

Church of England Liturgy: Where have we come from and where are we going?

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“Those who don’t study history are doomed to repeat it. Yet those who *do* study history are doomed to stand by helplessly while everyone else repeats it.”

Cartoon by Tom Toro of The New Yorker

<http://tomtoro.com/cartoons/>

“Just as Moses led a dark cloud into the whole land of Egypt so he (The Pope) spread such a cloud of Interdict in the whole of England so he (King John) might understand his plague better from the plague of all the people and he might learn to pity from their pain. And his heart was hardened and many of those in churches and ecclesiastical persons were moved with madness that the laity were to rule over ecclesiastical matters and the rights of priests were turned over to the abuses of laymen.... The altars were standing unclothed and displayed gloomy ruins; they did not resound with the modulation of unused songs from the devout, nor was heard the comforting melody of the bells; there were no holy festival crowds; now remained silent all the fathers who were instituted to the praise of God; the remedy of the provision of the blessed sacrament (viaticum) does not come to the aid of the dying; and finally Christian burial is not offered to the dead.”

Gaufridus de Coldingham, *Annales Dunelmensis* p. 25 Chapter XVIII
“De Interdicto in Anglia” - Translation S. Brush

Christopher Irvine at the Seventh International Anglican Liturgical Consultation, in Prague in 2005 as cited by Mark Earey, *Beyond Common Worship* (SCM, 2013) pp. 88-9
Core Principles

- 1 Anglican worship is structured and ordered, and there is a connection between the Church’s doctrine and its worship
- 2 Anglican worship is corporate, both internally (there is a part for all to play) and externally (the worshipping community must never be disconnected from the wider community and the outworking of justice in society).
- 3 Anglican worship gives a central place to the public, corporate reading of the Bible in structured, planned and accessible ways.”

Features:

- The inclusion of corporate confession in public worship.
- The connection between our worship structures and our ecclesiology, and in particular an episcopal ecclesiology.
- Trinitarian baptism, and the importance of both baptism and Eucharist.
- An ‘aesthetic sensibility’ and commitment to ‘quality’ in language, music and the arts in worship.
- The importance of the Christian year and daily prayer.
- The valuing of the psalms.
- The use of a blessing of the congregation at the end of worship.

Twenty Anglican principles of liturgy from Gray-Reeves, Mary and Perham, Michael, *The Hospitality of God* (2011) pp. 11-23:

1. Liturgy is ordered with beauty and holiness to reflect the beauty and holiness of God
2. Liturgy is the normal way Anglicans worship God together
3. A degree of commonality in liturgy is needed to maintain and enhance the unity of the church
4. The Christian formation of the people of God individually and as a community takes place within the celebration of the liturgy
5. Our doctrine is derived from our liturgy (*lex orandi, lex credendi*) SB translation the law prayer is the law believed.
6. Scripture, both as lection and as song (psalms and canticles), is always in our liturgy and we read it in step with one another through the use of common lectionaries
7. Anglicans use some texts sufficiently frequently that they enter the memory and feed the soul
8. Liturgy normally includes prayers of thanksgiving, penitence and intercession, some prayers in 'collect' form, creed and blessing, and principle services include a sermon
9. Liturgy is dialogue
10. In any liturgy there is usually a reference to the trinity, prayers are offered through Jesus and the Spirit invoked
11. There are distinctive roles in the liturgy for the orders of the church – laity, deacons, priests and bishops
12. The laity express their participation in the liturgy both by what they do together and by what individuals are called out to do as representatives of the people
13. Liturgy is normally led by ministers ordained or authorized by the bishop and the president of the Eucharist is always a priest or a bishop
14. Liturgical shape is more fundamental than liturgical text
15. Movement and gesture are not over prescribed, but normally have place in the liturgy
16. Liturgy usually includes music: Anglicans value hymnody, sing Scripture as well as read it and recognize that music deepens the experience of worship
17. Ordained ministers and others leading worship usually wear distinctive liturgical vesture
18. The liturgy reflects the times and seasons of the Christian year with their distinctive and contrasting moods
19. Canon law describes who may be invited to receive Holy Communion
20. Anglicans feel free to draw selectively on the liturgical traditions of other communities

Five additional characteristics for the emerging church:

1. Every liturgical occasion requires careful detailed planning
2. Welcome precedes any sense of either belonging or believing
3. The liturgy expresses indigenous authenticity
4. Liturgy needs to be multi-sensory and have complexity
5. A primary aim of worship is to feed the soul

Father of all, we give you thanks and praise that, when we were still far off, you met us in your Son and brought us home. Dying and living, he declared your love, gave us grace and opened the gate of glory. May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world. Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us so we and all your children shall be free and the whole earth live to praise your name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England (2000) p. 182

A Short Book List

Aisthorpe, Steve, *Rewilding the Church* (St Andrew Press, 2020)

Brown, David, *God and Enchantment of Place: Reclaiming Human* (OUP, 2004)

Burn, Stephen and Cones, Bryan, eds, *Liturgy with a Difference* (Hymns Ancient & Modern, 2019)

Earey, Mark, *Beyond Common Worship* (SCM, 2013)

France-William, A. D. A., *Ghost Ship: Institutional Racism and the Church of England* (SCM, 2020)

Gordon-Taylor, Benjamin *The Study of Liturgy and Worship* (SPCK, 2013)

Gray-Reeves, Mary and Perham, Michael, *The Hospitality of God* (2011)

Hammond, Cally, *The Sound of the Liturgy* (SPCK, 2015)

Jones, Cheslyn, ed., *The Study of the Liturgy* (SPCK, 1992)

Pritchard Houston, Margaret & Millar, Sandra, *Beyond the Children's Corner: Creating a culture of welcome for all ages* (CHP, Forthcoming 30 Sep 2020)

Reynolds, Simon *Table Manners: Liturgical Leadership for the Mission of the Church* (SCM, 2014)

Stanley, Bruce, *Forest Church: A Field Guide to Nature Connection for Groups and Individuals* (Mystic Christ Press, 2013)

Taylor, Steve, *First Expressions: Innovation and the Mission of God* (SCM 2019)

Underhill, Evelyn, *Worship* (Nisbet & Co, 1936)

Prof Diarmaid MacCulloch on Lockdown and The Interdict

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/arts-blog/covid-19-very-unholy-holy-week>

From the Church Times

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2020/24-july/faith/faith-features/celebrating-spirituality-outdoors>

<https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2020/1-may/audio-video/video/isolation-and-the-church-online-and-offline>

From M. R. James, "Drawings of M Paris" *The Volume of the Walpole Society* vol. 14 (1925-6): "no. 31. f. 27 b. 1208. The Interdict, symbolized by a church bell with the gudgeon, so that it cannot be rung. In 14 C. vii, f. 89 b, the same a bell mouth upwards and the clapper detached beside it (not reproduced). of 14 C. vii: no. 104" p. 8 & plate 7

