165 pages are full of valuable content, worth paying for.  
✉ *Ian Tarrant is Rector of St Mary’s Woodford.*

# Colin's Column

I flirted in the autumn with doing a column on consecrating bishops, even if that seems a somewhat rarefied concern to most readers. I was initially prompted by going twice running to York Minster (once for the confirmation of our new bishop in West Yorkshire and the Dales, and once for the consecration of his two new suffragans), to find both occasions marked by same Wesley hymn, viz 'O for a thousand tongues'. Great! But the tune both times was Cranbrook, or, being translated, 'On Ilkley Moor 'baht' at'. We thought (through our giggles) that our Ugandan Archbishop was trying to go native in Yorkshire.

Well, that was the autumn. But the winter has brought much more far-reaching innovations to York Minster. First, on 26 January we had the consecration of Libby Lane to be Bishop of Stockport, the first woman bishop of the Church of England. And the sharing in the laying of hands had shifted also – there were present English bishops who refrained from laying on hands, but from overseas there were, for the first time, women bishops (I met the bishops of Meath, Waikato and, via Porvoo, Iceland), who were keen to lay on hands. The Archbishop of Canterbury came too, one of more than a hundred striving to bring their hands on her or near her.

But the following week saw further innovation (though the Archbishop gave an assurance it was not a precedent). Now Philip North was being consecrated as Bishop of Burnley. The Northern bishops were all invited as usual – and Libby Lane was included. But the invitation was qualified by an archiepiscopal request that we should exercise 'gracious restraint', and not lay on hands. Indeed the Archbishop himself was not going to lay on his hands – he had invited the Bishop of Chichester to come from the far South and preside at both the consecration and the Eucharist; and for the consecration, the Bishop of Chichester was joined by two Northern suffragans who had refrained the previous week from sharing in consecrating Libby Lane. It must be centuries since a bishop of the Church of England was consecrated with but the minimal requirement of the Council of Nicea of just three bishops laying on hands.

But in what sense were we other bishops who were present assenting to this consecration rather than simply witnessing it? As there had been bishops who were not assenting who were present but not laying on hands at Libby Lane's consecration, how did we differ from them? But if we were assenting, but were 'restrained' from expressing it in the received way, is a kind of two-tier classification of assenting bishops being built into the tradition? Whether history deems us as assenting or not, participating or not, the Church of England does look dangerously near to establishing a studbook (determined entirely by pure stock and tactual succession); and the studbook is very open to functioning with the (officially denied) metaphor of 'taint'.

✉ Colin Buchanan is a former Bishop of Woolwich.

# Designing Common Worship

***In an issue that looks back at the formation and achievements of Praxis it seems appropriate to consider the source of what we were created to support. Here Anne Horton shares her discovery of Derek Birdsall's account of his design for Common Worship.***

**I**n the beginning, the Liturgical Publishing Group set up a panel to select a design group and oversee the process of design'. Beginning with those evocative first three words, Derek Birdsall, the winning designer, told the creation story of his design for *Common Worship*, in his interesting and unusual book *Notes on Book Design* (Yale University Press 2004).

The Liturgical Commission sent out invitations to eighteen design groups in 1999. Eight responded and three were shortlisted, including Birdsall's group, Omnific. Each was sent a detailed brief and some specimen copy on 20 September 1999, asked to submit three specimen spreads by the 7 October and to make a formal presentation to the panel at Westminster Abbey on 13 October. 'A somewhat daunting prospect and a very tight schedule', noted Birdsall.

By way of research, Birdsall sent his assistant, John Morgan, to a local church vicar to ask questions about format, etc. 'He notably replied that the most important thing was to be able to hold the book in one hand and a baby in the other.' The story of this visit was part of the presentation to the panel. The panel members' only doubts, however, were about sub-headings being set to the right and the use of the word "All" which they'd been prepared to drop. Birdsall said that if all the text were aligned to the left, the service structure would be much less clear. 'Setting 'All' out in the margin and in red further clarifies the structure, is comforting to those people not familiar with church services, and adds sparkle to the page.' 'Comfort, clarity and poetry' were Birdsall's guiding principles. He got the job and was given the deadline: a presentation to HM the Queen at a service in Westminster Abbey in November 2000.

The purple endpapers - and the cover design - came rather late in the

day' wrote Birdsall. 'The night before a production meeting, I had dinner at our local Turkish restaurant and noticed the colour of the napkins. At the meeting, when testily asked if we had chosen the endpapers yet, I said "Show them the napkin, John."'

As the project neared completion, Birdsall was asked to summarise his design process, 'presumably', he reflected, 'for the unbelievers'. These quotations from his 'summary of final layouts' enlightened me, and feel good to share more widely.

## **Typeface**

'It is appropriate to use an English type design and obvious candidates are the types of Eric Gill, namely Joanna, Perpetua and Gill Sans... As a clear distinction was required between the words spoken by the priest, by the congregation and the instructions, the ideal typeface would have equally clear distinction between the roman, the bold and the italic. Early research and trial proofs show Gill Sans to be by far the clearest.'

## **Page size and format**

'A page format of 202x125 mm performs a golden rectangle, i.e. a proportion of 1 to 1.618. This produces a book which is comfortable in the hand, creates the least possible number of interruptions in the prayers and fits in the pocket or handbag.'

## **Layout**

'The principal of avoiding breaks in prayers is followed generally throughout the layout, resulting in a relaxed and comfortable appearance. Instructions are in the traditional red and also in italic (for the colour blind).'

## **Paper and colour**

'Ivory paper gives the pages a warmer appearance, blends the red and black gracefully and reduces show-through on the 55 gsm weight.'

## **Cover**

'The coincidence of *Common Worship* being two words of almost identical length, placed across the vertical subtitle *Services and Prayers for the Church of England* at the word 'Church', produces an elegant solution to what could have been the trickiest problem of them all.'