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What is Praxis?

See www.praxisworship.org.uk

Praxis was formed in 1990, sponsored by the Liturgical Commission, the Group for the Renewal of Worship (GROW) and the Alcuin Club to provide and support liturgical education in the Church of England.

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Affiliation

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Crown him with many crowns

THE ORDER OF SERVICE for the Coronation is taking shape somewhere, and our lead articles reflect on the history and significance of that liturgical rite. Congregations and communities will want to mark the coronation itself as well as preparing for it and although, frustratingly, specific information about what liturgical resources for this purpose will be available was not forthcoming as we went to press, General Synod was assured by the Chair of the Liturgical Commission, in response to a question, that 'a variety of resources for worship and prayer' are in the pipeline. Michael Gisbourne, Chris Irvine and Simon Kershaw offer us history, liturgy, insight and some practical suggestions too. There is an opportunity to join in online reflection on all of this on March 16th (see p.7). Just as we went to press a 'Vision and Strategy webinar' on *Celebrating the Coronation in your Local Church* on 9 March was also advertised by the C of E. Google that title to find it. For those who believed that the recipe for coronation chrism was a secret, see page 6!

In response to another Question to the Chair of Lit. Com. at General Synod, we

learned that a piece of work exploring the development of nongendered language for God will begin this spring. The Question raised the specific issue of the challenge of absolutions that contain male pronouns. The reply noted that of course any authorization of new absolutions would require the full synodical process. This promises to be an interesting piece of work.

The House of Bishops' report on Living in Love and Faith, and annexed draft Prayers of Love and Faith, received the 'welcome' of Synod on Thursday 9th February, following substantial and passionate debate. Those draft liturgies will doubtless receive sustained examination and scrutiny, and one opportunity for us to participate in some of that will occur in the Praxis South event currently circling for a landing in June (see p.7).

Finally we note the passing of David Holeton, a distinguished Canadian Anglican liturgist and major founder of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation, and influencer of the move to admit unconfirmed children to communion. *✠ Tom Clammer OC, Editor.*

The Coronation Liturgy

IN 973 AT BATH ABBEY, Edgar was Crowned King of England by Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury. The Coronation service in use derives directly from that compiled by Dunstan over a thousand years ago. It has gone through several revisions or 'recensions' including translation into English for James I. The last major revision was in 1689, but it has been tweaked for each subsequent occasion, new monarchs usually wanting a shorter ceremony than their predecessor's, and new anthems or settings being commissioned. It remains to be seen how much will change in 2023, but the principal elements are clear.

The coronation is set within the Eucharist, as it has been since 973, and most of the ceremonial now takes place after the Creed. There are five main elements:

1. The Recognition

2. The Oath
3. The Anointing
4. The Investiture, culminating in the Crowning
5. The Enthronement and Homage.

The coronation of a Queen Consort follows.

First the Sovereign is introduced as the rightful monarch and acclaimed by the congregation, a vestige of the ancient election of the monarch. In 1953 the Oath was moved to follow this, having previously been at a later point. The monarch promises to protect the Church and to obey the laws of the land. In 1953 the Presentation of the Bible to the monarch followed — since its introduction in 1689 it had been immediately after the Crowning. Only when the Oath has been sworn and the Eucharist begun does the service move on to the Anointing. Zadok has been sung as an

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anthem here since 973, and the sovereign moves to King Edward's Chair (which holds the Stone of Scone) in the Crossing of the Abbey before the Altar, and is stripped. Under a canopy to protect their modesty, they are anointed in the form of a cross on the head, breast, and palms (in the reverse order in 1937 and 1953). Afterwards a white linen undergarment is put on, the *Colobium Sindonis*, and a golden robe, the *Supertunica*, and then the Investiture begins.

The Spurs are brought and touched to the monarch's heels, and the king is girded with the Sword, which he straightaway ungirds and places on the Altar as a gift to the Abbey. It is redeemed for 100 shillings and carried by one of the Peers. Next come the Armills (bracelets) and Stole Royal. These were made in 1953 and their form and role has been unclear since the originals were lost in 1649. The sovereign is vested with the Robe Royal, a golden cloak embroidered with roses, thistles, and shamrocks — and imperial Roman eagles, a reminder that from 973 the English were copying the symbolism of the Byzantine emperor.

The Orb — symbolizing the globe surmounted by the cross — is placed in the monarch's hand, and immediately returned and placed on the Altar. The ring, sapphire with a ruby cross, is put on. Next comes the Sceptre, topped with a cross, and the Rod, with a dove standing on the cross at the top. Finally, the culmination of the investiture, the monarch is crowned with St Edward's Crown. The congregation shout 'God save the King', trumpets sound, and a gun salute is fired from the Tower of London.

The monarch is solemnly blessed by the Archbishop, and moves from King Edward's Chair to the Throne to be enthroned. The bishops do their Fealty together, promising to be 'faithful and true' and the Archbishop kisses the king's left cheek. Then the royal dukes and the other peers pay their Homage and the leading peers kiss his cheek. Historically this has been a lengthy part of the service and might be further shortened.

The Queen's Coronation follows, almost unchanged since 1685. She is anointed — in recent times only on the head — invested with a ring, and then in a survival of an earlier order, crowned.

Finally, she receives a sceptre and a rod, and is enthroned next to the king.

The Eucharist resumes at the offertory, including in 1953 a congregational hymn (Old 100th), instead of an anthem. Traditionally the monarch makes an offering of the bread and wine, an altar-cloth and a pound-weight of gold, and a queen consort similarly.

The service follows the 1662 order with the prayer for the Church Militant, Confession and Comfortable Words. The *Sursum Corda* is followed by a proper preface, *Sanctus*, Humble Access, and Consecration. The Archbishop and assisting clergy receive Communion followed by the King and Queen. There is no general communion. The service continues with the Lord's Prayer, post-communion ('O Lord and heavenly Father') and Gloria. The monarch then moves into St Edward's Chapel, where they are disrobed of their golden vestments, while the choir sings the *Te Deum*. Finally, the monarch and consort process out through the Abbey to the west door.

✍ *Simon Kershaw is a member of the Liturgical Commission and has a long-standing interest in the Coronation. A longer version of this article can be found at <<https://simon.kershaw.org.uk>>*

'God save the [...]'

MOST, IF NOT ALL, OF US will be familiar with words or phrases of prayer and not be entirely sure where they come from. There is a phrase from a prayer that in my mind is associated with the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. It is a beautifully expressed petition and one to which I can heartily say 'Amen'. The memorable petition is this: 'Grant us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions', but how many readers know exactly where this phrase comes from? Well, it comes from the 'Forms of Prayer with Thanksgiving to Almighty God — for use in all churches and chapels within the Realm, every Year, upon the Anniversary of the Day of the Accession of the Reigning Sovereign.' I must admit, I only discovered this fairly recently. Whatever our frame of reference, and however we locate ourselves as Anglicans, those of us who are members

of the Church of England cannot ignore the place that the reigning monarch has in the life and prayer of the Church. Those of us who are ordained and exercise public ministry in the Church must publicly swear allegiance to the Sovereign as the Supreme Governor of the Church of England. This role is more than symbolic, and many of us will be familiar with the role the monarch has in inaugurating and addressing each new General Synod every five years.

Following the death of Elizabeth II, some of the words used in our public worship had to be altered for the following Sunday's services. There was the obvious switch from 'Queen' to 'King' and the changing of personal pronouns in the Collect for the Sovereign in the Prayer Book service of Holy Communion and in a versicle and response in the Prayer Book services of Morning and Evening Prayer. The Coronation Service itself properly belongs to the Archbishop of Canterbury and the royal foundation of Westminster Abbey, but the Liturgical Commission is busy preparing material for use in parishes, communities, and chaplaincies across the nation. Members of the Commission are appointed by the archbishops and represent the whole spectrum of the Church of England and a wide range of expertise and interests. It is brilliantly served by two (very much part-time) officers, the National Worship Adviser, the Revd Dr Matthew Salisbury, and Sue Moore, the administrative Secretary, who I might add without disclosing too many secrets, really holds the memory of the Commission! Both Matthew and Sue, in consultation with the Chair, Bishop Robert of Exeter, and Vice-Chair, Bishop Michael of Lichfield, ensure that the Commission is well resourced to undertake its various tasks. And so, at its last meeting back in October, a briefing paper on the Coronation was compiled and another paper on the Coronation Service by Fr. George Guiver CR was circulated for discussion.

The task we faced was to consider what was required now for parish churches and other communities to rejoice at the King's coronation and to ask what it is that we should be praying for as we look forward to the reign of Charles III. We need the words, words that resonate with

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our deepest hopes for our nation, words that express our joy, and words that have sufficient gravity to fit this extraordinary occasion with all its pageantry and splendour.

And as usual in the Commission's way of working, this task has fallen to a small drafting group with the expectation that what was produced would then be circulated to the wider Commission for comment and refinement. With only two full meetings a year, much of the work is now done electronically. The major projects usually have a longer timeframe, but prayers for the Coronation had to be produced well in advance of the next full meeting of the Commission in May. In its work, and this is especially the case with 'topical prayers', the Commission must work with the Church House Communications Unit based at Lambeth. Another key partner, of course, is Church House Publishing. My understanding is that the resource material compiled to mark the Coronation will be published both electronically as well as in hard copy. In producing this material, the Commission will be entering new territory, as the first meeting of the Church of England's Liturgical Commission was a good eighteen months after the coronation of Elizabeth II. Readers fascinated by this topic may like to know that the Alcuin Club and GROW published a Joint Liturgical Study, *Coronations, Past and Present* (JLS 38) edited by Paul Bradshaw back in 1997, and it's well worth a read. ✍ *Christopher Irvine is Chair of the Alcuin Club and Consultant to the Liturgical Commission.*

Celebrating the Coronation

ON SUNDAY 22 JANUARY, some details of the plans for the Coronation weekend were released. It was natural for the media to be excited by the prospect of a Windsor concert, perhaps on the lines of the one outside Buckingham Palace for Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee last summer. Alongside the headline act, Diana Ross, Buckingham Palace announced some of the world's biggest entertainers. This promises to be an exciting weekend of celebratory activities lasting three days including the Big Help

Out on the extra Bank Holiday Monday. As all those who are regularly involved in preparing excited couples for marriage will know, these other events can only take place if the Coronation ceremonies in Westminster Abbey take place. No one has a wedding reception without the wedding. For readers of this article, then, plans must be put in place to allow those who lead the churches of this land to enable their congregations to pray for the King, mark the Coronation itself and to then celebrate afterwards.

Plans for the Coronation are under wraps, but at Ripon Cathedral in North Yorkshire there are plans to livestream the service including the procession to and from the Abbey. (This, of course, is dependent upon the requirement to have a TV Licence, although there are hopes that, like Her late Majesty's funeral, that requirement may be lifted on the day). The January 22nd announcement did confirm that the service would be in the morning, preceded by the King's procession and followed by the Coronation procession back to Buckingham Palace for the traditional balcony appearance.

It is understood that the Liturgical Commission are preparing a variety of resources for local churches to use. Although nothing has been revealed, choirs may wish to prepare the anthem 'Zadok the Priest', for even if it is not sung at the Coronation service there is a substantial folk memory of it being associated with the last Coronation service. Looking at the resources offered by the Liturgical Commission when Her Majesty the Queen died, we might expect equivalent resources to be prepared for the Coronation. Prayers for the King on the evening before the Coronation might work in some places used to 'Vigil-style' services. A stand-alone service with a little flexibility might be provided, which would help in places where there are heavy demands or where life is busy and it is difficult to get the creative juices flowing. For those who do have a little longer to plan with a group of others, perhaps across several churches, there may well be a variety of suggestions of prayers, hymns and readings. Some of you may remember fondly the hymn that was written by Dominic Grant and published through social media that captured some wonderful poetic images set

to THAXTED from Holst's *Planets* suite (I vow to thee my country); a well-known and evocative tune. It would be worth keeping feelers out for any similar offering of a quality that will support worship.

Now is the time for worship leaders to begin to think creatively about the symbols that may well be used around the Coronation and to ponder ways of how to make the imagery, symbolism and ritual of the Coronation service communicate to the generations that have never had to engage with them before. You have found some those symbols explained in Simon Kershaw's article.

It is, of course, important to support King Charles in prayer, and from the days around the late Queen's funeral last September we are aware of the power of prayer in uniting people. It will be equally important to support King Charles and the Queen Consort in prayer as they and the nation prepare to make symbolic commitments to each other. There are four weeks from Easter Day to the Coronation. Parishes could do worse than commit themselves to particular and focused regular prayer for those four weeks in preparation for the Coronation.

The opportunities that the Coronation service will present are rich and varied. It is a moment in the life of the nation that will be fresh to many of us, and even those who remember 1953 will appreciate that the world has moved. Many were able to watch television for the first time at Her Majesty's coronation, and it is fascinating that places of worship are exploring showing the coronation live, but in a much more public setting than one's own front room. The opportunity of participating in the coronation from the heart of your own community, whether that be cinema, market square or place of worship, can bring people together in a meaningful way that lays the foundations for the following days' suggestions: a Big Lunch street party and then the Bank Holiday Monday Big Help Out.

Places of worship, so often at the heart of the community, are as well-placed as anyone to make the most of this occasion, to demonstrate that the church can do worship well, as we will expect from Westminster Abbey and the Liturgical Commission, but also be the beating heart of community life.

✍ *Michael Gisbourne is Chair of Praxis.*

Event Review

Praxis South:

Hidden Gems in Common Worship

Wednesday 5 October 2022 on Zoom

Since the advent of *Common Worship* we have been blessed by a rich variety of authorized liturgical texts, but how often do we stray from our familiar favourites? The online event organized by Praxis South on 5th October 2022 gave us a chance to explore some of the 'hidden gems' that we might have forgotten or never encountered. Our speakers Canon Jo Spreadbury and the Revd Dana Delap had both been involved in developing some of the *Common Worship* texts. Jo gave an overview of all that we now have in *Common Worship*, and a reminder of how radical a change it was when first introduced. Dana then focussed on 'Rites on the Way' and the Additional Collects in whose composition she had collaborated — finding words to express profound truths in accessible language. We enjoyed hearing insights from both speakers about the background to the texts, most memorable being Jo's reference to the removal of the word 'thongs' from one of the prayers — good Church of England people will of course think only of sandals and John the Baptist; the thoughts of others may stray to other articles of clothing...

Thank you to Praxis South for hosting this event, which can be viewed again at: <https://www.youtube.com/c/PraxisSouth>

✍ Christopher Powell.

In the last issue of PNOW Charles Read described the genesis of Grove Books 50 years ago, and now in this second piece he takes up the story by marking the 60th anniversary of the Group for the Renewal of Worship [Ed.]

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Group for Renewal of Worship. This grew out of the Latimer House Liturgy Group. When the Latimer House Group was showing some reluctance to engage with the programme of liturgical revision which was coming into the Church of England, a group of younger members including Colin Buchanan and

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Trevor Lloyd effectively formed a new group which would be more positive about liturgical revision and would help evangelicals to be part of it and to have some input into shaping it. (There were certainly voices within the Latimer House Group which took the view that evangelicals stuck to the Book of Common Prayer as that guaranteed doctrinal purity and therefore they did not get involved in liturgical revision.) Finding a name for the new group took a while and there is a story — I hope not apocryphal — that Trevor suggested the Evangelical Anglican Research in Worship Information Group which would have meant the group was called EARWIG. Eventually the name the Group for the Renewal of Worship was accepted and GROW came into being.

What has GROW achieved? The obvious answer is the steady production of booklets on aspects of worship which have helped people to think through how they worship and grapple with some of the issues behind our worship practices. The booklets are about to reach number 253 with no signs that we are slowing down. GROW has been a voice advocating reform of baptismal practice in advocating both the rightness of infant baptism on Biblical grounds and also that it may not be appropriate to baptize every child straight away. Therefore there has been some advocacy of the use of Thanksgiving services and also an encouragement for local churches to think carefully about how they conduct baptisms and how this fits within their pastoral and missionary strategy. There is still a need for this kind of encouragement and advocacy where some of us see the Church of England forgetting how baptism is of central importance to mission. So significant has been GROW's work in this area that a whole chapter of Mark Dalby's book *Open Baptism* is devoted to critiquing and replying to the case for baptismal discipline. He even called the chapter, 'Where Grove goes wrong'.

GROW has also had a long history of supporting the ordination of women within the Church of England and of enabling people who are committed to charismatic renewal to see the value of liturgy and how these two approaches to worship can be integrated. When the Church of England Evangelical Council was planning the National Evangelical

Anglican Conference at Blackpool in 2003, it was members of GROW among others who pushed to have mission as one of the conference themes. This reflects the way in which GROW has always seen worship and mission as linked together. This is once again something which the contemporary Church of England seems to have forgotten. We have endless mission initiatives most of which have nothing to do with worship. There is certainly no sense that authorized forms or structured worship might be missional.

For many years, the Group published a more academically orientated series known as *Grove Liturgical Studies*. This has now evolved into the Alcuin / GROW *Joint Liturgical Studies* and these publications have been a significant outlet for liturgical scholarship and indeed an impetus to it. While these booklets are no longer published via Grove Books, GROW continues its involvement with them and therefore with liturgical scholarship as much as with liturgical formation and practice.

When the Group meets, it normally does so overnight and spends time discussing a variety of issues which by no means always result in a Grove booklet being published. There is a great sense of working together and of helping each other to publish and to engage in other activities. Vocations to teach liturgy in colleges and courses have been nurtured in the Group as have vocations to serve in cathedral ministry as well as in parishes and chaplaincies. Members have served on the Liturgical Commission and on liturgical steering and revision committees in General Synod. The group includes lay and ordained people and members come from across the Church of England, including the Diocese in Europe. From time to time, the Group has run large-scale conferences and has published at least four larger books with other publishers, most recently *Reimagining Worship*, which seeks to look beyond the publication of *Common Worship* to help people engage with the bigger issues in worship, such as how we make sure that worship helps people encounter God.

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

CCLI streaming licences

Many churches and cathedrals now live-stream at least some of their services. These PNOW music pages have carried information in earlier editions about the Streaming Licence offered by Christian Copyright Licensing International, as an add-on to the basic Church Copyright Licence. Under the conditions of this licence, if a song is played and sung live during a live-streamed service, whoever administers the copyright for that place of worship should identify the song's publisher and check online whether that publisher catalogue is authorized under the licence (<https://uk.ccli.com/copyright-owners-lists>, choosing 'Streaming Licence – Covered Catalogues' from the options). Then it can be reported as usual. It's worth noting that all Jubilate and Resound Worship videos and recordings come with permission to include them in online worship on any platform where used with a CCLI or OneLicense streaming licence.

CCLI now also offers a Streaming Plus Licence, which the company says will 'enable the webcasting of your entire service'. Among the elements covered are the use of what are described as 'master recordings', such as 'artist or record label recordings of songs sold commercially'. Some churches might use these while the people are gathering, or during the distribution of Communion, for example. To validate the use of such a recording in a live-streamed act of worship, identify the record label or owner and then check the Streaming Plus Licence — Covered Record Labels list from the webpage above. You could also search for the song under 'Recordings' if you have the CCLI Reporting app (although it sounds as if that is not as comprehensive). Multi-tracks and backing tracks are also included; to understand this better than the present writer, another website run by Loop Community might help (<https://loopcommunity.com>), despite its North American focus.

200th birthdays

William Henry Monk, composer and arranger of many hymn tunes (including *EVENTIDE*, which he wrote for Henry

Francis Lyte's text, 'Abide with me') and first music editor of *Hymns Ancient and Modern: Hymns for Use in the Services of the Church*, was born in London on 16 March 1823. It might be appropriate for musicians and congregations to be alerted to this, and to mark the two hundredth anniversary by singing — perhaps on the previous Sunday, the Third Sunday of Lent — a hymn for which he specifically wrote the tune, such as 'And now, O Father, mindful of the love' (by William Bright, suitable for eucharistic services and sung to UNDE ET MEMORES), or 'Jesu, meek and gentle', an appropriately Lenten hymn by George Rundell Prynne for which Monk composed SAINT CONSTANTINE (published in the very first music edition of *Hymns A&M*, in 1861).

Due to celebrate its bicentenary *next* year is St George's Anglican Church in Paris (www.stgeorgesparis.com), founded in 1824 and today 'housing an international community of anglophone and francophone Christians'. To mark the occasion, a hymn competition has been set up; the deadline for entries is 30 April 2023, and the winning words will then be circulated to composers who have registered their interest in entering the competition. The Bicentenary Planning Committee is looking for 'words to express who we as a Chaplaincy are, allied to a tune which would enable all of us to sing them and make them our own'.

The full details are online: choose 'Who and What' from the home page (see above), then 'Bi-Centenary 1824-2024' from the menu on the left. One of the 'Rules' or guidelines is that hymn writers should take into account the mission statement of St George's, since the successful text 'will reflect this statement and these characteristics': 'Drawing on our Anglican heritage, we celebrate and proclaim the reconciling love of God in Christ.'

Jubilate news

Also looking for freshly written hymn and songs, with the same deadline — 30 April — as the Paris search above is Jubilate (www.jubilate.co.uk), with the intention of producing a collection of material suitable for Holy Week and Easter early in 2024. The project is called *Journey to Resurrection*,

and submissions are invited (no more than three per writer) from creators of new texts with new music, new texts with or without a suggested tune, and new tunes to existing Jubilate or public domain texts.

A press release from Roger Peach (Jubilate's Editorial Co-ordinator), circulated in early February, describes the aim of the project: 'to resource churches worldwide with high quality new Jubilate hymns/songs/recordings for this most important week of the Christian Year. We intend for the collection to have a sense of journey through from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday, infused with hope that goes beyond the grave. However, individual pieces do not have to cover the whole story! We would like to include pieces suitable for each of the major days of Holy Week, alongside others that might take a broader approach.'

Details of how to submit pieces can be found online (<https://jubilate.co.uk/journey-to-resurrection>). Hymns and songs selected will be recorded in the autumn of 2023, and any questions about the project may be sent to Roger at <roger@jubilate.co.uk>. To see other recent Jubilate collections, visit 'Shop' on the website.

The closing date is fast approaching (Sunday 12 March) for submissions to Jubilate's sister organisation, Resound Worship — both are under the umbrella of the Song and Hymn Writers' Foundation. The Resound leaders have been looking for congregational 'Songs of Lament and Songs of Hope' and plan to record an album in May 2023 for release in September. Several years ago Joel Payne, now SHWF's Executive Director as well as Resound Co-ordinator, posted some suggestions in the 'Blog' section of the website (www.resoundworship.org/blog/author/joel-payne) for music which can be used in times of tragedy and fear — sadly these continue to be relevant for singing in many parts of the UK and in the wider world.

RSCM conference

The annual conference for members and friends of the Royal School of Church Music will this year be held online, on Saturday 18 March between 9 am and 5.30 pm; the title is 'With the spirit and the understanding also'. There will be elements

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suitable for clergy, choir members, choir trainers, organists and other musicians, and the conference is designed to celebrate the music sung and played in churches and to help local worship and music-making flourish.

The Revd Dr Stephen Hance, who works for the National Church Institutions with particular responsibility for supporting parishes in their mission, will deliver a keynote address entitled 'A Secret Chord: Music as Mission', while the seminars include guidance on getting congregations to sing and on developing the faith of a choir and church through music. There will also be a lunchtime concert. The fee for taking part in this virtual conference is £40 for the day (£30 for RSCM members); for further details, including how to apply, visit the webpage <www.rscm.org.uk/whats-on/church-music-conference>.

Sing for the King!

A new coronation anthem with words from the psalms, composed by Joanna Forbes L'Estrange, was commissioned by the RSCM to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III in May. An open invitation is extended to all choirs to join in singing 'The Mountains Shall Bring Peace', said to be suitable for use in worship or at a concert (www.rscm.org.uk/sing-for-the-king). The composer herself gives a short introduction to her music in a video on the website, where there is also a film compilation of several choirs rehearsing the piece.

There are three versions of the music: for SATB + piano, SATB + organ, and unison voices with piano or organ accompaniment. The closing section uses a broad, hymn-like melody, so that younger or less experienced singers can still participate in a performance of the whole five-minute anthem. Copies can be ordered from the RSCM's online shop, as printed music or as a download pack. There is also an online registration form to complete in order to help the RSCM's campaign to encourage as many singing groups as possible to take part.

Richard Seal (1935-2022)

This is a brief and belated note of the death in July last year of Dr Richard Seal, at the age of 86. Organist and Master of the Choristers at Salisbury Cathedral from 1968 to 1997, Dr Seal played a crucial part in the historic foundation of the Cathedral's Girls' Choir in 1991, while simultaneously determined to protect the rich heritage of the existing boys' choir. The move to admit girls to sing in cathedral services was controversial at the time, but subsequently many other English cathedrals have followed suit.

The Alcuin Club

Join us for the 2023 Alcuin Club Festival!

'Songs of Everlasting Praise: Music in Worship Today.'

12noon – 3.30pm,
on **Tuesday 23rd May**, at St Giles's Church, Cripplegate, London, EC2Y 8DA

with a stimulating panel of two presenters:

The Revd Pete Gunstone: *acting Precentor of Bradford Cathedral and coordinator of worship for Lambeth 2023.*

and

The Revd Malcolm Chalmers: *Vicar of Great Missenden, Bucks, Choir Director, and formerly RSCM representative in South Africa.*

and two responders:

The Revd Helen Bent: *Worship adviser, formerly with RSCM and now with PRAXIS*

and

Dr Sarah MacDonald: *Fellow and Director of Music, Selwyn College, Cambridge, and Director of the Girl Choristers at Ely Cathedral.*

for further details: please see the Alcuin Club website: <https://alcuinclub.org.uk>

Chrism

Extract from News of Liturgy February 1984, p.3, supplied by Colin Buchanan:

We now print the reply [in Synod] of the Chairman of the Liturgical Commission to the question in November [i.e 1983]:

Question: Following the failure of 'The Blessing of the Oils' to secure a sufficient majority on 8th November 1982, what form is available for consecrating the oil of chrism for use at the coronation?

Answer: As far as I have been able to discover, from the time of the coronation of William and Mary in 1689, the form was included in the Coronation Service itself. The prayer runs 'to bless and sanctify thy chosen servant who is to be anointed with this oil and consecrated king.' As these words were said, the archbishop laid hands on the ampulla containing the oil. This prayer is part of the present coronation rite, revised by Prof. E.C.Ratcliff. It is based on a prayer in the Gelasian Sacramentary.

However, in 1902 for the coronation of Edward VII the oil was consecrated by an episcopal member of the Chapter early on the morning of the coronation. This was on the advice of Canon Christopher Wordsworth who wrote a long and learned letter to Dr. Armitage Robinson. The present Queen was asked whether the oil should be consecrated during the service or before it and chose the method of 1902. The form used...is not known.

As to the oil itself, simple oil was used from the Reformation until 1837. For the coronation of Queen Victoria a secret formula was used by one Peter Squire. This formula has been used ever since. A new supply was made for George VI's coronation, but was not in fact used, since there was enough of the old. It was kept in the Dean's study but was destroyed by bombing. For our present Queen's coronation, a new supply was prepared under the authority of the surgeon apothecary by Savory and Moore of New Bond Street. Dr. Don [Dean Alan Don, 1946-59 at the Abbey] was willing to reveal that the secret formula contained oil of orange flowers, of roses, cinnamon, jasmin and sesame with bezoin, musk, civet and ambergris.

Learning opportunities

Readers are encouraged to keep an eye on the Praxis website [praxisworship.org.uk] which will be updated regularly. [Ed.]

Online Coronation Colloquium

Hosted by Praxis Southwest

Thursday 16 March 2023,
10.00 - 12.00, on Zoom.

Speakers:

Canon Simon Kershaw, Liturgical Commission member and expert on the coronation liturgy.
The Very Revd David Hoyle, Dean of Westminster.

Opportunities around the Coronation.

On 6 May the Church of England crowns a new Defender of the Faith. What does the Coronation Liturgy tell us about who we are and who our Supreme Governor is? How might parishes and communities prepare prayerfully for this event? Discussion starters will be offered from Simon Kershaw, an authority on the coronation liturgy, and David Hoyle, who will be standing very close to the crown!

Attendance is for a £5 donation. Please contact Gill Behenna (gillbehenna@me.com) to register your attendance and receive the Zoom login link. Delegates from all Praxis regions, and further afield, are very welcome.

Praxis Southwest

Exploring Worship in Pilgrimage.

Saturday 20 May 2023,
10.00 - 16.00, The Jubilee Rooms, Castle Street, Stogursey, Bridgwater, TA5 1TG.
Speaker: Helen Bent.

The day will include a pilgrimage walk to St Andrew's Well and St Andrew's Church with worship connecting to Stogursey's medieval pilgrim past.

£20, £15 (affiliates), and free for ordinands/those training for licensed ministry.

Please contact Gill Behenna (gillbehenna@me.com) to register your attendance.

Praxis East

Treasures Old and New.

Thursday 16 March, 19.00 - 21.00, on Zoom.

Peer-led discussion exploring how we can resolve the tensions between traditional and contemporary styles of worship.

Wednesday 14 June, 19.00 - 21.00, on Zoom

Peer-led discussion. Topic to be decided.

Praxis North

Sacred Space: Creative worship which makes the most of your church building and churchyard.

Wednesday 24 May, 14.00 - 16.30, on Zoom.

Peer-led discussion exploring such issues as small congregation, large church; creative use of the lychgate; a wedding in the choir stalls and much more.

Please contact Helen Bent (helenbent99@gmail.com) to register your attendance and receive the Zoom link **for all the North and East events above**. Everyone is welcome.

Praxis South

New Blessings! Transforming language for a more inclusive Church.

Date to be confirmed: keep an eye on www.praxisworship.org.uk/praxis_south
St Mary's, Primrose Hill (and livestreamed), 13.30 registration for a 14.00 start. Closing worship at 18.00.

Speakers: The Rev'd Dr Anders Bergquist, Vicar of St. John's Wood and member of the Liturgical Commission, and others.

College of the Resurrection Worship & Liturgical Studies

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enable you to understand Christian liturgy and provide you with the skills to develop it in your church community.

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For further information, please contact:
The Revd Dr Jo Kershaw (Course Director):
jkershaw@mirfield.org.uk

How Village Churches Thrive: a Practical Guide

Robert Atwell, Gill Ambrose and Helen Bent, Church House Publishing, 2022, £9.99, 128 pages.

I should disclose at the outset that I have handed out more than a dozen copies of this little guidebook, as it seeks to 'fly the flag' of the rural church. The most impressive thing about this new volume is that the authors clearly understand the rural context and the kinds of politics that those in village churches face every day.

Robert Atwell spells this out in his introduction: 'In spite of the fact that a higher percentage of the population go to church in the countryside than in the city, village churches are often perceived as millstones around the necks of their 'go-ahead' urban cousins, sucking in precious resources which some claim would be better spent elsewhere. Rural clergy and hard-working lay officers often despair when they are compared negatively with large urban or suburban cousins, with success equated to strong numerical growth. Here lies part of the problem: village congregations are invariably small. But a small church is not a failed large church, any more than a satsuma is a failed orange.'

But this book isn't just for clergy. It is a hopeful guide for anyone who is involved in a rural parish and trying to ensure it flourishes. As Hugh Dennis says in the foreword, 'Many rural churches are

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rather like spring bulbs, ready for the right conditions to release all the potential they hold, and to thrive.’

This guide is designed to help you find the right conditions for your church to flourish. It encourages those in leadership roles to focus their energy on ten basic do-able things that can contribute to revitalization. And it is organised around those ten things to try: extending the warmth of your welcome; making the most of baptisms, weddings, and funerals; using your buildings creatively; caring for your churchyard; being the heartbeat of the community; celebrating your heritage; cultivating fruitful festivals; welcoming more children; reaching the isolated and lonely; and communicating effectively.

Many churches have gone through enormous changes necessitated by the coronavirus pandemic and have yet to recover sufficiently to handle more change, while still hankering after wanting the ‘old normal’. I have found the questions and discussion prompts included in this book to prove particularly useful in helping people take a fresh look at what they are doing and why, and at the same time imparting confidence to those who feel reluctant or too overwhelmed to talk about taking a step in a new direction.

The authors each bring experience of parish life and an appreciation of the tendencies and constraints that shape rural congregations. The case studies they offer are encouraging and worth learning from. I particularly liked the idea of holding a ‘Pimms and Hymns’ event and also of holding a teddy bears’ parachute jump off the tower on a summer’s day. And the section on caring for your churchyard will be invaluable for those trying to welcome wildlife and establish an Eco Church. That said, the tone is not at all prescriptive. This is not a book of answers so much as it is offering a guide and a means of smoothing the way so that you and those who lead with you can find the right answers for your context. I think it would be especially useful for PCCs and Churchwardens who are trying to develop Mission Actions Plans for their churches. If your congregation is interested in putting their church back at the heart of their community, this handbook will be an invaluable resource.

✍ Rachel Greene is Rector of Chiddingfold.

Colin’s column

When the floods have receded, that does not automatically mean that the village that was flooded has returned to normal; no, for much of normality has changed. And, similarly, when the floods of Covid have retreated, how does the liturgical landscape look? I suppose we can point to the firm arrival of streaming that means that I can, from Yorkshire, more or less watch, if not actually join, a Sunday service from London — or perhaps the USA. I provided a eulogy for a funeral in Melbourne. And the widespread discussion about whether and how someone at a distance can partake of the bread and wine of the eucharist will run on. But, all those things noted, how far has the old normality returned? I now offer my own liturgical route through 2022, not as being typical of anyone else’s experience, but as perhaps giving some points of reference. Within this loose liturgical diary my own default position in January was as masked in the back row of my parish church, St Barnabas.

In January I presided once at communion at St Barnabas, still troubled at inviting all to ‘drink’ and then drinking alone myself. I also attended a conference and received communion from an individual cup, another (and welcome) change to emerge from the flood. I also had published in *Anaphora* (the ecumenical journal of liturgical studies) a thorough critique of the (Covid-inspired) limiting of the numbers of bishops laying on hands at the consecration of bishops, as Justin Welby’s announcement of this had sounded to be long-term.

For ten years until lockdown I had taken on responsibility for leading worship for Lent until Easter Day in a vacant parish, selected by the bishop. I resumed this practice, going to Kildwick up Airedale. The programme included midweek Bible Studies. I soon asked why the people wore masks on Sundays, but not on Wednesdays — and the answer was that for hymn-singing they thought it best to stay masked. I had Covid myself over Palm Sunday and Easter Day — the first time in 67 years I have not received communion on Easter Day. I preached on doubting Thomas on Easter 2, being myself a visual aid as one who had missed out on Easter Day, but could, with other believers, rejoice at the

resurrection ‘eight days later’. At Kildwick the Peace continued as mutual waving, but communion in one kind had on Maundy Thursday moved on to intinction. The masks on Sunday fell away. And when I returned to St Barnabas in May, the chairs were together again, the masks had almost gone, and normal distribution of wine was about to restart (though intinction was still available).

At the ordination of presbyters at Petertide our cathedral had no masks, shared a warm very physical Peace, and received communion in both kinds, but an anomalous carry-over meant that assisting clergy were not to lay hands on the ordinands. I was then at a conference where another anomaly, one kind only at communion, still lingered. But all retrogression was happily reversed at the consecration of bishops in York on St Swithin’s Day, when the laying on hands by as many bishops as could reach the consecrands was resumed (for which precedent had been set in the South on St Mark’s day), and I went home happy.

Back at St Barnabas the choice between intinction and drinking from the cup still has a majority for intinction. I recall a teaching weekend 40 years ago in a New England parish, where a good number received by intinction (very rare in my experience). On enquiry I discovered that some epidemic in the 1890s had led to this use, and it continued to three generations as the norm within those families. How easily does an emergency provision become a norm! So do we have broadly the not-very-thrilling but marginally-comforting dull news that by fits and starts the old normalities have returned after the flood? And is that what we really wanted or needed?

This Issue’s 50th Anniversary

By Spring 1973 the Commission had moved on from its ground-breaking *Series 3 Communion*, and a draft *Series 3 Funeral Service* was before the House of Bishops (promoted because Series 2 Burial had itself met a premature death).

✍ Colin Buchanan is a former Bishop of Woolwich.