



# THE READER

Autumn 2004  
Volume 101 No.3  
£1.75





## Parcevall Hall

Diocese of Bradford Retreat  
& Conference Centre

Parcevall Hall has excellent facilities for conferences, retreats and holidays. It offers the comfort of an old house, the peace of a rural situation and the scenic beauty of Wharfedale. It is available to church and secular groups and can be booked for weekends, midweek or longer periods; also for day, part-day or evening functions. Bookings from individuals and groups are invited.

**Please contact the warden to find out about the programme of events for individuals and groups in 2004.**

Appletreewick, Skipton  
North Yorkshire, BD23 6DG  
Tel: (01756) 720213  
Fax: (01756) 720656  
E-mail: [parcevall@bradford.anglican.org](mailto:parcevall@bradford.anglican.org)  
(Charity No 247858)



Give your time and bring hope

Every year in the UK 100,000 children run away, often from neglect and abuse at home.

Right now many of them are in danger on the streets - cold, alone and scared with nowhere safe to go and no one sound to turn to.

By giving your time you can help us change that.

We urgently need your help in speaking out for these children by giving talks and increasing support in your diocese. We will fully support you in this role with relevant information and guidance.

To find out about our rewarding opportunities in your area, and how you can use your preaching skills to bring hope, love and understanding to the children we work with, contact us now.

Call our friendly  
Supporter Action Team on  
**0845 300 1128** or visit  
[www.childrensociety.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/volunteer)  
for details.



With children, for children, with you

*The Reader* aims to assist the ten thousand Readers in the British Isles in the exercise of their ministry by stimulating them theologically and encouraging them to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ effectively in their dioceses. *The Reader* reflects the work of the Central Readers' Council and the Church of England generally, while being aware of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

### **The Central Readers' Council of the Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England.**

Chair: The Bishop of Carlisle, The Rt Revd Graham Dow

Vice-chair: Gloria Helson

Secretary: Alan Wakely

### **The Reader production team:**

Editor: Clare Amos

Reviews Editor: Peter Watkins

Advertising Manager: Edwin Parr

Designer: Wild Associates Ltd

Editorial Committee Chair: Nigel Holmes

Editorial Committee Vice-chair: Christine McMullen

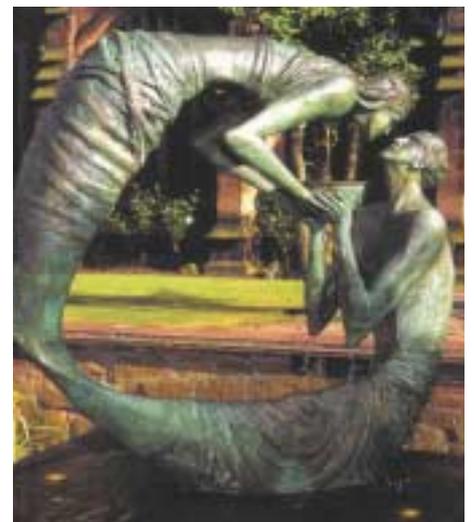
*The Reader* is available from the Central Readers' Council, Church House, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3NZ  
Tel: 020 7898 1415

Fax: 020 7898 1421

email: [thereader@c-of-e.org.uk](mailto:thereader@c-of-e.org.uk)

**Website: [www.readers.cofe.anglican.org](http://www.readers.cofe.anglican.org)**

*The Reader* is available in the UK for £5.00 for four issues a year. Cheques should be made payable to *The Central Board of Finance*.  
ISSN 0300-3469



Cover: Photograph by Paul Anthony Studios, *Water of Life*, by Stephen Broadbent, Chester Cathedral.



Autumn 2004 Volume 101 No.3

# THE READER



This issue contains:-

**SPIRITUALITY FOR A MISSION-SHAPED CHURCH**  
– Paul Bayes .....2

**THE PLACE OF READER MINISTRY TODAY**  
– Bishop Graham Dow .....4



**CONTINUING MINISTERIAL EDUCATION FOR READERS**  
– Alex Whitehead .....8

**THE WOMAN'S TALE**  
– A reflection on John 4.5-42 .....10



**THE SPIRITUALITY OF EXILE**  
– John Holdsworth .....11

**A GREEN SPIRITUALITY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY**  
– John Smith .....13

**IN PRAISE OF TREES**  
– David Childs .....15



**THE CASE FOR A LAY SPIRITUALITY**  
– James M Rosenthal .....16

**EYE OF THE STORM**  
– Janet Beal.....18

**STEPS ALONG HOPE STREET – REVIEW**  
– Bishop Graham Dow .....20



**FOR YOUR BOOKSHELF** .....22

**GAZETTE** .....27

**GLEANINGS AND IN MEMORIAM** .....28

**THE LAST WORD** .....29

It is one of the special privileges of being editor of *The Reader* that I can share with you, via our cover picture, images and works of art which I find moving, startling or thought-provoking. The sculpture of the 'Water of Life' executed by Stephen Broadbent and situated in the cloister at Chester Cathedral is all three of these things. It intrigues and invites us to explore it again and again. What is implied by the interrelationship between the two figures? Who is offering whom the water of life?

The New Testament story to which it most closely linked, that of Jesus' encounter with the woman of Samaria by the well, is a passage I never tire of returning to (*see p.10*). With its assertion, 'God is spirit' (*John 4.24*) it is surely an appropriate episode to bear in mind in this particular issue with its broad focus on spirituality. But it is also a significant reminder that what we term 'spirituality' cannot be simply other-worldly. Part of the power of this story is the link it makes between water, so physically basic and essential to our human lives, and our life and health in God. It is a reminder that our faith is a bodily and sacramental one – that we can know the invisible God through the basic elements essential to human existence. There is a link between the quenching of spiritual and physical thirst.

One of the highlights of 2003 for me was leading some Bible studies at a conference in India. Among other passages I focused on this particular story. It is a very powerful text to read in that country. The experience of the Samaritan woman – that she was seen as unclean, and was therefore very surprised when Jesus asked her for water – feels all too contemporary and real for many Christians and others whose daily lives are circumscribed by the weighty and oppressive caste system. This particular story therefore is for many Christians in India one of the most powerful New Testament statements of liberation through the gospel.

The theme of this issue is perhaps less tightly focused than some recent ones. As well as a number of articles with 'spirituality' in their title, we have also found space for a significant contribution on the new report *Mission-shaped Church*, and for some reflections on Reader ministry and training, bearing the imperative for mission particularly in mind. But after all mission and spirituality do go hand-in hand – or ought to!

Yet to return again to the woman of Samaria. I leave you with this reflection of an anonymous Christian from Japan which has always given me pause for thought:

One who said, 'I am the eternal water'  
dwelt among us  
living with us  
sustaining us.

To receive a cup of the living water  
is not only to cleanse ourselves  
but also to cleanse all the waters,  
river and well, lake and ocean,  
and to share them with all.

**Clare Amos,**  
Honorary Editor



# Spirituality for a mission-shaped church

**Revd Paul Bayes** has recently become National Mission and Evangelism Adviser for the Church of England. I was glad to invite him to give the reflections he makes here, which are written in the light of the recent report to General Synod, *Mission-shaped Church*.

## The rattling culture

Until a few months ago I was a parish priest, and had been one for many years, living and working from the vicarage. Then in January I began to work for the Archbishops' Council, and my lifestyle came much closer to that of many Readers – a job that you travel to, and do, and come home from. In my case lots of travel, up and down the country. Not so much driving, and much more time spent on trains (or waiting for them!).

So I began to write this article on a rattling train between Hove and Southampton, tapping on my laptop. In the carriage with me are an American lady and her husband who have caught the wrong train, and a family who don't like each other and don't care who knows it. Opposite me two businesswomen, working; and as each of them speaks on her mobile phone, they realise from their voices that they are both from New Zealand, and they strike up a conversation. On the seat next to me a couple of school students on wheels – one has some fine roller blades and the other a well-worn skateboard that he dumps beside me, and it digs into my foot – chatting about a skate park and the friends they're going to meet there. (These two are on the train for three stations, so the skate park must be fifteen miles from where they live.) And over all this presides the guard, a man of military bearing with a much-loved moustache and an unflappable cheerfulness.

Everything has a context. The railway carriage was mine, a microcosm of different nations, cultures, shifting friendships, technology and humanity, likes and dislikes, security and confusion. And the Church's context is that railway carriage multiplied to sixty-odd million people in these islands.

The report *Mission-shaped Church*<sup>1</sup> was commissioned by the Board of Mission (now the Mission and Public Affairs Council) of the Archbishops'

Council in 2002, and was published earlier this year. It was written by a working party chaired by Bishop Graham Cray. Its subtitle, and its focus, is 'church planting and fresh expressions of church in a changing context'. The report came before the General Synod in February and the Synod warmly commended it to the Church, for study but also for action.

*Mission-shaped Church* begins with the church's context. It points to enormous changes in the way we live, brought about by affluence, technology, and a shifting mindset that leads us to define ourselves by what we consume rather than produce. It speaks of a network society, where 'the importance of place is secondary to the importance of "flows"<sup>2</sup> – hence the casual friendships 8,000 miles from home; or friends in skate parks three towns away. 'Networks have not replaced neighbourhoods; but they change them.'<sup>3</sup> And the report says that God is sending us into this shifting, shuttling, rattling world, this huge railway carriage, to be salt and light *there*.

## Fresh expressions

Apart from the one in the Upper Room, every church has been planted by Christians in the name of Jesus. The faith spreads, and as it spreads it responds to its context, as it has always done. Here's an example from my own life. In my last job, in a parish in Winchester diocese, our church building was a huge redbrick pile, totally different from the mother church, a medieval building of great beauty. Ours was different because it had been built in the 1930s as a mission-shaped church, full of halls and rooms, equipped for the new housing area as the village grew into a town. And in my time there *we* faced the question, 'What will we build that is as different again, a mission-shaped church to meet the needs of this affluent, fragmented, often depressed society,

and to meet the needs of its poorer people who feel so left out of things?'

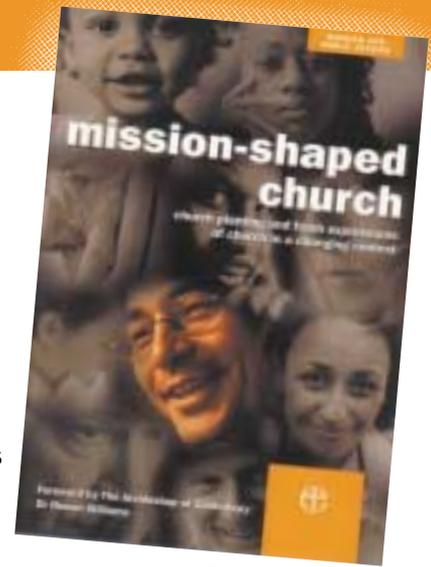
We answered the question, not by putting up a building of any kind, but by growing a network of small groups in the homes of Christians all over that town. These groups really were church – not just an extra layer on top of Sundays for keen believers. They were a fresh expression of *church*, built by a small and fragile group of Christians trying to respond to their context.<sup>4</sup> And that church was blessed with the ministry of four Readers.

Readers and clergy make the Declaration of Assent, the preface to which speaks of our faith, 'which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim *afresh* in each generation.' Church planting, fresh expressions of church. Isn't one part of the Reader's ministry in this generation to help the Church towards these? Very many Readers live on the edge, holding local church leadership together with total immersion in this rattling network culture. Their input is vital if churches are to be mission-shaped and to follow God's call to meet people where they are.

## Spirituality at the centre

In the Decade of Evangelism Canon Robert Warren developed his crucial thinking about missionary congregations<sup>5</sup>. For him the heart was spirituality – developing and sustaining an encounter with God in the life of the Christian and the life of the Church. And unless mission is built around that centre, then *Mission-shaped Church* will just be another report, another bandwagon, here today and gone tomorrow.

So what would the spirituality of a mission-shaped church be?



<sup>1</sup> *Mission-shaped Church*, Church House Publishing, 2004: £10.95

<sup>2</sup> *Mission-shaped Church*, pp.4/5

<sup>3</sup> *Mission-shaped Church*, p.5

<sup>4</sup> For details of that work see *Encounters on the Edge 20*, Soft Cell, published by the Church Army's Sheffield Centre, Sheffield Centre publications are available via [www.encountersontheedge.org.uk](http://www.encountersontheedge.org.uk)

<sup>5</sup> See especially his book *Building Missionary Congregations and Being Human, Being Church*

The report itself points to the answer. It speaks of five *values for a missionary church*, which 'are intended to offer a framework that can be applied to an existing local church or to any strategy to develop, grow or plant a church or a fresh expression of church'<sup>6</sup>.

These values are:

– **A missionary church is focused on God the Trinity**

*Worship lies at the heart of a missionary church, and to love and know God as Father, Son and Spirit is its chief inspiration and primary purpose...*

– **A missionary church is incarnational**

*It seeks to shape itself in relation to the culture in which it is located or to which it is called...*

– **A missionary church is transformational**

*It exists for the transformation of the community that it serves, through the power of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit...*

– **A missionary church makes disciples**

*It is active in calling people to faith in Jesus Christ... It encourages the gifting and vocation of all the people of God, and invests in the development of leaders.*

– **A missionary church is relational**

*...It is characterized by welcome and hospitality. Its ethos and style are open to change when new members join.<sup>7</sup>*

These values sketch the outlines of a mission-shaped spirituality. They have nothing to do with the external 'look' of church or prayer life. They make as much sense in the context of Catholic devotion as they do in the context of open, or Evangelical, or Charismatic disciplines of prayer. But together they give a flavour of the spirit, a flavour which equips us to be there for the people of the rattling culture.

### The mission-shaped heart

#### Calm

Ours is an age of anxiety. Christians with a passion for God's work can catch that anxiety which makes the Church hasty, becoming rattled in the rattling carriage. This can be a recipe for rushing from one bright idea to another, for bandwagons and 'trendy church'.

But trendy church is not what *Mission-shaped Church* is about. That first missionary value is an antidote to anxiety and haste. It simply calls believers to remember that God is God. As St Peter said, we are always to be ready with an explanation for anyone who asks us why we're so hopeful<sup>8</sup>. Infectious hopefulness comes from the calm of a worshipping heart.

### Laying down our preferences

God gives security in the silence of a calm spirit. On the bedrock of that security we're freed to ask for the courage to lay down our preferences. We shall need that courage, because a church shaped for mission is one that practices 'double listening'<sup>9</sup> – listening to God and to the cultural context. Obedient attention to God in this specific place or network is what gives the church its shape.

This means explicitly renouncing a church that's simply based on what we are used to and what we prefer. It's this value in the spirituality of a missionary church that equips it to be there for others; not cloning its own favourite services or songs or ways of worshipping, but stepping out into its networks or neighbourhoods ready to express church afresh, in a form that will surprise the Christians as much as it surprises the people to whom they're sent.

### Widening the banks

Filling in the last census I came across the following questions:

Q: Who is your employer?

A: The Church of England.

Q: What is the nature of your employer's business?

Mm. I looked at what was in my diary, and at what's in the church press, and I scratched my head a bit. What do you put?

A: Working with God for the transformation of the world.

---

**The rattling world is desperately looking for authenticity, for depth; seeking people who can say with the song, 'I want to give my life for something that'll last for ever.' That's discipleship.**

---

That was the answer I gave, and believe to be true. A church that is shaped for mission will not be providing narrow channels, alternative neighbourhoods and alternative networks, all designed to keep the Christians safe and away from everyone else. Instead it will work as creatively as it can to widen the banks – to flow alongside and within the culture, and work for its transformation; so that all the world reflects the values of the Kingdom of God.

### Deep Church

A friend of mine was asked 'are you high church, or low church, or broad church?' She replied, 'I try to be deep church.'

A missionary church makes disciples;

and the discipline of being a missionary church will cause its members to pray, and reflect on God's Word, and receive the sacraments, and learn and love together; because a mission-shaped church welcomes guests, but it doesn't carry passengers. The rattling world is desperately looking for authenticity, for depth; seeking people who can say with the song, 'I want to give my life for something that'll last for ever.' That's discipleship.

### Hospitality

When it comes to the relational value in *Mission-shaped Church* I can't say it any more clearly than the Roman Catholic writer Carlo Carretto:

'Today's people...want a Church made of friendship, of genuine contacts, of mutual interchange of little things. But more than anything else, a Church that feeds them with the Word, a Church that works with them by physically taking them by the hand, a Church whose face is like that of the Church of Luke, of Mark, of John, a Church that is just starting – that smells of beginnings.'<sup>10</sup>

In the end that taste of humanity, hospitality, warmth, will mean the difference between life and death in the future of the church. People are sick of loneliness, sick of impersonality, dying in the midst of all their gadgets. They need a hospital to cure that sickness. Christians have it. By God's grace our hospital is our community,

our church. Relational church can offer the heart of a hospital – hospitality, and through that, healing.

### Leaving the station

So there they go. People who are confident in God, unbothered about the way church life looks, filled with a wide and hopeful vision for society transformed, committed to deepening their own relationship with God and building good relationships with others – people with mission-shaped spirituality. Isn't it worth catching the train with them?

<sup>6</sup> *Mission-shaped Church*, p.81

<sup>7</sup> *Mission-shaped Church*, pp.81-2

<sup>8</sup> 1 Peter 3:15

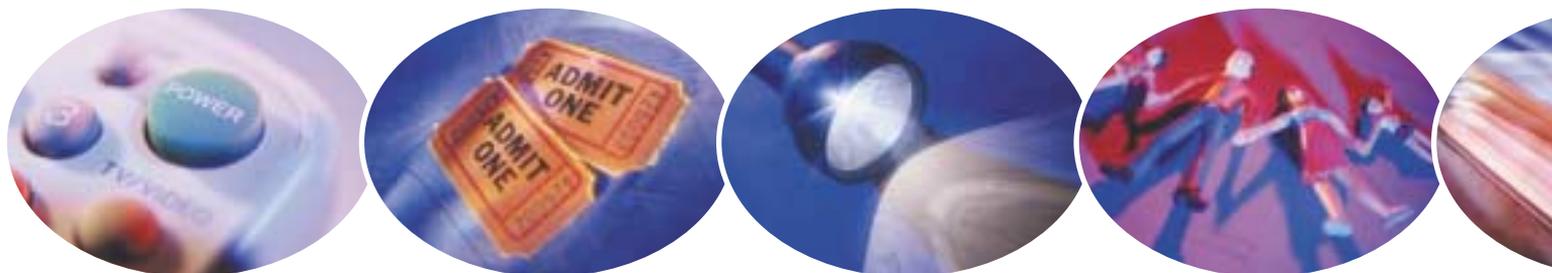
<sup>9</sup> *Mission-shaped Church*, p.104

<sup>10</sup> Carlo Carretto, *I sought and I found*, p.34



# The developing ministries of Christ in the Church – and the place of Reader ministry today

This is a revised version of the address given by **Bishop Graham Dow**, Chair of Central Readers' Council, to the CRC Annual General Meeting on 27 March 2004.



In many dioceses the number coming forward for Reader training remains buoyant. But with the growth of other forms of lay ministry, some Readers find themselves unsure what is distinctive about their ministry. It was with this in mind that I recently spoke to diocesan Reader Ministry officers at Nottingham University. Readers need to know how their ministry differs from other lay ministers and why their ministry is important. Uncertainty about this is just one factor affecting the recruiting of younger Readers.

To set the discussion in context I start with a view of the historical development of ministry patterns in the first centuries.

## From churches in large houses to large churches

'And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.' (1 Corinthians 12.28, NIV)

This is a strange way to describe varied ministries in the Church. Why put first, second and third and then a number of other gifts and ministries? According to Brian Capper<sup>1</sup>, following Harnack, the first three ministries are put in order because these were the itinerant ministries which needed to be supported: apostle, prophet and teacher. The remainder of the list are a selection of the ministries that were essentially local. Included in that list are the gifts of leadership, (more literally, piloting, but often

translated as gifts of administration) and of helping others. Brian Capper suggests that in a house congregation of about two dozen people, these two gifts may reflect first the host who was the president of the eucharistic meal and the natural leader (so leadership/piloting), and, secondly, the helpers who assisted with the meal.

When the Church outgrew congregations in homes, with congregations of several hundred souls in a central gathering, the hosts then became the college of presbyters and the helpers became the deacons. We know that in these growing town churches there were large numbers of deacons and this explanation fits. As the churches became larger units, the services became more formal in style so they were led by those designated for ministry, i.e. the large number of presbyters and deacons. Lay ministry was marginalised. To complete the picture, it is at about this time that we find the well known writing called *The Didache* telling the prophets and teachers to cease being itinerant and settle down in the local (and larger) congregations.

## Towards bishops, priests and deacons

So following Capper's analysis, as the Church expanded, the presbyters and deacons became the focus of local ministry, alternatively called the bishops and deacons, as in Philippians 1 and 1 Timothy 3. Timothy clearly has an apostolic and itinerant role and he appoints bishops/presbyters and deacons in the local church. So the ministry pattern is now developing as apostle (itinerant) – bishop/presbyter

(local) – deacon (local). The teachers, prophets and evangelists have ceased to be itinerant and are settling into large town congregations. Teaching the faith becomes a central role of the presbyters who now combine the roles of the president of the eucharist and teacher. Subsequently bishop and presbyter became separated as the bishop takes the apostolic role and becomes the itinerant focus of mission and unity. Working with him are the local presbyters and deacons in the congregations. Sometimes a distinction is drawn between teaching elders (presbyters) and governing elders e.g. 1 Timothy 5.17.

From this analysis we draw two principles:

- *Flexibility is appropriate in the development of ministerial roles.*
- *Of the five major ministries it is the pastoral ministry which must remain local.*

Apostles, prophets, evangelists and teachers can be itinerant, but not the pastors. The 'pastor' must be local and there every Sunday. This is because the pastor represents the care of Christ, the Good Shepherd, who lays his life down for the sheep and whose voice the sheep hear. My way of putting this is: 'Every congregation needs a shepherd, but that shepherd need not be ordained or paid'. The other ministries can be, and have been, itinerant. But, from the beginning, the small congregations in the houses had the host/leader as their pastor present every week.

This is of particular significance in Cumbria where many of the churches

<sup>1</sup> Brian Capper 'Order and Ministry in the Social Pattern of the New Testament Church' in *Order and Ministry*, Edited Christine Hall and Robert Hannaford.

are small: congregations of 8 to 15, for example. These congregations are worshipping in buildings designed for 100 or more. Instead of worshipping in a way suited to the small numbers, perhaps in a circle where everyone can easily take part, they worship in a style suited to a congregation of 100 or more, all facing forward, in a formal style led by one person. We need to put the process into reverse and recapture the appropriate



style of worship for small numbers, perhaps moving back to houses. Readers could play a major part in this either as pastoral hosts or as itinerant teachers.

According to the New Testament, Christian

ministry flows from the gifts of God. These gifts are widely distributed across all the members of the Body and are described in various passages such as Romans 12.4-8; 1 Corinthians 12.4-11, 27-31; Ephesians 4.7-16; 1 Peter 4.8-11.

The emphasis in these passages is not on order and hierarchy, but on organic interplay of the different gifts and ministries. The gifts are both 'spiritual' and 'natural' and there is no sharp distinction. 1 Corinthians 12.27 mentions miracles of healing in the same breath as leadership and helping. Every gift for ministry is both spiritual, that is, touched by the Spirit; and natural, since the nature God gave us is to be spiritual and spirit-filled people.

According to Ephesians 4, it is when every gift in the Body of Christ is working properly that the whole Body builds itself up in love, into the stature of Christ. So there is an important third principle:

- *The Church's ministry is expressed not by functions in hierarchical order, but in an organic unity of people using their God given gifts.*

Sadly, the Church has a long history of defining its ministerial work by function and hierarchy. People see themselves not as a vital part of a living body but as in a hierarchical order, something like: bishop, then priest, then deacon, then Reader, churchwarden other lay people, etc. This inevitably leads to some people feeling second or third class in the work of God. The New Testament principle is that at the heart of the Church's vision must be the recognition, release and development

of all the gifts God has given, working together in a collaborative unity. If everyone serves in the way that they are most gifted, they get the greatest sense of fulfillment. They are then less likely to feel that their ministry is not as important as other ministries. This has important implications for how Readers should think about themselves in relation to other ministries.

There are five foundational ministries which are given by the ascended Christ so that the Church grows into Christ's stature. They are apostles; prophets; evangelists; pastors and teachers (*Ephesians 4.7-16*). All Christian ministry is Christ's ministry; it is given by Christ and serves his glory in the world and the Church.

All may teach a little, as, for example, in a family, but only some have a teaching ministry in the Church. Designated ministries in the church must match gifting. Therefore gifts must be tested before a course of training commences. Otherwise someone may train for a ministry for which they are not gifted. This shows the importance of lay people preaching, under supervision. Those involved in Christ's ministry must know where their gifts lie and how their gifts relate to their ministry authorised by the Church.

---

### **The Church's ministry is an organic unity of people using their God given gifts.**

---

So we find two more principles:

- *Parishes will not have a basis for healthy growth unless all five foundational ministries are in place.*
- *Gifts must be discerned and tested before training.*

If every church needs the five foundational ministries for it to grow and flourish, this is very different from our 'one vicar' approach. We see rather that every church needs a team reflecting the five major ministries and Readers should play their part in this, according to their gifts.

It is not surprising that in our long years of a settled parochial ministry of a local and geographical kind, the Church of England's clergy developed as primarily pastoral in their gifting and ministry. In Cumbria, during the Foot and Mouth tragedy, the clergy excelled in their pastoral ministry and we received much commendation for it. However, speaking generally about

the Church of England as a whole, the 'one vicar' pattern has led to the pastoral ministry taking huge precedence over the other four foundational ministries.

Where are the other ministries, the ones that were originally itinerant: the teachers, evangelists and prophets? Some clergy are better teachers than pastors; some are good at both. The 'one vicar' approach is not the right way to offer all the foundational ministries. Some Readers may make very good itinerant teachers.

### **Public authorisation – Does the Church need such a pattern?**

Alongside the conspicuous use of the Body metaphor for gifts and ministries, there are several examples of authorisation in the New Testament. 'Deacons' were authorised to serve meals to widows (Acts 6.1-4). At the start of Paul's apostolic mission commissioning hands were laid on him and Barnabas, interestingly by prophets and teachers, and not by apostles (Acts 13. 1-3). Presbyters were appointed by Paul and Barnabas with prayer and fasting (Acts 14.23; Titus 1.5), and teachers are to be appointed by Timothy (2 Timothy 2.1-2). There are other important reasons why we need to authorise certain ministries:

1. In public ministry people need to know who acts with the Church's authority.
2. Such ministries are a public sign of God and the Church.
3. Authorised ministers serve as examples of godly life and ministry for others to follow.
4. The Church's authorisation gives confidence to help people use their gifts and exercise their ministries.
5. Authorisation gives protection against self-chosen ministry which the church cannot support.

But it is very important also to see what are the drawbacks of authorisation:

1. It can discourage those who are not authorised just because they are not authorised.
2. It leads to possession of ministry by those authorised, as in clericalism, thereby disempowering others.
3. It leads to inflexibility: following rules take precedence over discernment of particular gifts and ministries.



How do we avoid these pitfalls? If we proceed to authorise some ministries and not others how can we avoid returning to the dysfunctional hierarchical pattern rather than the organic pattern of gifts and ministries? The best way is for those in authorised positions, such as Readers to see themselves as enablers of the growth of similar ministry in others not yet authorised, and not, as often happens, as those who alone should practise the ministry.

### Steps towards authorisation

It can be helpful to summarise clearly what the steps should be towards authorisation:

**Step 1** The response of the Church and its members in *obedience* to Christ's commands to share the gospel and serve the world. Gifts emerge not by sitting waiting for them but as we follow the commands Christ has given us.

**Step 2** The discernment of people's *gifts* through giving opportunities for service.

**Step 3** Where gifts are consistently shown, that particular developing *ministry* needs support.

**Step 4** Finally, the Church must give *authorisation* for public ministry where this is appropriate.

Obedience, discerning of gifts, developing ministries, and finally, authorisation. Sadly, what has often happened in the Church is that we have jumped straight from obedience to the call, to selection, training and authorisation without giving scope for gifts and ministries to develop and be seen.

So here is our final principle:

- *The release and extension of the ministry of Christ is the overarching aim.*

Just as in the first Christian centuries patterns of authorisation changed, so today our patterns need to be flexible, always seeking to serve the ministry of Christ for this generation. The question for Readers is not 'How do we make Reader ministry continue as we have known it?'. It is 'What are the best patterns for Christ's ministry in the current generation.' This is consistent with the emphasis in *Mission-Shaped Church*.

### Reader ministry: Our hopes for its future

So, in the light of our principles what do we want to say about Reader ministry today?

1. *Reader Ministry currently offers a very great deal to the Church.*

A Readers brings to the congregation where they serve extensive training – theological and practical. This training has a primary focus on equipment for preaching, teaching and leading worship. Originally a Reader was someone who read the service. Now Readers are trained preachers whose experience is primarily in the wider community, the world of work and business. In the tradition of teachers being itinerant, Readers who are trained and authorised preachers should be available across a deanery or diocese.

What the Order of Readers offers to the Church of England is coherence across the Church of England and parts of the Anglican Communion. Licensed Readers may serve across all parishes in a diocese. They are transferable across dioceses and in the Anglican Communion.

All these points are important and of great value today. They show the advantage of Readers. None of these points applies in the same way to those who are authorised through the development of diocesan lay ministry schemes (*see table on p.9*).

### 2. *The Training of Readers gives potential for diversification of Reader ministry.*

We are seeing a growing return to flexibility in the actual ministries Readers undertake e.g.:

(a) **Funerals.** In most dioceses Readers may be permitted or licensed to take funerals, after appropriate training.

This widens the pastoral base of Readers, who are already experienced at taking public services.

(b) **Chaplains.** Readers are increasingly being appointed as chaplains in hospitals (with training), chaplains in airports, stores, city centres, cadet forces and prisons.

### (c) **Pastoral Care of Congregations**

Some Readers are now given authority over congregations, working under a priest-in-charge, a welcome development when the Reader has pastoral gifts. This is an obvious way to proceed if small congregations are to have their own local pastor. While it is well-known that parishioners can have reservations about receiving pastoral ministry from lay people, I have seen that these reservations can be overcome in the course of time if people are clearly offering ministry according to the strength of their gifts. The local 'shepherd' person for a particular village or congregation can become accepted if it is seen that they are

clearly gifted for the task.

### (d) **Fresh expressions of Church**

With the recent report *Mission-shaped Church* there is now much talk about encouraging new congregations, congregations which meet the needs of different people groups. People associate today more by the networks to which they belong rather than by the locality in which they live. New styles of being Church are springing up. It was exciting at the Readers' Conference in March to find an eagerness amongst Readers to be part of these new ventures. This could give new scope for their teaching, pastoral and leadership gifts.

Diversification is to be welcomed as an important way of developing the scope of lay ministry. However the primary focus on catechetical work is likely to remain. The recent report on *Reader Training Equipping the Saints – The Moderation of Reader Training 1999–2003* emphasises in its recommendations that as much attention in initial Reader training should be given to their role as teachers and trainers in the Church as to their preaching.

### 3. *How might Readers relate to the growth of other lay ministries?*

Most dioceses now have forms of authorised lay ministry other than Readers. There are hospital lay chaplains, evangelists, and pastoral assistants. Rochester, for example, has a foundation year, before diversification into tracks for evangelists, pastoral assistants and Readers.

There are leaders of worship or Communion by extension. Monmouth has around 80 of these, only some of whom are Readers.

Willesden and Carlisle have Commissioned Ministers. Many of these start with doing pastoral or evangelistic work under supervision and are not required to do a long training course before they start. Some lead worship and preach. Their gifts are clearly discovered before they train; then they train 'on the way'. But these commissioned ministers have no authorisation whatsoever beyond the parish. This is simply a more 'apprentice' type of route for discovering and promoting the gifts given by Christ for his ministry.

Readers should rejoice at this blossoming of lay ministry and not feel threatened by it. Their role is still very significant. But we cannot stand still. The patterns for authorising and

ordering lay ministry must change to support the developing ministry of Christ.

It is not right to think in terms of hierarchy and, therefore, of importance. The vision must be to work as an organic whole. Reader ministry has a great deal to offer alongside other typical Diocesan lay ministries, as shown in the table 'Patterns of Authorised Ministry' (see p.9).

#### 4. *The problem of recruiting younger Readers*

There is a problem and a number of factors feed into it. Many people in the 20s-40s are overworking and have no space in which to train. There is a perceived trend towards informal patterns of worship and leadership and away from hierarchy. The growth of other patterns of lay ministry may be a factor.

To address this I suggest proactive recruitment and vocations advice in the dioceses and patterns of training that are realistic for busy, overworked people. A national conference for Readers under the age of 40 is also being planned in 2006.

#### 5. *The problem of Readers who are underused.*

This issue never seems to go away. How then should we approach it? There are important questions which need to be asked about an under used Reader, such as: 'What are the person's ministerial gifts?' 'Are those gifts best used in traditional Reader roles? Or is there an opening that makes better use of the person's gifts?'

Clergy who are used to doing most of 'the ministry' themselves need encouragement and training in using the gifts of others and supervising the development of their ministries, and in collaborative working. Some dioceses like Carlisle are offering courses for incumbents in order to address this.

#### 6. *Future Patterns of Reader Training*

The new Regional Training Partnerships (RTPs) must be helped not to squeeze Reader training to fit patterns of training for ordained ministry but rather to ensure the best availability and quality of initial Reader training in every region, as well as training for other lay ministries. Because of their natural involvement in human networks, Readers are good candidates for training in the new patterns of being Church ('emerging Church' as some are calling it).

The sense of the organic interplay of the authorised ministries of Christ is best preserved by doing as much training as possible together with other ministries (clerical and lay). This requires flexibility and discernment on the part of those responsible. It is always easier to put people through one standard package of training that leads to one product, in other words to make people fit the system.

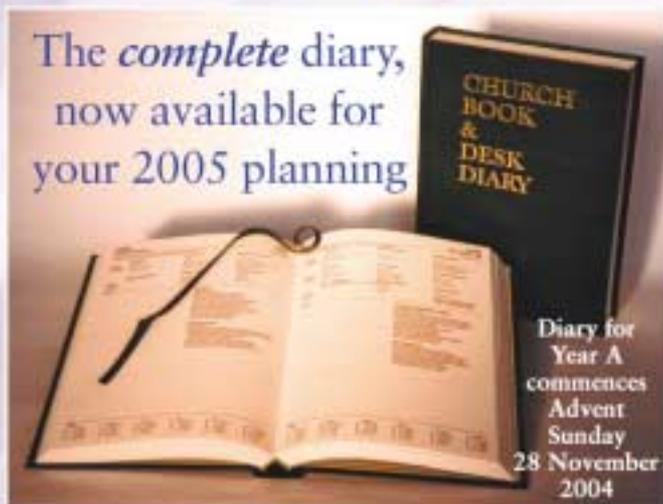
The Moderation Report recommends strengthening CME provision for Readers by assessing their needs, proper resourcing for books and travel and a balanced programme of training. It is to be hoped that this can also be done in association with other ministries, clerical and lay.

#### **And finally...**

In conclusion, our culture is changing, and the Church has to change. We need to place ourselves, ready for God, not holding on tightly to our old patterns. Rather, we must be ready for new forms of church. We stand offering to the Church all the present strengths of Reader ministry, both for 'continuing church' and for 'emerging church'. Personally, I believe that Reader ministry will not only survive, but do well. It may well look different. It might even change its name!

## CHURCH BOOK AND DESK DIARY 2005

The *complete* diary,  
now available for  
your 2005 planning



Page-a-day diary with double page spread  
for Sundays.

*Common Worship and BCP readings for  
weekdays and Sundays.*

Collects and Introductory Sentences for  
Sundays & Special Days.

*Each day is divided into morning,  
afternoon and evening, and includes  
weekly times of sunrise and sunset.*

Forward planners, telephone, address,  
accounts and note pages.

*Information section with details of all  
Church of England dioceses, other  
Anglican Provinces world wide, and a  
useful list of organisations.*

**£14.50**  
including VAT

Personalised gold blocking, and plastic  
protective jacket available. Ask for details.

Once again we sold out last year, so please  
order your 2005 copy as soon as possible  
through your local bookshop  
(ISBN 1-85311-575-4) or direct from the  
publisher (add £1.50 to cover  
postage & packing)

St Mary's Works, St Mary's Plain, Norwich NR3 3BH UK  
Tel: +44 (0)1603 612914 • Fax: +44 (0)1603 624803  
Email: [order@scm-canterburypress.co.uk](mailto:order@scm-canterburypress.co.uk)  
[www.scm-canterburypress.co.uk](http://www.scm-canterburypress.co.uk)

**CANTERBURY**  
PRESS  
NORWICH

SCM-Canterbury Press Ltd is a subsidiary of Hyman Ancient and Modern Ltd, registered charity 270892



# Continuing Ministerial Education for Readers

**Revd Alex Whitehead** is Diocesan Warden of Readers for the Lincoln Diocese and Priest-in-Charge of the Stow Group of Churches. He has served for nine years on the Executive Committee of the Central Readers' Council, chairing the Working Party on Reader Continuing Ministerial Education. His comments here follow on appropriately from Bishop Graham Dow's article.

In 2001, I was asked by the Central Readers' Council to co-ordinate a working party on Continuing Ministerial Education for Readers (= CMER). The ensuing working party report, which was based on a period of much research and much discussion, has been sent to every diocese as a contribution to the discussion on lifelong learning for all ministers so necessary in the church today. A series of national reports, including *Mind the Gap, Reader Ministry and Training 2000 and Beyond*, and more recently, *Equipping the Saints – A Moderation of Reader Training 1999–2003*, have all stressed the need for well resourced lifelong learning for all ministers, non-stipendiary as well as stipendiary, lay as well as ordained, for the sake of the church at a time of considerable change.

It must be recognised that many Readers own and arrange their own lifelong learning in all sorts of different ways, through guided reading, and by subscribing to courses provided by institutions of further and higher education. Again, for some years now CMER has been provided by national conferences, regional conferences, the annual Selwyn Week and the quality of many articles and book reviews in *The Reader*. There are also hopes that the further development of the Reader website, at present in progress, will become an increasingly important contributor to all forms of Reader education and communication. We also know from our research that some dioceses already provide elements of good quality CME for Reader CMER and others provide book grants as well as courses.

## Patchy provision

However, there is no doubt that provision has been patchy across the Dioceses. It needs to become more consistent. To this end, *Equipping the Saints* recommended that dioceses ensure proper post-admission courses and CME provision for all Readers, including:

1. An officer or planning group appointed to be responsible for this area of training.
2. A system for assessing Reader needs.
3. A balanced programme of training to meet these needs.
4. The provision of a training allowance for Readers where this exists for other ministers.
5. Proper resourcing of Readers by their parishes for books, travel and training.

The Central Readers' Council Working Party Report additionally recommended that, wherever possible, Readers and clergy should be able to undertake CME together and most importantly, that Diocesan CME funding should be made available to Readers as well as to clergy. The

the setting up of a national conference for Readers under the age of 40 now planned to take place at the All Saints Centre, London Colney between 11–13 June 2006. It is hoped that a great deal of networking and preparation between the under 40s will take place before the conference so that the conference itself will be the climax for work already completed and a springboard for fresh and creative work, encouraging new developments in Reader ministry for the future. Our Chair, the Bishop of Carlisle, has invited all diocesan bishops to send two delegates to this National Under 40s Conference. More information about this will be publicised as the working party warms to its task.

The work of the *Hind Report* is also encouraging a programme of much more integrated ministerial training at the levels of initial training, initial post-licensing training and continuing ministerial education for all serving ministers, ordained and lay. All of the Reports quoted above encourage this

---

**The voice of the younger Reader has rarely been heard at national forums and conferences and the suspicion is that this is also true at diocesan and more local levels.**

---

Working Party also encouraged that the regular review of a Reader's ministry should be linked to an opportunity to set new learning goals. The new Covenant arrangements developing with the Methodist Church might also encourage us to explore ecumenical partnerships for Continuing Ministerial Education.

## Where are the younger Readers?

An important outcome of the Working Party was the discovery that out of over 10,000 Readers in the Church of England, only a few hundred were under the age of 40. This is further borne out by the fact that the annual general meetings and national conferences are mainly attended by senior Readers of long standing, many of whom over the years have got to know each other across their diocesan boundaries. This has meant that the voice of the younger Reader has rarely been heard at national forums and conferences and the suspicion is that this is also true at diocesan and more local levels. Because of this, the Working Party Report recommended

greater integration of ministerial training and continuing ministerial education but we might also recognise that there are some legitimate occasions for differentiated training for clergy and for Readers. One of the aims of CMER must be to encourage a deepening sense of fellowship among Readers as Readers continue to offer a lay order of ministry within the Church of England.

There are all sorts of practical implications in these recommendations, such as ensuring that national and regional conferences do not clash and that programmes of CME should have well thought out themes, aims and objectives. We need to ensure value for money through finding centres which provide good facilities at the right price. We also need to find the right balance between very local provision and that offered by dioceses, regions and nationally.

## Lifelong learning

It is very encouraging that there is a definite change in culture towards lifelong learning and a genuine desire to provide good opportunities both nationally and locally for CMER.

However, one of the most significant implications still needed to be grasped, is that, although Reader Ministry is non-stipendiary and thus very cost effective, it is not merely ministry on the cheap. Most of the training and education budgets for ministry in the Church of England still go to provide for the needs of stipendiary and increasingly non-stipendiary clergy.

Reader Ministry is too often maintained on marginal and shoestring budgets. Reader ministry needs to be properly and adequately resourced, not 'the crumbs from the table' mentality so often experienced in the past. CME provision must be allocated to resource all our ministerial needs, not chiefly delegated to one particular constituency. Let us hope that the

dioceses of the Church of England will encourage the appointment of Reader representatives on CME planning groups or among CME advisors and that the precious CME purse strings will be increasingly open to Readers, as well as to clergy in sensitively thought through training budgets.

## PATTERNS OF AUTHORISED MINISTRY

(as suggested by Bishop Graham Dow)

|   | READER   | PERMANENT DEACON (Clerical)                              | TYPICAL DIOCESAN LAY MINISTER   | COMMISSIONED MINISTER (Willesden & Carlisle)  |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Ministry</b>   | preaching, teaching pastoral work, chaplaincy, leadership according to gifts | many sided as in the Ordinal                             | diverse according to training:<br>pastoral work, evangelist                       | diverse according to developing gifting:<br>pastoral work, evangelist, counselling, teaching            |
| <b>Training</b>   | full training leading to theologically equipped lay minister                 | full training leading to theologically equipped minister | full training usually with light theological foundation                           | apprenticeship model learning by doing vocational journey discovery of gifts theology gained on the way |
| <b>Authorisation</b>  | admission to Office of Readers<br>Bishop's Licence                           | ordination as Deacon<br>Bishop's Licence                 | certificate of authorisation specifies sphere of ministry                         | Bishop's Commission relevant permissions  |
| <b>Universality/transferability</b>                                 | transferable across dioceses authorised across parishes                      | transferable across dioceses authorised across parishes  | not necessarily transferable across dioceses; usually transferable within diocese | No - purely local to one parish or benefice   |
| <b>Stipendiary/voluntary</b>  | normally voluntary   | either   | voluntary   | voluntary   |
| <b>Leading Worship</b><br>• sacramental<br>• non-sacramental        | • no<br>• yes  | • baptisms<br>• yes                                      | • no<br>• possible permission   | • no<br>• possible permission under supervision   |
| <b>Preaching</b>  | yes  | yes  | not normally  | possible permission under supervision   |
| <b>Catechetical &amp; Teaching</b>                                  | expected potential   | yes  | potential   | possible permission under supervision   |
| <b>Bereavement &amp; Funerals</b>                                   | possible inclusion in licence  | yes  | bereavement visiting  | possible permission under supervision   |
| <b>Pastoral Ministry</b>  | potential according to gifts, including designated pastor of a church.       | yes  | after appropriate training  | learning under supervision  |
| <b>Chaplaincy:<br/>Hospital<br/>Stores<br/>City centre/business</b> | possible with training<br>possible<br>possible                               | possible<br>possible<br>possible                         | possible with training<br>possible<br>possible                                    | possible with training<br>possible appointment<br>possible appointment                                  |



# The woman's tale

With our cover picture and the themes of 'spirituality' and 'mission' in mind, this meditation seeks to engage imaginatively with the biblical story of Jesus' meeting with a woman at the well of Samaria. Bear in mind John 4.5-42; 7.37-39; 19.28, 34.

It is a joy for me to be able to speak of him. For that noontide by the well I truly discovered joy. Life had never been easy for me. Indeed, until that day when a stranger happened to stop at the well where I drew my water I had never really known life. I had always had to struggle. The well was deep and it was hard back-breaking work to draw up the water on which I and my family depended. Unlike the other women in my town I had to go there to draw at noon – the hottest part of the day. When I had tried to go to the well in the early morning, the other women either shunned me – which was bad enough – or even called me names and picked up stones to throw at me. It was my bad reputation: I had had five husbands – some had died, some I had escaped after they beat and abused me. Now I lived with a 'protector' and suffered the jibes of 'tart' in silence.

Normally I expected – and hoped – that I would not meet anyone at the well, but that day there was a man sitting there looking as tired and thirsty as I myself felt. He was a Jew, I could see that by his clothes. Well, in that case, he was bound to ignore me, since I was a Samaritan woman. If he were a good Jew he wouldn't have anything to do with me firstly because I was a Samaritan, then a woman, and he would be able to guess at my reputation because of the time of day. But instead he asked me for a drink, and when I asked him 'why', he started to talk with me. He was answering all the questions I had: all those questions that poured out of my frustration, and tiredness and unhappiness. I hadn't felt like this – so human – in years: it was almost as though I was sitting there drinking deep of a heady draught which I had not had to draw myself – and which refreshed the depths of my soul as well as my lips and tongue. The man was going to change my life, and it had already begun.

Did I say he was going to change my life? It was much more than that. He gave me the gift of life itself. I will always remember that day. The first moment I saw him, sitting by the well as I came to draw my water. It was like a dream out of the ancient tales – the handsome stranger who asks for water from a woman and then takes her to be his bride. But in the stories the woman was always a young and innocent virgin, not thoroughly soiled goods like me that no upstanding, good man would want even to be seen with. But he had wanted me, he had needed me, he had even used me – and for that I was grateful.

I still chuckle to myself when I think about his disciples. They had gone into the city to buy bread, and when they came back there was their revered leader talking to this disreputable woman. I could see that they were longing to ask him what he was up to, the question was just hanging out of their mouths. But they didn't dare ask it. He was like that: gentle, and yet with the kind of authority that didn't brook unnecessary questions. Yet he hadn't thought my questions were unnecessary – he had answered them, even encouraged the asking.

And then he had used me. No, not in the way so many other men had used me over the years. He had respected me too much for that. For him I was a person, a human being, not a sex object, a channel for men's desires. He had asked me if I would go and tell my people about him – he made me the messenger of his good news. Me, the dregs of my city, I had become the one who changed all their lives. Why was it they had listened to me when I went with the message, when normally they turned their backs and stopped their ears as I approached? Was it the lightness of my step, the light in my eyes that had commanded attention? But they did listen, and came to see for themselves – they made my Saviour their own, they too discovered the one who was bread and water of life. That day I drank deep of the draught he had offered and I believe that I will never be so hungry or thirsty again.

After those few strange days I never saw him again, but I heard word of him from time to time. Then one day, about two years later, the grim news filtered into town that he had been put to death – crucified – in Jerusalem.

They told me how, just before he was arrested, he had broken bread with his friends and pledged them his body. They told me, too, how when he had hung on the cross one hot noontime in

Jerusalem he had asked for water once again, for he had been thirsty unto death. It seemed that the living water he had offered had sprung deep out of his own side.

# THE SPIRITUALITY OF EXILE

The Venerable **John Holdsworth**, currently Archdeacon of St David's in Wales, and until recently Principal of St Michael's College, Llandaff, Cardiff, offer stimulating reflections on what the biblical theme of 'exile' means in our day. John's recent book, *Dwelling in a Strange Land* is reviewed on p.26.

On St Andrew's Day 2002 I attended an ordination service in Auckland Cathedral that I remember for two reasons. The first was that after the service, as a kind of fund-raising event, an attractive bikini-clad Tongan dancer who had covered her body in some kind of oil, performed a dance to the accompaniment of a Tongan choir. The idea was to approach the dancer and stick banknotes to her body. The archbishop told me that £20 notes stuck particularly well but I took his word for it. The other memorable part of the occasion was the sermon. This was preceded by the complete recorded rendition of Boney M's *By the Rivers of Babylon*. As it finished, the preacher triumphantly declared, "This is a time of Exile!" Unfortunately, there was little in the rest of the sermon to describe what exile might mean in these circumstances; or what difference it would have made if she'd played the theme from Star Wars and declared, "This is a time of Crusade!"

The most common ways of understanding exile, even in a religious context, are to do with geography and culture. To be an exile is to be away from home, and to have a real sense of exile is to long to be back there. In the writings of many American religious scholars exile means being out of step with surrounding culture. This is linked to the traditional view that the church is not of the world though it is in the world; the view that it sets up alternative cultures, communities, and holds alternative values. I have no real argument with that, but it is not what the Bible, for the most part, and especially the Old Testament, understands by exile. The people of the Old Testament are not portrayed as being constantly at odds with their Babylonian masters. Jeremiah even exhorts the exiles to settle in and

engage fully with their new country. For the people of the Old Testament there is actually much more at stake than that. Their argument is not so much with the Babylonians as with God.

## Israel in exile

In the Old Testament, exile is about learning how it might be possible to maintain religious faith, life, and identity once you have left a context of safety and security; once you have left shared, largely untested, assumptions. In this sense most thoughtful adult practicing Christians are exiles. We have had to grow up. As children, our

people felt they had known about God. Their land had gone, their status as a nation had gone, with all that that involves in terms of identity, and what price their special relationship if such a thing could happen? Even their belief that there was natural justice in the world had to go. Accept as they might that they deserved to be punished (and not everyone took that line, though it's the one we're most familiar with), why should they be punished by people who were morally worse than they were? For religious people everything had to be re-thought.

---

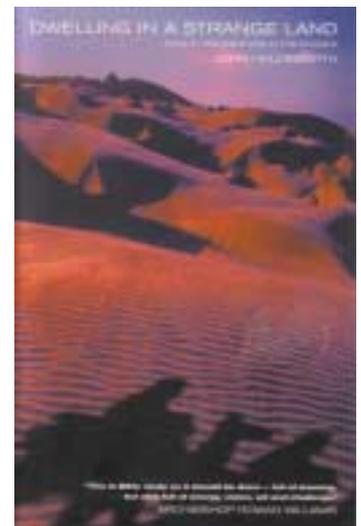
**The most common ways of understanding exile, even in a religious context, are to do with geography and culture. To be an exile is to be away from home, and to have a real sense of exile is to long to be back there.**

---

faith was about celebrating the settledness and reliability of life and God. It was about exploring with awe and wonder the fixed order he had ordained and responding to all that with thanks. It was about respecting the immutable boundaries God had set to human behaviour and endeavour. Adolescence brought with it a permission to test all that, making it a time of questioning and rage. But adult faith begins when the testing results in all the wrong answers, or no answers at all, and when adult experience makes the questions all the more acute.

The Old Testament tells the story of a people for whom religion meant settledness in secure boundaries of every kind, and a people who felt close to a God they understood fully. He had promised them land, progeny and a special relationship. He had given them a king. They had never had it so good. But then comes the trauma of the deportation to Babylon, a trauma which calls into question all that the

And so it is, in a sense for those today whose faith has taken its bearings from childhood, and who are brought face to face with loss, suffering, disillusion, the corruption of power, the triumph of evil, the subversion of good, and all the other traumatic experiences of adult life and citizenship.



Modern Old Testament scholarship sees the exile as a pivotal point for the creation of the Old Testament as we have it. This religiously traumatised people wanted to understand what 'religion' could possibly mean in these new times. This is not a superficial or trivial undertaking. The final form of the Old Testament reflects this serious quest in many places. From the point of view of spirituality, one of the most promising areas to look at is the response to exile provided by the writers we generally classify as simply 'P'. These writers do not get a particularly good press nowadays, partly because the 'P' stands for 'Priestly', and we can tend to associate the writings with a lot of obscure priestcraft which seems very remote from our experience of life or indeed church. Books like Leviticus and Numbers are hardly the most accessible. 1 and 2 Chronicles seem much more austere than their up-front media-conscious and racy counterparts in 1 and 2 Samuel and Kings.

But in principle they do point us to the 'bottom-line' of exile spirituality. Suppose you could interview the kind of person for whom the P family of writings is intended: what would they say? Perhaps they might express it like this. 'We once felt that we understood God perfectly, and were at ease in his world. We felt that he was close to us and that he knew us; and that gave us a real sense of who we were, our special identity. But now God has done strange things. He seems distant, difficult to understand, remote. This is not all bad. We now know, for example that he is much greater

---

**Exile spirituality takes trauma seriously. It is the first to describe God as healer. It is the first to describe forgiveness in a way which the New Testament might recognise.**

---

than we imagined. He is the God of all nations, all creation and all history. But that raises questions: why did he design history in this way. Why are there so many things wrong in this creation? And beyond that: who are we now, and how do we mark and recognise that?'

The P response is to design a spirituality that concentrates on God's sacramental presence – seeing the presence of God in a variety of new ways, and devising ceremonies to appeal to the imagination, and to stretch the mind, couched in the story of God so far. This means, in effect, redefining holiness and sacredness and placing them at the centre of religious life. And the observance of these new rituals and sacramental acts become the new way of describing who we are: they become the defining marks of our identity. It is quite interesting to think about the eucharist, not from the point of view of the New Testament Last Supper, but to see it as a similar response to the perceived absence of God, and a way of defining the community in a new fashion – the eucharistic people.

### A gentle God

Sacrament, and all it involves, is one direction of exile spirituality. Another is a new appreciation of God's gentleness. Exile spirituality takes trauma seriously. It is the first to describe God as healer. It is the first to describe

forgiveness in a way which the New Testament might recognise. A third element is that of re-dreaming the future. Settledness does not promote what we might call eschatology, that is, a yearning to consider and hope for a future different from the present in fundamental ways. The experience of exile gives new substance to hope as part of the spiritual life. The Old Testament writers use the story of an old disjunction (the Exodus) as backcloth for new hopes and dreams in 'The Return.' They then use the story of old settledness not in a nostalgic way, but as a stimulus to reflection in the present on the task of religion. Reflection can take place on the new kingdom, the new heaven, the new earth, in which evil is vanquished and individuals, society, and indeed, the whole created order, is transformed.

### The challenge of exile

Exile should be more of a challenge than it is, and more obvious in a church of adults. Unfortunately you are more likely to find churches where good people thank God for maintaining them, or where puzzled people lament that things are not as they were. Exiles do neither of these things. They affirm their context and learn from it. They read their story of faith afresh, and learn how to regard that as an inspiration rather than a betrayal. For them God is both nearer and further away. He is further away in the sense of being less understood but nearer in the sense of sacramental presence. Psalm 137 is not the best access point to this theology and spirituality, and it's a shame that when we think of exile it's what springs to mind. Thinking back to Auckland I could well have done without Boney M – but I'd have been sorry to miss the dancer.

**A · N · V · I · L**

An Anglican Evangelical journal for theology and mission

- ▲ Are you feeling confused by current theological debates?
- ▲ Do you want to read in more depth but find academic books and journals too heavy?

**Then try ANVIL**

- ▲ Full of thoughtful relevant articles plus excellent book reviews.
- ▲ Articles are designed, not least in their length, with busy Readers and Clergy in mind.
- ▲ A typical 80-page issue will have 4 to 6 articles & 25 pages of Book Reviews.
- ▲ With 4 such issues each year subscription is great value from just £16.50.

To subscribe or for more information:

Website: [www.anviljournal.co.uk](http://www.anviljournal.co.uk) (click on Subscription and follow links)

E-mail: [subscription@anviljournal.co.uk](mailto:subscription@anviljournal.co.uk)

Write: Anvil Journal, Ridley Hall Road, Cambridge CB3 9HU

---

Need a bit more persuasion? How about this?

**SPECIAL OFFER**

Subscribe now for 18 months up to the end of 2005 (6 issues) for just

**£19.95**

(Please quote offer no: REA21.3)



**John Smith** Chairs the Cumbria Ecumenical Environment Group.

A report in *Nature* this year warned of the current extinction of a quarter of all life forms due to man-made global warming, before the year 2050. Humanity's greed is forcing upon this Earth's creation one of the great extinctions, the sixth, that has damaged life on this planet. There are about 1.75 million known species on the Earth, but this could be a huge underestimate. The fifth extinction some 60 million years ago, leading to the loss of the dinosaurs was caused by a collision of the Earth with a meteorite. The greatest mass extinction was caused 251 million years ago, the Permian extinction. Here the earth poured carbon dioxide, through the Siberian eruptions, into the atmosphere. This caused the methane hydrate locked in the permafrost to be released. Methane is a far more potent global warming gas than carbon dioxide and the eventual spiral warming killed almost all life on this planet. Evolution took ten million years to recover and over 150 million years to restore the previous level of complexity. The temperature rise, caused by the Siberian eruptions, was probably only 6°C. The future seems fraught as one of the projected targets for temperature rise in this century is above that level (7-11°C) and methane is locked in the permafrost of the Arctic.

As homo sapiens (wise apes) we are unique, because we can think in such timescales. Our science can penetrate the past, or into the distances of space and we can understand the creation of our planet. If we can look backward so far, why cannot humans also look forward and create for ourselves a good future of as long as the last interglacial? (20,000 years) Why cannot humans have a practical vision of a sustainable world? This could be our gift to our neighbours and perhaps on humanity's part a gift to creation herself. Mankind

# Extinction, sustainability and sharing: a Green spirituality for the 21st century

knows enough to perform this act of kindness both for ourselves and the planet. Only selfishness, greed and our unique capacity to go beyond natural sustainability prevents this. We are at a point in history when a quarter of the world's people carry on consuming two-thirds of the world's resources and when half of the people, simply to stay alive, are destroying the means by which all people can survive and prosper. The rich First World has the knowledge to lead the human race from competing with the planet to a partnership which could have long term benefits. One scientist questions whether humanity will be extinct by the end of this century. Are humans at a point in history when we could determine our own evolution?

## The challenge of interdependence

In 1991 a body of experts under the important international sponsorship of the World Conservation Union, The United Nations Environment Programme and the World Wide Fund for Nature issued a report called *Caring for the Earth: a strategy for sustainable living*, with challenges to be met by the year 2000. It included national environmental law, the ability of communities to care for their own environments, a Covenant on sustainability; of air, waters, forests and lands. It is an unrealised vision of hope. It is a pioneering document for a sustainable future. Unfortunately many of its hopes have been dashed by the unreality of the political timescale. The earth's constituency of human beings does not seem inclined to act swiftly.

We live on a very small planet in a vast universe. The surface of our planet is a razor thin coat of life. The biosphere has developed as life has evolved. The air we breathe, the climate which sustains us, the rocks and soil, the mysteries of life interact with each other, have co-evolved and are mutually dependant. The process of life is one of constant renewal and loss and is, if naturally sustained, of increasing complexity. The more complex life is the better it is able to resist natural

catastrophes. Humanity tampers with these sustaining systems to its peril. There have been man made ecological disasters in Europe, Africa and the Americas. Currently, we may be beginning a global environmental tragedy. If humanity over exploits the renewability of natural systems all life loses. Today we know enough to be careful of proposed economic growth that does not take into account resourcing and waste disposal. Global warming will cost humanity dear if we do not recognise that we belong to this earth.

Humanity, according to some scientists, must now make our own evolution. An evolution, not only of the sustained physical environment, but also of the mind, the culture and, for those of us who are Christian, the spirit. These evolutionary parts are one continuum for the living systems of the planet depend on feedback loops. So the feedback loops of learning and spirituality can affect how humanity acts and behaves in this new situation. This is a New Age. Humanity has many choices to make if it is to survive well and we know enough to make them wisely.

## Sustainability and sharing

New Age spirituality needs to embrace the ethic of sustainability. Today competition and consumerism dominate our economies. Minimal cost has become a virtue and the cheaper the better. Other values of quality, fairness and partnership are suppressed. Under this profiteering much is lost. There is a need to move from a lifestyle of competition to one of partnership, from competition between people and the planet to the partnership of sustainability. Practicality needs to influence life and community. We should pay producers a fair return for their efforts and sustain organic farmers and the rural communities on which we depend. We need to limit the transport of goods to market so that carbon dioxide waste and global warming is reduced. Supporting local small shops has been shown to be cheaper, sustains local jobs and local

economies, minimises waste and supports re-cycling. Manufactured goods should be made for the long term and locally repaired so that waste is reduced. This could regenerate communities and in such a scenario communities share. Some share cars, others work – including caring for the young. Sharing is a dynamic of good community and good economics as well as wise use of resources. It is most easily organised in smaller and defined communities. These are social expenditures that do not appear on balance sheets

Sharing is a key ethic of Christianity. Christians believe that God became human and shared our life on this planet. The incarnation was an act of divine intervention. Viewed cosmically it happened comparatively recently. It is an event, which with Jesus's teaching, still resounds throughout the planet and has material, cultural and spiritual consequences and is a feedback loop.

---

### **There is a need to move from a lifestyle of competition to one of partnership, from competition between people and the planet to the partnership of sustainability.**

---

Practical sharing is a lesson we need re-learn. It is one of local and global significance that will inspire us to take up the task of sustainability as a spiritual discipline. Can we share the earth's resources with the rest of creation? Can we humans limit our material demands on the planet and increase that educational and spiritual quotient that is our potential, as Christ came to share our DNA, serve and change creation and evolution? A long term sustainable future is a religious challenge which all Christians should consider. Their good actions personally, locally and politically will have a material effect on the planet. Such changes have already begun in small sharing communities that live close to the soil and understand the resources that support good living. Sustainability and sharing are material, cultural and spiritual ethics that we need to embrace if the human race and God's sharing vision in Christ is to progress beyond this century. All religions, have a particular responsibility, with all their economic and social influence, to improve the world. We are called to love God as creator and our neighbour as ourselves.

Creation is the manifestation of God and all life is our neighbour. Human beings are called to understand and question prophetic environmental science and apply the religious imperatives that mitigate the dangers and enhance the opportunities that scientists explain.

#### **Easy... and difficult**

It is easy to leave this to the politicians and the institutions, including the churches. Bodies such as UNEP, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, and Church Ecology Link deserve our support and interest. Concern for spirituality is a feature of our 'New Age'. It is easy to blame George Bush, despite much sound science and lobbying in USA academia, and expect our politicians to take up these issues and to look longer term than the period between elections. There is a growing awareness that we can change our lifestyles for the benefit of the planet. This may be as simple as

walking not using the car, recycling, not using too many plastic bags, composting and reducing the thermostat on the central heating, or as complicated as living and worshipping in an energy efficient building incorporating simple and complicated technologies. This spirituality is both scientific and social and even wider. Eco-philosophy, eco-psychology, eco-history, eco-congregations, eco-theology and others can be found.

This spirituality demands that we first understand the issues. These are complex. We need a spirituality of wise personal decision making by which our lives can be framed and one which will help sustain our Earth. This spirituality means developing a new lifestyle, not losing too much in comfort, but leaving what is called a minimal ecological footprint on the Earth. It involves the high technology of low energy light bulbs and the low technology of recycling. It involves recognising the UN's solution to uncontrolled population growth is increasing the status and education of women and the green education of children. It can involve the vitality of

living in sharing eco-communities and the promotion of peace as a fundamental ecological concern. Also important are the political and institutional activities which constantly monitor the Earth systems. This is done largely through extensive computer modelling along with the collection of global scientific data. The vital issue is how individuals can live sustainably so that humanity can allow our earth to heal a world torn by unconsidered consumerism. Living simply so that others may simply live is one foundation for the future. Minimising our ecological footprint is a political, personal, religious and spiritual imperative.

#### **Whispers of hope**

In ecological terms is the glass half full or half empty? In the last ten years much has been achieved and scenarios have been revised as situations worsen and improve. The population expectations of 10 billion by 2050 (currently 6 billion) of a few years ago have been revised downward to 9 billion, with the possibility that by the end of this century it could be down to 3.5 billion (experts suggest ideally 2.5 billion). However this has been achieved not only by education and the status of women but by the tragedy of AIDS. The thinning of the ozone layer, due to man made chemicals, has been stopped and its healing anticipated. Regular international conferences explain the dangers of global warming. The importance of conservation of nature and species is recognised if not fulfilled. Yet the USA, whose per capita energy use is twice as much as any other country emitting 25% of the world's carbon dioxide waste, does not stimulate its green economy or reduce its pollution. Targets of carbon reduction are being set by international agreements and being met by a few countries, including the UK. There is then much to be hopeful about, but individuals must continue to be aware, to continue to change and expect our political and religious leaders to understand the pain, vitality and complexity of our biosphere and our responsibility to it. Our first answer to the question, 'Who is our neighbour?' must be the generous living Earth on which humanity depends, and the complex life that graces, stimulates and co-evolves her God given potential.



# In praise of trees



**David Childs**, founder of the National Memorial Arboretum, and a Reader in the Salisbury Diocese originally wrote about the Arboretum in *The Reader* autumn 2001. Here he writes about a new initiative with which the Arboretum is connected.

Every year at the end of November the Tree Council, the lead UK tree campaigning partnership, celebrates the start of the tree planting season by launching National Tree Week to encourage the planting of trees. In 2003 it was decided to add a spiritual dimension to the week by reviving the idea of a Tree Sunday Service.

The first tree planting remembrance service was held at the Heritage Craft Schools and Home for Crippled Children at Chailey in Sussex on the first Armistice Day after the 1914-18 War. On that occasion the service was followed by the blessing of memorial trees and the observation of the two minute's Silence, accompanied by Last Post and Reveille.

In 1934, in response to a broadcast

appropriate setting, not only for the Service as a whole, but one in which to recall such wooden structures as the ark, the temple and the cross. Of special interest was the first singing of the following hymn to the tune *England's Lanes* ('For the beauty of the earth'):

As the beech within the wood,  
As the pine upon the shore,  
As the redwood in the forest  
Rises from the shady floor;  
Lord of life, please help us be  
Strong and upright as a tree.

As the hazel in the hedges  
As the hawthorn and the sloe  
Give shelter to the shorn lamb  
When the icy wet winds blow:  
Lord of caring help us be  
A source of comfort like a tree.



## Trees in scripture and world religions

Throughout the service the role of trees and the benefits to be gained from them, both physically and spiritually, was emphasised. The readings were Isaiah 55.8-13 and Revelation 21.1-4; 22.1-2. A Buddhist monk, Ratnaprabha, also explained the importance of trees, especially the Bodhi tree, under which the Buddha meditated, and the sal trees beneath which he was born and below which he died. Common links with Hinduism, Judaism and Islam, through the significance of trees to their faith and history, were also mentioned and explored. Two harp solos, written and played by Fred Hageneder, author of *The Heritage of Trees*, allowed the congregation time for reflection.

For a psalm Byron's version of Psalm 137, 'We sat down and wept by the waters of Babel,' was recited. This was especially appropriate for November 2003 for, after the service, 55 weeping willows (*Salix Babylonica*) were planted to commemorate the lives of those British servicemen which had been so recently lost in Iraq. The trees were planted by the banks of the Rivers Trent and Tame, thus establishing a link between these Midland streams and the great waters of the Tigris and Euphrates. The Arboretum was honoured that the relatives of some of those who had died were able to attend the service.

The Tree Council and National Memorial Arboretum would be delighted if other churches felt they would like to hold a Tree Service. Any one interested can get details from David Childs, Waterfall Cottage, Chicks Grove, Wilts, SP3 6NA. email: [arboretumnma@waitrose.com](mailto:arboretumnma@waitrose.com)

**Although the initiative appears to have been short-lived, evidence of its success can be seen in mature and flourishing trees and woods throughout the country.**

appeal November 11 came to be regarded as a nation-wide day of tree planting. Given that, during the twentieth century, the onset of dormancy among trees moved further and further towards the end of the year mid November, in the 1930s, then probably marked the start of the planting season so the date would have been doubly appropriate.

Although the initiative appears to have been short-lived evidence of its success can be seen in mature and flourishing trees and woods throughout the country.

In an attempt to revive the idea The National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas in Staffordshire, devised a service to be held on 30 November 2003. I was privileged to lead the service, which drew on the links of many faiths with trees. The service was held in the Arboretum's Millennium Chapel of Peace and Forgiveness (featured in *The Reader* in Autumn 2001) which, being a Chapel constructed entirely in wood, was an

As the orchard's golden fruits  
As the orange and the pear  
Lime and lemon, nut and sap  
Feed thy people everywhere  
Lord of bounty help us be  
Full of succour as a tree.

As the blossom of the cherry  
And the acer's autumn glow  
As the aspen and the willow  
When they whiten, row on row  
Lord of beauty let us be  
Joy to all just like a tree.

As the dead tree on the hill  
Into which the nails were driven  
Turned a symbol of despair  
To a sign of being forgiven  
Lord of love, please help us be  
Signs of love, just like that tree.

The hymn was written by David Childs for a tree planting in tribute to Lord Farnham, late President of the Tree Council, but recited on that occasion because it was too new for a suitable tune to have been found!



Archbishop Rowan presiding at the Walsingham celebration.

# The case for a Lay Spirituality

**James M Rosenthal** is a Lay Canon, Reader in the Diocese of Canterbury, Director of Communications for the Anglican Communion world-wide and editor of *Anglican Episcopal World* magazine and the Anglican Communion News Service. A native of Chicago, Jim lives in Canterbury and works in London at the new Anglican Communion Office, St Andrew's House, Westbourne Park.

reading the offices of Matins and Evensong provides, on some level, a communion with the scriptures and with formulas and prayers that have sustained people for centuries – in a way that cannot be matched when we are passing through

the seasons of despair, calmness or even joy.

## In trouble or in joy

In 1981, for reasons yet to be fully revealed, I realised something was particularly wrong. Depression would be one name for it. I was blessed by the reality that our own Chicago Cathedral ran a counselling centre but despite having been on the Cathedral Chapter, I still really wasn't sure what they did. Yet given my state of mind I knew I had better find out. It was there that my spiritual journey continued under the careful guidance and affectionate care of a Welsh priest who taught me that my life needed to be grounded in the sense of communion and the acceptance with a God whose commandment is: You shall love your neighbour as you love yourself. How many ever read that phrase with care on the latter part!

Not that I wish depression on anyone, but it wasn't until those days in my life that the psalms came leaping off the page into my very being. In my sense of desperation and depression, I felt alone. No-one has the feelings I do, I lamented – but was I mistaken? Indeed I was! Strikingly there in the psalms, the same feelings, the emotions, the fear and the trembling, the stress and the strain came sharply into focus as the discipline, the rhythm again assured me, that someone had beat me to it,

someone has gone before, someone's own journey led them into expressions of hope that comes so poignantly to us in the psalms. As an avid Evensong-goer I often feel compelled to stand up after a psalm and shout – 'did you all get that – do you understand!'

## From generation to generation

Those who feel that written prayers aren't as valid as others need to remember that the faith has been alive from generation to generation and pray that it will continue that way. The written word, songs, hymns, prayers are a sustaining force in my spirituality. I can't imagine any Christian not being able to re-live the words of hymns like *Love divine, all loves excelling*. Emotion and devotion, thinking and experiencing, need to be balanced. The great words of scripture, such as Mary's song of liberation, the Magnificat, or the poignancy of Simeon and Anna's *Nunc Dimittis* can be a key way of sustaining our prayer.

Often the exuberance of great moments of discovery of God can lead us to mountain top experiences, but we also need to ensure that throughout our succeeding years the routine of praising God 'Seven whole days, not one in heaven' can be sustained.

## To be a pilgrim

My life and work has taken me on incredible physical journeys and pilgrimage. One often thinks of holidays and phrases like 'been there, done that', 'bought the postcard and the souvenir' but God meets us often in the strangest ways and at the strangest times. A spiritual walk includes paying attention to what is on offer. Sometimes when we pass by the beauty of creation around us, or lose track of the history, that is staring us in the eye, some small thing holds us

Being in hospital is no fun. My first time I particularly felt confined. My parish priest came to do what all good clergy do when a parishioner is in hospital. He arrived, prayers were said, scripture read, communion from the reserved sacrament given. A few questions, a clasp of the hand but as he was about to leave, he made a comment. On my bedside table I had what might be called the accoutrements of a good Anglo-Catholic practitioner. A rosary given to me by a fellow university student when I was confirmed and blessed by the Bishop, and also my own Book of Common Prayer, received at the same time. The priest said, 'It is wonderful to see your prayer book close by and to see it so well used.' He was referring to the elegant gold leaf edges that are often affixed to Bibles and prayer books, especially in the United States. My gold was fading. Should I have been proud, or humbled? I really wasn't sure. But I know that the discipline of saying Morning and Evening Prayer from the prayer book for me provides the rhythm of life which has sustained me through many days of stress, and 'through many dangerous toils and snares', as the great hymn writer reminds us.

If you are like me, there are times in life where you simply feel prayer is out of the question. Why pray? It is at such times that the holy routine of

back and bids us remember, engage and live! Recently I attended the National Pilgrimage at Walsingham and was busy taking photos. What photo opportunities there were, especially with the Archbishop of Canterbury present! But at one point I had to just stop in my tracks, and deliberately find my way to the nearest votive candles, bid my body, mind and spirit relax and take in the depth of the moment, and pray for others and myself.

How do people respond when they find themselves living in the precincts of one of the greatest Cathedrals in the world? Having lived in Canterbury for six years, the building by its very nature, especially when floodlit by night, compels me to think about what it is that inspired that building and to whom that building belongs. Some people may think they are the landlords or owners of our great churches. To me the power of these buildings reflect a human response in art and craft which surpasses ownership and leads to a relationship. It belongs to all, not just a few. In my mind it is linked with the ministry of hospitality and care, linked both to the way of St Benedict and to the ministry of so many lay workers.

### **The practice of the presence of God**

Spirituality in the average Christian's life is nurtured by their experience. It is usually begun at a very early age and most often enabled by lay women. Lay women have been a key element in spiritual growth and experience. In today's Anglican world the experience of Taizé meditation, the Labyrinth and lay renewal movements have made their impact on many. The Cursillo movement is one example of how lay people assume leadership roles successfully, in spite of using church terminology associated with our traditional top down approach. Cursillo has brought new life to many of the participants, even for some, a true lay-led adventure in spirituality. My Cursillo meant a re-thinking of the roles clergy and lay have in our church life.

Lay people living out their spirituality in secular employment or in busy family life can find joy in grabbing ten minutes or an hour to be quiet and listen to what God maybe saying to them in their own lives. St Bonaventure admonished people: take advantage of the moments and the dawns, the sunsets, and the beauty of the clouds. Discover in the hours and

in landscapes, in music, in art, and in all manifestations of beauty, the profundity of God reflected in the world he created. Enjoy this from your true interior solitude.

### **Lay pioneers**

Some of the most striking devotional practices within the Church have stemmed from the insistence of a lay person who wanted to share their own spiritual discoveries with others. Recently I preached at St Mary-le-Bow Church in London on the feast of Corpus Christi. I shared the story of St Juliana of Liege who had a particular devotion to the sacrament of the altar and how it enabled her to express her personal relationship to Christ. She did all in her power to see the devotion of Corpus Christi become part of the life and worship of the Roman Catholic Church. Many churches, including many parts of the Anglican

---

**Discover in the hours and in landscapes, in music, in art, and in all manifestations of beauty, the profundity of God reflected in the world he created.**

---

Communion, now include this day in their calendar, all because a laywoman felt a call from God to make something happen. Because of Juliana's persistence, millions have sought the solace of such devotion.

### **A blessed bishop**

As a layman, I rejoice that in my own personal experience, dealing frequently with bishops at the Anglican Communion Office, I found it necessary to seek what one might call an image and a spirituality surrounding the episcopate that would help me understand this unique ministry. My prayer was answered. In the traditions of St Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, who died 343AD, the modern day Father Christmas and Santa Claus, I found the image of a bishop who exemplified what I saw in some of the great bishops I have worked for and with over 15 years. Anyone who enters into my office or home is confronted with my strong feelings about the spirituality that is expressed in this great saint and my questioning as to why the Church ever allowed such a tradition to falter. My fostering of a spirituality of Father Christmas is my attempt at sharing a faith building discovery.

### **A holy communion**

Lay people can be effective instruments of creative spirituality and channels of a living expression of our faith. Laity keep the liveliness of our tradition alive in so many ways. The mother who listens to the prayer of her child at bedtime, the catechist in the fields of Sudan, the Church Army officer or volunteer at the Mission to Seafarers, these are the 'icons' by which a wider world can and does experience the love of Christ. Maybe this can even be true of a church bureaucrat like myself!

Each of us is on a journey, a journey to God, a journey home. On that journey the rhythm of prayer supports us. If the rhythm stops for some particular reason, it is not necessary to commit spiritual suicide. What is needed is perseverance and help along the way. We can use the examples of the saints, is an enormous help, especially those saints who speak to areas of concern

we experience in our life, in our work, or our witness, or our families.

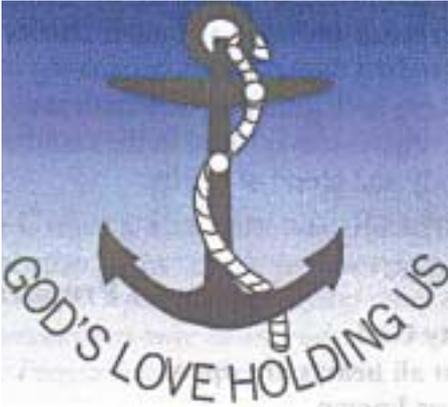
Those who have been instruments of sharing their faith with us, parents, friends and those who have gone before us, are vessels of grace, sharing this role with the Christ that they knew and loved and worshipped. We are surrounded by a great crowd of witnesses. Our friends in the Orthodox Communion know the value of the Communion of Saints.

An icon can be a companion that reaches beyond the artistic beauty of the object to an inner connection linked to the very being of the person we are venerating. For some, formal spiritual direction is a way of sharing one's striving to be one with the Trinity. To some, life in the Trinity is best reflected in Celtic spirituality, with places like Holy Island filled with seekers after truth from all walks of life.

As Readers our work in teaching, preaching, leading worship and mission outreach, is made that 'perfect offering' because of who we, as lay persons, are and what we bring, not only in attained knowledge and study, but by our very being and our experience, and the ability and privilege of sharing this with others.

# Eye of the Storm

**Janet Beal** has just been licensed as a Reader in Canterbury Diocese. Her reflection on this pastoral placement, which formed part of her training, feels an appropriate contribution to this issue of *The Reader*, with its focus on spirituality.



The following reflections arise from the placement I spent linked to the Chaplaincy of Medway Maritime Hospital, part of my Readers' Pastoral Theology Course.

The overwhelming sensation one has when arriving at the hospital is of extreme frenetic busyness. Everywhere is buzzing with people: sick people, people overcome with the temporary excitement of having an arm or a leg newly in plaster, people depressed with the lack of mobility that any length of time in this condition brings, visiting people, worried people, medical staff, computers roaring en masse, telephones penetrating the roar with their persistent shriek for attention... my own busyness is a rest compared to this! But, walk through the seething reception area, turn right along the corridor. Follow the signs to the Chapel. You will know when you are near to it because, as well as the sign, there are posters informing you of events such as: 'A Time of Quiet Prayer with Hans and Jane on Wednesdays – all are welcome', 'Sunday Service at 6.30, a short service of prayers and hymns, followed by Communion for anyone wishing to stay – All are welcome'. There is art work depicting different ideas about God. And inside the chapel, where prayers from different faiths find a place, the altar has a plain wooden cross, with a colourful backdrop containing the

words: *Open Our Eyes Lord to discover You in All Things*. Above all, in this chapel, placed in the heart of the maelstrom, you find a space – a space to stop, to think, to reflect, to be. For some it is a place to pray. For some it is, as all churches have historically been, a place of sanctuary. The telephones, the computers, the heart monitors, the syringes, the endless technology used for keeping people alive do not come here (except by invitation). Here, you can be alone with yourself, and if you choose, alone with God.

## A lifeboat on call

Come out of the chapel, and knock at the door immediately on your left, marked 'Chaplain'. The occupant may very likely be out in the 'storm'. A chaplain is rather like a lifeboat on call. Instead of rockets and flares, the telephone rings, or someone knocks on the door. If you happen to arrive in a

recovering from an operation, and he came to visit me. He said very little, no doubt sensing my tiredness, but I remember his quiet, comforting presence. When arrangements for my original 'placement' at a funeral directors' fell through at the last minute, I wrote to Medway Maritime Hospital in the hope that I may be able to secure a placement there. Within a few days I received a reply from Alan in which I was made to feel that he actually wanted to offer me a placement, and would take joy in doing so. Usually, such pleas from a student for help are met with a tired, resigned attitude: 'Oh dear, another student. Well, by all means come along, but we're very busy so you'll have to look after yourself.' My initial meeting with Alan lasted about three quarters of an hour. Amidst all the obvious busyness, he made time to talk to me and to invite my questions. I had done quite a

---

## Quite early on in the placement I became aware of how personal suffering of any kind can enable a person to be more effective in his or her ministry.

---

lull, you may well be met by the Trust Chaplain Alan, a smiling, friendly figure with a grey beard and sparkling eyes. He may very well be busy at the time you call, dealing with the latest flotsam and jetsam that has washed up in his room, in the form of paper, phone message, email, or, more likely, human being. If you are fortunate enough to find him at his station, he will definitely want to see you. You may have to wait a few minutes, but he will see you. You will realise, fairly soon, that you are infinitely more important than all the paper, forms, and computer messages because you are a human being, and it is you, first and foremost, that he is there to serve. I first met Alan, not realising who he was, about three years ago. I was

bit of hospital visiting over the years, but always to people I knew to some extent, and never in the role of a Church representative. Unless instigated by the patient, I had never talked about God. My question at this initial meeting was 'How do I bring God into my visiting?' Alan smiled. His answer was 'Ah, well we don't have to worry about that do we, because, you see, God's already here isn't he!' He went on to explain that his task as Chaplain would be intolerable and impossible if that were not so. One day he had been sitting quietly in the chapel when he was aware of God speaking to his heart in this way: 'I'm the one in charge here. I'm the chief minister in this place. Let me do my job. Let go and leave me to lead the healing here.'

Alan explained how he felt a great burden was lifted from him then.

### Wounded healers

Quite early on in the placement I became aware of how personal suffering of any kind can enable a person to be more effective in his or her ministry. Many members of the ministry team at Medway have endured considerable personal suffering lately – broken bones, bereavement, paralysis, Parkinson's disease, stroke, to name a few of the afflictions. Out of these infirmities has come a deeper understanding of illness, and a stronger affinity with patients.

Those I met from the ministry team included a wide variety of people from different backgrounds: Joan from the Salvation Army, Hans and Jane, Quakers, Maurice, a charismatic Christian, Mike, a Roman Catholic layman, Roland, a Reader licensed to the hospital, and Cilla, a Church of England priest. The chaplaincy team includes about forty registered hospital visitors. Liaison is made with local representatives of other faiths, and Alan has edited, for The North Kent Council for Inter Faith Relations, *Guidelines for Spiritual & Pastoral Care of Patients and Relatives*, a handbook which has a foreword by the Bishop of Rochester, the Rt Revd Michael Nazir-Ali. Bishop Michael writes: 'This is designed to raise awareness among care staff of the beliefs and spiritual requirements of patients belonging to a spectrum of faiths found in this area. It suggests ways in which such beliefs can be respected, while in hospital, and assistance provided for people to fulfil their religious obligations.' The handbook gives information about many faiths: Baha'i, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Jehovah's Witness, Jewish, Mormon, Rastafarian and Sikh. The care of the Chaplaincy team aims to embrace all people. The words in the chapel: *Open our Eyes Lord to discover You in All Things* could well be the banner under which the team operates.

### Uncharted waters

Alan had warned me that the Sunday Service was always unpredictable, and very much depended on who was in hospital at the time. On the occasion I attended there were about 25 of us there, including helpers from St Margaret's, Rainham, who helped to bring patients down from the wards

and assisted with the worship. We sang hymns and choruses from *Songs of Fellowship*. The reading, which Alan asked me to do, was from Mark's Gospel, about those who are least being the greatest, and about Jesus welcoming the children. Alan's talk on this theme was almost constantly interrupted by a patient who wanted to comment on everything he said! He remained calm and unruffled, obviously not unused to such situations! Before very long the patient decided to leave.

---

## We prayed that the Lord Jesus would go before us and use us to help meet the needs of the patients we were to visit.

---

There seemed to be quite a few comings and going throughout the service! All were made welcome, for however long they did or did not stay. It culminated with a shortened Communion service for which a good many stayed. The atmosphere was homely, rather like that in a 'house church'. Afterwards, whilst clearing up with Maurice, the Pastoral Assistant who had been helping with the service, a young woman came in quietly and sat down gazing intently at the backdrop.



She asked me: 'Is there a picture under there?' I said I didn't know. After she had gone, Maurice told me that she had torn down the picture, along with other wall hangings in the chapel. She usually attended the Sunday service, but had not done so this week.

### Christ before us

So far, I had had quite a bit of contact with the Ministry team, but not very much with the patients. This was because Alan wanted to make the most of the very limited amount of time of my placement by enabling me to talk

with the team, and learn as much as possible about the way they worked. But, on the third visit, Joan a chaplain and Salvation Army Major, Cheryl (a newly appointed hospital visitor), Alan and I were to spend the morning on the wards. We began in the chapel with a time of prayer, committing our morning to God. I found this very helpful, and exactly the way I would, personally, want to go about things. We prayed that the Lord Jesus would go before us and use us to help meet the

needs of the patients we were to visit. Alan and Cheryl went off to the elderly care wards and Joan and I to a medical ward. The 'storm' was certainly very high this morning. Doctors in white coats jostled in corridors with patients tottering along attached to various drains and other monitoring equipment; nurses were trying to keep up with their copious records whilst keeping tabs on them! The sight of two more to add to the congestion did not help them at all!

We decided to move on to another ward. Here we visited a lady who was undergoing tests for a possible recurrence of a brain tumour. I sensed that she may have wondered if our visit boded bad news for her! We spent some time assuring her that we were just doing a routine round of visiting. The doctors' rounds seemed to be descending on this ward too, so we headed for the Elderly Care ward. Here we met up with Cheryl who was on her own as Alan had been summoned to Casualty. We decided that three visitors at a time would be too many, so Joan went off to visit alone and Cheryl and I went to talk with a few people in Byron and Tennyson wards – both for the care of the elderly. The two ladies I talked to in Byron were visibly pleased to have a visitor, and seemed to enjoy talking about their home lives and what had brought them into hospital. In Tennyson we came across two very sad old people – a lady who was desperate to get back into bed and wanted us to assist her in this, though we knew that she was supposed to be remaining in her chair, and, more heart-rending, a man who could not speak, but who

pleaded with his eyes for me to go and be with him. I did go, and just placed my hand on his for a moment. I felt, very, very, helpless, and very, very sad that I could do nothing for him. I realised that this would be a common everyday situation for a hospital chaplain. It is not part of the job I would take to easily.

Downstairs is Keats ward, and this was our last port of call. Here I found a very chatty little lady who spent about ten minutes telling me how she believed that God was in charge of us all, and that she had so much to be thankful for.

### Reflecting back

My last visit to Medway Maritime was spent reflecting on my experiences over coffee with Alan. During this time, my mind was trying to process a multitude of impressions and experiences and come up with an overall picture of what the Chaplaincy at Medway is about. We talked for a while over what it is not about. It is not about going into the wards with 'a box of tricks', or

any expectation that one's visit is going to result in some instant change in the patient! It is not about spouting words of scripture, or attempting to convert people to Christianity. In Alan's words, it is simply about being there as a human being who has feelings. Perhaps it is about becoming helpless alongside the helpless, as I was for a short moment in Tennyson ward.

patients as they are. The chaplains respect the patients' views, whatever they are, knowing that they can always learn from them. At the same time, the chaplains earnestly want them to be well, and as fully human as they can possibly be. That is their wish, but they have the humility to admit that it is not within *their* power to bring that healing about. The power is God's. As

---

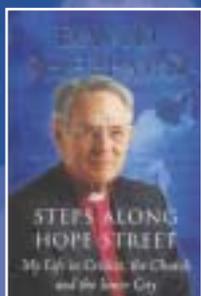
**I see this as the eye of the storm. I never know what is going to happen here. But I wouldn't want to be anywhere else.**

---

I perceive the ethos of the Medway Chaplaincy to be something like this: those who offer themselves to help the Chaplaincy are valued for whatever they are, not for what they are not. Likewise, the patients are valued by the visitors in a similar way. Alan's view is that all people are valued by God, and so, as God's servants they value each other as they are and they value the

Alan told me at our initial meeting: 'God is the one in charge of healing here.'

As Alan and I parted company at the end of my time at Medway, the phone was ringing and he was happily making his way to it, saying 'I see this as *the eye of the storm*. I never know what is going to happen here. But I wouldn't want to be anywhere else.' I believe him.



# Steps along Hope Street

The Reviews Editor of *The Reader* invited the Bishop Graham Dow, Bishop of Carlisle and Chair of the Central Readers' Council, to review the autobiography of Bishop David Sheppard, who is a long-standing friend of his. The length, and personal nature, of the review means that it feels more appropriate to print it as a separate article – which blends well into this issue's focus on spirituality.

I am delighted to review Lord Sheppard's autobiography; for David and Grace have always given me warm encouragement in my ministry. This goes back to 1965 when my wife-to-be and I visited the Mayflower Family Centre to see the innovative work he was doing there.

It is most unusual among clergy that in 42 years of ministry David has only had four posts. The book is about these four spheres of work, described in considerable detail and interspersed with a little cricket in the early years. After a first chapter about his childhood, we are taken to his conversion at Cambridge University and then his curacy in Islington. David describes the world of evangelical Anglican ministry very much as it was (I was in it also!). He sees its strengths: the clear focus on personal commitment to Christ, the daily Quiet

Time, the aim to bring others to Christ; and he sees its weaknesses: its narrowness and its lack of vision for the many dimensions of the kingdom, such as justice.

However, it was at Islington that a far-reaching change began in David. About that time he writes, 'at the top of my motives was a longing for the Christian gospel to be credible to inner-city people.' He realised that the typical evangelical approach to ministry did not touch the local people; and he felt shame at having once said 'We can't avoid importing leaders'.

### The Mayflower Family Centre

His 11 years at the Mayflower Family Centre in Canning Town were a period of intense learning. First there came Grace's agoraphobia and the blessings that come from facing weakness. All would admire the way they handled

her illness together. As her subsequent writings and broadcasts showed, her journey and her willingness to talk about it have been extraordinarily fruitful for the kingdom of God.

Secondly, in Canning Town, the local culture was to be listened to with respect. It was right to be indignant that so many gifts were being wasted; there was much frustration since 'most of our neighbours had no access to places where decisions were taken'. Learning to work with and through the tempestuous relations with George Burton was a cameo of the whole experience in the East End. George was both wonderfully gifted and very manipulative. He both admired David and was repelled by the culture from which he came. Burton could be harshly critical of David to his face. But these years developed David's inner strength and shaped his concern



for people whose history and circumstances had deprived them of much of what others take for granted.

The youngsters who came to the Mayflower had not come from circumstances where trust and reliability were naturally learnt. But it was one thing for David to understand this and another to have to lead the Youth Work, as he had to do for a year when George Burton died. In David's words, 'it was the most demanding and emotionally exhausting task I have ever undertaken'.

As David struggled to learn how to fight with the East End community against injustice, these were also the years when he publicly refused to play cricket against an all-white team from South Africa (1960) and took a public stand against a cricket tour to South Africa without Basil D'Oliveira (1968). Friendships of long standing were fractured, as some could not accept that these issues should be brought into sport.

### Bishop of Woolwich

The chapters on his six years as Bishop of Woolwich describe parish visits, parish missions and parish clergy. They speak of learning to relate to Anglo-Catholics and to Roman Catholics; and they give a portrait of the remarkable but lonely Bishop of the Southwark diocese, Mervyn Stockwood. More important, they describe the uncomfortable learning experiences of listening to the black community, to their anger at being marginalized from the centres of decision-making and the expression of that anger against those who represent the establishment, particularly the police.

David is a good listener and learner. As a bishop, he chose to spend a day with Wilfred Wood (later Bishop of Croydon), when Wilfred was a curate in Shepherd's Bush, so as to learn how to see things as the black community see them. David then brought Wilfred to be Vicar of St Laurence, Catford, in Southwark diocese. It was Wilfred, according to David, who most shaped his subsequent thinking about race relations.

David and Grace retained many of their long-standing friendships with people in the evangelical tradition, but this became increasingly painful. David could no longer see things in terms of the traditional evangelical priorities. The vision of the kingdom of God became for him not only a matter of individuals converted to Christ but also a vision of a just and wholesome society, a corporate vision in which the resources of the world were justly

shared. It is not a tidy vision or a clear programme for action; it is a hope, a vision true to the prophets and to the parables of Jesus about how the kingdom is to be.

David's book *Built as a City*, written at this time, describes the complexity of the urban situation. Humbly he records that those who criticised it said it presented many of the problems but lacked the sharpness to discern their roots and offer solutions. That would be David's way, however. He is happiest in narrative style, describing what he sees and reflecting on it in the light of the scriptures. He is less happy in a more didactic evangelical mode, seeking to draw conclusions straight out of passages of the Bible. He can always see the complexity of the argument and respects the historical circumstances which have led people to behave as they do.

### Liverpool – 22 years

Throughout the second half of the book, the Roman Catholic Archbishop

suspicion into one of appreciation and positive working together. It is an example to us all.

The chapters about Liverpool are full of detail about major political and Church concerns, including the *Faith in the City* Report, ARCIC and the Board of Mission, Heysel and Hillsborough, as well as concerns already mentioned in connection with Derek Worlock. Woven in with the detail we see Bishop David emerging as a very thoughtful Christian, someone who sees the task of Christian ministry more as steady, faithful progress than as dramatic successes or breakthroughs. The title of the book is apt: *Steps Along Hope Street*. He believes, using the words of David Ford: 'God is not a God of quick fixes, and easy instantaneous solutions. Signs of hope are given, but God is above all concerned with love and long-term faithfulness, with healing hearts, minds and communities as well as bodies.' The whole story breathes that atmosphere. There are many brief

---

## The vision of the kingdom of God became for him not only a matter of individuals converted to Christ but also a vision of a just and wholesome society

---

of Liverpool, Derek Worlock, features prominently. David has the highest regard for Derek as one who became the 'closest ally and friend and a major influence on my life.' Derek was sensitive and easily wounded, but he was an astute politician who could spot how any action they took together might be perceived. Their book *Better Together* expresses the commitment they made to each other, which included a time meditating on The Passion together every Good Friday. Together they made visits to government ministers and issued many joint statements. They struggled together against the loss of Merseyside jobs and disagreed publicly with the Prime Minister's view that younger people should leave Liverpool to find work; they were together in the turmoil of the Toxteth riots, and together against Militants leading Liverpool Council. Together they visited Northern Ireland and South Africa. When Derek died, David was asked to preach at the Vigil Mass the night before Derek's funeral. It is no exaggeration to say that between them, on Merseyside, they changed the climate of Anglican – Catholic

portraits of significant people with whom David has worked. In some cases these are somewhat sharply worded; but David can take criticism himself and perhaps expects others to do so.

In some ways this is a book for bishops and clergy. Its careful detail covering the many facets of a bishop's ministry may be more than some licensed Readers want to read. But it will repay a patient read. It reveals a wonderful breadth of mission for God, through the Church. For me, as a bishop, it challenges me on page after page and shows me much of what might have been or yet might be in my own ministry. I note, for example, that David has been particularly strong in keeping his own learning and training alive. He has diligently taken sabbaticals and attended courses on subjects like leadership or preaching. All in all he has had a remarkable ministry and I, for one, am indebted to what he has given to the kingdom and to the Church.

*Steps along Hope Street* by David Sheppard is published by Hodder & Stoughton hbk, £17.99, ISBN 0 340 861169; pbk, £8.99, ISBN 0 340861177.



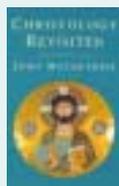
# For your bookshelf

**B**  
**Discovering John**  
Ruth Edwards  
SPCK £14.99 pbk.  
9 780281 054039

Ruth Edwards' Oxford lectures on John were hugely appreciated by ordinands and other undergraduates. In this short book she has digested much of their learning and sound judgement into a handy brief space. Readers willing to engage in some serious New Testament study will get a lot from it. While no substitute for the kind of commentary work the church can expect of any preacher, it is a splendid introduction, which will open many eyes. Apart from the standard historical, literary and thematic issues, the problem of John's alleged antisemitism is faced squarely and answered helpfully and the monotheism of John is defended against Muslim and Jewish worries. Instead of the traditional 'spiritual gospel' John is introduced as 'a distinctive gospel'. The miracle stories are helpfully considered as narrative theology and feminist interest in John is noted in a chapter on 'characters in John's story'. The endnotes, bibliography and indices are compact and helpful. In deciding whether to buy this book I ask, 'Will I want to return to this book, and will I want to lend it to others?' On both counts this one gets a strong 'Yes'.

**ROBERT MORGAN**

**T**  
**Christology revisited**  
John Macquarrie  
SCM £12.99 pbk.  
0 334 02930 9



John Macquarrie's book is an accessible return to the eternal questions surrounding the nature of Jesus – his humanity and divinity, and his

relations with humanity and with God. The book acknowledges continually that there are paradoxes in the nature of Christ and that the eternal divine logos is a mystery which can never be finally understood by human beings. It is in this framework that Professor Macquarrie considers the christological quest and sets out his own ideas. His arguments begin with the hypothesis that to understand Jesus' nature it is necessary to start with his humanity and he argues this point by referring to many of the most eminent Christian theologians. While the reader might not agree with all his views the book is valuable in that the author challenges us to reconsider our preconceptions of the human, divine and eternal Christ and to reengage with some of the deepest mysteries of our faith.

**ANN RICHARDSON**

**H**  
**Reformation**  
Diarmaid MacCulloch  
Allen Lane  
£25 hbk.  
0 713 99370 7



**The Reformation**  
Patrick Collinson  
Weidenfeld & Nicolson  
£14.99 hbk.  
1 84212 681 4



Ever since the Oxford Movement, attitudes in the Church of England to the Reformation have been ambivalent. 'The Reformation was a limb badly set – it must be broken again in order to be reset', wrote Hurrell Froude. 'Nothing riled English high churchmen more than the phrase Protestant church', wrote Professor Owen Chadwick. The 39 Articles, the foundation document of the Church of England may not use the term Protestant but they were born of the Reformation and the Church of England is a reformed church as surely as it is a catholic church. Here then are two magnificent books on the Reformation by outstanding

scholars, different in their scale but equally reliable in both fact and commentary.

Diarmaid MacCulloch's sub-title is *Europe's House Divided 1490 – 1700*. His background is in the Anglican Church and he 'retains a warm sympathy for the Anglican Communion at its best', though he does not now 'subscribe to any form of religious dogma'. This is a work of quite remarkable scholarship worthy to be compared with the same author's magisterial life of Archbishop Cranmer. He eschews all forms of bias referring to the Atlantic Isles rather than the British Isles and using the increasingly common CE and BCE in preference to AD and BC. His book is about 'Reformations', including what is often referred to as the Counter-Reformation in the Roman Catholic Church. He concludes with a fascinating section entitled *Patterns of Life*, in which he discusses issues such as love and sex, the genesis of religious toleration, doubt and humanism, and the relevance of these issues for the present day church. What is more this book is a bargain: £25 for a handsomely produced well illustrated hardback of over 800 pages. It will take time to read but the reward in knowledge, understanding and wisdom will be great.

For the Reader with less time to spare Patrick Collinson's book is warmly recommended. The author was Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge and the book is the result of years spent studying and lecturing on the Reformation. Its style is attractive, ruminative, allusive and full of fascinating asides.

It is hard to imagine England since the 16<sup>th</sup> century without the King James's Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, John Milton or John Bunyan. The Reformation deserves renewed study. Here are two outstanding works to help us.

**PETER WATKINS**

**T W**  
**God's pattern**  
David Stancliffe  
SPCK £12.99 pbk.  
0 281 05360 X



The author is Bishop of Salisbury and Chairman of the Liturgical Commission, responsible for *Common Worship*. He states that he intends his book for those 'who have tumbled to the fact that they are baptised and want to do something about it', in other words for new converts or for those wishing to rededicate themselves as Christians. In his foreword the Archbishop of Canterbury speaks of the author's clarity. Alas to the present reviewer Dr Stancliffe's content is so rigorous and dense that it is not easy reading even for a well-educated reader. His starting point is the journey to Emmaus in Luke's gospel, from which he draws out a complex but highly original pathway to discipleship, worship and practice. Those becoming familiar with *Common Worship* will recognise many of the themes which underlie its structures and content. Studying both texts in parallel will show how our contemporary liturgists have not only tried to reformulate our set worship but have also more subtly tried to refocus our church doctrine. While the author is clearly no radical liberal he can hardly be seen as standing foursquare in the Reformed doctrines of Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer*. The thinking behind the wording of many of the new Eucharistic prayers becomes much clearer on reading this book.

Nevertheless although this book is an excellent commentary on *Common Worship* its primary intention remains as a thoughtful guide to Christian experience, life and worship. In this respect I feel that the density of the presentation will limit its use in the parish, though in its unintentional purpose some will find it illuminating.

**RICHARD CARTER**



**S**

**Prayers from the east**

Richard Marsh  
SPCK £12.99 pbk.  
0 281 05417 7



I really enjoyed this book and hope it will give as much pleasure to other readers. This is much more than just another book of prayers. Richard Marsh has visited and talked with leaders and members of a group of churches which used to be known as the ancient oriental churches (Oriental Orthodox), active in an area reaching from Armenia to Ethiopia. They are not in communion with the better known Greek and Russian Orthodox for reasons which go back to the Council of Chalcedon held in 451AD. The prayers in the book are mainly liturgical and reveal something of the ways in which these churches worship, and open to us some new perspectives on our own relationships with the greatness and omnipotence of God. The author provides commentary and explanation for each of the prayers. He stresses that these ancient churches are not lost in the distant past but communities of living, worshipping and suffering Christians active today in parts of the world where they suffer violence and oppression almost daily yet look to a future in which the promises of their Lord, and ours, will be fulfilled.

**PHIL WILLIAMS**

**S H**

**Joy of Heaven: Springs of Christian spirituality**

Edited Benedicta Ward and Ralph Waller  
SPCK £11.99 pbk.  
0 281 05496 7



The basic premise underlying this book is that there are certain prayers, writings and hymns that have informed the spirituality and prayer life of Christians for over two thousand years. The book aims to examine these texts

to discover their relevance for a dynamic Christian spirituality today, through a collection of eight chapters by different authors covering texts as varied as the Jesus Prayer, the Lord's Prayer and the Battle Hymn of the Republic. How well does it succeed in this aim? I found the contents a mixed bag, even heeding Rowan Williams' comment in his foreword that 'Whatever our starting point, the landscape after reading is different, if we can read with patience and self-questioning.' Several of the chapters have challenged me to re-consider and reflect on my own praying and spirituality in a positive and helpful way; others seemed to have much less to offer. To some extent there may be inevitability about that in an edited collection of this sort, although I would have found some editorial comment helpful on what guided the selection of these particular texts over others. There are undoubtedly things in this book that will help Readers reflect on their own prayer life and spirituality, and that may help them in enabling their churches to do the same, but other books and resources may do this as well as or even better than what is on offer here.

**STEPHEN RICHARDS**

**H W**

**A history of women in Christian worship**

Susan J White  
SPCK £27.50 hbk.  
0 281 05647 1



We may be excused for expecting a book on the history of women in Christian worship to be extremely short. Surely women have played such a small part in Christian worship in earlier centuries that there is little to say about it? But we would be wrong. Susan White ably shows in her book the extent and importance of women in worship. Her treatment is a thematic, not chronological, one. Thus she presents evidence from many different cultures (though predominantly

western ones) and times. This has a slightly dizzying effect, but serves her purpose of demonstrating how much evidence there is of the worship of women. At first glance this book has a specialised audience made up only of those who are interested in liturgy and of women's place in it. In fact, this book has a much wider appeal. Its concern is with the experience of liturgy among the laity. Many Readers will find that this book provides a fascinating and unusual insight into the liturgical experiences of lay people across the centuries.

**PAULA GOODER**

**W**

**A house of praise: Collected hymns 1961-2001**

Timothy Dudley-Smith  
OUP £20.00 pbk.  
0 19 7100159 7

*Tell out my soul; Lord for the years; Holy child* – few of us have not sung a Dudley-Smith hymn. This exhaustive collection has the author's notes on their themes, genesis, inspiration, translations, recordings and publication. Everything you could want to know. I'm unsure what or who this book is for. It's not for reading from cover to cover, nor for use as a church hymnbook. The arrangement of the material according to the church year, types of service and theme, with every index and cross-reference you could want, would make it easy to select worship material from one person's writing – hardly an everyday need. But he has some poetic images, and has worked out that the discipline of metre and rhyme liberates rather than constrains. The level of inspiration varies but in general the respect for language is way ahead of most modern worship songs.

**ALAN KERSHAW**

**W T H**

**Worship**

Keith F Pecklers  
Continuum £14.99  
0 8264 6856 x

This is an interesting and informative book on liturgy written from a Catholic point of view but with reference to and admiration for other points of view – including a love of Anglican Evensong. The book is divided into two parts. The first gives an historical and theological background to help explain how we arrived at where we are today in liturgy. In this part, the section on the Reformation is necessarily brief, but the author acknowledges there was a real need for reform. The second section looks at current issues in liturgy and society and proposes some ways forward. The last chapter on the future is especially worth reading. This will prove a useful introductory text for Readers who are thinking about liturgy and worship in an ecumenical context.

**JON REYNOLDS**

**P**

**Loved by Love**

Roy Williamson  
SPCK pbk.  
0-281-05619-6

Subtitled 'Growing into spiritual health and wholeness', this book by a former Bishop of Southwark is a helpful meditation on each phrase of Paul's great song of love in 1 Corinthians 13. Roy Williamson is a good communicator and uses many personal illustrations to bring out not just the practical meaning of Paul's words, but also the challenge to all of us to live and love in the way God wants. The author believes that 1 Corinthians 13 should carry a health warning 'for if we study it carefully and take it seriously, our life, and our relationship to other people, may never be quite the same again'. It is a book in which Readers (and clergy) will find many helpful thoughts when they preach on this chapter, but it is also one which should challenge us personally as we read it.

**HUGH SANSON**



**S**  
**Wonderful exchange**

Alexander Ryrie  
Canterbury £7.99 pbk.  
1 85311 557 6

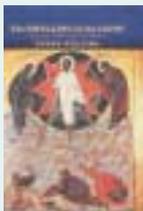
Silent prayer, which brings us face to face with God at the deepest levels of our being, is the 'wonderful exchange' this little book seeks to explore. It consists of seven chapters; defining the 'mysterious reality' of silence, finding a way to prayer (which I found very helpful), entering oneself, encountering God, mutual relationship, prayer and the world and, finally, prayer and life. The whole process was a journey into a deeper faith and relationship with God, which the author accepts is very hard to achieve. Each chapter is annotated as the author uses references to and quotations from a number of spiritual writers, many from the Orthodox tradition and there are fuller notes on these people in an appendix. Despite this somewhat academic approach, the content of the book does succeed in being accessible to the general reader, one of the author's stated aims. As well as the prayer of silence, the author has useful comments to make on intercessions in general. He also outlines the modern replacement of the seven deadly sins which I am sure to include in a sermon at some point. As a means of preparation for prayer, I found this far better than any relaxation tapes.

ANNE NELSON

**S**  
**The dwelling of the light**

Rowan Williams  
Canterbury £8.99 hbk.  
1 85311 562 2

Subtitled *Praying with icons of Christ*, this book is a companion volume to the author's earlier *Ponder these things: praying with icons of the Virgin*. It consists of four meditations



each based on an icon of Christ namely, the Transfiguration, the Resurrection, Christ as a person of the Trinity and Christ as Ruler and Judge of all. It is important that each meditation is read slowly, with reflective and prayerful pauses. We are led, step by step, through the rich symbolism of the structure of the icon – the figures, shapes and colours, the actions and gestures – discovering that it is not so much we who look at Jesus as that he is looking on us and through him we glimpse the reality of the gift to us of God himself. Echoing St Paul we can begin to know 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ'. The language of this short book is simple but packed with possibilities. It is devotional theology at its best and cannot be too highly recommended.

PAUL BREGAZZI

**S P**  
**Journeying in faith**

Alan Jamieson  
SPCK £11.99 pbk.  
0 281 055890



'In and beyond the tough places', is the rest of the title of this challenging and sometimes disturbing book. It illustrates what many of us know – the journey of faith is not easy. However this is particularly the case for those who, for a variety of reasons, find themselves inextricably drawn beyond the confines of established religion towards unknown horizons of Christian belief. The author is a Baptist minister who has also trained as a sociologist and this book follows up his earlier book *A Churchless Faith*. It is based on the stories of the journeys of a number of people, often meeting in groups, who are described as 'wanderers who are trying to make sense of faith and life in our wilderness times of new horizons'. There is much here to help us as we wrestle from time to time with our own questions of faith and

also to communicate better with those trying to pursue their faith outside the confines of church.

DAVID WEBSTER

**J**  
**Jesus and the earth**

James Jones  
SPCK £6.99 pbk.  
0 280 05623 4

£7 for 100 pages? – my question too, but by the end I had changed my mind. The Bishop of Liverpool sets Gerard Manley Hopkins' 'Nature is never spent', alongside the Astronomer Royal's conclusion 100 years later, that the human race has only a 50:50 chance of surviving the 21st century. Noting that almost all biblical references to environmental ethics are found in the Old Testament, he is challenged to explore Jesus' attitude to the earth, and what meaning should be attached to the fact that the only title Jesus takes to himself is Son of Man – Ben Adam – and that *adamah* in Hebrew means 'hewn from the earth'. This leads to a stimulating Bible study – I am not competent to know how much is new; certainly I have not met it in so accessible a form. It leads us through judgement and forgiveness to the time of universal restoration. Creation is cosmic as is salvation. The earth is safe not because of human ingenuity but because of God's faithfulness expressed in the trinity of divine actions – Creation, Covenant and Cross – in relation to the earth. If you feel your head is in the clouds be ready to come to earth. The last few pages are a job description for an environmental officer in every parish, promulgating a detailed sustainable life-style.

FRANCES WILKINSON

**W**  
**Let justice roll down**

Compiled  
Geoffrey Duncan  
Canterbury £12.99 pbk.  
1 85311 555 X

This Christian Aid/CAFOD

anthology for Lent, Holy Week and Easter is a collection of new prayers, readings and liturgies for this important part of the Christian year. The prayers are drawn from all over the world. Especially useful are the liturgies and prayers for Ash Wednesday and some interesting dramas based on the events of Holy Week and Easter. There is for example a Lenten Witness for Peace and an Easter Sunday drama which involves the congregation actively and which could be used for services. The collection draws attention to issues of justice and commitment arising from the events of this season of the Christian year, alongside the more specifically spiritual dimension.

GEORGE J SHARPE

**W**  
**From shore to shore**

Kate Wyles  
SPCK/USPG £5.99 pbk.  
0 281 05393 6

This collection of liturgies, litanies and prayers from around the world was compiled by USPG during its 300th anniversary year and is now offered as a thanksgiving for the great riches and insights of churches in other parts of the world. The four orders for Holy Communion immediately bring the realisation that particular concerns and emphases differ according to day-to-day experience whilst a common core remains the same. Other orders of service, six in all, cover a range from morning and evening worship to special themes such as a service for World Aids Day. The final section contains shorter litanies and individual prayers. This is intended as a resource to dip into. As the introduction says: 'Above all we encourage you to be bold in the way you use the material in this book, adapting it to fit your local situation'. It provides an opportunity to broaden horizons and to pray with, rather than for, our brothers and sisters around the globe.

SUSANNE MITCHELL



**W P**

**A handbook for children's liturgy**

Barbara Mary Hopper  
Canterbury £12.99 pbk.  
1 85311 551 7

This book is part of a series designed to help lay people in the Roman Catholic Church play a greater part in the life of the church. Whilst some sections concerns specifically catholic practice, the principles behind it are applicable to any church which wants to bring alive a formal liturgy and make it meaningful where adults and children are worshipping together. There are good sections on the purpose of liturgy and how to use it to help children worship, useful tips on good educational practice and how to encourage the parish to support this work and some helpful examples of orders of service of worship for children of all ages. Its use by Anglicans is limited since the appendices, glossary and list of resources are exclusively catholic.

**T J**

**The SCM dictionary of Third World theologies**

Edited Virginia Fabella and RS Sugirtharajah  
SCM £18.99 pbk.  
033402931 7

In view of the increasing cultural diversity of people who make up the social groups and church congregations in this country, this is a timely addition to our reference books. The introduction emphasises that all the entries are 'viewed through the prism of a Third World lens and not from a western cultural standpoint'. The range of entries is wide, their length varied, but all have cross-references to other articles in the dictionary and suggestions for further reading. More space is given to Christologies, for example, but it would be a pity not to explore such entries as Mask Dance and Ecology. The value of the approach of the book is encapsulated in this sentence from one entry, 'We reject as

irrelevant an academic type of theology which is divorced from action. We are prepared for a radical break in epistemology which makes commitment the first act of theology and engages in critical reflection on the reality of the Third World'. The treatment of theologies by those who are at the heart of shaping and living them makes this a unique resource for our understanding of them.

**MARGARET CLARKE**

**T**

**Encyclopedia of new religions**

Edited Christopher Partridge  
Lion £25 hbk.  
780745 950730



The contents of this encyclopedia are set out in chronological order under the headings of the religions from which they have diverged. There is also a comprehensive index. The contributions are well written, easy to read and informative, so can be used by

those with or without knowledge of other religious faiths. While the sheer number of new religions may seem daunting and indeed depressing, it is both encouraging and fascinating to see how and why new lines of thinking have emerged and how old ideas have resurfaced in the human thirst for a spiritual understanding of life. This thought-provoking reference book would provide useful points of contact for Readers who have to witness to those who follow the proliferating faith stances of our modern society.

**GLORIA HELSON**

**J P**

**The provocative church**

Graham Tomlin  
SPCK £9.99 pbk.  
0 281 05641 2



This book's modest size belies its importance. Its deceptively simple message is that what we are as people and churches is the key to evangelism, rather than what we say – strategies will fail in



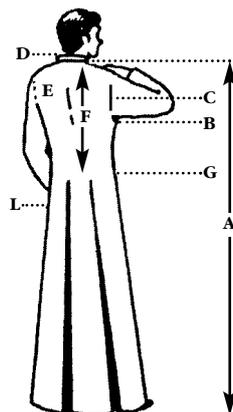
**St Martin Vestment Ltd**

Lutton, Near Spalding, Lincs PE12 9LR  
Tel/Fax 01406 362386

For over 30 years our workshop has been producing individually made church regalia for churches and cathedrals at home and abroad.

The firm remains in the hands of a clergy family but is managed by Mrs Dorothea Butcher who will be pleased to discuss your requirements. Send for details and fabric samples.

Cassocks for Readers are supplied at prices ranging from £86 to considerably more.



**Watts**  
Est.1874

**Readers' Robes**

*Cassocks*

*Surplices*

*and Scarves*

*Brochure sent on request*

**Watts**  
& Company  
7 Tufton Street  
Westminster  
London  
SW1P 3QE

T 020 7222 1978  
F 020 7233 1130

edwincook@wattsandcompany.co.uk  
ceinwenwoods@wattsandcompany.co.uk



today's culture without the prerequisite of personal and communal lives embodying love, humility, compassion, forgiveness and honesty. Our lifestyles must provoke questions and stimulate a longing for an encounter with God. Evangelism is not about answering questions nobody is asking or using a megaphone to reach the deaf; it is about modelling the rule of Christ, living Kingdom values, so that our churches become irresistibly attractive transforming communities. This book is a 'must have' for Christian leaders longing for a turn round in the health of local churches. It is an apt remedy for ailing congregations because it is accessible, practical and timely. It is ideal for personal reading and group study (guide included). Buy now!

**LESLEY MITCHELL**

**W T**

**Unofficial God**

Brian Castle  
SPCK £13.99 pbk.  
0 281 05392 8



This book focuses on the relationship between the institutional church and those outside its walls. Its central argument is that churches have much to learn from those beyond its walls and that such relationships are vital for the life and growth of each. Who are those outside the walls? For the purpose of this book they include various developments in theology such as liberation theology (particularly Korean minjung), folk and implicit religion, the Pentecostal movement and hymns and songs from inside and outside the church. The final chapter on challenges for the future includes a useful discussion of the dialogue between tradition and contemporary context. This book is an important assessment of the relationship between those within and without the walls of the church. Given the growing importance of mission and evangelism in Reader ministry

and training it is a valuable resource for theological learning and experience.

**JANICE PRICE**

**B S**

**Dwelling in a strange land**

John Holdsworth  
Canterbury  
£7.99 pbk.  
1 85311 563 0



On the cover of this book Archbishop Rowan Williams writes, 'This is Bible study as it should be done'. The book is set out for individual study or for group use. It describes a nation assembled from persecution, establishing itself richly in the Promised Land, grown secure in its belief of God's approval and protection and then suddenly overwhelmed and in exile. The date, 11 September 2001; the nation, the United States. The author compares the chaos and dismay in Israel after the Exile as seen in the post-exilic biblical writings with similar reactions in present day USA. But this is not the only exiled community in the world. Others result from war, famine, dictatorship, terrorism and evil trading practices. All these are also, in the author's view, modern examples of exile. Where do we go from here? Theologians can help to provide the answer. Although Jerusalem was re-established, the scribes and the Pharisees were sadly lacking in godly leadership. Jesus offered a new way and his theological ideas were spread abroad, not as a result of committees of scholars working out codes and constitutions but by theologians whose lived experience gave them permission to be theologically creative. And this creative work took place in a living community of faith, not an institutional church bound by law, order, rules and the niceties of denomination. John Holdsworth challenges us to do likewise.

**LYN FERRABY**

(Note: See the article by John Holdsworth on p.11)

**T H S**

**Journal of Anglican Studies Vol.1.1 & 1.2**

Continuum  
ISSN 1740 3553

Until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century the Anglican Communion was the British Empire at prayer. As late as 1965, according to *The Church of England Yearbook*, the Archbishops of the four provinces of what was then called 'The Church of England in Australia' were priests who had been recruited from England and the same was true of many other overseas dioceses.

Today the position is reversed: bishops of two English dioceses for example come from Uganda and Pakistan. It is quite appropriate that this new journal, devoted to the study of the nature of the Anglican Communion past and present, should emanate from Australia. Its editor is Dr Bruce Kaye, until very recently General Secretary of the General Synod of the Anglican Church in Australia. It editorial board is multi-national with two English representatives – Dr Paul Avis, Secretary of the Council for Christian Unity and Professor David Ford, Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, and a Reader. The new journal sets out to provide 'a distinctive contribution to the understanding of Anglicanism' and 'welcomes contributions from every corner of the globe'. The second issue is particularly concerned with issues of authority and fellowship. There are thoughtful contributions on the dilemmas facing the Communion as it confronts issues such as the ordination of women, the blessing of gay unions and the ordination of 'non-abstaining homosexual persons'. The issue is how to combine 'ecclesial integrity' with 'tolerable diversity'. Essays in this new journal are serious contributions to academic scholarship. They require and deserve careful study, though in one or two

cases the writers might consider the elimination of unnecessary jargon. Many readers will be grateful for the opportunity to study in print the Gore lecture given by Bishop Stephen Sykes in Westminster Abbey in February 2003 on *The Basis of Anglican Fellowship*. It is perhaps unlikely that Readers will subscribe but some may wish to have access to the journal through diocesan libraries.

**PETER WATKINS**

(Details of various forms of subscription to *The Journal of Anglican Studies* can be obtained from Orca Journals, 3 Fleets Lane, Poole, Dorset, BH15 3AJ.)

**And finally...**

Church House Publishing has produced three further volumes to accompany *Common Worship. Collects and Post Communion* is a hardback which contains the authorised additional collects together with the original collects and post communions for Sundays, principal feasts which fall on Sundays and principal holy days. The two collects are presented together on the same page (0 7151 2088 3 £25 hbk. 180 pages). *Common Worship: collects and post communions in traditional language* were previously only available in the President's edition of the main volume. (0 7151 2087 5 £5.95 pbk.) *Additional Collects* recently approved by General Synod are intended to be short, simple in their syntax, vivid and interesting in their themes and images and written in accessible language (0 7151 2087 5 £3.50 pbk.). These alternative collects seem likely to gain wide currency.

Two further books in the excellent Lion Histories are *The expansion of Christianity* by Timothy Yates (0 7459 5708 2) and *Augustine and his world* by Andrew Knowles and Pachomios Penkett (0 7459 5104 x). Each costs £8.99.



# Gazette of newly admitted and licensed Readers

## CHESTER

OCTOBER 2003.

*Admitted and licensed*

**Joyce Anderson**, All Saints, Thornton Hough  
**Elaine Bisson**, St Saviour, Oxton  
**Peter Budd**, St Andrew, Cheadle Hulme  
**David Burkill-Howarth**, St Andrew, Tarvin  
**Kathleen Collinge**, St Boniface, Bunbury  
**Peter Collinge**, St Boniface, Bunbury  
**Thomas Eaton**, St Hildeburgh, Hoylake  
**Malcolm Evans**, Holy Trinity with St Luke, Northwich  
**Peter Hall**, St Matthew, Stretton with St Cross, Appleton Thorn  
**Pauline Holgate**, St Peter, Plemstall  
**Jacqueline Jonas**, St Thomas, High Lane, Stockport  
**Giselle Jones**, St John, High Legh  
**Jennifer Kendal**, St James, Sutton  
**Shirley Knipe**, St Paul, Helsby  
**Glynnis Lautenbach**, St Andrew, Grange, Runcorn  
**Brian McEvoy**, St Stephen, Prenton  
**Elizabeth Morris**, St Peter, Elworth  
**Philip Newsome**, St Mary, Cheadle  
**Elaine Oilman**, St John the Divine, Frankby with Sreasby  
**Diane Redwood**, St Luke, Holmes Chapel  
**Tim Robinson**, Christ Church, Moreton  
**Kenneth Smyth**, St Luke, Winnington, Northwich  
**Betty Turner**, Christ Church, Moreton  
**Elizabeth Varney**, Macclesfield Team  
**Elaine Walton**, Macclesfield Team  
**Dennis Watson**, All Saints, Marple  
**David Williams**, Christ Church, Barnston

## ELY

24 APRIL 2004

*Admitted and licensed*

**Roger Brown**, St Andrew and St Mary, Whittlesey;  
 Pondersbridge & Coates  
**Paul Cracknell**, Great Gransden, Abbotsley, and Little  
 Gransden and Waresley.  
**David Fletcher**, Chatteris  
**Graeme Gaskell**, St Neots  
**Paul Gildersleve**, Papworth Team Ministry  
**Marion Goodchild**, Haslingfield with Harlton and Great  
 Eversden and Little Eversden  
**Sarah Gower**, Whittlesford and Pampisford  
**Mary Jepp**, The Ramseys (St Thomas & St Mary) & Upwood  
**Sarah McKearney**, The Good Shepherd, Chesterton  
**Barbara Pearman**, East Marshland  
**Elizabeth Pinnock**, Hemingtord Grey.  
**Patricia Saunders**, Godmanchester  
**Joyce Shotton**, Yaxley and Holme with Conington  
**Terri Streamer**, St John, March  
**Judy Usher**, Hemingford Grey.  
*Licensed*  
**Maureen Dobson**, Great Shelford  
**Philip Rees Williams**, Thorney Abbey

## LIVERPOOL

6 MARCH 2004

*Admitted and licensed*

**Barbara Alldred**, Newchurch, Warrington  
**Lizzie Boyes**, St Bartholomew, Roby  
**Karen Corbett**, St John, Crossens  
**John Davies**, St Michael, Garston  
**Anne Dixon**, St Luke, Formby,  
**Stuart Haynes**, St Peter and St Paul, Ormskirk,  
**Brenda Jagger**, St Cuthbert, North Meols  
**Rose Johnson**, Church of Ascension, Woolston  
**Alwyn Kernaghan**, Christ Church, Southport  
**Gillian Lewis**, St Nathaniel, Platt Bridge  
**John Moore**, St Peter, Woolton  
**Sue Palmer**, Holy Trinity, Southport  
**John Roberts**, Christ Church, Southport  
**Sue Taylor**, St John Chrysostom, Everton

## LONDON

2 DECEMBER 2003

*Admitted and licensed*

**Isaac Adenigbagbe**, St Michael and All Angels, Stonebridge  
**Robert Chandler**, St Jude on the Hill, Hampstead  
**Malcolm D'Aubney**, Christ Church, Southgate  
**Henderson George**, Poplar Team Ministry  
**Katie Higham**, St Ann, South Tottenham  
**Linda Joyce**, St Mary, Spring Grove  
**Lydia McLean**, The Ascension, Wembley  
**Margaret McVeigh**, St Michael, Chester Square  
**Helen Palmer**, Poplar Team Ministry  
**Adrian Parsons**, St Botolph-Without-Aldgate  
**Marion Phillips**, Upper Holloway Team Ministry  
**Judith Powell**, The Parish of Old St Pancras  
**Michael Redman**, St John the Evangelist, Hyde Park Crescent  
**Andrew Reid**, St John with St Luke Clay Hill  
**Andrew Rooney**, St Nicholas, Chiswick  
**Nicholas Sanderson**, St Michael, Highgate  
**Barbara Scott Wollaston**, St John at Hackney  
**Frances Westcott**, St John the Evangelist, Great Stanmore

## ST ALBANS

20 MARCH 2004

*Admitted and licensed*

**Jean Boothby**, Hitchin Team Parish  
**Teresa Dales**, St Nicholas, Barton le Cley  
**Helen Harding**, Christ Church and St Mark, Watford  
**Catherine Jupp**, St Mary, Welwyn  
**Susan Pankhurst**, Christ Church and St Mark, Watford  
**Eva Hadrill-Wallace**, St Michael and all Angels, Sunnyside

*Lists of licensing for Chelmsford, Monmouth, Norwich  
 Peterborough and Worcester will appear in the following issue.*



# GLEANINGS

## Walking the tightrope: Balance in Reader Ministry

The 2005 National Readers' Conference will be held at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick on 22-24 July – with the above title. There will be more details about the Conference and a booking form in the November 2004 issue of *The Reader*. But get the dates in your diaries now!

## From the editor's postbag

Two letters have arrived which pick up interesting points from the May 2004 issue of the magazine.

*Ben Harvey, Reader in Morpeth, Northumberland writes:*

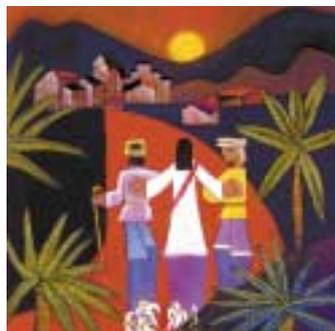
I read with interest Denise Mumford's article on cohabitation. Like many parents, my wife and I were faced with this situation when our daughter wanted to 'move in' with her boyfriend. Being sympathetic to our feelings they announced their engagement with a date for the wedding. At the time I was involved in writing an Ethics Module essay and cohabitation seemed an appropriate subject.

Marriage was seen as covenantal as early as the 8th century BC but alongside this there is a strong biblical tradition of betrothal, when the man and the woman are deemed to have entered the state of marriage and live together prior to a public marriage ceremony. Betrothal, unlike engagement where there may be no predetermined plan for marriage, is a public announcement in which a couple vow (troth) their intention to marry within a given time.

The most obvious example of betrothal is that of Joseph and Mary. Matthew 1.18 suggests that Mary was betrothed to Joseph before they were married. Matthew's overall intention is to convey that a legal binding existed between the two, bringing us face to face with pre-marriage practices that are different from our own. Betrothal is as binding as marriage and if there were justifiable grounds, it required legal action, divorce, to release the parties involved.

The House of Bishops' teaching document of the Church of England 1999 is rightly definite in its view against sex before marriage and although cohabitation is discouraged it is not openly condemned. Is it possible that if betrothal were encouraged that more younger people would feel less cut off from the Church? If betrothal were to be recognised would it enable more couples to feel that a Christian wedding is open to them?

For my wife and I the most important issue was, and still is, the love and affection that holds our family together. By strengthening that bond rather than entering into conflict we are able to move forward. Does this not apply to the greater family embraced in the love of Christ?



*Mary Roe, a Reader in Bournemouth writes:*

I enjoyed the Chinese view of the road to Emmaus very much, as a picture, but was rather saddened, especially as I read on in the issue, which is devoted to marriage and family life, that the traditional, Western medieval idea that the two disciples

were both male and living in an all male household which has been fixed in our minds by Caravaggio's well-known masterpiece, should now be the world-wide reading of the gospel story. There is, in fact, every reason to assume that the two disciples were Cleopas (named) and his wife Mary (named as a disciple elsewhere, but not when in the company of her husband).

Linguistically the masculine plural would be used of any number of disciples even if only one man were present among several hundred women! It was pretty well unknown for two men to keep house together, unless they were brothers, and the meal table was (and still is) presided over by the woman of the household, wife, mother or sister. I have often thought that the story of the road to Emmaus would make an excellent reading for the marriage service, showing how Christ becomes present at the family table and that idea is taken up in your editorial, 'suggesting that this particular journey is one that has to end in the transforming of our own homes, our own "dining rooms".'

Women and families could draw much strength from this story and others, if we were not condemned to invisibility by the limited understanding of our ancestors. So, who will paint us a picture of the real supper at Emmaus?

*(Note by Editor: Interesting thinking, but I wonder if you are wrong about the picture on our May cover, Mary? An international group I studied it with concluded that the figure on the right of Jesus is probably female!)*



## In Memoriam

The deaths of the following Readers have been notified to us:

### Birmingham

Ron Linden  
Denis Preston

### Blackburn

Peter Outhwaite

### Bristol

Edna Homer  
Leslie Carey

### Canterbury

Tom Bennett

### Chelmsford

Richard Perry  
Len Hopkins  
William Reader

### Chester

David McBriar

### Coventry

Desmond Lamb  
Terry John  
John Adams

### Ely

Maurice Dowsett

### Liverpool

Ron Buxton

Bernard Edmunds

### Truro

Robert Mermagen

### Winchester

Bryan Morris  
John Whitham

We give thanks for their work and witness and remember those who grieve.



# The Last Word

The last issue of *The Reader* carried an appreciation of the work done by Pat Nappin, my predecessor as Secretary to the Central Readers' Council. As I take over from her, I should like to add my personal thanks to Pat for 'showing me the ropes', and for helping me to discover how the inner workings of the Church of England actually operate. The answer, incidentally, is nothing like as mysteriously as one might have imagined!

*The Reader* office looks out into Dean's Yard and across to Westminster Abbey. The view cannot have changed very much for several hundred years. Indeed Church House itself is much the newest building in the Yard. The cars below our window are, of course, modern – but the style of the Rolls and Bentleys that come into the area to park when there is a major service in the abbey has not really changed. They gleam just as carriages will have done in earlier centuries. All this gives a sense of timelessness.

### Time: an ever-rolling stream

However, Reader ministry can hardly continue in the same timeless way. At a time when the Church as a whole is looking to its laity to take a greater role in the sharing of ministry, we must be ready to respond. In the light of this, it is quite alarming to realise that the average age of Readers is getting higher far more quickly than the average age of clergy, or of congregations as a whole.

Your Executive Committee has grasped this particular nettle. There will undoubtedly be much discussion of the issue in coming months, but the Executive has already set up a committee consisting of Readers under 40 with the specific brief of organising a conference for younger Readers in the summer of 2006 to look at the future.

Every diocese is being asked to send two delegates, although I am afraid to say that the fact is that not all dioceses can find even two Readers under 40! The story of Gideon comes to mind: God can help us to surmount numerical shortages. Only one member of the Planning Committee has ever served on any national Reader group before. Expect some radical thinking! The group is serious, practical and prayerful but above all stimulating. It deserves our support.

### An enjoyable time

On an entirely different note our new National Moderator, Alec George, and I went along recently to a Eucharist at a village church outside Bicester in Oxfordshire. This was open to Readers and their spouses, and was followed by a barbecue in the very lovely walled vicarage garden. It was a lovely evening, and the opportunity to meet socially was great. I know several dioceses hold functions like this – but I also know that many do not. If you hardly ever get the chance to meet your fellow-Readers, why not organise something similar?

My very best wishes to you all,

Alan Wakely  
Secretary, Central Readers' Council

ESSENTIAL • CONTEMPORARY • COMPREHENSIVE  
HYMNS ANCIENT & MODERN  
presents its  
**COMMON PRAISE**  
RANGE OF HYMN BOOKS



- \* 628 hymns
- \* Indexes include COMMON WORSHIP Christian year index
- \* bright, attractive board binding in blue cloth.
- \* colourful limp cover for alternative words edition

The new Hymns Ancient and Modern designed for use with either COMMON WORSHIP or BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER with a LARGE PRINT version NOW AVAILABLE.

List of first lines and samples on request.

*"A first rate collection of sacred song for the second millennium. Common Praise is undoubtedly the collection of hymns that any church in search of a new hymn book should look to first. It is a book for the parishes; organists and clergy alike will find it most valuable"*

Garry Hulme ARCO, Organist and Choirmaster, Manchester

with the NEW STANDARD (1983) and REVISED (1950) editions still available, the basic prices\* are as follows

|               | COMMON PRAISE<br>(628 hymns) | NEW STANDARD<br>(533 hymns) | A & M REVISED<br>(636 hymns) |
|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Full Music    | £20.99                       | £18.50                      | £16.50                       |
| Melody        | £12.50                       | £11.25                      | £9.99                        |
| Words (cased) | £8.99                        | £7.99                       | £7.50                        |
| Words (limp)  | £6.99                        | £5.50                       | £4.25                        |
| Large Print   | £17.50                       | £16.50                      | £11.25                       |

\*Apply for additional generous GRANTS of up to 25% available for introduction of all editions of Hymns Ancient & Modern. All prices may vary without notice.

St Mary's Works, St Mary's Place, Norwich NR3 3BH UK  
Tel: +44 (0)1603 012814 • Fax: +44 (0)1603 028403  
Email: [order@scm-canterburypress.co.uk](mailto:order@scm-canterburypress.co.uk)  
[www.scm-canterburypress.co.uk](http://www.scm-canterburypress.co.uk)

**CANTERBURY PRESS**  
1997

© SCM-Canterbury Press Ltd is a subsidiary of Hymns Ancient and Modern Ltd, registered charity 270068



**Christingle**

Shining light into darkness

# '... Let your **light** **shine** before all people ...'

Matthew 5:16

Shine a light into young lives with Christingle – the fun family service everyone wants to be part of.

Your service will make a vital contribution to our work, helping us to give the 100,000 children who run away from home each year somewhere safe to go and someone sound to talk to.

For more information, register for your free resource pack online at

**[www.christingle.org](http://www.christingle.org)**

or call

**0845 300 1128**

