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Transforming Worship News

Bishop Robert reflects

In the second instalment of our interview with the retiring president of Transforming Worship, Bishop Robert Atwell reflects on the work of the Liturgical Commission past, present and future. Bishop Robert was Chair of the Liturgical Commission until his retirement this autumn. Bishop Robert continues...

Common Worship

ONE OF THE THINGS that distinguishes the Church of England from other churches, as it emerged from the Reformation, is that it is a liturgical church. That is why the Book of Common Prayer has been a milestone in our journey as English Christians and still, in some sense, is our 'gold standard'.

I am one of the few people who still have a nostalgia for the *Alternative Service Book 1980* (ASB). There was something wonderful about the ASB because it was in one book. What concerns me about *Common Worship* is that there isn't a lot of 'common' about it. I always say, "less is more". To the extent that I've been able to influence matters, as the Liturgical Commission has been commissioned to write new material, I have encouraged us not to craft a plethora of alternatives. I

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think it is better to have a strong structure, to give guidance and to err on the shorter side. Coherence is important. In my view, there is a danger that we're losing our liturgical coherence as Anglicans in the variety of alternatives.

'As language evolves, I'm absolutely certain that what we have at the moment will, in due course, feel archaic and be dumped in the way that the ASB was dumped. But at the moment, there is no appetite amongst the bishops that the library which constitutes *Common Worship* should be replaced.'

One of the first texts of *Common Worship* was the Psalter and 'I fully expect a new version of it to be commissioned at some stage, though this may not be in the next decade or even in my lifetime.'

Editorial

THE publication schedule means that this edition is being compiled just as General Synod meets in London. *Prayers of Love and Faith* take a good deal of the agenda. We will provide a liturgical analysis of those prayers in *TWN* once the precise nature and status of their authorization or commendation is clear. We understand that a Grove Booklet on the matter is also planned. Sticking firmly to comments on the process from a liturgical point of view, it is certainly unusual that the Liturgical Commission has not been invited to bring its expertise to bear more fully during the drafting process, and we can hypothesize as to why that might be. The proposal going to General Synod that *individual prayer resources* will be simply commended for use by the House of Bishops for use privately or in regular scheduled acts of worship, whilst the *full stand-alone acts of worship* will require full synodical scrutiny and approval under Canon B2 is also odd, as it is surely in the text of the actual prayers that the doctrinal content is found, the draft outline services being little more than outworkings of a Service of the Word. This matters because the liturgy, for the Church of England, is the repository of our faith: That our 'historic formularies' 'bear witness to' our faith in a particular and important way is part of our Anglican identity: the '*lex orandi, lex credendi*'. Keep praying.

I need to apologize for my innumeracy! The last edition was of course the *first* edition of *Transforming Worship News*, not the 79th!

✍ Tom Clammer OC, Editor.

Bp Robert

Consultation

THE Commission learnt a lot through the stages of revision of the initiation liturgies. 'The trouble with the initiation liturgies was that they were not piloted. That was one of the reasons why they had to be revised. Since then, everything else has been trialled before commendation and publication.'

At the time of this interview (June 2023) the outcome of the 'Prayers of Love and Faith' was not known. However, commenting on the process of gathering this suite of prayers: 'There has been significant input in the revision process. For example, there was a requirement that the draft prayers which General Synod discussed in February should be 'refined' in the light of the comments submitted by members of the General Synod of which there were no fewer than 226. So there has been extensive consultation. Can we please everybody? No. It is an impossibility. In the end, as with all liturgy, one produces a text, you pilot it, you get feedback, and you refine it and refine it and refine it.'

Funeral ministry

WHEN I was ordained in 1978, over 90% of the funerals in this country were conducted by Anglican clergy. Now it is something like 10%. The landscape of funerals is continuing to evolve. We cannot control that but we need to speak into it. At the same time, we need to be resourcing our ministers and providing them with ways of responding to this new way of death, and particularly how they can help people grieve appropriately. The

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secular funeral celebrant offers empathy. The Christian minister offers hope. As Christian ministers, we ought to have confidence in the Gospel of hope.

‘One worrying thing is the marketing of direct cremations. Increasingly, people are not having funerals, but being presented with a box of ashes by undertakers. What are they going to do with them? These cremated remains should be interred but provision in *Common Worship* for this [interment] is limited, because the expectation is that you would have already had a proper funeral. In a funeral the deceased person would have been commended to God and will have had their body committed to be cremated. Now all of that has been swept away.’ The existing liturgical provision ‘cannot bear the weight of what is now sometimes happening. This gap in our provision was exposed particularly during the pandemic, when funerals services were curtailed and people didn’t have the opportunity to grieve.’ Additional liturgical provision is on the agenda of the Liturgical Commission.

A diverse nation and church

The Bishop continues, ‘In our generation, we’re conscious of living in a global village, and particularly of the rich ethnic diversity that exists in the United Kingdom. This needs to be reflected in the liturgy of our Church and our calendar.

‘New prayers and liturgies for Racial Justice Sunday and Black History Month are part of a current project. The Church of England has set up a Racial Justice Commission under Lord Paul Boateng,

and our two Commissions have been working in partnership on this. I look forward to seeing what emerges, but it will be after I’ve retired. A principle of the Liturgical Commission is that you write liturgy with people, not for them. When it comes to racial justice, we are making sure that this principle is followed.

‘One of the things being mooted is to see how liturgies from other parts of the Anglican Communion can be used in the Church of England in appropriate ways. There is a richness there to be explored. We are mindful of the fact that there are some communities, particularly in cities, in which the majority of people in the building are not [ethnically] English.

Gendered language

‘For some people, and perhaps many younger people, using exclusively male gendered language in relation to the Almighty is problematic. How do we handle that? We believe in God the Holy Trinity, and God is, in Rudolph Otto’s phrase: *Mysterium Tremendum et Fascinans* [an awe-inspiring mystery]. Language continues to evolve, and finding the right language is a major challenge because there is no way we will be praying, ‘Our Parent in heaven’. We must avoid lowest common denominator worship, and one of the functions of the Liturgical Commission is to ensure that the quality of the language we use is the best.’

✍ *Interview conducted in June 2023 by Paul Kingdom, a rector of rural parishes in the Exeter Diocese and treasurer and administrator of Transforming Worship.*

Reimagining Training

A PASSION FOR WORSHIP can be infectious, and it is fair to say that enthusiasm is caught rather than taught. However, good quality training is required if a skill is to be nurtured, honed and developed creatively. Our role as an organization has always been regarded as an important conduit for liturgical training. This is needed more than ever both nationally and locally as many dioceses move towards 'lay focal ministry', when a key lay person (usually a Reader or Licensed Lay Minister) is given responsibility for a particular church congregation. At the same time, a growing number of younger curates have not grown up with the *Book of Common Prayer* or lived through the liturgical developments of the past sixty years. As a result, they can lack understanding of the fundamentals of Anglican worship in terms of its heritage, ecclesiology and doctrine. Why might it be a reasonable expectation that worship leaders are obedient to the Canons, the Rubrics, or the Bishop? Why might consistency matter? Alongside this, we have seen a radical reduction in the provision of dedicated liturgists teaching worship in theological institutions. Since leading worship remains a core skill for ordained and lay ministers alike, these issues underline the ongoing need for quality training in liturgy and worship for the future wellbeing of the church.

Although in-person training is invaluable, the appetite for it has gradually waned over the past twenty years. Covid-19 served to accelerate a move towards more online training, including

in Initial Ministerial Education and Continuing Ministerial Development. Indeed, many in-person events that are also live-streamed have more participants present online than physically in the room. As a worship training provider, Transforming Worship has adapted well to this trend. The South and Southwest regions organized online events on Liturgy for Celebration (in preparation for the Platinum Jubilee) and Opportunities around the Coronation with keynote speakers, which were readily accessed from right across the country.

Peer-led, colloquia-style online discussions have become a regular part of the training provision for other regions, namely Yorkshire, North and East. These are proving both time- and cost-effective. This forum is particularly useful for tackling current hot topics and innovations, drawing on the expertise of those already experimenting within their local contexts. Recent discussions have included Outdoor Worship, Intergenerational Worship, Rural Worship, Sacred Space and Environmentally Aware Worship. Sessions exploring Worship in Pilgrimage (North) and The Worship of Lament (East) will also have taken place by the time this goes to print.

In the September edition, Bishop Robert spoke about an ideal – an act of worship every Sunday in every parish – and therefore a desire to identify and train those people who will become competent in leading the local people of God in worship, particularly in rural communities. This involves a mix of skills: a deepening

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understanding of what worship is; how to put it together well; and how to lead it well. As a training organization, Transforming Worship is already addressing this challenge.

Nowadays, when we want to find out how to do something, we look for a video on the internet. In line with this trend, we are beginning to introduce some new DIY video PowerPoint training materials, which can be accessed alone or as part of a small group. A Simple Guide to Planning and Leading Worship is already available, particularly aimed at those in rural areas who find themselves involved in leading worship with little or no training. Three teaching videos are accompanied by additional downloadable resources. These have been field tested and well received, with hopefully more similar training materials to follow. For more information, email: training@transformingworship.news

The worship of God is not an optional extra; it is foundational, and raising the quality of worship in our churches is an ongoing task. As we move into a new phase, changing our name from Praxis to Transforming Worship, we are excited at fresh opportunities to equip those leading worship. Our ongoing desire is that worship should enrich the Church and enable congregations to experience an inspiring and transforming encounter with God.

✍ Helen Bent is a Worship Consultant for Transforming Worship and Associate Priest in the Walgrave Benefice in the Diocese of Peterborough.

Event review

Having Confidence in Liturgy as Mission

Transforming Worship South,

12 October 2023

The Revd Dr Ian Paul led a session which was both informative and stimulating for Transforming Worship South on Zoom in October. After taking us on a journey through his own liturgical experience he framed the discussion around insiders and outsiders in a liturgical context, startling us with survey findings that most Anglican worshippers would not invite friends or neighbours to their regular act of worship. Why should this be, he challenged us, and then began to unpack some of the ways in which liturgy, and the culture around us, may or may not be compatible.

He used the very pertinent symbol of steps up to often opaque or closed doors to invite us to think of this physical illustration as a metaphor for the steps and barriers through which unchurched enquirers may feel they need to pass before feeling part of a community and open to religious experience.

One of the most fascinating aspects of the input was a discussion of the shape of the Eucharist and the various transition points from 'gathering' to 'confessing' to 'collecting', and on to the great encounter with the story of salvation and the final being 'sent out'. It was so helpful to step

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outside what can so easily be routine and think about why we are doing what we are doing, and ask how aware the congregation might be of the direction of the Eucharist towards mission. This tied up with the provoking perspective of liturgy as the 'meeting place' leading to the 'training place' leading to the market place.

The breakout groups were given some difficult questions, for example: 'How does your congregation feel about being missional and how well does your congregation understand the shape of the liturgy?' In one sense another question – 'Do you have a culture of invitation and welcome?' – is easier to answer in practical terms.

The final input included consideration of issues such as books and/or screens, how to be inclusive in terms of accessibility, so (for example) saying, 'Please stand if you are able to', and was interspersed with questions on inhabiting the liturgical space. Simple explanations can run into intrusive commentary, the distraction of 'fuss and faffing'. How do we welcome the 'outsider' whilst keeping a sense of mystery? Could the ways in which our culture offers a glimpse of transcendence in other settings teach us something here?

Dr Paul sent us out thinking creatively and, for me, unexpectedly, about how the three key elements of the title: confidence, liturgy, and mission, must go together. He reminded us of some useful resources, especially Grove Booklets. As someone who, I suspect, often views liturgy as an escape, I need to rethink the balance between comfort and challenge.

The two keynote addresses were recorded and are available on the Transforming Worship South YouTube channel; the address of that channel can be found on page 15. They are really worth watching and sharing with ministry teams and congregations.

✍ Rosemary Walters, *Transforming Worship South*

Liturgical Look Ahead

Most of us will already have twigged that **Advent** this year is very short – exactly 3 weeks long – which will doubtless be concertina-ing many of our observations. It's also one of those years where **Epiphany** falls on a Saturday, meaning that many, if not most, parish churches are likely to transfer it to Sunday, 7 January. That, of course, shunts the **Feast of the Baptism of Christ** onto the Monday, where it is likely to languish largely unnoticed. Although not encouraged by the rules, on a couple of occasions I have resolved this by keeping Epiphany in the morning, and focusing on the Baptism of Christ in the evening, which might be a solution where you are. Alternatively you might think about using some of the rich resources for the Baptism of Christ later in the season of Epiphany, gathering up those themes with the material for Unity, to mark the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

It's a very short period of **Ordinary Time** before Lent as well: just the two Sundays, so the focus on Creation that we get some years in February rather disappears, though we do revisit the Johannine prologue. [Ed].

Music Matters

Summer conferences 2024

The National Network of Pastoral Musicians will hold its annual conference at The Hayes, Swanwick, from Friday 26 to Sunday 28 July 2024, with the theme 'Christ, be our light' (familiar to many as the opening line of the refrain of Bernadette Farrell's song 'Longing for light'). Keynote speakers include the Iona Community's John Bell addressing the paucity of hymns about the earthly life of Christ in comparison to his birth and death (an issue he has sought to grapple with in his own writing), and Tina Beattie exploring how liturgical worship, including music, might allow space for those struggling with faith and those on the margins to seek meaning and to overcome experiences of church which have left them feeling alienated.

Among the workshop leaders will be Marty Haugen, from Minnesota; his title is 'Drawn to the light' and he will explore how we can serve as the hands and feet of Jesus, how our music in worship can be used in reconciliation and healing, and how we can be a prophetic witness for the life and future of our planet. He is perhaps best known in the UK for the hymn 'Let us build a house' ('All are welcome'). More conference details from Jennifer BurrIDGE (jburrIDGE@me.com).

Just before the NNPM conference, members and friends of the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland will be gathering at High Leigh Christian

Conference Centre in Hertfordshire (www.cct.org.uk/high-leigh/high-leigh-conference-centre) run by the same Christian Conference Trust as Swanwick. The Hymn Society conference dates are Tuesday 23 to Friday 26 July. No speakers have yet been announced.

New carols

Oxford University Press has published another volume in their much-loved *Carols for Choirs* series, famously begun in 1961 with the 'green book', a collection of fifty Christmas carols arranged by Reginald Jacques and David Willcocks (then overseeing the chapel music at King's College, Cambridge). It also included readings for Services of Nine Lessons and Carols. The 'orange book' followed in 1970 with fifty more carol arrangements for SATB choirs, some with accompaniment and some without. Edited and arranged by David Willcocks and John Rutter, it included texts more suitable for Advent than Christmas. These collections were to serve carol concerts as well as school and church services for many years, and they provided now-familiar descants for Christmas hymns such as Charles Wesley's 'Hark! The herald angels sing'.

Carols for Choirs 3 was blue; *Carols for Choirs* 4 (red) provided repertoire for upper-voice choirs; and in 1988 a bigger anthology was published (*100 Carols for Choirs*), which drew many of the most popular items from the first three books and added some new ones. A few pieces

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were suitable for worship during Epiphany or Easter (e.g. ‘This joyful Eastertide’).

Carols for Choirs 5 appeared with a gold cover in 2011, edited by Bob Chilcott and David Blackwell; while the representation of women composers was still thin, the first item in the book was Cecilia McDowell’s chorally demanding ‘A heavenly song’.

Diversity is more conspicuous in Volume Six, which celebrates the centenary of the Oxford University Press Music Department and brings new names and styles to the series: a number of contemporary composers were commissioned to write carols for the book, edited by David Hill and including arrangements by Bob Chilcott, who also provided his own setting of the lovely text ‘Jesus Christ the apple tree’.

In Errollyn Wallen’s ‘The road to refuge’ she draws comparisons between the nativity story and modern refugees; the choral and piano writing is quite challenging so this is again one for more accomplished choirs. Slightly simpler, but with sung chords demanding careful tuning (with some organ support), is ‘A Present for the Future’ by Joanna Forbes L’Estrange.

Two settings are provided of ‘There is no rose’, an anonymous early English text with a focus on the Virgin Mary: one is by Ben Parry, the other by Laura Walker. On a similar theme, Joel Thompson has provided ‘The Rose’. Musicians aware of the popularity of the melody we think of as GREENSLEEVES may enjoy looking at the arrangement of ‘What child is this’ by Phillip Moore and the setting of the same

text (a hymn by William Chatterton Dix) by Becky McGlade.

Samples from the book have been recorded – listen on OUP’s SoundCloud website – while a video of a conversation between the compilers, David Hill and Bob Chilcott, can be found at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=C33eKtmXtqs>. A spiral-bound version of the book is offered to help conductors, pianists and organists keep the book open on their music stand; always a bonus.

Meanwhile, the RSCM published in 2020 a collection of 42 carols for Advent and Christmas by 26 composers – written during lockdown – for sopranos, altos and unison men’s voices (SAMen choirs), the kind of repertoire valued now by many church choirs who cannot muster the full complement of SATB. This book includes a beautifully simple setting by the editor, David Ogden, of Timothy Dudley-Smith’s ‘Christmas Blessing’: ‘Christ is come, the child adored’. Composer David Hall has set another of this distinguished author’s texts, the better-known ‘Holy child, how still you lie’.

Full details can be found on the RSCM shop and publications website (www.rscmshop.com), where you can look at sample pages in flipbook format; choir directors who would like rehearsal tracks to help singers learn their parts should contact the publisher. Information on the *Carols for Choirs* series is available on the same site.

Encore Publications also have a new carol collection, *Carols of our Time: Hymns and Carols for Advent, Christmas, Epiphany & Candlemas* for mixed-voice choirs. All

Anne Harrison

were composed or arranged by women, one of the compilers and editors being Sarah MacDonald, Fellow and Director of Music at Selwyn College, Cambridge. For further details visit <www.encorepublications.com/news>.

Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924)

A hymnological centenary some might like to observe early in 2024 is the one hundredth anniversary of the death in Devon on 2 January 1924 of Sabine Baring-Gould, who was approaching his ninetieth birthday when he died. As well as writing in many other genres, he was a hymn writer, most famously of ‘Onward, Christian soldiers’ but also of the gentler ‘Now the day is over’, first published in the *Church Times* in 1867 – the author also wrote a tune for it, EUDOXIA.

Baring-Gould translated hymns as well: ‘Through the night of doubt and sorrow’ is from the Danish of Bernhardt Severin Ingemann (1789-1862), while ‘The angel Gabriel from heaven came’ is his free rendering of a Basque original.

Festival of Faith and Music

The Royal School of Church Music and the *Church Times* (owned by Hymns Ancient & Modern) are joining forces for a weekend festival in York from Friday 26 to

Sunday 28 April 2024; booking is already open via <<http://faithandmusic.hymnsam.co.uk>>. The event is aimed at clergy, music leaders of various kinds, and anyone with an interest or involvement in church music. The programme will mainly run on the Friday and Saturday but for those who can stay for the Sunday, the celebration of music in worship will continue in York Minster.

Advent song

A short song from Matt Weeks of the Resound Worship songwriting community may be helpful this Advent: ‘Do not be afraid’ (www.resoundworship.org/song/not-afraid).

Celebration song

What a wonderful way to celebrate a centenary! Welsh singer-songwriter and broadcaster Mal Pope (b.1960) was invited to write a song for the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon, part of the Church in Wales, to be performed at their all-age centenary celebration on 9 September 2023 at the Royal Welsh Showground.

The resulting song/anthem, performed in English and in Welsh, was ‘For This Reason’ or ‘Am Y Rheswm Hyn’, inspired by verses from Ephesians 3 but also drawing on phrases from psalms and other biblical material. The writer once described in a radio broadcast how his musical gifts were shaped initially by his background

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in a Swansea Gospel Hall where the congregation sang hymns and Sankey songs in unaccompanied four-part harmony. He went on to a musical career working with a number of celebrated popular musicians (including Art Garfunkel) and writing works for musical theatre in Welsh. He also recorded the title track for the cartoon *Fireman Sam*!

Backing tracks and full piano/choral scores of his new song were made available to churches and schools in time for them to learn the words and music, and recordings were made in a variety of styles around the diocese, including one by the choir and organist of Brecon Cathedral. At the festival itself, male-voice choir Only Men Aloud led the closing performance, along with the composer himself.

A search on <<https://songselect.ccli.com>> will lead to various YouTube videos of 'For This Reason', including one with lyrics; words and music are covered by CCLI copyright licences. They may also be downloaded, with the usual restrictions, from the diocesan website <<https://swanseaandbrecon.churchinwales.org.uk/en>>. The way the music is constructed allows plenty of scope for musicians to improvise 'in the gaps', whether as part of a praise band, brass ensemble or other instrumental group.

Regional Hymn Society event

Union Chapel, Islington, N1 2UN, is to be the venue for a London-based regional

event of the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland, from 10.30 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. on Saturday 20 April 2024. The chapel is conveniently close to Highbury and Islington station.

The speakers will include Gemma Birt (an Anglican priest), Ken Walker (a retired Baptist minister) and James Dickinson from Chesterfield, well known to Hymn Society members. They will select hymns for a closing act of worship, but first will address topics including Free Church hymnody over the last fifty years; the attitudes to hymnody of Reformers Luther, Calvin and Zwingli; the question of whether *Hymns Ancient & Modern* and *The English Hymnal* should be regarded as rivals or partners; and an analysis of how the Covid pandemic has affected congregations in relation to singing.

While it is not essential to book a place in advance, those interested could help the organisers by contacting John Webber, <maggieandjohn1@gmail.com>, tel 020 8650 9164, who will be able to say in due course what the charge for attendance will be. Participants are requested to bring a packed lunch, but drinks will be provided.

Did you know...

... that one of Transforming Worship's three sponsoring bodies is the *Alcuin Club*? This excellent organization dedicated to the study of liturgy and worship has recently updated and refreshed its website. Do have a look, and consider joining. <www.alcuinclub.org.uk>

Learning Opportunities

Transforming Worship Yorkshire

The Sun Doesn't Always Shine: Exploring liturgical responses to death, bereavement and All Souls' Day.

Monday 17 June 2024.

Leeds Minster, and online.

Keynote Speaker: John Bell, hymnwriter, Church of Scotland minister and member of the Iona Community.

Save the date! More information in the March edition of TWN.

Transforming Worship: a Simple Guide to Planning and Leading Worship

'I think this needs to go viral! It is clear, easy to follow, ideas develop well, and each section is achievable.' (Jill Hall, Exeter Diocese)

This brand new course is made up of three video PowerPoints, compiled and narrated by the Revd Helen Bent, a respected author and trainer of worship leaders. It explores why we worship, how we craft inspiring worship, and how we lead well with confidence and sensitivity.

To access the course, email: training@transformingworship.news

Sarum College, Salisbury

Revisiting Lent, Holy Week and Easter Thursday 31 January 2024, 9.30 - 12.30, on Zoom. £35

Speaker: Canon Dr Tom Clammer, OC.

As we reach Candlemas, our minds will already be turning to how we will observe Lent and Easter in our parishes and communities, and in our own devotional life.

This half-day online course will seek to revisit the distinctive themes of this wonderful period of the Christian year, focusing particularly on Holy Week and Eastertide, but noting also how this season is embedded in the preceding season of Lent.

The great Paschal cycle has distinctive liturgical opportunities, theological and doctrinal themes that emerge through the Scriptures which we read as we move through the season. It differs from Advent and Christmas in that it is not so embedded in popular culture, but there are still lots of opportunities for engagement. How do we structure a Lent, Holy Week and Easter in a way that helps us to proclaim the deep truths of this season both in our current worshipping communities, and in the wider community? In half a day we won't be able to plumb all of these depths, but there will be opportunity for input, reflection, conversation, and the sharing of best practice.

RSCM and Church Times Festival of Faith and Music

See details on p.9 under Music Matters.

*Book directly through Sarum College:
<<https://www.sarum.ac.uk/short-courses/revisiting-lent-and-eastertide/>>*

Hopes for the Future

As we settle into our new identity as Transforming Worship News, previous editors of various iterations of the journals that have led us to this point offer some reflections on their tenure, and their 'take' on the landscape of worship in the Church of England. Here is the first. More will follow through next year.

I'm grateful for the invitation to reflect on the issues that continue to challenge, excite or frustrate me about how we worship. During my short time as editor, I tried, through the Praxis publications, to represent a broad cross-section of views and experiences. I also welcomed the opportunity for contributors to share some theological reflections on their lived experience of liturgy in practice. At the end of June, I retired from my 'day job' at York Minster, but continue to be involved in parish life as a Director of Music. Working in a traditional context, it's encouraging to see that some university students are still drawn to words and music that have deep roots. Others will, of course, look elsewhere for a style that is more contemporary. My hope, is that we can all recognize and respect different responses to God's revelation, as long as they are authentic and grow out of a living faith, nourished by word, sacrament and the witness and mutual support of those who gather faithfully week by week.

✍ *Tim Hone edited Praxis News of Worship between 2010 and 2011.*

Obituaries

David Silk

(Robert) David Silk, Roman Catholic priest and former Anglican priest and bishop died on 20 September 2023 following an accident. *I am indebted to David Hebblethwaite OBE for providing a good deal of the following tribute. [Ed.]*

David Silk was a highly significant liturgist, having served on the Liturgical Commission of the Church of England for several terms. David was on the 1975-80 Commission that managed the transition from *Series 3* to the *Alternative Service Book*. He formed something of a 'duo' with Colin Buchanan, brokering the balanced accommodation over anamnesis across the churchmanship divide. In the 1981-86 Commission much of the focus was on the production of *Lent, Holy Week and Easter*. From 1986-91 David was in the midst of the work towards *The Promise of His Glory*, particularly the details of the lectionary suggestions. That led to his being part of the unofficial grouping that negotiated with the Society of St Francis on their office book *Celebrating Common Prayer*, which became the foundation for *Common Worship: Daily Prayer*.

During the 1991-94 term David had left the Commission but, as Archdeacon of Leicester and Prolocutor of the Convocation of Canterbury, was well placed to facilitate liturgical business in the Synod, and was noted for the pastoral eye that he kept upon the Synod office staff.

David was consecrated the eighth Bishop of Ballarat in Australia in 1994. On his return to England in 2003 he served for

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18 months as parish priest of St Michael's, Amberley, before retiring to Devon where he was made an Honorary Assistant Bishop in the diocese of Exeter. He was received into the Roman Catholic Church in 2011, ordained deacon and subsequently priest in February of that year, and in June 2012 he was elevated to the rank of Monsignor.

His influence upon the shape and tone of our current liturgical material cannot be underestimated.

Hilary Spurgeon

Transforming Worship South Committee is sorry to record the death of Hilary Spurgeon in August. Hilary was a valued friend and, as Treasurer, brought many financial and organisational skills from her banking background to our deliberations. Hilary was a meticulous planner and a joy to work with. She was a Lay Canon Emeritus of Portsmouth Cathedral and a long-serving and much-loved Lay Reader in the churches of Binstead, Havenstreet, Wotton and beyond on the Isle of Wight and in the Diocese. The huge attendance at her funeral in All Saints, Ryde was a witness to the affection and respect for her ministry. We shall also miss that friendship and ministry in our committee.

✠ Rosemary Walters, *Transforming Worship South*.

Books

The Eucharist in Four Dimensions: The Meanings of Communion in Contemporary Culture.

Jessica Martin, Canterbury Press, 2023, 160 pp., pb £14.99.

Although one in a series of three books by Jessica Martin, *The Eucharist in Four Dimensions* stands on its own as an accessible yet deep exploration of how the Eucharist works in today's world. Martin spends some time in the introduction setting out the parameters for this endeavour: it's not a book about the history, formation, or structure of the eucharistic liturgy, but it does reflect on some of those things to do its work. It is a book about how the history of disagreement has fed some of the scepticism and doubt about what is real in the Eucharist, and how it therefore continues to exist and work in our post-modern world, which is sceptical of authority, scripture, and the reality of the intangible.

Key to the structure of the book is its titular four-dimensional analysis. After the introduction, the chapters follow a process of layering dimensions. Martin begins with the point (which is both a non-dimensional location and the heart of a thing) and moves on to consider the two-dimensional aspect of liturgy consumed via a screen and the words on the page, before adding the physically-present third dimension of space and finally the transcendent nature of the Eucharist 'where what was comes to abide

Books

with what is and reaches towards what will be’.

Martin’s history as a teacher of English Literature is clear, in her handling of texts to give perspective on each of the chapters’ dimensions, and also in her writing, which is both academic and beautiful, dense and lyrical, wandering and structured. She is good at providing points of view without overly pushing any one as correct, although she does also offer her opinions, carefully flagged as such. The book teaches in the best sense: it provides an underpinning of knowledge not to reach conclusions, but to empower the reader in wrestling with what arises from within themselves as well as what is provided.

Jessica Martin is a Residentiary Canon of Ely Cathedral, and her practical and pastoral experience of the Eucharist in particular and ministry in general are sensitively and helpfully woven into this exploration, so that it does not become dry or remote. There is a tendency for her to repeat herself at various points (as preachers are wont to do), including the re-use of exact quotations; it comes across as reinforcement, and gives a sense that the structure of this book would lend itself to devotional reading and contemplation. There is a great deal of meat here, and although it can be consumed in a few sittings (the book is only an introduction, with four chapters spread through 116 pages), it is worth dwelling with over an extended time.

✍ *David Gardiner is Vicar of Lydney and Woolaston with Alvington and Aylburton, Diocese of Gloucester.*

Grove Booklets

Several Grove Booklets in the Worship series have been published in recent months, including:

W256, *How to Worship Outdoors*, by Coryn Stanforth. 2023.

Outdoor worship is deeply rooted in Scripture. Throughout the history of the church worship has taken place outdoors, often out of necessity - but there are positive reasons for engaging with nature as part of our devotion. This helpful study explores these reasons, and offers a wealth of ideas and advice for worshipping together outdoors in a wide range of contexts. Coryn Stanforth is an assistant curate in rural Norfolk with a background in education.

Those interested in developing their ministry of outdoor worship might also want to review Grove Spirituality Booklet S164, *Muddy Church: An Introductory Guide*, by Wendy Coleman, 2023.

I intend to focus on outdoor worship in a forthcoming issue of TWN [Ed.]

Just about in time for Christmas, Grove Books also invite us to revisit a number of previously published really helpful titles:

Ev114, *Hosting Mary and Joseph: Posada - An Advent Experience for Your Community*, by Jacqui Horton and Susanna Gunner, 2016.

What is Transforming Worship?

See www.transformingworship.news

Transforming Worship (known until recently as 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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Books

S134, *Reviving Advent, Reclaiming Christmas*, by Ruth Grayson, 2015.

B9, *The Christmas Stories in Faith and Preaching*, by John Proctor, 1998.

Don't forget that these inexpensive and really useful booklets can all be downloaded instantly as PDFs from the Grove Books website (though you can, of course, order hard copies) so all of these could be on your desk for Advent!

Colin's column

It rather looks as though I need to repeat how I started in the last edition – namely that there is only one liturgical matter in the news as I write – *viz* the prayers from the House of Bishops known as Prayers of Love and Faith (PLF). I write before the November General Synod, in which the twists into which the House of Bishops seems to have blundered may possibly be untwisted or, more probably, become worse twisted. So I leave it with the editor to air those issues elsewhere in this edition; but I am not only not ducking out – I am in the process of putting together a Grove Booklet on the topic, and that should be around in the New Year.

So I offer a complete distraction from current conflicts – no less than the Lord's Prayer. I have been reminded, from writing the '50 years ago' snippet below, that, when Series 3 communion was authorized from early 1973, the widespread approval from those using it was qualified

Colin's column

in just one respect. People couldn't get comfortable with the ninth line, 'Do not bring us to the time of trial' (which was the only text facing them from the green booklet). How had it got into that shape?

It all goes back to the ecumenical texts being proposed by ICET (the International Consultation on English Texts). They came up in 1970 with 'Do not bring us to the test.' The reaction in England was not exactly defiance but more like tolerant amusement: do not these clever people in the USA know that in England 'the test' means either the 11-plus or the M.O.T.? Ronald Jasper was not keen to go back to 'temptation' (and Regius Professors from both Oxford and Cambridge underscored his unwillingness) and, aware in 1972 of further thoughts dawning on ICET, he proposed and gained 'Do not bring us to the time of trial.' And so it was authorized and so the people had to be persuaded.

Meanwhile ICET had indeed adopted 'time of trial', but had also changed the verb. So now it became 'Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us...'. You will find that in, for example, Methodist texts to this day. But in 1979 our General Synod went back to 'Lead us not into temptation' in the *Alternative Service Book*. Then in 1998-99, when the Commission was ready to propose 'Save us from the time of trial,' Anthony Thiselton, professor at Nottingham, unaware, I think, of his distinguished predecessors' intervention in 1972, argued to the Synod's satisfaction that it had to be 'temptation', and so it is today.

But it niggles me. What indeed does *peirasmos*, the Greek word, mean? Well, a current answer in the 1970s was the (very plausible) notion that it meant the great trial of God's people which is to come at the end-time. It was that meaning that Anthony Thiselton was opposing. But my own persuasion is that the *peirasmos* may be immediate (I well know what a time of trial in the present tense is) or, yes, it may be eschatological; it may be a trying time inflicted upon me now, or it may be a dark shadow lying across my future – or the world's. I can find scripture for both senses of *peirasmos*. But it does not take me long to be clear that I would like to be delivered from both. Instead I merely have to shrug off temptation.

This Issue's 50th Anniversary

The Worship and Doctrine Measure was on its way in General Synod, and offered the prospect of open-ended or longer-term authorization of services, so a working party was appointed to explore the desirability and nature of a substantial book of modern services. The rest you know.

✍ Colin Buchanan is a former Bishop of Woolwich.