

Southwell

The Newsletter of the Southwell Diocesan Liturgical Committee

What's new? Three thought-provoking articles, and details of seven training events we have lined up for the coming year....

Liturgy



September 2004

Good for the soul?

July's General Synod meeting looked at a report which built upon the Common Worship Initiation Services (Baptism, Confirmation, etc) authorized in 1995. When these services were introduced, it was envisaged that they would eventually form the core of a larger volume of 'Rites on the Way'. The volume was to conclude with rites for Reconciliation and Restoration, whereby the baptismal covenant may be renewed and "those whose lives have been marred by sin may be reconciled and restored to the new life in Christ given in baptism".

Over recent years the theme of reconciliation has come to prominence, particularly after the collapse of apartheid in South Africa, and resulting establishment of a 'Truth and Reconciliation Committee'. Instead of reconciliation being the realm of the few in creaking wooden confessionals, it became associated with ideas of unity, renewal, peace, completeness, and healing. Healing is one of the key images used in scripture for the restoring and reconciling of those whose lives have been marred by sin. In many of the healing miracles in the NT the Greek word *sozo* (save, heal) is used of both physical healing and the deeper reconciliation brought by Christ.

So reconciliation is moved beyond the dominion of appeased consciences to a dominion of healing as the letter of St James urges, 'Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another that you may be healed' (James 5.16). The Church's role in ministering forgiveness to individuals is taught in scripture (cf Jn 20.19-23, Acts 2.38), but using material for both churches and individuals also makes pastoral and liturgical sense.

On the 5th February 2005, The Dean of Southwell, Canon Tony Evans and I will be looking at the various resources and forms of service which are going to the House of Bishops for commendation, and at examples of corporate and individual needs and acts of reconciliation. (See last page for details.)

Confession is good for the soul because it is so much more than Jerry Springer and Tricia: it's about healing, restoration, renewal and reconciliation. But also it is the knowledge that it begins with us. So if you would like to be a part of the day please contact me.

Robert Chapman

Projection pros and cons

With the prices of computers and projectors falling every year, many churches are asking whether they should be installing fancy new technology to enliven their liturgy. We asked Mark Brown, our Diocesan Canon Missioner for his reflections on the use of video and data projection in the context of worship. Reflecting on his experience of using this media in many different contexts over the past five years, here's what he had to say.

Worship is a sensory experience and with the greater accessibility of video and data projection our senses can be stimulated in a variety of new ways using this technology.

1. Pictures

Drawn from the rich traditions of Christian Art, or with contemporary images or home grown photographs our eyes can be fed with creative possibilities to aid prayer and praise. Pictures of the people we pray for, creative images to suggest possible links in people's minds with what is being sung or said – the possibilities are endless. A picture can easily speak a thousand words.

2. Pictures and words

To animate a talk or a sermon or to suggest the direction our thoughts may be heading in. Done well, we could free our pews of paper and booklets and may find this enhances our attitudes and bodily freedom to worship. Time, skill and creativity are needed to put these presentations together. That in itself, could be part of the offering of worship that we bring to God when we meet.

3. Pictures, words and music

All three of these media have been used before in the history of Christian worship. The window of creativity that has been opened up to us now is the possibility of designing innovative, integrated experiences of all three at the same time. The emotional connections that various forms of music make with pictures and carefully chosen words from scripture, poetry or our own compositions can be a very powerful medium for use in public worship.

The key issue with the use of the latest technology and its usage in worship is to imagine new possibilities for visual, audible and mental stimuli to enhance the worshipping experience of God's people. As one popular commentator said, "We have the technology." Amen to that, so let's experiment, learn together and use it to help others worship to the Glory of God.

Mark Brown makes a strong and clear case for the use of video and data projection in worship. We asked Nick Harding, Children's Officer for the Diocese and a member of the Liturgical Committee to respond...

Worship is indeed a sensory experience, and in an ideal world many more churches would be using creative images to help them come closer to God. But, without trying to be too negative, the effective use of data projection is for most churches at best aspirational, and at worst impossible.

It's great to think that some churches are moving in this direction, but to throw all of our 'worship eggs' into one basket without careful consideration and planning is dangerous. Here are a few reasons why:

1. We often fail at the basics

Many churches have not yet mastered operating a simple P.A. system, have problems with microphones, and don't know how to set levels and sound balances. If we can't even hear the leader of the service we lose out much more than not having pictures to look at. For some, Overhead Projectors are old hat, but for others they are new and advanced. For many they are not used particularly well, the positioning is poor, the machines are not adequately cleaned and serviced, and words are too small.

2. We could ignore the physical

The sensory nature of worship is well expressed through kneeling, standing, touching and moving. Perhaps we have lost some of this awareness, and see simple actions such as touching and feeling artefacts, kneeling in prayer or standing in church as ritual or habit rather than worship. But as we reclaim the physical and become more experimental we may discover a more profound, simple way to worship.

3. We must count the cost

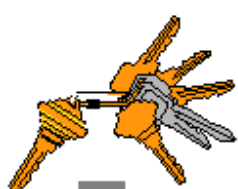
The pure financial investment that is involved in setting up and running a good visual data projection system is too much for some churches. The temptation would then be to make do with a low output projector, an inadequate screen, or lower quality software.

If a church decides to go for a full kit we've got to consider what is not being paid for as a consequence. Perhaps the budget for children's and youth mission resources is cut, or there's no money to run an Emmaus or Alpha course. We have to balance our needs as a worshipping community with our call to serve our wider community.

Perhaps the most important cost is human! Someone, or preferably a team of people, has to learn how get the best out of the equipment. This will take time and money, and it could take the individuals concerned out of other less attractive but no less important areas or service.

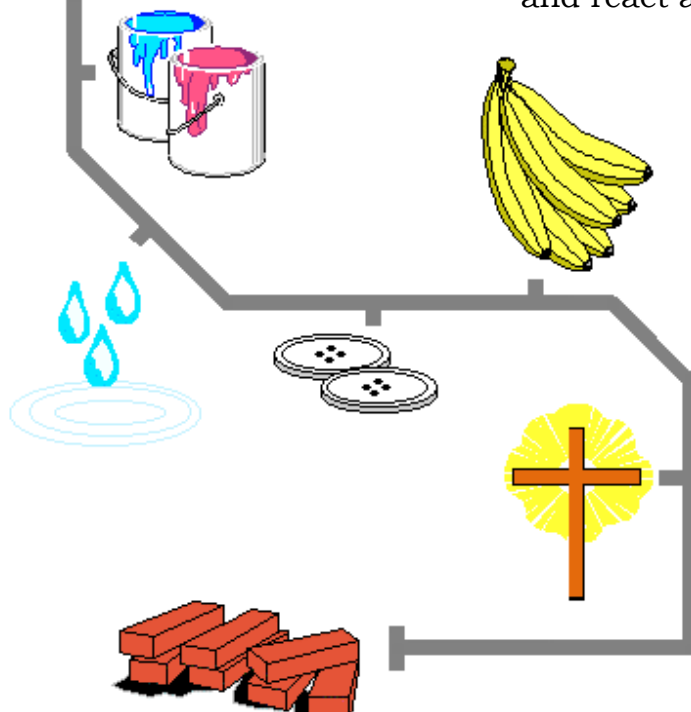
I am a great believer in using visuals and projecting words and images in worship from time to time, but I'm also keen on keeping it simple and challenging the misconception that complicated has to be best! If you're in a position to proceed with plans to use data projection in the future my advice would be to proceed with caution.

In your own time



Have you ever felt frustration at the pace of a service in church - wishing either that it would move along more quickly, or, perhaps, that it would slow down so that you have more time to savour some words or reflect on an image?

Then you might appreciate some 'liquid worship' or a 'prayer fayre' or a 'labyrinth' or a 'prayer journey'. All these worship experiences put you in control of timing, allowing you to receive, reflect and react at the pace you choose.



There's some new terminology to master here, but a key concept is that of a 'prayer station' - a place with something to look at, to read, and preferably something also to touch or to do, stimulating thought and prayer.

If you want to know more, read the latest Grove Booklet in the Worship series: *Labyrinths and prayer stations*, available from www.grovebooks.co.uk or, if you'd like some hands-on experience and training, come to our event on 19th March.

Ian Tarrant

Training Events

Leading Worship in Small Groups – more than a song and a prayer?
Saturday, 25th September, 10.30am – 12.30pm, St John's Colwick. Enquiries to Robert Chapman at robertsarah@chapm64.freeseve.co.uk

Intercessions – for all involved in preparing and leading prayers of intercession. Tuesday 2nd November, 7.30 - 9.30pm Warsop Parish Rooms. Enquiries to mike.skidmore@breathemail.net

On the screens behind me – a consultation for those already regularly using data projectors in worship, and those who would like to. Looking at the technicalities, and the effect that the medium has on the worship. Monday, 24th Jan '05, 7.30 - 9.30pm, University of Nottingham Chapel. Enquiries to ian.tarrant@nottingham.ac.uk

Ministry of Reconciliation - for anyone interested or involved in this ministry, with reference to the new Common Worship material to be approved by Synod, with Revd's Tony Evans & Robert Chapman, & Very Revd David Leaning. Sat 5th Feb '05, 10.30am - 3pm (bring a packed lunch), St. Mary's Sutton-in-Ashfield. Enquiries to Robert Chapman at robertsarah@chapm64.freeseve.co.uk

Labyrinths and liquid worship - the whys and the hows of two relatively new approaches to worship. Saturday, 19th March at St. Luke's Gamston. Try out and discuss a sample 'prayer journey' from 10am; core training time 11am - 12.30. Enquiries to ian.tarrant@nottingham.ac.uk

Tying the knot – this session is primarily intended for those recently ordained, but may be of interest to anybody involved in planning or conducting weddings. We'll look at the options available within the Common Worship provision, the choice of music, and do a run-through of a wedding service. Thurs 14th April, 10-12.30am, at St George's Netherfield. Enquiries to ian.tarrant@nottingham.ac.uk

Can you hear me at the back? – A very practical session on speaking/reading/praying in church, so that everyone can hear you. A choice of date and venue: **either** Tues, 24th May, 7.30pm St. John's Mansfield, **or** Weds 15th June, 7.30pm St. Mary's Radcliffe-on-Trent. Enquiries to joyceatkins@waitrose.com

The standard fee for DLC training events is £2, to cover room hire and other expenses.

Bookings for all these events may be sent to Katriona Gundlach, Dunham House, Westgate Southwell NG25 0JL; email katriona@southwell.anglican.org, phone 01636 817232. You can just turn up on the day, but you may be disappointed as we reserve the right to cancel any event for which there are not sufficient bookings, one week in advance.

Members of the Southwell Diocesan Liturgical Committee:

Ian Tarrant (Chair), Joyce Atkins (Secretary), Rob Chapman, Nick Harding, Angela Heywood, Sue Hemsley-Hall, Jacqui Jones, Peter Price, Mike Skidmore and Celia Tew.

Web-pages

Check out the DLC web pages at:
www.southwell-liturgy.org.uk

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