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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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# London Bridge

THE FOCUS OF THIS ISSUE is necessarily rather different to that which my advance planning had anticipated. The long-awaited and much delayed new *Common Worship* volumes to resource our ministry of initiation were finally published this autumn, and were to have formed the heart of an edition reflecting on our ministry of baptism and confirmation. Book reviews of both volumes can be found here, but the broader reflection will wait for another time.

The extraordinary collective experience of hearing, first of all, that Her Majesty the Queen was experiencing some concerning medical symptoms, followed swiftly by the long-anticipated but nonetheless seismic announcement of her death, and the unfolding of the observances both of mourning and of proclamation, provides most of the context of this issue of *Praxis News of Worship*. Within these pages a cathedral Precentor, an Incumbent, and an Assistant Curate reflect on their experience of negotiating the liturgical and pastoral

terrain in largely unprecedented times. Amongst the many questions we asked ourselves when pulling together our liturgical observances, the perennial Anglican concern over to what extent a funeral is ministry to the departed, as opposed to ministry to the bereaved, and the legitimacy or otherwise of prayer for the dead unsurprisingly resurfaced. We might revisit those in a future edition.

The significant anniversaries of the Group for the Renewal of Worship, and of Grove Books, find observance within these pages, and those celebrations will continue in the spring edition. Lastly, I add my own personal voice of mourning to those who call to mind Priscilla White, with whom I worked closely for several years as a member of the Praxis Midland committee: a significant figure in the life of Praxis and one who not only taught us to worship with imagination, but also how to die in faith and with grace. Thank you, Priscilla.

✉ Tom Clammer OC, Editor.

## 'We knew it was going to happen... but I didn't expect to feel so upset.'

THE WORDS ABOVE were from a young Naval rating, visibly in tears as he spent some time reflecting quietly here in Portsmouth Cathedral before writing in one of the Books of Condolence open in the Nave. I think he expressed what many felt after the news came of the death of Her Majesty on Thursday 8th September. There had been, of course, a certain amount of discreet planning and preparation, in the diocese and locally, in advance of 'The Unhappy Event' as it was tactfully called. For a long and fulfilled life, the Queen's death seemed to leave many feeling unexpectedly unhappy — perhaps because it had been such a devoted and dedicated life, fulfilling her early pledges given to God and to her people in such a committed and constant way.

At the Cathedral, we stayed open for longer hours each evening from the very

first day on which Her Majesty's death was announced. The preparations we had been able to put in place meant that prayer cards were available for people to use here, or take away as a focus for their prayers — helpful when many at first found it hard to frame the words or express their feelings of both gratitude and loss. There were surprising numbers who came in to light a candle and write a message — something that had not been possible at the time of Prince Philip's death during the restrictions of lockdown — and to find a sense of support and solidarity from coming together, drawn to the Cathedral as a place of prayer and peace.

As the days of national mourning unfolded, the readings and music at the daily services were adjusted in line with some of the anticipated plans, but also amended in the moment as the national and local mood became more tangible. Our newly-arrived

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Choral Scholars coped really well, not having sung a single regular service before we had to change the repertoire for the whole of their first fortnight. The daily and Sunday Communion services were offered in commemoration and thanksgiving for the Queen's faith and faithfulness. The way that 'D-Day' fell meant we were in the unusual situation of having two weekends in which to offer appropriate commemoration before the funeral. There was a really good (and rather unexpected) civic and diocesan response over the first weekend, with our Bishop and Lord Mayor and a number of local councillors choosing to attend our Sunday morning Eucharist at short notice. A large number of these came again, with representatives of many local organizations and charities — formally invited this time — for the official Civic Service held the following Sunday afternoon, which was followed by a vigil of prayer ahead of the State Funeral itself on Monday 19th.

At each choral service through the whole ten days we sang the National Anthem at the end: of course in the new form. This helped people to recognize the reality of what we were living through: the transition from 70 years of the Queen's reign, when people all over the world had come to know her as *The Queen*. So singing 'God save the King' each day was pastorally significant and brought mixed emotions. I think many officiants are probably still feeling a little jolt each time we lead the Responses at Evensong, as we have to remember it's 'O Lord, save the King... and mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.' And the Collect for the Sovereign and the Prayer for the Church Militant in the BCP Communion service remind those who preside, week by week, that we are now in a new era. I know that we will become accustomed over time, liturgically, to 'thy chosen servant Charles our King and Governor' but I hadn't realized before now how differently the words 'Sovereign Lord' would resonate to 'Sovereign Lady' when, before now, in my lifetime at least, the former has been an address reserved for God.

During the period of Royal Mourning, there was something splendidly reassuring and uplifting as the solemn ceremonial was broadcast on television in unprecedented ways, from the Accession

Proclamation from St James's Palace through to the final service of Committal at St George's Windsor. I was reminded that Queen Elizabeth had prayed daily for strength and guidance from God, and it was the traditional forms of the *Book of Common Prayer* that she most valued and found her faith sustained by.

I hope that the traditional patterns of prayer and worship have been found to be a source of inspiration and reassurance by many in these days. Evensong is still said or sung in many churches in the Prayer Book form, offering timeless and enduring worship to lift the heart and the spirit. The words and cadences speak afresh each day to help us all gain a sense of deep perspective and purpose on life, and find reassurance from this constant and continuing reminder of God's grace, guidance and enduring love.

✠ *Jo Spreadbury is Canon Precentor of Portsmouth, and onetime Chair of Praxis.*

## A Parish Church responds

I SUSPECT WE WILL ALL REMEMBER exactly where we were when we heard the news that 'London Bridge' had fallen. For me, it was a BBC breaking-news notification which flashed up on my watch while I was reading my 4-year-old his bedtime story. That duty discharged, I quickly swapped the 'mum' hat for the 'incumbent of a Church of England parish on the occasion of the death of the Sovereign' hat, a hat that came with what felt like a huge responsibility.

I quickly consulted with my team and decisions were made about when we would open, how we would staff this, and what we wanted to put out on social media. I was hugely grateful at various times to be able to call on Readers, a curate, an ordinand and a retired priest, as well as wonderful churchwardens and some brilliant admin support. On the Friday morning we set the church up for visitors before opening the doors at 9.00am. The hangings were changed to purple to reflect the fact we were now in a period of national mourning. The purple would remain until after the State Funeral. On one side of the choir we placed the

official photograph of the Queen in a black frame between two candles on a table covered with a white linen cloth. The Paschal Candle stood prominently nearby, reminding us of Christ's triumph over death. On the other side of the choir we placed our votive candle stand. In the side chapel we set up the book of condolence alongside the other official photograph, with a candle burning beside it. There were printed prayer sheets available for people to pick up on entering the church and to take away. We had also designed a child-friendly version, some copies of which I took over to our church primary school.

At 9.00am I led Morning Prayer for the team who had gathered, tweaking the *Common Worship* provision by using the propers for All Souls' Day. Prayers released on the Church of England website were used during the intercessions. The church remained open (bar a funeral) until 8.30pm, and we had a steady trickle of visitors throughout the day. Ministers wore black cassocks to enable visitors to identify quickly people they could speak to and who would pray with them if desired. People seemed really to appreciate having a place to go in response to the news of Her Majesty's death. For many, the shock and grief were palpable. Some wanted to talk, often of their own reawakened grief for departed loved ones; others wanted to sit quietly in a sacred space; many seemed grateful for the opportunity to light a candle; nearly everyone spent time sitting at the Book of Condolence, trying to work out how to articulate what they were feeling.

Copies of printed prayers were regularly stopped up. Many people seemed glad to be able to take something away with them after they had visited church: a memento, perhaps, of this strange and significant time. Our steeple-keeper and bell-ringing team managed all things to do with flags flying at the correct height, and bells being tolled in mourning or rung in proclamation. Our musicians reacted swiftly and calmly to adjust Sunday's hymns and anthems. There was a great sense of everyone pulling together, glad to be able to 'do something for the Queen', who had done so much for her people.

As we watched on the television different military personnel keeping vigil around the late Queen's coffin, there

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was a sense that we, too, were keeping vigil at St Peter's. Those of us who staffed the church spent many hours standing in the stillness and silence of this sacred space whose focal point had, for a few days, become a picture of Her Late Majesty illuminated by the light of the Paschal Candle, that powerful expression of Easter faith which had so inspired the Queen during her earthly pilgrimage.

As our physical space needed to change, so too did our liturgy. In preparing for Sunday I felt a heaviness as I reprinted the BCP altar book so that we beseeched God to 'save and defend his servant Charles our King', rather than 'Elizabeth our Queen'. After the quiet dignity of the 8.00am BCP service, our 10.00am service made use of the published 'Resources for a Eucharist during a time of national mourning'. I preached on the readings offered to us within those resources. Singing the revised version of the National Anthem for the first time was a strange feeling of 'familiar yet unfamiliar'. Evensong followed later that day, remembering to amend the Suffrages to 'O Lord, save the King'. We used the 'Prayers for use at Morning and Evening Prayer,' saving the material published for 'A Special Commemoration Service' for Evensong on the Eve of the State Funeral.

Following the State Funeral, I gratefully swapped the hat I had been wearing since the eighth of September for my comfier, more familiar, parish priest hat. The practical, liturgical and pastoral challenges had been considerable, but I remain proud of the way in which this parish church rose to the occasion, and lived out its vocation as the established Church during a significant, solemn and historic time for our nation.

✍ *Kate Stowe is Priest-in-Charge of St Peter's, Harborne, and a non-residential Canon of Birmingham Cathedral.*

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## The silence was the talked-about thing

THOSE WHO HAD 'done The Queue' experienced it directly as they came into Westminster Hall, but the strikingly novel phenomenon was the 'Lying-in-State-by-extension' on the BBC

livestream. Some of this time was devoted to the Edinburgh vigil and the two vigils in London kept by the royal family around the coffin, where silence was yet more profound as the movement in the space was stilled.

We are, arguably, a nation familiar with ceremonial, and it may be possible to pass off much of what happened over the period of mourning for the Queen as 'what we're good at doing'. I have little doubt that some of the sweeping up of the sentiment and, indeed, sentimental, was gathered in that ceremonial, and given expression either through it or through, at least, the voice of Huw Edwards! It struck me, however, as it struck others commentating, that this national experience was a good deal more personal than had either been the case in the past or than any given person might reasonably have expected of themselves. Not only was the Queen recalled in personal anecdotes and by her characteristics, but grief at her death was for many a transposing of other griefs. For that, some kind of personal response was needed.

Sign and symbol speak to us intuitively. As people of faith, we may feel this especially keenly. In a parish liturgical context I am inclined to draw upon silence as sign and symbol — itself an 'absence which is presence', as Cally Hammond has it in her *The Sound of the Liturgy*. In a society where silence is hard come by, this can be a powerful experience. Much as I understand this to be the case, its very power suggests to me the need for some careful consideration as to how it is handled and, as a precursor to those decisions, a need to interrogate what the silence is being used for. More broadly, I wonder if there is a distinction to be made in the intentions of our communal silences. There are secular silences that we grow accustomed to keeping: two minutes at Remembrance, one or two minutes upon a national or global disaster, the minute's silence in a packed football stadium following the death of a hero of the game — or indeed the Queen. The premise of these moments may seem obvious: to offer 'a respectful silence'. The fulfilment is perhaps less clear for each of the individual participants, and may potentially be experienced rather more as an 'uncomfortable silence': 'Am I doing

this right?' 'What should my thoughts be in this moment?' 'Should I have thoughts at all, or should this be some pure offering of respect?' It's quite possible the only relief is that the silence has been promised to come to a certain end.

I suspect it's fair to assume that in the context of worship — and pastoral care — we would wish a silence to be more expansive, and more generous than this. There was a quality I discerned in the public silences related to the Queen that had an entry point of respect but in the end tilted at the transformational. The outward offering was of respect — the internal need in this expression was for some combination of connection, resolution, and hope. If our liturgy is to afford entry points for glimpses of the divine in the shape of the love and hope revealed in Christ — which in turn may transform us in deeper discipleship and formation — then the sign and symbol of silence may need to make that invitation bravely clear. Biblical silences have a raw, wild characteristic; we may not expect to encounter, as Elijah, the sound of sheer silence in the heartbeats between 'Let us pray' and the Collect, but with the potential for the revelation of the nature of God, these liturgical moments are nonetheless the places of our calling.

As I contemplate how this may all play out in the parish I am reminded of a recent funeral. Not uncommonly for these parts, the deceased was an elderly lady of Caribbean birth. The conclusion of the burial ushered in the complete filling-in of the grave by the young men of the family, spadeful by spadeful, all held in silence as we stood gathered around. This takes a long time. That this time was held in patient silence suggested to me the Benedictine premise of work entrusted to God as prayer, and our transformation within the work, silence, and trust.

So as in all our worship, a respectful silence may usher us in, but the deeper invitation is the transformation.

✍ *Sarah Howard-Jones is Assistant Curate of St Martin's, Kensal Rise.*

Cally Hammond's *The Sound of the Liturgy: How words work in worship*, referred to above, was published by SPCK in 2015.

### Praxis South West: Celtic Spirituality and Worship

17 September 2022 at St Andrew's  
Church, Taunton.

Colin Lunt and Andrew Maries led an interesting and informative day on Celtic spirituality and worship, its origins and developments, and some of the modern forms today.

Following a short act of worship Colin challenged us to consider 'What is Celtic? Are we talking about a 'Celtic Church', 'Celtic Christianity' or 'Celtic Spirituality'? We were introduced to *The Antiphony of Bangor*, the earliest 'Celtic' manuscript. We were also introduced to the *The Stowe Missal* dated around 790. Both of these helped us to appreciate the early medieval mind where faith and worship are a journey of dynamic encounter.

We shared in a service of word and song from the Community of Aidan and Hilda focussing on 'Departures and Journeys'. It set before us a pattern of prayer which can be used when a person leaves a household, job or locality, or sets out on a new journey.

Prayers are a central feature within Celtic worship, for example 'The Lorica of St Patrick': a type of prayer for protection.

The Northumbria Community has recognized that there are those people both in society and church who can be made to feel that, because they are not married or are without a partner, something may be missing in their lives. A liturgy has been created and can be used: 'for those who want to give themselves to God in celibacy for a particular period of time', or 'for those who, after further testing and discerning with others, have come to the conclusion that this is for as long as they shall live.' The liturgy embraces everyone who may be present to love and support those following this particular journey of life:

'Created by God, we are bearers of the divine image. Whether married or single, our bodies tell us the story of redemption is one of union.'

Following a time of questions the day concluded with Celtic Evening Prayer led with musical accompaniment by Andrew Maries and Chris Moorsom.

✍ Alan Cook, Praxis South West.

One of the sponsors of Praxis, the Group for the Renewal of Worship (GROW), has been celebrating two significant anniversaries. It is 60 years since the Group was founded (and more on that next issue) and 50 years since Grove Books began publishing. Grove put on a day conference at St Katherine's in the East to mark the occasion. There was input from a variety of people involved with some of the different author groups which produce the Grove Books series. From time to time, Grove has run an event like this, not least so that members of different author groups can meet each other. This is always good to do to help people get a sense of the whole enterprise above and beyond the group to which they belong and for which they write. This day was meant to have a bit of a sense of looking to the future but it began with a video interview with Colin Buchanan about the beginnings of Grove Books. This was rather surreal since Colin was himself at the conference and could have spoken live! While it was good to hear, for example, of the ways in which the education group has been serving the needs of school governors and of how issues of race and culture are being tackled, there were several author groups who did not get a chance to have input into the day, of which the Group for the Renewal of Worship was one. While this was a good day to be part of, I can't help feeling that there were some missed opportunities here. The day ended with Bishop Emma Ineson offering some reflections on the significance of Grove Books which did make some effort to connect history with the future.

What I hope came out of the day was a reminder of some significant aspects of the history. The first is that the publishing operation arose out of a group of people interested in liturgy who needed an outlet to publish their ideas. Colin Buchanan had been publishing occasional booklets himself but the publishing as we now know it really began with an explanation and apology from Julian Charley about how an evangelical could have been involved in the first ARCIC talks and could also sign the joint statement (for Julian was that evangelical). This became *Grove Ministry and Worship No. 1*. Other series grew out of the Ministry and Worship series in time.

GROW came before Grove and existed for a decade before Grove Books really began. The company that now runs

Grove came even later, after Colin had been running the publishing as private enterprise.

My own reflections stem from first reading Grove Books when I was in the sixth form studying A-Level Religious Studies. Our vicar stocked them on the church bookstall and pointed me to them as books that might help with some of the things I was studying. At university, taking the new liturgy module which was taught by Kenneth Stevenson and Richard Buxton at Manchester University, I found that Grove Books were once again often recommended and I was quickly hooked. The great thing about them is that they are brief and well researched. They do not aim to offer a definitive answer to anything but rather to get people thinking in an informed way. It is very appropriate that the advertising slogan for many years has been 'not the last word but often the first' — a title which was dreamt up by Michael Vasey who was also very committed to the Grove Books enterprise though not always treated kindly by it.

With the advent of digital communications and social media, Grove Books is now not always the first word but it is often one of the first words which has been carefully thought through and discussed with colleagues. The way the author groups work helps people to get things into print which have been discussed with others. There is still a vital place for this kind of publishing and we might even claim that we ran an early version of a blog in the days when we were publishing *News of Liturgy* which became part of the publication which you are now reading. James Steven gave a paper at the Society for Liturgical Studies a few years ago in which he analysed *News of Liturgy* as a kind of blog in which Colin and others commented on things that were happening in the world of worship and where comments could be published fairly speedily. Indeed, one of the things about Grove Books is the speed with which things can be got out into print and so they can be very timely.

✍ Charles Read is Deputy Convenor of the Group for the Renewal of Worship.

*In the next issue of PNOW Charles will continue the marking of these significant anniversaries with 60th anniversary reflections on GROW itself. [Ed.]*

## New from Jubilate

*New Light has Dawned* is a collection of new sung resources for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany produced this year by Jubilate. The ten items, recorded in June for a CD, are available in a songbook as well as online ([www.jubilate.co.uk](http://www.jubilate.co.uk)), each with a lyric video. Some are intended for choirs, such as Simon Perry's 'Welcome, Jesus, child of Mary' which sets a short hymn text by Michael Perry in bright, jazzy style — the words first appeared in the original *Carol Praise* (1987) paired with much gentler music, giving a very different feel.

There is also music for congregations to sing, such as a very effective paraphrase of the Song of Mary ('O sing, O sing the greatness of the Lord'), with words by Derek Boemler and Joel Payne set to the well-known Advent melody VENI EMMANUEL.

## Music from Ukraine

How can we keep our Sunday prayers for the people of Ukraine fresh and urgent? One way is by using music, and from Encore Publications come some words by Edgar Pettman ('Peace we may not understand, in a weary strife-worn land') set to the music of a Ukrainian folksong, arranged by Timothy Rogers for mixed-voice choir (SATB). There are three short verses, with both Christmas and Easter versions available (<https://encorepublications.com/Preview/RogersPeacefaithandhope2nded.pdf>).

## News of REH

The publishers of the long-awaited *Revised English Hymnal* (<https://reh.hymnsam.co.uk>) reported in October 2022 that advanced proofs stage had been reached and that the full music edition of the hymn book would arrive in May 2023, with other editions following. They hope that a sampler will be available soon, both in print and online.

About 185 of the 680 or so items in the new collection were not in the 1986 *New English Hymnal*. As well as an editors' Preface, the book will include an essay by former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, who is the president of the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

Dr Williams also wrote a Foreword to *Strengthen for Service* (Canterbury Press, 2005), which celebrated the centenary of the original 1906 *English Hymnal*, edited by Percy Dearmer (texts) and Ralph Vaughan Williams (music).

## Wild Goose news

An e-newsletter sent to supporters of the Wild Goose Resource Group at the end of September confirmed what many had already heard, that the Revd Dr John L. Bell of the Iona Community is retiring from paid employment: 'After forty years' wandering the globe since co-founding WGRG, he will cease from his current labours in November, hibernate for four months and then reappear in public with less frequency... no longer employed by the Iona Community as a Resource Worker with WGRG, but of course still with strong connections to both.'

John, born in Kilmarnock in November 1949, will continue to be based in Glasgow, home of the Wild Goose Resource Group. The other current resource worker, Jo Love, will carry on its ministry (seeking to encourage and enable the renewal of worship), while administrator Gail Ullrich will provide ongoing support. In due course they will look for the right person(s) to join them. Meanwhile, one of John's final engagements, in early November, was a weekend at a retreat house in Woking with the characteristic title, 'Why do God's people sing?'

Wild Goose Publications — including many songs and hymns written by John Bell, often in collaboration with the late Graham Maule — continue to be available online ([www.ionabooks.com](http://www.ionabooks.com) and [www.giamusic.com/store/sacred-music](http://www.giamusic.com/store/sacred-music)). The 1992 Advent and Christmas collection *Innkeepers and Light Sleepers* is a useful place to look for unusual music for carol services: for example, 'No wind at the window' — about the annunciation — is set to the Irish melody COLUMCILLE. The words and music can also be found in *Carol Praise* (Harper Collins, 2006), while the words alone appear in the more recent Wild Goose collection of texts, *Known Unknowns* (2018).

## Royal occasions

The State Funeral of Queen Elizabeth II in Westminster Abbey on Monday 19

September 2022 included new music from the first female Master of the King's Music, Judith Weir (b.1954), and from the best-known contemporary composer in Scotland, Roman Catholic Sir James MacMillan (b.1959). Weir was appointed in 2014 to the centuries-old honorary position of Master of the Queen's Music in succession to Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, whose 'Reliqui domum meum' was among the organ pieces played while the congregation assembled. His 'Farewell to Stromness' had been played before the Service of Prayer and Reflection at St Paul's Cathedral at 6 p.m. on Friday 9 September, the day after the Queen's death, and also in St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, a few days later.

MacMillan had composed the anthem 'Who shall separate us?' — sung towards the end of the funeral — ten or more years ago in response to a commission from the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey, in readiness for this occasion. The text, drawn from Romans 8, was suggested to him and is understood to have been one of the late Queen's favourite Bible passages. It was sung by the combined choirs of Westminster Abbey and the Chapel Royal, St James's Palace, conducted by another Roman Catholic, James O'Donnell (who, as mentioned in Issue 74, will be leaving his position as Organist and Master of the Choristers at the Abbey and moving to North America at the end of 2022). O'Donnell's simple setting of Psalm 139, sung on 14 September at the Service for the Reception of the Coffin in Westminster Hall for the Lying-in-State, is to be made available by Encore Publications, along with his two arrangements — including descants — of hymns for the funeral service ([www.encorepublications.com](http://www.encorepublications.com)).

Judith Weir's contribution to the funeral was a simple but effective unaccompanied choral setting of the first seven verses of Psalm 42, 'Like as the hart', again composed especially for this service at the request of the Abbey (and now published by Chester Music). Described as 'astonishingly beautiful' by *Guardian* music critic Tim Ashley, it was mainly homophonic, the voices moving together with very little dissonance, predominantly in D minor but closing with a D major chord on the final syllable of 'countenance'. The composer has said she was inspired by the Queen's 'strong

# Music matters

faith in and support of Anglican worship' as she wrote, and one sensed the influence of Anglican chant. 'O taste and see', another of the choir's offerings, recalled the coronation of the late Queen in 1953, for which Ralph Vaughan Williams wrote this short choral setting of Psalm 34.8, while one of King Charles III's favourite composers, Hubert Parry, featured with one of his *Songs of Farewell*, 'My soul, there is a country'. Richard Morrison, music critic for *The Times*, wrote of how sacred music such as this can transport us 'into seemingly celestial realms where all things seem possible, even eternal life'.

James MacMillan's 'Who shall separate us?' — scored for unaccompanied SATB choir with divisi — is now published by Boosey & Hawkes. The composer, writing in *The Spectator* magazine (24 September 2022), reflected on the Queen's 'central presence' in his life and on her Christian faith. As well as denying social media suggestions that his title had hidden significance in relation to the Scottish independence debate (!), he also wrote of the joy he experiences when setting the word 'Alleluia' to music, adding: 'This anthem culminates in a series of ecstatic Alleluias, the eight vocal lines rippling up and down before settling to a serene Amen. It was my way of expressing joy at the gift of the Queen's life with us [for so many years].' An alternative text from the Book of Revelation may replace the Alleluias when choirs sing the anthem in future penitential seasons. It is understood that several professional choirs are competing to be the first to record MacMillan's tribute to our late Queen.

The three hymns sung in Westminster Abbey began with 'The day thou gavest, Lord, has ended' by Anglican priest John Ellerton (1826-1893), to nineteenth-century tune ST CLEMENT. The final verse of this evening hymn, chosen by Queen Victoria to be sung at churches across the British Isles on 20 June 1897 to mark her Diamond Jubilee, includes a reminder that 'earth's proud empires' pass away. After the two Bible readings came 'The Lord's my shepherd', a metrical paraphrase of Psalm 23 from the 1650 Scottish Psalter, sung — as at Princess Elizabeth's wedding in 1947 — to CRIMOND. This tune (probably composed in the late nineteenth century in Scotland) became popular due, in part,

to a famous recording by the Glasgow Orpheus Choir. And perhaps to represent Wales, Charles Wesley's 'Love divine' was sung to BLAENWERN, a hymn tune written in about 1905 by Welsh schoolteacher William Rowlands.

The hymns at the Service of Thanksgiving for the Life of Her Majesty the Queen on 12 September in St Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh (which opened with a slightly out-of-tune fanfare...), concluded with a perhaps surprising choice: a relatively unknown text by Scottish writer Leith Fisher, who died in 2009. Fisher had been a convener of the Church of Scotland's Panel on Worship and a member of the Iona Community. His hymn 'Glory to God! Our living song we raise' was published posthumously with traditional Scottish melody 'The bleacher lass o' Kelvinhaugh' in a collection edited by Douglas Galbraith, *Strange Majesty: The hymns of Leith Fisher* (Wild Goose Publications, 2018). Verse two speaks of thankful hearts 'for all who loved and served your people here, / for all who for the Christ made room and home, / their faith inspiring us to persevere.'

In Wales, a commemorative service was held in St David's Cathedral on Sunday 18 September, while St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast hosted a Service of Reflection five days earlier. It was presumably the speed at which orders of service needed to be prepared which led to one misprint in Northern Ireland, where the line 'in glad hymns eternally' from the opening processional hymn appeared (at least in the pdf online) as 'in glad hymns externally'. A hymn by Timothy Dudley-Smith closed the Belfast service: not 'Lord, for the years', suggested by the Church of England as one of several hymns which might be sung following the Queen's death, but 'O Christ the same, through all our story's pages', appropriately paired with a traditional Irish melody.

The singing at the Service of Committal in St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, was accompanied by Luke Bond, Assistant Director of Music. Before the service music was played by young female organist Miriam Reveley ARCO, who had apparently only taken up her position as Organ Scholar at the beginning of September. It was refreshing, too, to see a female alto in the back row of the Choir of St George's Chapel, which was directed

by James Vivian. A former organist of the Chapel, Henry Walford Davies, had composed the setting of Psalm 121 sung as the coffin was carried into the Quire, while another had edited the music from Kiev which followed, the sorrowful 'Contaktion of the Departed', sung by lower voices only.

The congregation in the Chapel stood for the bidding prayer, then sang four verses of 'All my hope on God is founded': the usual second verse — 'Pride of man and earthly glory, / sword and crown betray his trust;' — was omitted here, in contrast to the service at St Paul's earlier in the month when the complete hymn had been sung as the choir and ministers entered (with 'Human pride' replacing 'Pride of man'). Before the hymn 'Christ is made the sure foundation', sung to the stirring WESTMINSTER ABBEY (as in the Belfast service but with one extra verse and a slightly different text), the Windsor choir sang 'Bring us, O Lord God, at our last awakening', a deeply moving motet with words drawn from a sermon preached by John Donne. The composer, William Harris, had not only been Organist of St George's Chapel from 1933 to 1961 but had also given musical instruction to the young Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret. His motet had been heard, too, on 9 September in St Paul's Cathedral, where John Donne served as Dean for ten years.

Finally, who could forget the haunting lament from the Queen's Piper as he began to play in the North Quire Aisle of St George's Chapel, then slowly moved away?

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## Follow the Star: the Great Invitation

Following a series of difficult Christmases, churches across the Church of England are hoping that 2022 offers a chance to welcome people back to services and events that haven't been possible recently. Discover resources to invite your community back to church this Christmas. You will find signposts to the national branding, reflections and more that will help you to invite people into your church — both online and onsite.

*Printed and digital resources for Follow the Star: the Great Invitation, are available at* <https://www.churchofengland.org/resources/resources-advent-and-christmas>

## Learning opportunities

Praxis regions are continuing to make use of online learning opportunities, whilst planning to resume in-person meetings. Readers are encouraged to keep an eye on the Praxis website [[praxisworship.org.uk](http://praxisworship.org.uk)] which will be updated regularly. Ed.

### Praxis Yorkshire

**Resources for the Easter Season**

**Tuesday 14 February 2023,**

**14.00 -16.00, on Zoom.**

Attendance is free.

**Speakers: Peer-led with short contributions from Praxis members.**

Contact Michael Gisbourne for details and the link: [canonmichael@riponcathedral.org.uk](mailto:canonmichael@riponcathedral.org.uk)

## Priscilla White remembered

I first met the Revd Canon Priscilla White on Thursday 18 June 2008 on the train to a meeting of Praxis Midlands in Peterborough Cathedral. She was the new rep for Birmingham Diocese where she was Vicar of St Faith and St Laurence, Harborne. I was on the cusp of moving to Birmingham, so our paths would cross many times over the next few years. Priscilla had previously ministered in Exeter Diocese and was amongst the first women to be ordained priest in 1994.

Priscilla served as Area Dean of Harborne, Chair of the House of Clergy in Birmingham and on General Synod, attending the July 2022 session in a wheelchair.

Priscilla had a passion for liturgy and for inspiring others to plan and lead it well. One of her most imaginative ideas was her development of a Colour Palette which was linked to senses and shades and a very helpful tool for planning any worship, though initially designed for all-age services. She went on to chair Praxis Midlands from 2011 until 2017 and under her leadership we delivered a wide variety of events.

Priscilla was diagnosed with breast cancer a few years ago and made a good recovery, but secondaries returned. Her final service at St Faith and St Laurence was on 6 February 2022. She began a new ministry as Associate Priest with her husband John who was (and is) Vicar of the Kingsbury and Baxterley Group of Churches. Sadly the couple's daughter Debbie died aged 29 in August

## Books

2021. Priscilla died peacefully at home barely a year later on 28 September 2022.

Bishop Anne, the Acting Bishop of Birmingham, said, 'Priscilla has been such a faithful servant of God.' A curate in Birmingham Diocese noted, 'Priscilla was the holiest person I knew, but her footwear...' I've often said that a good liturgist is like a burglar: always wears soft-soled shoes, always has their exit planned and steals much (in the way of good ideas) from others. Priscilla would rarely meet the first criterion but her shoes were stunning.

I have stolen much from many Praxis members and training events over the years and always think of Priscilla at the Fraction: We break this bread (*break the bread*) to share in the body of Christ. Though we are many (*separate the pieces widely*), we are one body because we all share in one bread (*bring the two pieces together*).

A Service of Thanksgiving for her life and ministry will be held within evensong on 15 January 2023 at 3.30pm in Birmingham Cathedral (St Philip's). All are welcome.

✠ *Janet Chapman is Rector of Northfield and former Canon Liturgist at Birmingham Cathedral. She was Secretary of Praxis Midlands 2009 – 2013.*

### **Common Worship: Baptism and Confirmation Services**

*Church House Publishing, 2022*

Another *Common Worship* volume, this time in a restrained blue cover.

This book has sifted out the liturgies for baptism and confirmation from *Christian Initiation* (2006) and added in subsequent authorized material, including the Accessible Language texts.

Do we need another book like this when so much will be obtained online?

Don't throw away your *Christian Initiation* book as 'Rites supporting Reconciliation and Restoration' and some of the 'Approaching Baptism' texts are not included in this book. That still leaves plenty!

Helpfully, it sets out the rites with and without the newer material and also

includes a large section for the President. This lays out in full the relevant orders, so that the whole of the pathway or map for the service can be seen, rather than the usual rubrics guiding the user to alternatives.

The texts for the Eucharistic Prayers aren't included, which might be a drawback for some.

I still have a quibble with the title 'In accessible language' suggesting everything else must be inaccessible in some way or other. I also think there's no need to direct non-eucharistic service users into another template halfway through the 'in a service of Holy Communion' order, when a non-eucharistic order is provided for clearly elsewhere in the book (p. 25).

The book admits that this whole area of liturgy is now 'challenging' in what is available; the new volume does set out the wide range of possibilities with clarity, once the book is studied with care.

✠ *Richard Mitchell is Canon Precentor of Gloucester Cathedral.*

### **Patterns for Baptism**

*Church House Publishing, 2022*

This new publication brings together in a single volume all the existing authorized *Common Worship* baptism material.

The introductory section gives valuable insights into the theology underpinning baptism and guidance on specific aspects of the rite, and the first main section gives outlines of four standard structures, together with notes.

Arguably the most useful part of the volume is the extensive Resource Section, which has been laid out with clarity and ease of use very much in mind. The liturgy is divided into 20 sub-sections, each beginning on a new pair of pages, with all the available liturgical texts, including seasonal material, on the right-hand page, and comprehensive notes and commentary opposite on the left. The unusually large amount of blank paper within this section is justified by the consequent clarity of the layout.

The following section comprises seven fully-worked sample services, some of which, in accessible language, are designed to complement the existing

'Holy Baptism' card (2016), while others provide variants of the standard *Common Worship* liturgies. Guidance notes for particular circumstances follow. Finally, the four imaginary churches familiar to users of *New Patterns for Worship* are re-named and expanded to eight, providing some useful ideas for baptism services in a wide variety of contexts.

Other than the expansion of previously published notes and commentary, there is little new material in this volume: its undoubted value lies in its gathering together of all the available material in a format which is clear and easy to access. A well thought-out, practical volume which deserves a place on the bookshelf of all ministers of baptism in the Church of England.

✍ *Judy Anderson is a Licensed Lay Minister in the Diocese of Salisbury*

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## **Grove Worship 253: Understanding the Eucharistic Prayer**

by Charles Read. Grove Books, 2022

This next booklet in the Worship series aims to offer an introduction to the Eucharistic Prayer in terms of its structures and theology. It arises out of what Charles and others have been teaching in colleges and courses over the last 20 years. There is an explanation of how modern Eucharistic Prayers are shaped and some discussion of where Eucharistic Prayers come from. There is a survey of key theological issues and why people disagree over eucharistic theology. The booklet is aimed at being something which can be used in colleges and courses and which anyone interested in why Eucharistic Prayers are the way they are could find useful. Although written by an Anglican, it looks at Eucharistic Prayers ecumenically and there is a particular emphasis on Methodist contributions to eucharistic praying.

**I** ONCE HEARD THAT, when Harold MacMillan was asked why declared policies had not or could not be implemented, he replied 'Events, dear boy, events'. So I expected to report the liturgical return from Covid, but events interrupted: the Queen departed at last, having tidily reached her Platinum Jubilee. And events galore ensued, all with a liturgical component to them. Of course, they were not put together quickly at 24 hours' notice — indeed I recall Ronald Jasper being late for a Liturgical Commission meeting over 50 years ago, apologizing because he had been planning the Queen's funeral. So, with no doubt some revisiting at intervals, the programme has sat in a locked box labelled 'London Bridge', until the day came and the box was opened. And in with the meticulously rehearsed marching columns of troops, horses, gun-carriage, military bands, vigils and brilliant coffin-bearers came the liturgical texts. They are no doubt reported with wild enthusiasm in earlier pages — my task, I fear, is to scrutinize.

First was the service at St Paul's of 'Prayer and Reflection' on the day after her death. To have the doors open to all who chose to come was highly laudable, though, apart from the welcome hymns (HMQ's own choice?), the choral music rather indulged the choir and did not really meet the people. My problem was in the very mood — negatively, that only one word in the text gave thanks for a great life (the sermon rather corrected that), but positively, the cast of the wording was to pray for the departed monarch as though, contrary to what we were otherwise affirming, she was in need of rest and peace. There are no doubt a number of Anglicans who want to pray 'Rest eternal grant unto her, and let light perpetual shine on her'; but many do not, and it was accordingly not thought appropriate for inclusion in the *Common Worship* funeral or memorial services; it was not even in the 'commended' supplementary texts in *Pastoral Services*. Surely the Liturgical Commission had nothing to do with its inclusion in London Bridge?

The funeral itself at the Abbey was announced as from the 1662 Prayer Book — and it largely was just that, and very fittingly so, again with fine hymns and choice of psalms. And just because it was

1662 (yes, not even 1928/Series 1), it did not lead us into the misleading petitions for the dead. We had a good slice of the set 1 Corinthians 15, with an addition from John 14 (reading this was perhaps one of the best things in Liz Truss's premiership). And a superb archiepiscopal sermon. The only jarring note was the recurrence from the earlier service of that clumsy shopping-list blessing: 'God grant to the living grace, to the departed rest, etc.' which is not only at odds with the BCP but is also unknown to *Common Worship*. I call it clumsy not only because it prays for the dead, but also because it goes into its shopping-list without citing attributes of God, and because its object is thoroughly third-personal and then switches to the congregation with the second person.

And then there was Windsor, and in with the splendid hymns and the moving dignity of the committal, we were back again in the half-lit world of petitions for rest eternal and light perpetual. Here the blessing was not the shopping-list one but the eightfold injunction, 'Go forth into the world in peace...' etc — not misleading, but again not from our official services — and rightly not.

The 'shopping-list' showed up again at cathedral services here — and in the text sent down by some authority and placed in my hands for the parochial remembrance service. Why do they do it? Well, I substituted the blessing from Order One. Some, at least, of this we will be spared at the coronation. But what, I muse, is in preparation for when the next royal funeral comes, and who constitutes the unseen parallel liturgical commission?

## **This Issue's 50th Anniversary**

... has to be the Final Approval in November 1972 of Series 3 Holy Communion — the Church of England's first lawful modern liturgical text. The total vote in Synod was 298 for and 19 against. Green booklets came in January.

✍ *Colin Buchanan is a former Bishop of Woolwich.*