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### In this issue

New Chair	1
Training Post	1
Music News	2-3
Events	4
Reports	5
Books	5 and 7
Lay leadership of worship	6-7
Colin's Column	8
Liturgical Commission	8

### 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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*We reserve the right to edit material and make no guarantee to include material submitted. The views expressed are not necessarily those of Praxis or the Praxis Council.*

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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?

## New Chair of the Liturgical Commission and President of Praxis

It was announced at the end of the summer that the Rt Revd Robert Atwell, Bishop of Exeter, is to be the new Chair of the Liturgical Commission. He will take up the role in January 2015. Bishop Robert has long taken an interest in pastoral liturgy. His recent writing includes *Peace at the Last: leading funerals well* (Canterbury Press, 2014) and *The Good Worship Guide: leading liturgy well* (Canterbury Press, 2013) – as well as addressing Christian spirituality and prayer. He is one of the authors of the new *Pilgrim* course. Before becoming a bishop, he was for several years the Vicar of St Mary's, Primrose Hill, a church celebrated in

English liturgical history as the place where the *English Hymnal* was compiled (Vaughan Williams, the musical editor, was a local resident) and where Percy Dearmer was the incumbent. Things have, of course moved on a bit since *The Parson's Handbook!* With a background of university chaplaincy, religious life, parish ministry, and bishoping in the dioceses of Chester (where he was Bishop of Stockport) and now Exeter, Bishop Robert brings many-sided experience and wide-ranging interests to his new role.

And the Chair of the Commission is also the President of Praxis.

## A new training post: RSCM and Praxis

Praxis and the Royal School of Church Music together are creating an exciting new post that will increase the availability of training in worship and music right across the country. The advert is as follows:

### Head of Ministerial Training

In partnership with Praxis, the RSCM seeks to appoint a person to train ordained and lay ministers in the sphere of worship and music. Creating the programmes and resources for this mission, the post holder will forge and develop effective links with ministerial training bodies. The ideal candidate will be an excellent communicator who will nurture leaders of imaginative worship within strong liturgical principles and in a wide range of styles. The post holder may be lay or ordained. Relocation to Salisbury is not required.

This is a full-time post; salary indicator: £35,000. See [www.rscm.com/jobs](http://www.rscm.com/jobs) for job descriptions and how to apply. If you have any questions relating to applying for this post, please contact [recruitment@rscm.com](mailto:recruitment@rscm.com) or 01722 424848.

Closing date: 5.00 pm on Friday 9 January 2015

# Music News - Anne Harrison

## Training musicians

In some Church of England dioceses, official authorisation is available for musicians who follow a particular course of study and training in leading worship. Salisbury, for example, has a Diocesan Certificate in Church Music, with funding from the Tindall Trust ([www.salisbury.anglican.org/worship/music/dccm](http://www.salisbury.anglican.org/worship/music/dccm)).

### Sheffield

Sheffield Diocese has run the *Worship 4 Today* programme for worship leaders and musicians, developed by Helen Bent, since 2007 ([www.sheffield.anglican.org/worship-4-today](http://www.sheffield.anglican.org/worship-4-today)). On successful completion of the course students are authorised by the Bishop at a Celebration of Lay Ministries Service alongside new Readers, Pastoral Workers, Parish Evangelists, and Children and Youth Leaders. To enable wider use, the material has been published: find out more from the Church House Publishing website ([www.chpublishing.co.uk/features/worship-4-today](http://www.chpublishing.co.uk/features/worship-4-today)).

### RSCM

For musicians looking outside their own diocese for training, various options and styles are available, including events and programmes such as Church Music Skills run by the Royal School of Church Music ([www.rscm.com](http://www.rscm.com)). Their new *Strengthen for Service* short residential course in Salisbury will run twice in 2015: Tuesday 14 to Thursday 16 April, and Tuesday 15 to Thursday 17 September. This is designed not just for musicians but for Anglican clergy and Readers, with a focus on managing parish music. Practical help is offered in choosing suitable materials and establishing good working practices. (See the article on p 3.)

### London School of Theology

London School of Theology ([www.lst.ac.uk](http://www.lst.ac.uk)) runs programmes at Certificate, Diploma and Degree level in music, theology and worship. Staff include Sam Hargreaves, Carey Luce and Geraldine (Latty) Luce, with one of the modules exploring music ministry and worship leading: 'This module covers a range of issues concerned with initiating, developing and maintaining an effective music and worship team, planning, creating and leading acts of worship in a variety of contexts, and choosing music for worship. A series of regular Worship Labs give students the opportunity to develop

practical and creative skills in leading worship.'

Sam Hargreaves is also leading two Youth and Worship Intensive Weekends at the London School of Theology in 2015 (Friday 6 to Saturday 7 February, and Friday 6 to Saturday 7 March, each with an optional visit to a youth service in the London area on the Sunday). Youth workers and worship leaders are invited to join LST students to explore the challenges and potential of inviting young people to worship God. Some reading will need to be done in advance. For more details see Sam's website, <http://engageworship.org/events/YouthAndWorship>.

### Holy Trinity Brompton

From Holy Trinity Brompton, South Kensington, comes the Worship Central Course, a seven-session programme examining theological and practical issues around leading contemporary worship. A promotional video from Tim Hughes and Al Gordon can be seen online ([www.worshipcentral.org](http://www.worshipcentral.org)) where you can also download a guide to running the course in your own context and the leaders' notes for the first session, giving a helpful picture of what is involved.

Tim Hughes also runs the Academy in London (set up in 2011), along with Daniela Hogger, Tom Read and some of the Worship Central Team. Students train with St Mellitus Theological College as part of the programme ([www.stmellitus.org](http://www.stmellitus.org)).

## Theology and music

Durham Cathedral and the Music Department of Durham University are hosting a study day early in 2015 with the title, 'Putting theology into musical practice'. To be held on Saturday 24 January in the Prior's Hall, Durham Cathedral, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., the day is aimed at anyone interested in the relationship between theology and music, whether from the perspective of practice in the local church or academic study.

Professor Bennett Zon from the University Music Department will be in the chair, with speakers including Durham's Precentor (David Kennedy, a former chair of Praxis), the Cathedral Organist (James Lancelot, who is also an active member of Durham Diocesan Liturgical Committee) and Rosalind Brown, hymn-writer and author of a number of books including *How Hymns Shape our Lives* in the Grove

Spirituality series. They will explore aspects of the interaction between theology and music in worship, looking at questions such as what theological insights go into shaping worship – whether big Christmas and Easter services or regular Sunday worship – and how music nuances and expands theology, with the belief that in worship, theology and music should be in dialogue so that the music expresses good theology and gives it wings.

Those wanting to participate should contact the Cathedral ([events@durhamcathedral.co.uk](mailto:events@durhamcathedral.co.uk)). Coffee will be provided; bring your own lunch or eat in the Undercroft restaurant. Although the event is free, a donation of £10 towards expenses is welcome on the day.

## 'Sing for joy' at Scargill

Gospel musician Anna Weister Andersson will be leading a weekend of choral singing in North Yorkshire at Scargill House (where she is a member of the community) from Friday 20 to Sunday 22 February 2015. MP3 files will be available in advance to those who book in, so that they can learn this 'healing and life-giving' music at home – whether or not they have previously sung in a gospel choir – before working together on expression and dynamics and reflecting on the 'encouraging lyrics'. See the Scargill website (<http://scargillmovement.org>) for booking information.

A month later at Scargill, from Friday 20 to Sunday 22 March, Roger Jones and a team from Christian Music Ministries ([www.cmm.org.uk](http://www.cmm.org.uk)) will be leading a weekend for musicians and other leaders of worship entitled 'Worship Works'. There will be opportunities for ministry, while the teaching topics include leading and planning worship, prophetic worship and healing in worship. Roger and his colleagues have also published a 'workbook for groups, choirs and congregations' with the same title.

## Studying congregational song

Registration begins on 31 January 2015 for the third biennial Christian Congregational Music Conference, to be held from Tuesday 4 to Friday 7 August at Ripon College, Cuddesdon. The multi-disciplinary conference's subtitle, once again, is 'Local and Global Perspectives',

# More Music News

with the aim of bringing together scholars and practitioners to explore the varying cultural, social and spiritual roles which congregational song plays in the life of Christian communities around the world.

Among the main speakers will be a professor of liturgical studies (Teresa Berger from Yale Divinity School), an ethnomusicologist (D Timothy Rommen, also from the USA), Anglican theologian Carol Harrison (recently appointed as the next Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford University) and Methodist scholar Lester Ruth (currently Research Professor of Christian Worship at Duke Divinity School, Durham, North Carolina). Joseph J. Palackal, of the Christian Musicological Society of India, will be among those bringing an Asian perspective.

Some of the papers presented at the first conference, held in 2011, have been published by Ashgate with the title *Christian Congregational Music: Performance, Identity and Experience* (edited by Monique Ingalls, Carolyn Landau and Tom Wagner). One chapter is by Mark Porter, who recently completed a doctorate at City University based on research carried out at St Aldate's Church, Oxford, and who is one of the organisers of the 2015 conference.

## Resound Christmas CD

While it is relatively easy to find new choral repertoire for Christmas, finding new seasonal worship songs can be more of a challenge. For fresh ideas, consider the twelve tracks from Resound Worship on their new CD, *Christmas Songs*, also available as a digital download. Further details, including audio samples, are on the Resound website ([www.resoundworship.org](http://www.resoundworship.org)). The recording opens with Joel Payne's 'In the beginning' – based on John 1 – while other songwriters include Judy Gresham.

RESOUNDworship.org is the song project of the Jubilate Group of writers; resources for Advent and Christmas are listed on the Jubilate website ([www.jubilate.co.uk](http://www.jubilate.co.uk)), including seasonal hymn texts by Christopher Idle and a call to worship by John Leach based on the Magnificat.

## Caribbean liturgical music

A new Communion setting which is being taken up by a number of Anglican churches in the West Indies uses music in Afro/Caribbean style. Some of the

pieces have been sung at the Catholic World Youth Day in Brazil and at the Anglican Caribbean Provincial Congress in Barbados. Find more information about 'Lift up your hearts: A Caribbean Liturgical Celebration' on composer Judy Bailey's website ([www.judybailey.com/liturgy](http://www.judybailey.com/liturgy)).

## Hymn-singing challenge

The choir of St John the Baptist Church, Keynsham, set themselves an ambitious fundraising challenge in preparation for a tour to Holland in 2015, aiming to sing 500 hymns in 500 churches across the Diocese of Bath and Wells in five days. Choir members and friends were sponsored to sing a hymn in each church, where they also prayed for the worship of that place and its local mission. Ten per cent of all the money raised was given to the Diocesan Fund for Church Growth, which provides support for a range of projects.

Forty singers began the challenge as a full choir at Wells Cathedral at 10 a.m. on Wednesday 29 October before travelling in small teams to as many of the 567 churches in the diocese as possible. At 5 p.m. on Sunday 2 November the choir reunited to sing a hymn at their home church, bringing the total number of churches visited to 509. Keynsham's Music Director, Roger Peach, while acknowledging that some had wondered occasionally whether reaching their target was going to be possible, said the warm welcome received at many of the churches had been a huge encouragement. There was moving appreciation from some of the smaller places of worship involved, and the initiative also drew members of the choir and congregation together.

One ten-year old who sang in over 100 churches during the challenge said, 'The best bit was singing in the Bishop's Chapel because I felt part of something very special. The five days were really fun and I loved visiting all the churches!'

Roger Peach will be working alongside Roger Jones at a choral day for conductors and singers in Birmingham on Saturday 7 February 2015, under the auspices of Christian Music Ministries ([www.cmm.org.uk](http://www.cmm.org.uk)). Repertoire from CMM, the RSCM and the Jubilate Group will be sampled and available for browsing. For further details of the event, to be held at St Andrew's Church, Barnt Green, B45 8NR, contact the CMM office ([events@cmm.org.uk](mailto:events@cmm.org.uk)).

## Strengthen for Service offered by RSCM

This is a short introduction to the origins, history and development of worship and music in the Western Church, designed not just for musicians but for Anglican clergy and Readers, with a focus on managing parish music. Practical help is offered in choosing suitable materials and establishing good working practices. It majors on the practical application of this knowledge to contemporary church life, and explains how things fit together. The course follows the route of studying the Jewish antecedents, learning the vocabulary of currently used items with *Common Worship* as the core, and then moving into practical tasks – how to manage music in a parish, how to design a bespoke act of worship for a particular constituency of worshipper, and so forth. Worship takes place frequently during the course and this offers the opportunity to demonstrate monastic, parish and community styles of worship with music from a wide provenance, and to explore the various functions of music from the simple chant of Compline to the very personal nature of improvised music to illustrate the Eucharistic Prayer. All this is squeezed into 48 hours.

One lay participant in the September 2014 course, Jackie Robbs, had this to say:

'The 'Strengthen for Service' course is aptly named and works on a number of levels. First of all it tests your physical stamina. The central day starts with Morning Prayer at 7.30 and doesn't end until 9.30 with Iona-style night worship. Secondly, the course stretches your mental capacity. Throughout I felt I was having to operate in a higher gear as I absorbed new material and dredged up knowledge that had long been dormant. Thirdly, and most importantly, the course increases your confidence in leading worship. The times of worship encouraged us to listen to each other and pool our gifts and experience. The tutors clearly have a passion for music and for worship and the successful interaction of both: and their implicit aim was to pass all this on for the glory of God and the advancement of his kingdom.'

✉ Rosemary Field is RSCM Deputy Director (Education and Voluntary Networks).

# Events

## **Pastoral Care and Worship in an Emergency**

**Saturday 28 February 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.**  
**Derby Diocese**  
**St John's Church, Walton, Chesterfield**  
**S42 7LT**

Speakers: Bridget Nichols, John Williams.  
This day introduces the *Common Worship Pastoral Ministry Companion*, and looks at how clergy and lay ministers can respond appropriately in a range of situations from hospital calls and parish pastoral care to major incidents and emergencies.  
Contact Fiona Bennett 01332 388670  
lay.ministry@derby.anglican.org

## **Music and Liturgy**

**Thursday 5 March 10 a.m. - 3.15 p.m.**  
**Praxis Midlands**

**St Chad's RC Cathedral, Birmingham**  
Speakers: Andrew Maries (worship consultant, the Keynote Trust), Jon Payne (RSCM Birmingham)

An opportunity to explore the role of music in supporting and communicating liturgy. This is an interactive day to explore a range of styles and approaches to music in worship, and consider the place of music in the worshipping communities we serve.  
Contact jayne.crooks@blueyonder.co.uk

## **All Age Worship for All – is it possible?**

**Thursday 12 March 10 a.m. - 3.45 p.m.**  
**Praxis Northwest**

**William Temple Church, Wythenshawe,**  
**M22 0DU**

Speakers: Gill Ambrose and Susan Witts  
All-age worship exists in many forms, from Messy Church to a Service of the Word where children may or may not always be present; from lay-led worship in village churches to parade services in suburbia. There may be babes-in-arms to 90 year olds, life long worshippers and first timers. This day is designed to help us think through how we might create all-age worship that can engage with all those that might attend.  
Contact michael.gisbourne@icloud.com, 01524 32106

## **When the Phone Rings: Pastoral Care and Worship in an Emergency**

**Saturday 14 March 10.30 a.m – 3.30 p.m.** **Oxford Diocese**

Speakers: Bridget Nichols, David Wilbrahams.

Responding appropriately in a variety of pastoral situations, from parish pastoral care and hospital calls to major incidents and emergencies.

Contact Sheila Townsend 01865 208277  
sheila.townsend@oxford.anglican.org

## **Act Justly...**

**Saturday 25 April 2015 10 a.m.- 4.00 p.m.** **Praxis Southwest**

**Cullompton Community Centre, Devon**

Speaker: Bernadette Farrell (composer and organiser for London Citizens)

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

## **Making Way: Labyrinths and Sacred Moments**

**Saturday 25 April 10.30 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.**

**Praxis Yorkshire Wakefield Cathedral**

Speakers: Andi Hofbauer, (Precentor of Wakefield Cathedral) and Helen Bent, (Bishop's Adviser in Music and Worship, Sheffield Diocese)

Praxis Yorkshire and Wakefield Cathedral 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. Contact helen@thebents.co.uk, 01709 363850

## **Liturgy for the Unchurched**

**Friday 8 May 10.30 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.**

**Praxis South Southwark Cathedral**

Speakers: To be announced  
How to communicate with the 'unchurched' and the renewal of baptized Christians have become primary concerns for almost every Christian denomination. How can we 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 01202 296886

## **NOT all over by Christmas**

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

**Thursday 8 October 10 a.m. - 3.30 p.m.**

**Praxis Midlands**

**St Chad's RC Cathedral, Birmingham**

Speakers: Maggie Ross, Michael Snape, Andrew Wickens

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

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

**Thursday 5 November 2015**

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

Speakers: Sandra Millar, (Head of Projects and Development for the Archbishops' Council) and Anders Bergquist (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 01202 296886

## **Vasey Lecture**

On Monday 23 February 2015 at 7.30 p.m. the Rev Canon Dr James Steven will give the annual public liturgy lecture in memory of Michael Vasey in the chapel of St John's College, Durham. His subject will be 'Anabaptist Daily Prayer: A 21st Century Synthesis of Liturgical and Evangelical Traditions'. James is the Academic Dean and Programme Leader for the MA in Christian Liturgy at Sarum College, Salisbury, and Canon Theologian of Gloucester Cathedral; he was a student of Michael Vasey at Cranmer Hall.

## **Laing Lecture**

The following day, Tuesday 24 February, sees the London School of Theology's 2015 Laing Lecture delivered by Dr John Witvliet (director of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship in Grand Rapids, Michigan) at the college in Northwood. His books include *Worship Seeking Understanding: Windows into Christian Practice* (Baker Academic 2003). Further details will be posted at [www.lst.ac.uk](http://www.lst.ac.uk).

# Reports

## **Worship in the Winter of Life - Praxis Midlands**

50+ people attended this event at Birmingham Cathedral on 30 October. Canon David Winter, in a humorous and insightful keynote address that celebrated old age rather than its difficulties, demonstrated that the church is well placed to help older people face up to daunting questions such as the purpose of life, the need to know where we are going, as well as problems of loneliness and facing up to death. The church is a community called to offer a spiritual home to all ages, and as God's family, it must recognise the many positive things the elderly bring, and find a place for them to belong. David asked how well our worship and our preaching (not just at funerals) help us all to face death with hope. He ended by quoting the atheist Brian Cox, who has said that 'what makes infinity bearable is love', capping it with his own phrase 'but what makes infinity glorious is God'.

The address drew a lot of responsive questions and comment: mid-week, daytime services and activities offer the lonely and newly-bereaved a place of belonging; the glorious paradox that is the first sentence of the funeral service; ways in which church communities can combat the assumptions of the lonely elderly that they are 'not wanted'; how church members can keep hope alive for housebound and 'drugged' elderlies; how to help those asking 'why doesn't God just take me home?'; if the young find church a good place to be, they are more likely to 'come back' when they get older; and the opportunity Advent offers the whole church to reflect on the four last things.

The keynote talk was followed by a short act of worship devised in a care home situation. In the afternoon, four workshops were offered. Catriona Foster, Pastor of Older People at St John's, Harborne, outlined many ways in which their church aims to be 'a good place to grow old in'. From a 'drop in,' all the way through Senior Alpha, courses based on *Pilgrim's Progress* and on gardening, the elderly are encouraged to belong, feel valued and grow in faith. David Primrose, Director of *Transforming Communities*, Lichfield Diocese, spoke about creating dementia-friendly worship. He said that many elderly people brought up with an experience of church can, despite dementia, remember

hymns and prayers from their youth. He challenged people to think about making their relatives' spiritual history known to their carers. What hymns, readings and prayers are special to them? Andy Metcalf, a full-time chaplain to Methodist Homes in Leamington Spa, helped us reflect on how to challenge and stimulate older people whose minds are still functioning well but who may not be able-bodied. Spiritual themes relating to Christ as Shepherd, Wounded Healer and Holy Fool were fruitful discussion starters. Robin Rolls, director of the Outlook Trust, addressed the subject of evangelism with older people. His suggestion of 'holiday clubs' for seniors rang bells for some delegates.

Evaluation forms indicated that those who came were given new insights and left better equipped for building up an undervalued and challenging area of ministry.

✦ *Richard Curtis, Tony Leighton and Anne Horton, Diocese of Leicester*

## **Funerals and how to improve them - Praxis South**

On 5 November, over 100 people, clergy, ordinands and readers-in-training, gathered at St Mark's, Hamilton Terrace to discuss funerals and how to enhance and improve this area of ministry.

The day began with an inspiring talk by Sandra Millar, Head of Projects and Development for the Archbishops' Council. Sandra took us through the ABC guide to funerals: Attract, Build and Care. How can we continue to 'attract' people to have a Christian funeral; how can we 'build' understanding; how we can 'care' and build an ongoing relationship?

Over 160,000 funerals a year are conducted by Church of England ministers, but we need to rethink, refocus and realise that we are now in a competitive market. The Church is not the only body conducting funerals; we need to focus on the pastoral details and to pay attention to the aftercare of families. While we all know it is good to visit the bereaved after a funeral, restraints of time are usually against us in parish life, resulting in the neglect of this important ministry. However, Sandra gave us some very simple and effective ways of keeping in touch, helping families to still feel supported, and to know that we are there for them: ideas included Death Cafes and Grave Talk groups, which could give people

opportunities actually to talk about death, dying and funerals.

We then had a very thought-provoking talk from the Stuart Thomas, Rector of Frimley, on what a funeral is from a Christian perspective. After lunch Richard Putter, of Leverton's Funeral Directors, offered a light-hearted view of funerals from his perspective, but also some serious ideas on how clergy and funeral directors can work together more effectively by more immediate communication. The day ended with a session from Anders Bergquist, from the neighbouring parish of St John's Wood, giving his experience of putting together a good funeral.

Overall the day was well spent in giving us food for thought in what is an extremely important area of our mission and pastoral ministry.

✦ *Jane Manley is Vicar of St Paul's Ruislip Manor and Dean of Women for the Willesden Area.*

## BOOK

### **Alcuin/GROW Joint Liturgical Study**

*No. 78, Further Essays in Early Eastern Initiation: Early Syrian Baptismal Liturgy, SCM-Canterbury Press, 2014, £7.95*

In the latest Joint Liturgical Study, by Paul Bradshaw and Juliette Day, Paul Bradshaw investigates the relationship of anointing candidates for baptism to the actual immersion of them in water, running his enquiry across three centuries from the second to the fourth, and across the whole of Syria. He gently queries conclusions of previous authors, particularly those which have been propounded with a confidence that has outrun what the evidence (under careful inspection from Paul Bradshaw, the advocate of 'splitting') has warranted. Juliette Day, on the other hand, has gone to a particular set of lectures of a single author in a single city at a single time – namely the Catechetical Lectures of Cyril of Jerusalem, delivered by him in 351. She combs the lectures in order to put together a reasonable construction of the baptismal rite for which Cyril was preparing his catechumens.

# Lay leadership of worship

## World and worship: Reader ministry

More than ever today we need people who can take what's going on in the world around and reflect on it with a theological perspective, and people who can put into words what they know of God and his love and share it outside the church. I'm convinced that a renewed Reader ministry is ideally placed to join other ministries in making, refreshing and sustaining disciples of Christ. Readers (or Licensed Lay Ministers or Catechists) are not clones of the clergy.

Readers are called to the ministry of the word, to engage people in conversation about God and with God, to lead them to Christ and to equip them to share the good news of God's kingdom; they also lead worship, teach and preach, building up the Church in Christ's name. So Reader ministry is by no means restricted to leading worship and preaching. Readers bring the word of the Lord to the world and they bring a lay perspective to the Church and its hearing of the word. They are lay theologians: lay because they are rooted outside the system and should be encouraged not to become church office-holders. That's not because these are under-valued but because the job of a lay theologian, for most of the time, is to be out there in the world, away from church-centred activities and involved with people and issues that may not even benefit the church directly.

Stephen Cherry commented that 'there was a very sad Reader in the TV series, *Rev. ...* What was sad about Nigel [the Reader] was that he was so churchy and so much wanted to be a vicar. The tragedy was that he did not see that his churchiness was precisely what would undermine his ministry if he were ever ordained.' He was a lay person unable to celebrate the lay-ness of his ministry. If that joke is understood by people outside the worshipping life of the Church but not by some within it, we are in trouble.

Readers are theologians because they have been trained in 'God-talk' – to study and pay attention to God in Scripture, to understand the teaching of the Church and to help people apply that in practice. Theology as God-talk is for all, and theology is effectively communicated only by someone on fire.

On Ascension Day 1866, Reader ministry was re-founded largely as a means to extend the effectiveness of the traditional parochial system to new pioneering work on the boundaries between Church and world. From that point onwards the role of the Reader has evolved to mirror the liturgical role of the clergy, particularly in the last seven decades. For instance, in 1941 Readers were allowed to read the epistle, but not the gospel, to administer the chalice but not the paten and to preach at Morning and Evening Prayer but not at Holy Communion. In 1969 Readers were authorized to read the gospel and to preach at Holy Communion, and the ministry was extended to women, around the time that the blue scarf began to be used. We have dressed-up and clericalized pioneer lay ministers so that many have come to see leading worship and preaching as the whole of their ministry, functions they share with their ordained colleagues; some have allowed themselves to be re-defined as lay-clergy!

As authorized lay ministries diversify, I value the pioneering lay ministry of the word represented by the Anglican reader. *✠ Bishop Robert Paterson is Chair of the Central Readers' Council and Vice-Chair of the Liturgical Commission.*

## Lay preaching in the Diocese of Oxford

Lay participation in leading worship has been encouraged in Oxford diocese now for many years – much as in many other parts of the country. One particular innovation, now in its tenth year here, has been the development of a scheme under which the bishops authorise lay people to preach in their own benefice without needing to become fully-fledged Licensed Lay Ministers (though some do go on to train as LLMs in due course).

The potential has been evident and, increasingly, demand too – whether through a theological commitment to shared ministry, or the stark functional challenge of needing to service multi-parish benefices. But how to release these people to fruitful service in a way that encourages and affirms local ministry while still retaining an appropriate level of equipping and accountability? Still going strong, this initiative continues to encourage the ministry of an ever-growing number in their desire and discerned call to tell the story of God. The original scheme, launched

in 2004, looked for a commitment to complete three portfolios (Preaching, Bible and Spirituality) at Level 4 HE. Following a review earlier this year these training requirements have been streamlined such that participants are now asked to:

- attend an introductory preaching course
- submit a 1500-word essay/reflection (evidencing thought about the nature of preaching and its good practice)
- submit three sermons with constructive feedback from congregation, clergy and other preaching colleagues.

The point has not been to reduce the learning of preachers in the diocese, but to underline the vital importance and personal responsibility of ongoing development and reflection in all forms of ministry. The aim all along has been to ensure that our preachers have good foundations of skill and knowledge in essential areas, and to encourage a life-long approach to learning (which bishops often ask about when it comes for authorisations to be renewed every few years).

Some have asked, 'Why not just leave it to local training and assessment?' However, it has always seemed appropriate that there should be some level of diocesan oversight, since people are preaching with episcopal authorisation. PCC approval is required before authorisation is given and local ministry teams can be great places to learn from each other. So it is very much seen as a partnership between diocese and parish.

Has it worked? We think so! Yes, some have slipped through the net and some have found preaching may not be for them. But many others have known the satisfaction of completing worthwhile training which may even have stretched them a little, and are now ministering with the full support of both local church and diocese.

*✠ Phil Cooke is the Coordinator of the Local Ministry Programme Courses, Department of Mission, Diocese of Oxford.*

## Lichfield's experiment

In September 2013, a two-year experiment started in the Diocese of Lichfield giving permission to congregations to try different styles of worship, and to invite people not licensed as clergy or Readers to lead worship. This initiative was the result of a lot of discussion in the diocese about gathered worship, and several different concerns about the suitability and sustainability of the worship we offer.

Inevitably, one of the questions was

# Lay leadership of worship

about resourcing worship. Like other dioceses and denominations, we face the challenge of fewer priests, and the problems that are created by serving large numbers of parishes. So we considered how it might be possible to continue to offer public worship frequently, and in a way that honours God and builds up the community. One response to this challenge has been an initiative in the Diocese of Arras, in northern France, where they have developed 'Sunday services without priests'. The Bishop of Lichfield had experience of the Diocese of Arras and its work, and had been impressed by the way in which people meet for Bible study and worship during the week, and out of this encounter prepare worship for the coming Sunday. Such an approach also seemed to address the question of whether our worship connects with people today, and whether it is offered in a way that enables people to encounter God and engage with the great mysteries of faith.

A third consideration is providing a way into Reader ministry that starts by doing it. It doesn't suit everyone to do a course first; some people need to be involved in the work and then participate in training as their ministry develops.

In reality, feedback indicates that there has been a fairly small take-up of the experiment. It seems to have been most useful for parish groups starting new worship events such as café church, but the provisions of the experiment seem to affirm the permission for worship to be led by lay people. Churches that have always involved a large number of lay people in leading worship continue to do so, and, of course, churches that rarely have a service that is not eucharistic do not find this permission particularly helpful.

We are now half way through the period initially allocated for the experiment, and we hope it might be extended. Whilst it hasn't yet changed the life of the Diocese, or even made big ripples in it, we do feel that it is one way of being open to what God is doing in the Church today. By supporting people to take risks in worship, we hope that some new ideas, practices and patterns will emerge that will renew and sustain the life of the Church.

For more information see: [www.lichfield.anglican.org/ourdiocese/leading-worship](http://www.lichfield.anglican.org/ourdiocese/leading-worship).

✉ *Lindsey Hall is Director of Lay Development in the Diocese of Lichfield.*

## Lay Leaders of Worship in the Diocese of St Albans

We are continually exploring ways to fulfil our diocesan vision of Living God's Love. As part of this commitment we are seeking to enable worship which takes place every Sunday at the same time in every parish/church, irrespective of the size of congregation.

Some parishes in the Diocese find it hard to maintain a weekly Sunday service at a regular time because of a shortage of licensed leaders – clergy or Readers. As a result, services may not be held at all on some Sundays, or they take place at varying times throughout the month, which makes it difficult for occasional worshippers to attend. Alternatively, services may be led by lay people who, however willing, have had little training and may feel ill-equipped to lead, whether it be a service of Morning or Evening Prayer or an all-age service.

The *Lay Leaders of Worship* scheme, which has been piloted in the Diocese during autumn 2014 and will be rolled out fully in 2015, is designed to address this situation. It helps parishes across the Diocese to discern and affirm the gifts of lay people as local Lay Leaders of Worship (LLWs) and provides training for them, on completion of which they receive a letter of permission from the Bishop authorising them as LLWs in their local parish church.

LLWs are, of course, not Readers, though some may discern a vocation to a licensed ministry as a result of exercising this more limited ministry. The intention is that they lead worship on an occasional basis only in the parish or parishes where they regularly worship. Where possible, they are encouraged to lead worship with another LLW, or to share planning and leading within a parish worship team. They are not permitted to preach, although training is given to enable them to offer space for reflection on God's Word in place of the sermon. They are also not authorised to take funerals or to take services of Public Worship with Communion by Extension and do not preside at services of Holy Communion.

The training has three elements:

- six sessions (on two Saturdays) covering the basics of understanding and leading worship, after which the LLWs write short reflections,
- two services led in their own parish under

supervision with a guided reflection by the LLW, and

- some reading.

So far the feedback from the pilot phase has been positive. We await to see how the Scheme evolves. Further details about the Scheme can be found on the diocesan website: [www.stalbans.anglican.org/ministry/lay-leaders-worship/](http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/ministry/lay-leaders-worship/)

✉ *Jeanette Gosney is Parish Development Officer in St Albans Diocese.*

## BOOK

### **The Latest Grove Worship Booklet**

*How to Distribute Communion. W220, Trevor Lloyd*

Published in August, Trevor Lloyd's helpful booklet is another in the intermittent series of 'How to...' Grove publications. If you naively thought you simply pick up paten or chalice and go along a row administering it, then this will cure you of your naivety – Trevor will here find and solve for you the dozen or two problems you may well encounter as you embark on this ministry. The booklet should be a valuable aid for those starting out on this ministry, and is also a guide to any PCC considering nominating lay people to fulfil the ministry.

### **Praxis News of Worship on the website**

**Last year's issues have now been uploaded and are freely available on the Archive section of the Praxis website: [www.praxisworship.org.uk/archives.html](http://www.praxisworship.org.uk/archives.html).**

## Colin's Column

I have this autumn remembered that which I vow each Easter to recall – namely, that I have some comment to make on the extraordinarily inflated concept of a 'Chrism eucharist'. Lest you think I am fussed about nothing, let me begin with some history.

The use of oils in the Church of England's worship was permitted in the new Canons in 1969, where Canon B37 allowed that the local clergy should anoint the sick with 'oil consecrated by the bishop of the diocese or otherwise by the priest himself in accordance with such form of service.' (There was no form of service, so the Canon in effect permitted any form of 'consecrating' the oil to be used.) There was no other in the Church of England's formularies, and all the years I was on the Liturgical Commission (i.e. 1964-86) the Commission absolutely declined to mention oil even as an option in relation to baptism and confirmation. Oil has become so much part of the story that no-one seems to recall that (apart from the two instances of anointing the sick) literal anointing does not occur in the New Testament – and the rare instances of believers being described as 'anointed' are clearly highly metaphorical. However, oil at baptism and 'chrism' at confirmation (where, in the Roman Church, it is the substance of the rite) were bound to attract Rome-orientated Anglicans – and in 1977-78 the Catholic Group on General Synod said they would block the whole initiation package for the ASB unless the Synod allowed them to write into the notes that oil might be used. That provision is how oil still appears today in *Common Worship* Christian Initiation – the oiling is incorporated into the signing with the cross in baptism and added in without change of text to confirmation. So the use of oil has no distinct meaning assigned to it in either of those spoken texts.

From that addition of a 'Note' in the late 1970s, there came an urgent request from a section of the Church of England for the bishop to 'bless' the oils (as was done on Maundy Thursday in the Church of Rome). There exist stories of relatively private services in side-chapels where bishops provided such oils for the connoisseurs. There were even stories (in the days of the Navy's supposed blockade of Smith's Rhodesia) of oil being smuggled across frontiers! But by the early 1980s the bishops had been prised out into major cathedral events, and found they enjoyed gathering their clergy for the oiling service on Maundy Thursday. Since Vatican II the Roman Church had included a renewal of ordination vows within their rite, so that even those clergy who were not using oils had a genuine place within the rite.

Nevertheless the rite itself magnified the oils. The Roman pattern provided the renewal of ministerial vows on the way to the blessing of the oils. *Times and Seasons* in its 'commended' rite has the same structure (and has more pages than the evening's true Maundy Thursday liturgy). But to those who view oiling baptismal and confirmation candidates as otiose, and are free, following the Canon, to consecrate oil for the sick themselves (and *Pastoral Services* half encourages this), there is no climax in the praying over the oils (sometimes with dubious theology – I could comment further on the *Times and Seasons* texts). As a first step let bishops (and precentors perhaps?) ask themselves whether to revise inherited texts (whether *T & S* or not), so as to make the renewal of ministers and their ministries the climax of the central part of the rite (leading to the Peace), and deal with oils en passant as a minor feature. The enjoyment factor which spread the Maundy Thursday morning practice to virtually every diocese in the land has involved an uncritical adoption as normal of a somewhat exaggerated sectional interest – and all this can be brought down to size without imperilling either the seriousness or the enjoyment.

(And by all means be in touch with me – I have both anecdotes and texts up my sleeve ready for deployment.)

✉ Colin Buchanan is a former Bishop of Woolwich.

## Liturgical Commission

The Liturgical Commission met at St Columba's Woking on 15-16 October, under the presidency of its Acting Chairman, the Bishop of Sodor and Man. This was the first meeting in a new pattern, spread across two more densely-filled days rather than across the usual three. The new pattern brings a gain in efficiency of business, at the cost of halving the number of occasions for worship – which has been an important part of the Commission's life. As the Commission finds itself less busy with the drafting and revision of texts, and more concerned with liturgical formation, it becomes less important to have opportunities to 'road-test' material at a very early stage, but it will still matter that the Commission continues to pray together in a variety of idioms.

The Commission may have prayed less, but it studied hard. Significant time was spent in small groups, working on Juliette Day and Ben Gordon-Taylor's Alcuin guide to *The Study of Liturgy and Worship* (Alcuin Club/SPCK, 2013), and seeing whether some of the content could be adapted into a training resource on the Transforming Worship website. The Commission was given updates on the renewal of the website, and on the usual range of its partnerships (JLG, Praxis, etc.).

'Christian Initiation: Additional Texts in Accessible Language' – the main text-based concern of recent meetings – has now passed beyond the Commission into the General Synod, where it is currently in its Revision stage. All the Commission could do was to reflect on the Synod debate last July, in a conversation that will be helpful to those Commission members who find themselves on the Steering and Revision Committees.

The Commission was joined by Libby Lane and Kat Campion-Spall from the Transformations Group for a fascinating discussion of the language and imagery that are used of God in the Church of England's modern-language liturgy. The Transformations Group was set up by the Archbishops' Council to engage with a wide range of organisations in the Church of England, to help them to look afresh at their work in the light of the perspectives and experiences of women in ministry. For the Commission, this means looking again at the ground rules which the General Synod laid down for its work at the start of the *Common Worship* process – broadly, to be as inclusive as possible in language about human beings and the church, and to retain the traditional terms of relationship in language about the Trinity. Ultimately, it will be for the Synod to take decisions in this area. It will also be for the Synod to decide when and whether it wants to revise the existing *Common Worship* Calendar. Fairly numerous suggestions arrive for additions and upgradings to the existing list of holy women and men: the Commission looks at all of them carefully, but can only store them for the time being, until the Synod decides to reopen the calendar.

Finally, the Commission was warm in its appreciation of Robert Paterson's interim chairmanship. The Bishop of Exeter will be in the chair when the Commission next meets in January.

✉ Anders Bergquist is Vicar of St John's Wood and a member of the Liturgical Commission.