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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?

# Time for Creation

In October 1999, the Second Ecumenical European Assembly adopted a resolution recommending that the churches consider and promote the preservation of Creation as part of church life at all levels. The Assembly agreed that the seriousness of the ecological dilemma for the future of the human race meant that consciousness of it must be raised. A commitment to preservation of the creation was not an issue among many others but an essential dimension of all church life. A proposal followed that the period from 1 September to the second Sunday of October be observed as a period of celebration of the Creator and Creation and in 2008 WCC Central Committee invited churches to observe a Time for Creation through prayers and actions.

The beginning and the end dates are linked with the concern for creation in the Eastern and the Western traditions of Christianity, respectively. 1 September was proclaimed as a day of prayer for the environment by the late Ecumenical Patriarch Dimitrios I in 1989. The Orthodox Church year starts that day with a commemoration of how God created the world. On 4 October, many churches from the Western traditions commemorate Francis of Assisi, known to many as the author of the *Canticle of the Creatures*.

In this issue of *Praxis News of Worship*, we consider some of the ways in which congregations might begin to think about this and allow it to shape their worship this autumn.

### Further resources

The web pages of the ecumenical and international bodies are a particularly good source of liturgical material for marking creation time. Countries where the impact of climate change first became noticeable – Australia, for example – were the earliest to recognise the importance of reflecting liturgically on its implications.

- The Anglican Communion Environmental Network (<http://acen.anglicancommunion.org/>) offers a great deal from Australia as well as material from South Africa.
- Season of Creation (<http://seasonofcreation.com>), based in Australia but drawing from networks across the globe, offers material for each Sunday of September 2016 and 2 October.
- Churches Together in Britain and Ireland offers resources each year as well as a comprehensive archive (<https://ctbi.org.uk/category/spirituality-and-reflection/creation-time/>).
- Eco-Congregation Scotland ([www.ecocongregationscotland.org/materials/creation-time/](http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org/materials/creation-time/)) gathered an ecumenical writing group to create material for the Sundays in September 2016, which will be available soon.

# Reports

## Worship in changing times

It was a sunny, if rather breezy, St Georges' Day when we met, as Praxis Southwest, at the excellently-appointed Cullompton Community Centre with Tim Lomax, now Director of Mission for the Diocese of St Albans.

Tim took as his starting point the observation that times are changing. He argued that worship needs to change too if it is to be an adequate response, before the God of life, in the world today. He also noted that worship and mission were so often kept in separate compartments. This imbalance needed correcting, and, anyway, mission was not just about outreach. What needs to happen is a fusing of context and tradition. There needs to be a balance here too: too much context and you end up dumbing down; too much tradition felt constraining, a structure more like a cage than a stage. Get this right and you create a framework that is faithful to tradition – for us, our Anglican heritage – but which also builds on our life experience, our culture and the lives of our communities.

The question is how to achieve the balance. Tim offered twelve building blocks for truly missional worship. The first was that it should be thoroughly Trinitarian – creative and community orientated. Other blocks included disciple-making, deepening relationship, promoting active participation and inspiring creativity. Very telling was number 12 – attractively authentic. We cannot copy the worship of others: falling into the temptation of trying to replicate at home a great experience encountered elsewhere. Worship needs to be rooted in its home context with tradition there to give it shape, structure and a voice.

Much of this wisdom is contained in Tim's recent book, *Creating Missional Worship*, published in 2015 by Church House Publishing. Along with a Reader colleague, I bought a copy, determined to share what we had heard with the rest of our Ministry Team at home. The next part of the journey will be to apply it!

✉ Robin Lodge is Chair of Praxis SW.

## Hitting the right note

Emerging from London Bridge tube station on a misty May morning, we headed for Southwark Cathedral for a day on music in worship entitled 'Hitting the right note'. It was our first experience of a Praxis event and the clever title promised much. We wondered how effectively such a large area of interest could be covered in just one day. What kind of music would be featured and what styles? Would we learn anything new? Would there be anything useful to take back to our home churches?

However, the day was well planned and lived up to its name. After a friendly welcome, registration, selection of afternoon workshops and much appreciated tea and biscuits (well-orchestrated by Praxis South Committee members), we gathered in the historic nave with anticipation. Our keynote speaker for the day was Helen Bent, a professional musician, teacher and Head of Ministerial Training for the Royal School of Church Music in partnership with Praxis. With great enthusiasm and warmth, she led us straight into worship. Her love of God and people communicated naturally and we were treated to an ecclesiastical master-class of liturgical music and song. From power-point to grand piano, Helen had us singing in parts before we even had time to doubt ourselves! A gifted worship leader, she sang and played a wide spectrum of styles from Bach to traditional South African, to Rend Collective, Stuart Townend and Matt Redman. 'He who sings prays twice' was a truth that reinforced the practical teaching, with an outline of the theological role of music in worship, a comprehensive bibliography and time-line sheet showing the progression of liturgical and musical development in the Church of England during the 20th century. Helen's easy manner made this an enjoyably instructive and participative day.

It was also helpful to hear something of Helen's experience of working in multi-parish benefices. She believes that people often receive more from the worship than they do from the sermon. Worship is a window of opportunity for churches, a means to glorify God and edify his people.

She is passionate about involving lay people in worship, building confidence and breathing life into the weekly worship of local churches. Such testimony gives hope to small rural congregations (like ours). Where there is a genuine desire to give God our best, there is a rich store of musical treasures available, treasures old and new (Matthew 13.52). She challenged us to try something new, even with a traditional congregation (and Helen was well-versed in what was 'new' on the Christian music scene). All things to all musicians, she encouraged us to try chanting, or teach responsorial psalms. We could revisit older hymns, experiment with a new form of words with a fresh theological insight or sing a well-known hymn to a different tune. Prayerfully and sensitively employed, such variety in a liturgical diet can be spiritually beneficial and an aid to deepening faith.

Following lunch, the afternoon workshops built upon the foundations laid by Helen Bent. Andrew Maries spoke about 'Music, song and the wider community' and Stuart Thomas covered 'Choosing and using music'. Helen herself led a further session on 'That singing thing'.

So did I learn anything new? Of course I did, though most of Helen's music choices were known to us. But the day was useful and more importantly, it was a re-learning and a re-awakening of examples of good musical practice which can all too easily slip away in the complex planning of busy multi-parish service rotas. Certainly I was inspired to invite the organist at one of our churches to come along and teach the singing of their joyful 'Gloria' to all the others at our next Cluster PCC meeting!

Why had I not thought of that before? It is all too easy to stick with the familiar and the routine. So even if our musical ability is not great, we could still do what we are doing already, but plan our church music more imaginatively and more intentionally.

Helen said that 'music takes us on a journey' and it should be spiritually exciting, as 'worship which does mission'. Might we even find that our congregations will grow, as new people are attracted by the vibrant worship?

✉ Deborah Larkey is the Team Rector of Vale of Pewsey

# Reports

## Inspired – in Birmingham?

**A**bsolutely yes! It was great to be back together again as *Praxis Midlands* and in our St Philip's Cathedral 'home' base. We met in the newly refurbished undercroft, which was light, bright and a perfectly-formed meeting place.

It was a joyful inspiration to have Bishop Michael Perham, founding chair of Praxis, as our main speaker and to welcome him back to the Midlands. (Michael was Dean of Derby 1998-2004, before being elevated to the bishopric of Gloucester 2004-14.)

We had asked Bishop Michael to inspire us – about the beauty of God and the beauty of the liturgy. Many of us had walked from the 'new' New Street Station to the newly refurbished St Philip's Cathedral, so it seemed good in our eyes also to invite Iain Frew and Canon Janet Chapman to join Bishop Michael in leading our reflections about the beauty of those two special local buildings – cathedral and rail station – and the mixed beauties of our own buildings. (Janet is Canon Liturgist on the Cathedral team, and Iain is the Retail Chaplain to New Street Station, soon to be re-named Birmingham Grand Central Station.)

In the beginning, though, Bishop Michael moved us to be inspired by 'the beauty of God'. He moved us from Holy Scripture to Holy Trinity, and from God in the Darkness, the 'broken bleeding dying man', through Eucharist, Cross and Broken Host, to the vision of the Lamb of God in the Book of Revelation. Then we came down to earth as we reflected on the reality, and the beauty, of our own buildings. Our questions and the flow of our discussion with the panel was wide-ranging and challenging.

After lunch we were inspired by reflecting on the 'beauty of the liturgy'. Bishop Michael said 'Liturgy must be alive!' so with him we explored word, song, movement, gesture, silence and Eucharist. (He is kindly allowing us to share the text of both his talks on the Praxis website.)

The afternoon climaxed upstairs in the Cathedral Chancel with a 'hearts to heaven' Eucharist, the colourful Burne Jones windows overshadowing us. 'How

shall I sing that majesty which angels do admire? Let dust in dust and silence lie; sing, sing, ye heavenly choir. Thousands of thousands stand around thy throne, O God most high; ten thousand times ten thousand sound thy praise; but who am I?' It was an awesome day.

And the future? Praxis Midlands committee will be in touch with all our email contacts shortly. Your ideas and requests are always appreciated.

✉ *Anne Horton, Praxis Midlands*

## Empowering children as ministers

**A**big thank you to the Praxis East team for their innovative and inspirational May 2016 event at Bar Hill Church, Cambridge, on empowering children as ministers. 50 or so people from all over the region and beyond listened and contributed with enthusiasm. This well-planned event began not only with coffee but also with a 'sign up' notice board which acted as a 'public witness' to participants' experience of the ministry of children in their parishes. It was exciting to realise what was already happening – far more, I guess, than any of us had realised! Significant thought-starters for me during this first part of the day were one phrase – 'It gives them a status in their church' – and one question – 'Are there things that only children can do?'

Ally Barrett gave scriptural encouragement: the witness of the child encouraged by Jesus to stand up among the vast crowd of adults around him; the impact of Samuel's calling on Eli, his mentor; the miracle made possible by the young lad who was willing to share his picnic lunch with Jesus. Testimonies by Andrew Reid (now grown-up, and currently director of RSCM) and Joanna Barrett (not yet grown up but already exercising an important ministry in her home church) testified to the impact for individual and church growth of adult affirmation of the ministries of children and young people.

After lunch we heard testimonies

from four adults. Ally described the important ministry of children and family groups at afternoon baptism services (welcoming, holding the Gospel book, reading the Bible, leading the prayers, setting up the PA system, etc.). Alexandra, secondary school chaplain, described how students plan and lead tutor group worship. Chris described the formation of a young voices choir which led the singing at the monthly all-age services in his church. And Rachel told us about a young boy who has instinctively grown into a ministry of supporting and mentoring fellow young people in his church.

We ended with an all-age Eucharist which incorporated many of these ideas and examples. I went home with a real sense of hope and of the church growth potential created by congregations with the vision to empower children as ministers.

### Discover more

Look up <https://praxisworshipeast.wordpress.com/empowering-children-as-ministers/> for a full summary of the wisdom of the day. 'Read, mark, learn and inwardly digest'!

✉ *Anne Horton, Praxis Midlands*

# Time for Creation

## Worship in response to creation

How do we bring the creation into our worship? The psalmist has no difficulty: 'let the sea thunder and all that fills it... Let the rivers clap their hands' (Psalm 9.8-9). Here, the creation is invited to acknowledge its creator; and this invitation takes on a defiant quality when, for example, in the Greek text of Daniel, the three Jews cast into the burning fiery furnace summon the entire creation to praise the Lord. In effect, they are saying: we may die in this furnace, and we do not know whether our God will save us from it; but even if he doesn't, the sea-creatures and cedar trees will celebrate our God's victory. Nebuchadnezzar is defeated by a song from the furnace that is stronger than that of his tin pot orchestra ('the horn, pipe, lyre', etc.), and the three Jews walk free in the heart of the fire. Just as we invite creation to join with us in worship, and in so doing give a voice to those who have no voice, and no one to speak for them, so creation can speak for us when we have no voice of our own. The creation both images and incarnates its creator: thus, in the lovely image of the 125th Psalm, the hills *keep us company* (v.2), silently sustaining us just as the Lord does.

But what if the creation has no desire to praise its creator? Or, to put it another way, what if, in some sense, the creation is alienated from its maker? This issue is addressed directly in the Johannine writings. The word *kosmos* (usually translated 'world', but literally 'created order') comes over 70 times in the Gospel alone. More strikingly, it occurs four times in the Prologue and once in the Gospel's closing verse, heightening its importance. Its use is nearly always negative ('the world did not know him; 'if the world hates you, be aware that it hated me before it hated you'). Yet the single most famous sentence in the Gospel tells us that 'God so loved *the world* [not just the holy, or even the human, but the whole creation] that he gave his only Son... God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.' Jesus' prayer to the Father begins with the intimacy of Father and Son, but extends to include the entire cosmos: 'so that the world may believe that

you have sent me.' God loves the world – dies for the world – in all its hostility. William Temple put it like this:

No object is sufficient for the love of God short of *the world* itself. Christianity is not one more religion of individual salvation, differing from its fellows only in offering a different road to that goal. It is the one and only religion of world-redemption (*Readings in St John's Gospel* 1955, p.48).

This is not universalism: we are free to reject the love of God. But a huge responsibility, and a huge potential, rests with humankind, as the concluding verse of the Gospel makes clear: 'there are many other things that Jesus did; if every one of them were written down, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.' Is this empty rhetoric? No: the narrator (who appears just for a second, just as the curtain comes down, in that fleeting reference to 'I') is inviting us to dream of the day when the entire creation is transfigured through the changed lives and stories of those who follow Christ. That is why worship matters, for there we are bidden to praise into being the new heaven and the new earth of which John of Patmos speaks; to seek forgiveness for our failure as stewards; and to draw everything, from our nearest fellow-creature to the furthest galaxy, into the reach and rhythm of our prayer.

✦ *Gordon Mursell is Canon Theologian of Leicester Cathedral and a former Bishop of Stafford.*

## The traditional festivals of the agricultural year

The medieval festivals of Plough Monday, Rogation and Lammas were a way of honouring God and, when food supply was precarious at best, paying attention to our dependence on the natural world. How might these festivals speak to us today when, for most in the rich world, food is relatively cheap and plentiful?

First they can be a prophetic voice reminding us where our food comes from, our dependence on God in creation, and on each other, in a culture

where individualism reigns. They can also challenge us to remember the many around the world, and more locally, for whom the food supply is still precarious.

Plough Sunday or, more correctly, Plough Monday, its medieval title, signified a return to work after the twelve days of Christmas. The plough might be kept in the church and then paraded around the village; some churches kept a plough light burning to remind people to pray for the land. Praying for those returning to work, alongside a consideration of what is happening in the natural world as creation appears to hibernate in preparation for spring, might be another fruitful theme to explore.

Rogation comes from the Latin *rogare*, to ask – for God's blessing on the crops once all the fields were set. The *BCP* denotes the days leading up to Ascension Day for this and in a variety of traditions communities might walk around parish boundaries, praying in some way for the crops. Building on these traditions appropriately is a real opportunity to be visible and to create a community event, perhaps with food shared.

At Lammas, celebrated on 1 August to mark the wheat harvest, new grain was used to bake a loaf for the Mass. At this busiest, pressured time of the year praying for arable farmers is a way to stand with them, celebrating the staple food that bread represents. And while Harvest Festival has remained popular, a celebration of the natural world will be a good opportunity to connect with wider communities, even in a city. Sharing food as part of the celebrations is a good way of extending hospitality and welcome which also helps to build up the community.

Resources for all these festivals are available on the Arthur Rank Centre website, [www.germinate.net](http://www.germinate.net), and the Iona Community also produces appropriate resources: [www.ionabooks.com](http://www.ionabooks.com).

✦ *Elizabeth Clark is National Rural Officer for the Methodist and United Reformed Churches.*

# Time for Creation

## Creationtide and the environment

The opening verse of Psalm 24 reminds us that we are stewards and caretakers of creation. The earth does not belong to us – it belongs to God, and therefore deserves our respect and care. We are also assured that all creatures of our God and King, the sun, the moon, the heavens above, and the earth below, can join us in praise of Almighty God. The psalm was written to be sung on entering the temple. When worshippers went into the house of God they were reminded that the whole of creation offered praise to the Lord. These words make permeable the doors and walls of our churches today. They remind us that our vision for worship always needs to expand horizons to capture something of the likeness of the wonder and glory of the God of all things. God who can also be praised, worshipped and adored in running water, fields thick with corn, roses springing to life, and creeping and crawling things that move over the face of the earth.

The growing emphasis and concern over matters linked to the environment and creation have made the Church increasingly aware that we need to garner our liturgical resources to give full expression to this in our worship and our prayer. The care of our environment, and attentiveness to the created order, are central to the Church's mission, which calls us to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

Sometimes our worship will need to help us make sense of a creation that can appear disordered, unstable and brutal: flooding, storms, drought and fire which can ravage the earth and put human life in danger. Sometimes our worship will need to help us appreciate and meditate on the beauty of nature and all things created.

There is already a vast array of liturgical resources to assist us in this aim, including a whole section in *Times and Seasons* and *New Patterns for Worship*, which can be adapted accordingly to local need. Other excellent resources and ideas can be found on *Roots* ([www.rootsontheweb.com](http://www.rootsontheweb.com)) and through organisations like A Rocha, Christian Aid and Churches Together

in Britain and Ireland. Many churches now celebrate Creationtide which may incorporate Lammastide, Rogationtide, Environment Sunday and Harvest Festivals.

The Archbishops' Environmental Working Group has been meeting together for just over a year to raise awareness and explore how issues relating to the environment can be communicated in the whole life of the church, through campaigning, through education and importantly through our worship. Graham Usher, Bishop of Dudley, a member of the group says, 'Every act of worship should be one that is thankful for all of the mysteries and wonders of God's creation but, in a special way, Creationtide follows the psalmists' call to join our song of praise with the forests, rivers and fields who bring their own praise to the Creator. Our common home is crying out to be cherished and our thankful praise should stir us to action and to tread more gently on the earth.'

✠ *Victoria Johnson is a canon of Ely Cathedral and member of the Church of England's Environmental Working Group.*

## Wild Church

So often we troop inside to dim interiors for our times of worship together, putting the boundaries of walls and ceilings between us and some of the greatest works of God's hand. So often we refer to the stewardship of our planet in our prayers and then immediately forget our good intentions as we head home in our air-conditioned cars to our over-heated houses. We wrote *Creative Ideas for Wild Church* to try and inspire people to break the traditional Sunday habit of indoor worship and activity. Not all of the time, just sometimes.

Nature is to be celebrated – whether it is the tenacity of a rugged urban dandelion growing in rebellious fashion despite years of dedicated weed-killing, or the abject and heart wringing perfection of a new blossom or a winter sunrise. We believe that we need more nature in our time together as a church community. Like God, nature is both wonderful and terrifying, gentle and fierce.

And nature is good for us. Increasingly,

research is pointing to the many benefits of being more connected with the natural environment. A pleasant view from a hospital bed has been proven to speed recovery in patients. Regular and frequent access to the outdoors has been found to improve mental health outcomes and people who display a deeper connection to nature have reduced levels of the stress hormone cortisol in their systems.

Many times we use visual aids in our worship and study. What better visual aid than the creation of God's own hand, the natural world? The peace and tranquility that can be found in nature helps us to a place where we can truly listen to God. Handling natural materials and looking closely at the details of their perfection inspires us to praise him with awe and wonder.

We hope that our book will help churches look at their own outdoor space as having the potential to support worship, build community and inspire a desire for a closer connection to nature, that we might better comprehend it and protect it in the future. And we hope that, for some, the contact with nature will be a vehicle for a closer walk with God. The book provides practical guidance and ideas, activities for both rural and urban settings, as well as whole services designed to be led in the outdoors – for all ages and every church community.

✠ *Creative Ideas for Wild Church by Juno Hollyhock and Mary Jackson will be published by Canterbury Press on 30 July 2016.*

## An autumn labyrinth

As a labyrinth facilitator, my primary interest is in the labyrinth as a place of mystery, a sacred space. Here it is possible to let go of the thoughts of the busy mind and open up to a deeper knowing, through the simple act of walking the path, which circles always toward the centre. In 2014 a community arts project provided the opportunity for me to bring a temporary, outdoor labyrinth to my home village of Girton, in Cambridgeshire.

Building a labyrinth is a team activity. Ours was constructed on the recreation ground by local people and members of the church. To mark a clear, evenly

spaced classical labyrinth on grass we used a central tether and a 6 metre long rope and swivel, plus four strategically-placed tent pegs. The rope was marked at equal distances to guide the volunteer labyrinth makers. The curved lines of the labyrinth were made of chicken corn poured from recycled plastic bottles.

We chose the autumn equinox as a good day with the idea of reflecting on the passing of the seasons, as the long days of summer give way to the dark nights of winter, nature's time for rest and reflection. Our site was under a row of mature horse chestnut trees. The conker season was fully under way and many children and parents were already present and curious to know what we were doing. The conkers, such wonderful symbols of the fruitfulness of nature and the promise of hope and new life, turned out to be central to the proceedings. I asked the children to collect conkers and make a heap at the entrance to the labyrinth, so that walkers could pick up a conker to carry with them. I suggested they might like to think of something they were thankful for, or a wish they had for the future. They could then put their conker down in the centre. We soon had a glorious 'conker cairn' in the middle of our labyrinth.

At dusk, we lit the labyrinth pathways with tea lights in jam jars and the effect was magical. The labyrinth appeared to float before us in the growing darkness. More families and individuals of all ages came. The children enjoyed running around the labyrinth and the adults walked reflectively or just gazed. Over the next few days some people came back to walk the labyrinth in the quiet of the early morning. Then, gradually, it faded, as birds and squirrels ate the grain. Unexpectedly, some of the corn sprouted, so faint green lines stayed visible for a few weeks longer. The first labyrinth was so popular that we repeated it and we hope to make this an annual event, bringing church and community together for a time of reflection in the magical conker season.

✉ Kay Barrett is a Veriditas-trained labyrinth facilitator based in Cambridgeshire: [www.kayspathway.com](http://www.kayspathway.com). Instructions for a temporary corn labyrinth can be found at [www.labyrinthos.net](http://www.labyrinthos.net)

## Festival services

The RSCM regularly publishes festival service books which can be used for complete acts of worship, including prayers and readings as well as musical items, but can also function as anthologies. Some are aimed at young people, such as *Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly* (celebrating the justice of God and marking last year's 800th anniversary of Magna Carta). Others have music for SATB choirs, of varying difficulty.

The most recent festival service to appear is *With Sainly Shout and Solemn Jubilee* – celebrating God's saints in words and music. Compiled by Andrew Reid (Director of the RSCM), Peter Moger (Precentor of York Minster) and Tim Ruffer (the RSCM's Head of Publications), the resource contains an outline for using the book as a Service of the Word, supplemented by a suggested order for Choral Evensong.

The congregational items include, as one might expect, 'For all the saints who from their labours rest', but also newer material including a metrical version of the *Te Deum* by Michael Sadgrove, who recently retired as Dean of Durham. His words are paired with a new tune, MINSTER GATES, by Peter Moger; if the choir were to sing the first of the six verses to introduce the melody, all should have picked it up by the end of the hymn. There are also songs as alternatives to two of the hymns: Stuart Townend and Keith Getty's 'King of the ages' and the strongly rhythmic 'There's a place where the streets shine' – the latter a bit of a challenge for an organist. A *Kyrie* from the Taizé Community is one of the musical options in the penitential section.

Contemporary composers are well represented among the choral items; James MacMillan's tranquil 'Think of how God loves you' (written for his granddaughter's baptism) should be within the reach of an average parish choir, while Sally Beamish's lively 'Gaudent in coelis' is considerably more demanding. The Thanksgiving for the Holy Ones of God (from *Common Worship: Times and Seasons*, p.558) is set to simple chant, with the refrain sung to the three Alleluias of GELOBT SEI GOTT (the tune generally associated with 'Christ is the king! O friends rejoice').

As well as being suitable for a choral festival, there is material in *With Sainly Shout and Solemn Jubilee* for any church celebrating a particular saint, or the saints of God in general.

## Jubilate website

The website of the Jubilate Group ([www.jubilate.co.uk](http://www.jubilate.co.uk)) provides a number of resource sections, including one with a mission theme. There are hymns and songs with appropriate texts and several prayers, including one by Michael Perry based closely on Colossians 4. All are freely available for those who register and sign into the website, reporting any use through the CCLI licensing scheme. Some of the songs listed are by writers linked with Resoundworship.org ([www.resoundworship.org](http://www.resoundworship.org)) – with these a small charge is made for a piano score, an mp3 file etc, but the lyric sheet, lead sheet and chord chart may be freely downloaded.

## Youth Praise at 50

The ground-breaking songbook *Youth Praise* was published by the Church Pastoral Aid Society in March 1966. Many Christians with evangelical backgrounds will remember singing 'Can it be true?', 'I want to walk with Jesus Christ' and other songs, hymns and spirituals compiled principally by Michael Baughen. His tune for Timothy Dudley-Smith's 'Tell out, my soul' (number 3 in the book, to be sung 'with a swing') became very popular, though now usually replaced by WOODLANDS.

A Jubilate Jubilee is being held to celebrate the 50 years since the publication and launch of Youth Praise. This will be at All Souls, Langham Place, on Saturday 15 October from 10 until 4, with contributions from Noel Tredinnick, Michael Baughen, Sam Hargreaves, Joel Payne and others. As well as looking back with thanksgiving, Jubilate will also be looking forward to the next 50 years. There will be plenty of opportunities to sing, and more information about how to apply for tickets will appear soon ([www.jubilate.co.uk](http://www.jubilate.co.uk) and [www.resoundworship.org](http://www.resoundworship.org)).

## Communion song

The opening words 'Here is bread' have been used before (Graham Kendrick's 'Here is bread, here is wine', 1992) but a new song by Mark Bradford on the RESOUNDworship.org website makes a welcome addition to the repertoire of worship songs on eucharistic themes. 'Here is bread that speaks of love' can be heard online ([www.resoundworship.org](http://www.resoundworship.org)). The words, melody and chords may be downloaded free by anyone who registers, and there are various options available for

a small charge, including a string quartet arrangement. RESOUNDworship.org is part of the Jubilate Group ([www.jubilate.co.uk](http://www.jubilate.co.uk)).

## Prisons Week

**P**rison Week ([www.prisonweek.org](http://www.prisonweek.org)) aims to encourage and enable the Christian community, through individuals and churches, to pray for the needs of all those affected by prisons: prisoners and their families, victims of crime, those working in the criminal justice system and all involved in caring for those affected by crime, both inside and outside prisons.

The 2016 dates are 9 to 15 October. An appropriate hymn to sing at services or prayer gatherings during the week has been written by Timothy Dudley-Smith. It was commissioned by a prison chaplain for a service in Worcester Cathedral in 2014, and the first verse names two significant figures in penal reform: Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845) and John Howard (1726-1790), from whom the Howard League for Penal Reform – celebrating its 150th birthday this year – takes its name.

The text of the hymn may be reproduced under the terms of the CCLI copyright licence (making sure the use is reported in the annual return); Oxford University Press have kindly given permission for it to be reproduced in PNOW.

Eternal God, we come with prayer,  
those pioneers to praise,  
who offered prisoners hope and care  
in half-remembered days;  
the honoured few, whose names we  
know,

a Howard or a Fry,  
and those unnoticed here below  
whose names are known on high.

Bless those whose duty lies today  
within the prison wall;  
give them, on our behalf, we pray,  
an equal care for all.  
Draw near to those in sore distress  
with weary years to spend;  
dispel their fear and loneliness  
and be for them a friend.

We pray for lives where hope is lost,  
a weary road to climb;  
the innocent who pay the cost  
and bear the scars of crime.  
Through all the world our prayer we  
make

for those unjustly tried,  
the prisoners held for conscience' sake,  
in cells where martyrs died.

O Christ, who once in mercy came  
to seek for those astray,  
the blessings of your saving Name  
be known in this our day.  
Your kingdom come, O Prince of peace,  
to burst oppression's chain,  
where hatred, crime and conflict cease,  
and grace and mercy reign.

Timothy Dudley-Smith (b.1926)  
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University Press. All rights reserved.  
Suitable tunes (the metre is DCM) include  
COE FEN and KINGSFOLD.

## Events

### ***Celtic Worship for Today***

**Thursday 10 November 2016**

**10.30 am - 3.30 pm**

**Southwark Cathedral**

**Praxis South**

Speakers: Aled Edwards and Emily Walker

A day exploring styles of Celtic worship  
and how they may enhance and deepen  
our worship to-day.

Contact [norman.boakes@btinternet.com](mailto:norman.boakes@btinternet.com)

### ***Making the most of baptism: developing and sharing good practice in response to the Church of England's Christenings initiative.***

**Thursday 13 October 10.30 am –  
3.30pm**

**The Hyndman Centre, Bury St  
Edmunds**

**Praxis East**

This day will offer the chance to explore  
together the resources and opportunities  
created by the Church of England's  
Christenings Project and to work out  
how we can use them to best effect.

Contact [tom.ambrose@happyserver.co.uk](mailto:tom.ambrose@happyserver.co.uk)

### ***How to Plan your own Funeral Service, Ian Tarrant, Grove Books, 2015***

Ian Tarrant's Grove booklet is a departure from that series' normal format. It is aimed directly at people in the pew – a resource to be given to the members of the congregation to help them plan their funeral. It is not new or unique in that: there are other resources too, not least the leaflet from the Church of England itself, *Ideas for my funeral service*.

However, Tarrant's book is no less helpful for that. I particularly liked his answers to the question of 'What is a funeral for?' – recognising the practical, social, emotional and spiritual aspects to the event. Too often, when people dismiss the need for a funeral, they ignore the latter three functions and hope that the practical side of it can be met without ceremony.

He goes through each aspect of the service – the venue, the means of disposal, music, readings, words, symbols, offering guidance and then leaving a section in each chapter for people to put down their thoughts. He clearly intends the booklet to be left in an obvious place, so next of kin can pick it up and follow their loved one's wishes.

Tarrant writes in an easy and accessible style and with sensitivity to the difficult subject material. Sometimes the easy accessibility does not quite work. I felt that his appendix on life after death was so brief as to leave people with more questions than it answers.

There are limitations to the booklet – the space provided for jotting down memories seems woefully small and may not help family members at all – but the booklet will undoubtedly help those who want to give some serious thought to each section of their funeral. With the growing popularity of church events such as *Grave Talk* where there is space provided to talk about death, I could see copies of Tarrant's booklet at only £3.95 each selling well.

✉ *Jeremy Brooks is a parish priest and the author of Heaven's Morning Breaks, and Whispers of Love, books on funeral ministry.*

## **Alcuin/GROW Joint Liturgical Study 81: The Richard III Reinterment Liturgies, Tim Stratford (ed)**

There was a paragraph about this Study in the last *Praxis News of Worship*. We understand now that Peter Hobson, who did much of the leg-work in Leicester Cathedral, has written his own account, entitled *How to Bury a King* (available from the Cathedral). The title would have fitted well into the Grove Worship Series, where 'How to...' introduces several booklets of practical coaching for leading and sharing in worship. But I think GROW were unaware of sufficient demand for this title ever to have come up with such a coaching resource.

The most wonderful further news is, of course, that Leicester City Football Club won the Premier League at (unique) odds of 5000-1 against and, though the causal links are hard to establish, probably owe it all to King Richard III's recovery and reinterment.

## **Alcuin/GROW Joint Liturgical Study 82: The Reformers and the Liturgical Use of the Decalogue, David Wallingford, with editorial assistance from Gordon Jeanes**

Anglicans in most parishes nowadays are somewhat surprised – and possibly even marginally irritated – when the Ten Commandments are read in liturgy. But at the Reformation the Commandments were a centre-piece – most obviously in the communion service (and in use there in the ante-communion even on the Sundays when there was no communion), but also literally centred in large letters on the east wall when the previous images and ornamentation had come down, and further rehearsed in church within the catechism which was supposed to be learned by all teenagers before confirmation. And what the English experienced, so did the Lutheran Germans and the Reformed Swiss. David Wallingford made this a special study in his middle age and the Joint Editorial Board had just commissioned it when the author died. Gordon Jeanes has (at the author's explicit wish) taken over the project and edited it for publication as the next Alcuin/GROW Joint Liturgical Study.

## **Evaluating Worship: How do we know it is any good? W227, Mark Earey**

Mark's earlier booklet on *Worship Audit* is now out of print, and in this new booklet he reflects more broadly on the criteria that we use to evaluate worship and what this tells us about our (often unarticulated) assumptions about what worship is, what it is for, and what therefore makes it 'good'. In the process he uncovers some hidden 'models' that underpin our assumptions and some more obvious criteria which we often apply without thinking about the implications.

The booklet is designed to help us think about the evaluation that takes place at different levels – our self-evaluation of worship we have led; our evaluation of worship at local level in which we participate; the worship of the Church nationally. It will be particularly useful for churches engaging in some sort of assessment of their own patterns of worship, perhaps as part of mission action planning or a wider mission audit.

I have tried over the 13 years of fuelling this column not to stay too long on the liturgical role of bishops, largely because bishops and their customs are not the main concerns of the parochial practitioners for whom this journal is chiefly compiled. That said, I am far from indifferent to trends in episcopal styles, and my starting point is a distrust of the episcopal sub-culture, which has generally become more Roman, more elaborate, even more pompous, during my 55 years in orders – a ratcheting up which is all the more paradoxical because in the last 35 years there has come first a trickle and then quite a full stream of evangelical bishops, such as could never have been envisaged in the 1950s and 1960s. Part of the reason for the ratcheting is, of course, that anglo-catholics have always had a reasoned programme for ceremonial, while evangelicals (who have rarely become bishops on the grounds that they knew something about liturgy) have been torn between the relative informality in which they had been previously formed, and an indiscriminating readiness to adapt to the ways of their clergy and congregations so as not to offend or disappoint people's expectations. We thus have not only the near-universality of the nearly-indefensible mitre, but we also have it being propped up for display on communion tables and worn inappropriately when the occupant of it is praying. We have not only the more-defensible staff, but we have it laid upon the communion table as though that were a display case for episcopal regalia (which it is not), and we also have it solemnly delivered to the bishop to hold while standing to hear the Gospel, a ceremony which not only distracts from the Gospel itself, but is completely meaningless. And so one could go on.

This is more strongly in mind, as I have been reading Simon Jones' very engaging new Alcuin Liturgy Guide, *Celebrating Christian Initiation* (SPCK). Alcuin, of course, reckons to give guidance in a broadly catholic way. In fact I find myself giving Simon all sorts of good marks for very sensible guidance, but I am then stopped in my tracks when I read that at confirmations a server carries water in a jug or ewer in procession to the font, that the use of oil raises questions about how to do it, but not the weightier question as to whether to do it, and that for the bishop's confirmation prayer:

'The bishop's hands remain joined for the responses that introduce it. They are then extended palms down, towards the candidates for the prayer itself, and brought together again during the last line before the people respond with the 'Amen'. The bishop's folder will need to be held by the chaplain or a server to make these gestures possible.'

Well, it's OK as practice, but surely over-directive as guidance? I shall have to watch myself in that last line.

### **An irrelevant footnote:**

Do I understand aright the note by Michael Gisbourne in the March edition of *PNOW*? Did others see it? He was introduced as the new chaplain to the General Synod, but he was asking us for 'ideas about liturgy for a "Pet Service"'. I am aware that the liturgical programme of General Synod nowadays has a comprehensiveness far beyond that occasional daring use of *Series 2* which enlivened our worship in the early 1970s; but did the archbishops know what they were letting the Synod in for when they appointed this radical new chaplain?

✉ Colin Buchanan is a former Bishop of Woolwich.