

**new patterns
new patterns
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**for worship
for worship
for worship**

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Authorization

New Patterns for Worship comprises

- * alternative services and other material authorized for use until further resolution of the General Synod;
- * services which comply with the provisions of *A Service of the Word* and other authorized services;
- * material commended by the House of Bishops;
- * material, the use of which falls within the discretion allowed to the minister under the provisions of Canon B 5 and by the rubrics and notes in authorized forms of service.

For details, see page 480.

Canon B 3 provides that decisions as to which of the authorized services are to be used (other than occasional offices) shall be taken jointly by the incumbent and the parochial church council.

Note

Throughout this volume references simply to *Common Worship* refer to the main *Common Worship* volume, *Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England*. The other *Common Worship* volumes are referred to by their full titles, for example *Common Worship: Pastoral Services*.

Preface

Patterns for Worship was first published in a Synod edition in 1989, but was not published in a commercial edition until 1995. The Synod draft contained what some people considered fairly revolutionary proposals about alternative structures for the Eucharist and Eucharistic Prayers, and the House of Bishops said it was 'mindful of those who want a period of stability in the liturgical life of the Church, and who might be anxious lest the Commission's proposals extend the bounds of choice and variety of liturgical provision more widely than has been customary in the Church of England'. The 1995 edition established the principle followed in *Common Worship* of publishing both commended and authorized material in one volume. It included the newly authorized Service of the Word, Confessions and Absolutions and Affirmations of Faith, but no Eucharistic Prayers were included. This present volume contains the same range of material, and includes the outline for the Eucharist, authorized as *A Service of the Word with a Celebration of Holy Communion*, together with provision for using a number of thanksgivings as extended prefaces with some of the new Eucharistic Prayers.

What is the difference between *New Patterns for Worship* and *Common Worship*? There are two important features about *New Patterns* which distinguish it from the *Common Worship* volumes. These have led to the publication of a new edition of this book, brought up to date so that it is entirely compatible with *Common Worship*.

First, it is organized in a completely different way from *Common Worship*. It is a directory of resources, organized in such a way that those looking for material for different sections of the service can find and compare possible texts and ideas, all cross-referenced for 'secular' themes as well as for major doctrinal themes and seasons. This is not a new idea. The introduction to *Lent, Holy Week, Easter* in 1984 said, 'We are providing a directory from which choices may be made. We think of this book as a manual to be used with selectivity, sensitivity and imagination.' In 1985 the report by the General Synod Standing Committee, *The Worship of the Church*, called for 'a directory with a wealth of resource material including supplementary material for each of the many points in the service where there is room for the individual's own words. The directory would need to set boundaries to the proposed freedom, and points which might be theologically divisive would have to be watched.' The introduction to *Common Worship* says that the provision for the combination of old and new 'provides for the diverse worshipping needs of our communities, within an ordered structure which affirms our essential unity and common life'. This continued provision for diversity within an authorized structure continues in *Common Worship*, both in the outline structures provided for *A Service of the Word* and other services, and also in the notes and rubrics which frequently use the phrase 'these or other suitable words'.

Second, *New Patterns for Worship* is designed to educate and train those who plan and lead worship. There are training elements built into each of the resource sections, together with discussion material for PCCs and worship planning groups. Some of the items in the Resource Sections have been deliberately chosen to illustrate different ways of doing things. So there are different ways of handling the Prayers of Intercession, and a number of examples of the same psalm or canticle treated in different ways both for singing and for speaking. At the end of the book there are Sample Services, covering quite a wide range of thematic and seasonal occasions. Sometimes they will be exactly what the user is looking for, and can be copied for local use. Sometimes they are simply outlines illustrating different shapes and creative ideas. The principles behind the basic outline of A Service of the Word imply the need for those who conduct and lead the services to be aware of the theological models that shape our worship, both in the patterns of the services and in the structures of the component parts. These patterns draw worshippers from where they are by means of encounter with the story of what God has done for his people to where we might hope they would be. But the main reason they are there is to illustrate the theory and methods explained in the earlier part of the book, and to stimulate those who plan services locally to produce better worship. Again, one of these services is deliberately dealt with in a number of different ways, so that the effect of different approaches may be seen.

The Liturgical Commission's aim in producing *Patterns for Worship* in 1989 was to meet some of the current needs of the Church's worship, reflected most acutely in Urban Priority Areas and in services (often called 'family services') at which all age groups, including children, are present. We used the already established principle of flexibility to provide forms of worship which could still be recognizable as belonging within the Anglican tradition, while encompassing the enormous variety that exists within the Church at present. Time has moved on. Much of the flexibility and variety is enshrined in *Common Worship*, and this book provides some complementary resources to encourage that. And we now speak of 'all-age worship' rather than 'family services', reflecting the social changes which still continue. But many of the needs are still the same: the need to explore different ways of recognizing and celebrating the presence of God in worship, the need to maintain the unity of the Church while doing so, the need to train more people to share in the planning and preparation of worship, and the need to enjoy God in worship in such a way that others are attracted and join in.

✠ David Sarum
Chairman of the Liturgical Commission

November 2002

Introduction

How to use this book

Worship is not worship until you do it.

Worship books consisting simply of texts to say or sing are like recipes which list ingredients without the instructions for putting them together.

But how do you offer advice and suggest questions to ask about the presentation of the liturgy without putting it all in rubrics, or mandatory stage directions, in the services, or producing a separate manual? Probably the most digestible and least legalistic way of doing it would be to tell stories. So here you have

- * the authorized text of A Service of the Word, with notes and instructions about how to put it together;
- * a set of Resource Sections providing material, section by section, for each part of a service; and
- * the stories of four entirely imaginary churches, at the beginning of each Resource Section. As you read them, you will gather a little of the flavour and style of each church, both rural and urban, with different spaces and resources. You may find you identify more with one than with another, but be prepared to learn from the others. Sometimes the lessons may be how *not* to do it.

What do you want to do?

- * To look for items to put into a service, browse through the Resource Sections, using the indexes. You will find an index of the themes followed in each section on pages 59 and 501.
- * To find a service for a special occasion, look at the section entitled Sample Services for ideas and suggestions, an outline order of service, or a complete worked-out example.
- * To find some help in preparing either of these, read the introductory pages to each Resource Section and each Sample Service.
- * To learn more about putting services together, or find ways of helping a PCC or worship planning group to learn more about the decisions they need to take, read the stories of the four churches. The introductory notes and outline discussion starters included in the Planning Worship section of this book are designed to make it a useful educational tool.

How to use the stories

Two or three people could be asked to read a particular section beforehand, in preparation for the discussion; the stories – and possibly the questions below – could be reproduced on a handout given to everyone. A larger meeting would be better divided into groups, possibly with both the questions and the collecting of responses set out on an overhead projector.

Ask some questions:

- * Can you imagine being present in the situations described?
- * What is good or bad about them?
- * Do you feel nearer to the experience of one of the four churches?
- * Which one?
- * Make a list of suggestions which come to you as a result of reading this section.
- * Are any of these suggestions possible for us
 - a) some time in the future?
 - b) right now?
- * Do we need variety in how we handle this part of the service week by week, or do we need the security of being consistent?
- * Do we need to consult with others before taking action – other church leaders, the PCC, musicians, choir, servers etc.?

Patterns of church life: Introducing the four imaginary churches



St Ann's is a large suburban church, with a mixed congregation of different ages and backgrounds. There is considerable lay involvement in the leadership of the church, and this is evident in the worship too. The PCC recently spent a day away reviewing the church's worship, and one of the results of this was the setting up of a worship planning group. See the first section of page 25, and Planning and Preparation in General, beginning on page 24.

Sunday worship is the focus of the whole life of this very active church, and a lot of energy is put into preparing for Sunday both by those involved in teaching the different adult and children's groups and by the music and drama groups. Sunday morning worship follows *Common Worship Order One Holy Communion*, but on occasion makes use of the provisions of *A Service of the Word with a Celebration of Holy Communion* to enable it to feel more like a less formal all-age service. The sermon is done in a variety of ways, for example using videos or dividing the adult members of the congregation into groups. There is a break at the Peace when the children come back from their groups and some non-communicants and enquirers leave without embarrassment.



St Bartholomew's is a lovely medieval country church, small both in size and in congregation. Sharing a vicar with other churches in the group means that the Sunday pattern varies from week to week, and the main service is not always communion. The church is not as insular as it used to be; one or two people sometimes go to services at other churches in the group, and some incomers in the village bring experience of other churches. The main vision of the staff (vicar, deacon and an excellent Reader) is of worship that is accessible to everyone in the village, children included, and that accurately reflects and sums up the life of the community. Some of the congregation would prefer the worship to be a little less related to the community and more of a beautiful oasis, away from the week's troubles – a kind of entering into eternity from which they can emerge refreshed to face the week.



St Christopher's is a large nineteenth-century neo-gothic building in the downtown part of the city. The parish priest lives in the vicarage adjoining the church. The high brick wall which surrounds the church and vicarage also includes the disused school, now used adventurously for a wide range of community activities. The parish priest is the only professional living in the area. The small congregation spend a lot of time together; all of them live locally. Some of them help to run things in the community centre and every morning there are four or five praying, with more for late evening worship, and thirty for communion with hymns and sermon on Tuesday evening. Sunday worship is a culmination and gathering together of the activities, concerns and worship of the week. The social needs of the community are offered to God as easily as they are discussed practically in the pub after church – a kind of extended Peace attended by most of the congregation.



St Dodo's is a church where worship is simply not one of the most important things the church does. It comes low on most people's agenda, though there are occasional heated discussions at the PCC. The demands of different factions and rival views in the church mean that the worship is very bitty, and there is a different kind of service each Sunday in the month, with very few people going every week. The vicar finds little time for preparation and feels it is impossible to involve others in preparing or helping to lead because of the need to keep the balance between the different factions.

Note: There really was a St Dodo. He was the abbot of a monastery in Belgium who died in AD 750. We've chosen him partly because there are no churches dedicated to him in Britain, partly because of the other overtones of his name. But if you find yourself identifying with some of the stories of St Dodo's (and many of them are true) don't despair: you're not extinct yet, and the fact that you are using this book shows that you are well on the way to recovering from deadness.

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Planning Worship

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A Service of the Word: Authorized Text and Notes

Worship may often make use of the authorized provision for A Service of the Word, which is given here for ease of reference.

A Service of the Word

¶ Introduction

A Service of the Word is unusual for an authorized Church of England service. It consists almost entirely of notes and directions and allows for considerable local variation and choice within a common structure. It is important that those who prepare for and take part in A Service of the Word should have a clear understanding of the nature of worship and of how the component parts of this service work together. Leading people in worship is leading people into mystery, into the unknown and yet the familiar. This spiritual activity is much more than getting the words or the sections in the right order. The primary object in the careful planning and leading of the service is the spiritual direction which enables the whole congregation to come into the presence of God to give him glory. Choices must be made responsibly by leaders of this service or by groups planning worship with them, whether the service is an occasional one, or a regular one which may use a service card. The notes and the text of A Service of the Word should be read together as they interpret one another.

The Liturgy of the Word

At the heart of the service is the Liturgy of the Word. This must not be so lightly treated as to appear insignificant compared with other parts of the service. The readings from Holy Scripture are central to this part and, together with the season, may determine the theme of the rest of the worship. At certain times of the year, as Note 5 says, the readings come from an authorized lectionary, so that the whole Church is together proclaiming the major events in the Christian story. Telling that story and expounding it in the 'sermon' can be done in many different and adventurous ways. Some are suggested in Notes 5 and 7, but there are many others. The word 'sermon' is used in the service, and explained in the note, precisely because it would be too limiting to use words like 'address', 'talk', 'instruction', or 'meditation'.

The items in the Liturgy of the Word may come in any order and more than once. So the sermon may be in parts and there may be more than one psalm or song, and of course hymns may be inserted as well. But on most occasions it will be appropriate for this part of the service to have a Creed or Affirmation of Faith as its climax.

Preparation

With the Liturgy of the Word becoming clear it will be easier to see how the Preparation for it, and the response to it in the Prayers, fit in. People need to know when the service has started (Note 1). What happens at the beginning can create the atmosphere for worship and set the tone and mood for what follows. The gathering of the congregation and the call to worship are to be marked by a liturgical greeting between minister and people. Leaders should have worked out exactly where this comes among the singing, Scripture sentence, introduction (perhaps to the theme) and opening prayer. All these should draw the members of the congregation together and focus their attention on almighty God.

This part of the service will usually include the Prayers of Penitence, though these may come later if, for instance, the theme of the Liturgy of the Word appropriately leads to penitence. Authorized Prayers of Penitence include all those confessions and absolutions in *The Book of Common Prayer* and in services in *Common Worship*, together with several other seasonal and thematic forms, mostly for occasional use, which are set out on pages 122–137 of *Common Worship*. The climax of this part of the service is either the Collect or, if that is included in the Prayers, one of the items of praise, a hymn or the Gloria. The Collect does not have to be that of the day; it may be a thematic one based on the readings (in which case it should come immediately before the readings), or be used to sum up the Prayers.

Prayers

Part of the response to the Word is the Creed, but the response should be developed in the Prayers which follow. There are many different options for this part of the service. These range from a series of Collect-type prayers to congregational involvement in prayer groups, visual and processional prayers, with responsive forms and a number of people sharing the leading of intercessions in between. But, whatever the form, it is essential that the Prayers also include thanksgiving. A section of thanksgiving, which may include the spoken word, music and hymns, may be the proper climax to this part of the service.

Conclusion

Many different words have been used for the Conclusion, each of which has something to contribute to our understanding of how the service ends: dismissal, farewell, goodbye, departure, valediction, commission, blessing, ending, going out. What is essential, as with the way the service starts, is that it should have a clear liturgical ending: options are listed in Note 9.

Once the service is planned, leaders will want to check through to ensure that there is the right balance between the elements of word, prayer and praise, and between congregational activity and congregational passivity. Does the music come in the right places? Is there sufficient silence (Note 4)? This is something leaders can be afraid of, or fail to introduce properly. And is there a clear overall direction to the service: is it achieving the purpose of bringing the congregation together to give glory to God?

¶ A Service of the Word

Preparation

The minister welcomes the people with the **Greeting**.

Authorized Prayers of Penitence may be used here or in the **Prayers**.

The Venite, Kyries, Gloria, a hymn, song, or a set of responses may be used.

The **Collect** is said either here or in the **Prayers**.

The Liturgy of the Word

This includes

- ¶ readings (or a reading) from Holy Scripture
- ¶ a psalm, or, if occasion demands, a scriptural song
- ¶ a sermon
- ¶ an **authorized Creed**, or, if occasion demands, an **authorized Affirmation of Faith**.

Prayers

These include

- ¶ intercessions and thanksgivings
- ¶ the Lord's Prayer

Conclusion

The service concludes with a **blessing, dismissal** or other **liturgical ending**.

¶ A Service of the Word with a Celebration of Holy Communion

This rite requires careful preparation by the president and other participants, and is not normally to be used as the regular Sunday or weekday service.

Sections marked with an asterisk must follow an authorized text.*

Preparation

The people and the priest:

- ¶ greet each other in the Lord's name
- ¶ confess their sins and are assured of God's forgiveness*
- ¶ keep silence and pray a Collect*

The Liturgy of the Word

The people and the priest:

- ¶ proclaim and respond to the word of God

Prayers

The people and the priest:

- ¶ pray for the Church and the world

The Liturgy of the Sacrament

The people and the priest:

- ¶ exchange the Peace
- ¶ prepare the table
- ¶ pray the Eucharistic Prayer*
- ¶ break the bread
- ¶ receive Holy Communion

The Dismissal

The people and the priest:

- ¶ depart with God's blessing.

¶ Notes

In this form of service, the material is described as 'authorized' or 'suitable', which expressions shall have the following meanings:

- ¶ 'authorized' means approved by the General Synod in accordance with the provisions of Canon B 2.
- ¶ 'suitable' means a form used at the discretion of the minister conducting the form of service on any occasion, but such that the material so used shall be neither contrary to, nor indicative of any departure from, the doctrine of the Church of England in any essential matter.

This service is authorized as an alternative to Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer. It provides a structure for Sunday services, for daily prayer and for services of an occasional nature.

1 Greeting

The service should have a clear beginning. The liturgical greeting may follow some introductory singing, or a hymn or a sentence of Scripture, and may be followed by a brief introduction or an opening prayer.

2 Prayers of Penitence

Only authorized Prayers of Penitence should be used. They may be omitted except at the Principal Service on Sundays and Principal Holy Days. Authorized forms of Confession and Absolution may be found in *The Book of Common Prayer*, in the services in *Common Worship* and on pages 122–137 of *Common Worship*. See also pages 81–97 in this book. The minister may introduce the Confession with suitable words.

3 Hymns, Canticles, Acclamations and the Peace

Points are indicated for some of these, but if occasion requires they may occur elsewhere.

4 Silence

Periods of silence may be kept at different points of the service. It may be particularly appropriate at the beginning of the service, after the readings and the sermon, and during the prayers.

5 Readings

There should preferably be at least two readings from the Bible, but it is recognized that if occasion demands there may be only one reading. It may be dramatized, sung or read responsively. The readings are taken from an authorized lectionary during the period from the Third Sunday of Advent to the Baptism of Christ, and from Palm Sunday to Trinity Sunday. When A Service of the Word is combined with Holy Communion on Sundays and Principal Holy Days, the readings of the day are normally used.

6 Psalms

The service should normally include a psalm or psalms. These might be said or sung in the traditional way, but it is also possible to use a metrical version, a responsive form or a paraphrase such as can be found in many current hymn books. The psalm may occasionally be replaced by a song or canticle the words of which are taken directly from Scripture: a 'scriptural song'.

7 Sermon

The term 'sermon' includes less formal exposition, the use of drama, interviews, discussion, audio-visuals and the insertion of hymns or other sections of the service between parts of the sermon. The sermon may come after one of the readings, or before or after the prayers, and may be omitted except on Sundays and Principal Holy Days.

8 Sermon and Creed

The sermon, and a Creed or authorized Affirmation of Faith may be omitted except at the principal service on Sundays and Principal Holy Days.

9 Ending

The service should have a clear ending. This takes one or more of the following forms: the Peace, the Grace or a suitable ascription or blessing. If a responsive conclusion is used, it comes last.

10 A Service of the Word with a Celebration of Holy Communion

An order for this is provided (see page 25 of *Common Worship*). The notes to the Order for the Celebration of Holy Communion (pages 158–159 and 330–335 of *Common Worship*) apply equally to this service. In particular the Note on Ministries (pages 158–159 of *Common Worship*) specifies that the president must be an episcopally ordained priest, but indicates that where necessary a deacon or lay person may preside over the Preparation and the Liturgy of the Word, including the Prayers. The order provided is not prescriptive.

Planning and Preparing a Service of the Word

How to put a service together

1 Structure

The first thing to do is to read the authorized introduction to A Service of the Word on pages 9–10. From this you will see that there are three main sections, like three tubs into which you are going to put the different items in the service; Preparation, The Liturgy of the Word, Prayers. Into these tubs you put the ingredients, the different items in the service. Add to these a beginning and an ending and you have the main outline.

There are four different kinds of ingredients and it is important that there is a balance in the way these are used:

Word | Prayer | Praise | Action

It is a bit like preparing a meal with three courses, plus an appetizer at the beginning and coffee at the end. Each course has a number of different ingredients, which can be used more than once in different combinations in different courses. It is worth noting that for the principal service on a Sunday certain ingredients, which are otherwise optional, are required: an authorized confession and absolution, an authorized creed or affirmation of faith, and a sermon.

The basic structure for A Service of the Word is set out on page 11 and for A Service of the Word with Holy Communion on page 12. For more background on the structure see page 27. It is important to have a clear structure such as that in A Service of the Word, even though the detail may vary from week to week. The emphasis on different parts of the structure may be varied according to the theme.

2 Theme and direction

The Introduction to A Service of the Word says:

Leading people in worship is leading people into mystery, into the unknown and yet the familiar. This spiritual activity is much more than getting the words or the sections in the right order. The primary object in the careful planning and leading of the service is the spiritual direction which enables the whole congregation to come into the presence of God to give him glory.

Care should be taken to ensure that there is some overall direction, some sense of cohesion, of going somewhere, some development in the congregation's relationship to God, reflected in the service structure. Sometimes this is provided by a clear theme. The theme may be determined

by the occasion or season, such as Mothering Sunday or Christmas, or by some local event, such as a patronal festival or jazz festival. The theme will also be regularly determined by the Bible readings. Sometimes no clear overall theme will emerge, and the Bible reading, prayers and praise will be left, like coloured glass in a kaleidoscope, to cast light on one another and to provide, in the interplay of patterns, different pictures for different people in the congregation. The important thing is to recognize which of these routes is being followed. Ask the question, either on your own or in a planning group, 'What do we expect to happen to people in this service? What will be the outcomes in terms of Christian growth, education, deepening appreciation of God, experience of him in worship and praise, and in obedience to his word?' And that outcome, and the development through the service, will be partly determined by giving some attention to the emotional flow of the service. Does it start quietly and build up, start on a 'high' and become reflective, or have a climax in the middle?

3 The Word

The Introduction says this is 'the heart of the service', and this is the best place to begin to look at the ingredients which will sometimes determine the theme for the service.

- * What are the Bible readings? The authorized Lectionary will be the natural starting point, and must be followed in the periods around Christmas and Easter. This helps to keep the whole church together on the same track as we tell the stories of Jesus' birth, death and resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit. At other times other routes may be followed, such as those in Resource Section C (pages 98–123) or a specially designed local teaching scheme.
- * If occasion demands, there need only be one reading, except that if the service is Holy Communion, there should be two readings, one of which should be from the Gospels.
- * How are other readings going to be presented? See page 101 for examples.
- * What psalms, Scripture, songs or canticles are to be used? Begin to think about music resources and preparation. See pages 125–128 (Psalms) and 35–38 (Music).
- * Begin to plan the sermon. If the preacher is not part of the planning group, it is important to know the main drift of the sermon so that other items in the service support rather than conflict with this part of the Word. Does it need one 'slot' or more? Note 7 to A Service of the Word (page 14) gives a new interpretation to the word 'sermon' which 'includes less formal exposition, the use of drama, interviews, discussion, audio-visuals and the insertion of hymns or other sections of the service between parts of the sermon'.

4 Prayer

Look at the Prayer section of the service, and also the Preparation section, as both penitence and the collect may be included in the prayers. Note 4 (page 13) reminds us about the need for silence. What form should the prayers take?

- * An outline form filled in by the minister
- * An outline form with extempore prayer or biddings from the congregation, or from a group
- * A litany or responsive intercession
- * A series of set prayers

It is best not to mix the forms too much, though a set prayer may be a good way to end or sum up one of the other forms. The Lord's Prayer and a collect should be used at every Sunday service.

5 Praise

Praise may be said or sung. Select hymns, songs or items from the Praise section of *New Patterns* or elsewhere. See pages 220–222 for further ideas. A set of versicles and responses (see pages 225–233 for examples) may be used in the Preparation or elsewhere.

6 Action

This is not the same kind of thing as the other three ingredients; rather, it describes the way in which something is done. For example, dramatic action might interpret the Word, or a procession or dance might help to express praise. So something might be done with music, or followed by silence, or accompanied by visuals, gestures or symbols. There might be a movement by the congregation, such as standing or joining hands, movement with an object, e.g. a candle or Bible, a change in lighting or visual presentation. See pages 279–281 for further examination of this.

The action may be the climax towards which the service moves, or an action that begins the worship and sets the theme for it.

7 Beginning and ending

These are dealt with in the paragraphs headed 'Preparation' and 'Conclusion' in the authorized Introduction to A Service of the Word (pages 10–11), together with Notes 1, 2 and 9 (pages 13–14).

- * Decide how the service is to begin and end: each should be clear.
- * Decide what is to go into 'The Preparation', and what other material you want to add. Prayers of Penitence, with an authorized form of confession and absolution (see Resource Section B, pages 72–97 and *Common Worship*, pages 122–137), may come here or in 'Prayers'. The collect may also come later in that section.

- * Decide whether and where to add a creed or affirmation of faith (see Resource Section E, pages 157–169), notices, collection, invitations or biddings, explanation, silence. See pages 29–32 for some ideas about inserting things like this into services.
- * Decide how these ingredients relate to the aim and structure of the rest of the service. For example, prayers of penitence might be part of the preparation at the beginning, to clear away any barrier to hearing God, or they could be the climax towards which the service moves (as in an Ash Wednesday service). The full structure might then look like one of the following samples.

Example 1: A block structure

Items you must include for a Principal Service on Sunday (though individual items and order will vary)	Additional items you may want to add
Preparation	
Greeting	1 Scripture sentence
	2 Hymn
	3 Opening prayer
	4 Invitation
* Confession	5
* Forgiveness	6
Word	
	7 Introduction
Old Testament	8
Psalm or paraphrase	9
New Testament	10
	11 Song or hymn
Talk	12
* Creed	13
	14 Hymn
Prayer	
* Collect	15
Form of intercession	16
Praise	
	17 Versicles and responses
	18 Hymn
Action	
	19 All stand while the candle is carried out
Blessing or ending	20

* Authorized texts must be used

Example 2: A conversation structure

Word | Prayer | Praise | Action may come many times within the same service. Imagine a conversation between God and the congregation. The **Word** items present what God is saying, and the other three items may be used as the response or reply to God. The service may be built from a series of **Presentation** and **Response** units, like building blocks. This example is from Morning Prayer in *The Book of Common Prayer*:

Presentation God Speaks	Response We Speak
Word Scripture Sentence	
	Praise Hymn of adoration
Word Invitation	
	Prayer Confession
Prayer Declaration of forgiveness	
	Praise Open our lips... Glory be... Canticle
Word Psalm Old Testament	
	Praise Canticle
Word New Testament	
	Praise Canticle Creed Lord's Prayer Collect
Word Sermon	
	Hymn

Themes

A theme may determine the pattern of the worship. The traditional Morning and Evening Prayer pattern allows the word and praise to throw light on each other. A thematic approach very often means that the worship leader decides the way the word is to be heard, and the response that needs to be made. Care must be taken to make sure that the whole service does not become a sermon. This tends to happen when explanations and exhortations introduce every item.

Some examples of a thematic approach

- * Maundy Thursday foot-washing
- * Baptism service: see pages 363–371

Guidelines

When you have completed the service outline, consider this checklist. Parts of this are amplified in the descriptive commentary sections that follow.

- * Is there a balance between word, prayer, praise and action? For instance the Word section may be top heavy with long readings and long introductions, or too many short readings.
- * Is the worship directed to God, addressing him rather than the people?
- * Is the structure and direction of the service clear enough for people to know where it is going? Does the service have an overall coherence, or is it just one item after another?
- * When is the climax to the service? If there is more than one, is that deliberate? Is the emotional or spiritual climax the same as the climactic moment in terms of music or words or congregational action? There is no 'right' answer, but it helps if service planners are aware of these ways in which the service develops.
- * What space is there for reflection or silence in the service?
- * How much of the service might be classed as 'entertainment'? Is this justified? Is there a balance between receiving (listening, watching, contemplating) and responding? Check on posture: is there too much sitting down or standing up at one time? Or, conversely, are people bobbing up and down too much? Is there enough action?
- * Is the music used in such a way as to further and develop the main thrust of the service? Is there too much musical praise, with too many choir items, or too long a section of choruses from the music group, or hymns too close to one another?
- * Does the form of service enable the gifts of a variety of people in the church to be used in both planning and taking part?
- * Compare this service with other services in the month. An occasional completely new form of worship may stimulate people to discover new dimensions to their ordinary worship, but a new pattern each week may be confusing and unsettling, particularly to children. If people are familiar with both structure and content of the service, they feel more secure and can take part more easily. For an all-age service, for instance, it may be better to have a standard structure, with 'windows' or 'slots' which can be changed from week to week.
- * Especially if you are planning 'family worship', check that the contents do not exclude some in the congregation, e.g. children, single people, the bereaved, members of broken families. It is hurtful and not constructive to require a mixed congregation simply to join in prayers thanking God for our homes and families and all the happiness that parents and children share.

Planning and Preparing Holy Communion

There are basically two parts to the Holy Communion service: the Word and the Sacrament.

The Word part consists of

- * the first part of the Holy Communion (The Gathering and The Liturgy of the Word)
- or
- * A Service of the Word (Preparation, The Liturgy of the Word, Prayers). This can take the form of Morning or Evening Prayer, or a Family Service.

The Sacrament part consists of

- * The Peace
- * Preparation of the Table
- * The Eucharistic Prayer
- * Breaking of the Bread
- * Giving of Communion
- * The Dismissal

These features are not all of equal weight.

How it works

First decide the structure.

This is well set out on page 12 above, although Note 10 to A Service of the Word (page 14) says that the order provided is not prescriptive. A decision will need to be taken about where to place those ingredients that are normal but may vary in position; for example, where penitence is to come, and where the Peace is shared.

Second, add to this structure:

- * Other elements that are compulsory, but may vary in form. All of the authorized forms of confession and absolution from *Common Worship* may be found in Section B. When A Service of the Word with a Celebration of Holy Communion is being used, the readings must be governed by an authorized lectionary, but the Creed could be the Apostles' Creed or an authorized Affirmation of Faith. All those currently authorized may be found in Section E.
- * Those ingredients in the service which are not compulsory; e.g. the collect for purity, the Gloria in excelsis, the prayer of humble access, the choice of post communion or another suitable prayer.
- * Those parts of the service where 'ad lib' or unofficial material may be used, or where there is provision made in the Resource Sections, e.g. the Greeting, the Prayers of Intercession, the introduction to the Peace, Prayers at the Preparation of the Table, the Post Communion or other suitable or seasonal prayers, the seasonal or other suitable form of blessing.

The Peace

Most modern rites place the Peace between the Prayers and the Preparation of the Table. Note the scope for placing it elsewhere, for example at the beginning or the end of the service, as well as the option to introduce it with other words, which may be composed for the occasion or the locality. See page 271 below.

Preparation of the Table

Customs vary on the solemnity with which this is done. In some places, variable prayers may be used. These should be *preparatory*, as the title for this part implies, and not dramatically overshadow the Eucharistic Prayer.

The Eucharistic Prayer

One of the authorized forms must always be used. A Eucharistic Prayer, whether it takes the form of extended monologue with acclamations, or a dialogue between president and congregation, normally includes the following:

- * thanksgiving for creation, redemption and the work of the Spirit
- * the memorial prayer for the Church to receive and grow in the life of Christ
- * doxology, offering praise to God the Holy Trinity.

These are the 'deep structures' of the prayer. They need to be 'signposted' clearly as the prayer progresses, not least by the tone of voice(s) used as the prayer is proclaimed.

The pattern of the prayer is normally

- * an opening dialogue
- * an introduction to praise
- * an extended act of thanksgiving
- * the narrative of the institution of the Lord's Supper
- * the memorial prayer
- * the prayer for the work of the Spirit
- * the concluding doxology.

While this basic pattern is true for all the Eucharistic Prayers in *Common Worship* Order One, an examination of the position of the Sanctus reveals two slightly different structures.

- * The traditional Western structure, to which people grew accustomed in the prayers in *The Alternative Service Book 1980*, places the Sanctus at the climax of the preface or extended thanksgiving. It is followed by petition, which also encompasses the narrative of institution. This is the pattern of Prayers A, B, C and E.
- * The Trinitarian or Eastern structure followed in Prayers F and G places the Sanctus within the thanksgiving, where it marks the change of focus from Father to Son. In this pattern the narrative of institution marks the shift from praise to petition and the focus on the Holy Spirit comes after it. This Trinitarian pattern is slightly less clear in Prayer D. Prayer H is also

Trinitarian in pattern, but the initial thanksgiving is concluded with the narrative of institution and the Sanctus is the final climax of praise at the end of the prayer.

Within this framework there is scope for variations:

- * The Preface: Short Prefaces may be inserted in Eucharistic Prayers A, B and C in Order One, and Extended Prefaces may be used with Eucharistic Prayers A, B and E. See Note 18 on page 333 in *Common Worship*, and also Praise in Resource Section G in this book. Others may be specially composed, provided that they balance the style and overall length of the rest of the prayer.
- * Acclamations: four three-line acclamations, each with a specific introductory line, are provided for Eucharistic Prayers A, B, C, E and G, and one of them must be chosen. Optional acclamations are suggested for use in Prayers A and E, and as Note 18 says, other acclamations may be used.
- * Chorus or metrical versions of the Sanctus and Doxology may be used, instead of those printed.

In Order One the Eucharistic Prayer leads into the Lord's Prayer, but A Service of the Word with a Celebration of Holy Communion does not specify where the Lord's Prayer should be used, opening up the possibility of using it, for example, in the Prayers of Intercession or in its Order Two position.

Breaking of the Bread

This symbolic action prepares for the sharing of the bread and wine. On Sundays and Principal Holy Days one of the forms of words provided in Order One or Order Two must be used. On other days it may be done in silence or during the Agnus Dei. See Note 20 on page 334 of *Common Worship*.

Invitation to Communion

Forms for this may be found on page 180 of *Common Worship*, but there are no explicit instructions either in the Notes or the Order on page 12 in this book.

Giving of Communion

Local customs vary. However the consecrated bread and wine are shared, it should be done decently and in order.

After Communion

Consecrated bread and wine not required for communion are reverently consumed at the end of the distribution or after the service. This is not a liturgical act and need not be done at the holy table or by the president.

For prayer after communion there is a choice between presidential texts (the authorized Post Communion of the day or another suitable prayer) and congregational texts. Other alternative prayers and dismissals are provided in Resource Section J.

Planning and Preparation in General

Stories from the four churches



St Ann's sent three lay leaders on a diocesan course on preparing worship. As a result they came back wanting to set up a planning group for worship. They brought back with them draft terms of reference for such a group, which were discussed and amended by the PCC (see section opposite). The PCC recognized that this was a move away from the previous pattern, where a different house group had planned and led the worship each week. This had resulted in some inconsistency in the worship, though one good thing about it was that a very wide range of people had been involved, so the new planning group had a long list of people in the church who had worship gifts.



At **St Bartholomew's** the vicar recognizes the difficulty of planning worship for several different country churches. At St Bartholomew's itself the monthly all-age service is planned and led by a group of young parents, two of whom teach in the small Sunday school, so that there is some link between the two. They plan the themes with the vicar six months at a time. This involves deciding on how to handle the theme in terms of teaching, readings, music, prayers and activities. In one village two people have been on a diocesan course on leading worship and can plan a communion service and lead the first part of it until the vicar arrives. In another village the PCC is small enough to discuss worship easily and the vicar has been training some of them to lead the intercessions.



Planning at **St Christopher's** is in the hands of the staff. The vicar uses a blank form (specimen opposite) which gradually gets filled in, from his initial ideas a couple of months ahead, through discussion with the staff and regular meetings with Sunday school leaders, organist and head server. Copies of the form, duly typed, give all concerned a complete menu for each service.



The vicar of **St Dodo's** returned from a (compulsory) diocesan clergy conference, at which worship had been on the agenda, keen to put into practice some of the things he had learnt others were doing. The next Sunday's worship had a different structure, with a new confession, creed and Eucharistic Prayer (and no time for the congregation to be taught about them or even to read quietly through them before having to join in). There were also new songs – which the choir hadn't seen before – in the order of service badly duplicated on dark pink paper. The clearest liturgical refrain in the service was 'You'll find it on your pink slip', which amused everyone but the colour-blind. An angry PCC the next week invoked the provisions of the Worship and Doctrine Measure and insisted on a return to the traditional services. Everyone was hurt and the worship was fossilized.



Worship Planning Group: terms of reference

- 1 To review and evaluate all aspects of worship at St Ann's, including
 - * structures and patterns of worship on Sunday;
 - * the relationship between worship and the rest of the life of the church;
 - * the teaching and preaching programme and the use of music and drama;
 - * the place of children and other groups.
- 2 To be responsible for the planning and preparation of Sunday worship, including working through other groups such as house groups, choir, music groups, drama group.
- 3 To ensure that the varied gifts of the congregation are being used in worship.
- 4 To plan developments in worship and to prepare for regular PCC discussion of worship.



St Christopher's service form: 10.30 a.m. Parish Eucharist

Season/mood:

President:

Assistants:

Standard service:

Setting:

Introit / introductory music / sentence:

Hymn:

Old Testament:

Psalm:

New Testament:

Canticle/song:

Gospel:

Sermon:

Any special requirements e.g. tapes, visuals:

Intercessions: (who? add items...)

Hymn:

Variable items for Liturgy of the Sacrament:
(words/music for peace, preface, before and during distribution)

Hymn:

Post-communion prayer:

Notices (list...)

Blessing/dismissal

Discussion starter/Away Day agenda: our worship

- 1 Share in twos or threes: what is really good about our worship?
- 2 Talk or Bible study or discussion:
 - * What is worship? Look at the section below, which could be reproduced as a handout.
 - * Would we say more, or less, than this? What is our experience?
 - * What should our Sunday worship include? What are the basic ingredients for our worship?
- 3 From this, in twos and threes, list two or three principles which should govern our worship. Share these with the whole group, and see how much agreement there is. Sometimes we disagree on practical decisions about worship because we don't agree on the principles.
- 4 Next, consider in small groups practical questions such as:
 - * How does the worship meet the needs of the elderly, children of different ages, the disabled, those who find reading difficult, those who need to be stretched intellectually?
 - * Should there be more freedom (or less?) in our worship?
 - * How should we expect to know the presence of God?
 - * How could the intercessions be improved?Then decide which two items should come top of the group's agenda.
- 5 With everyone together, list the suggested agenda items, see how much overlap there is, and start with the one with most 'votes'. There will not be time to discuss everything. Some items will need further research: two people could be briefed to bring items back to the PCC.
- 6 For each item, consider four questions.
 - * What resources do we need?
 - * What barriers or problems are there in the way of taking action on this?
 - * What is the timetable for action?
 - * Who is responsible for action?



Discussion handout: What is worship?

A worship planning group, a PCC or church leaders' group would do well to have some discussion in general terms about worship. Are we agreed about what is worship and what is not, what the ingredients are, what kind of movement, physical, emotional and spiritual, we should expect in worship?

Try completing the sentence, 'Worship is...' Yes, it is giving God his worth, or what he deserves, or glory. 'The true end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever', as Christians said in the seventeenth century. But explore the mechanics of that a bit more: do any of the following paragraphs get near our experience?

Worship is a door open in heaven. We lift up our hearts, listen in to what God is saying, join the angels and archangels and all the saints in heaven in praising God's eternal holiness. We are there and he is here.

Worship is a door open to the inner depths of life. Suddenly, as we worship, there is wholeness, *shalom*, peace, as all the fragmented bits of our being are put into God's perspective. Things make sense, and there is something to hold on to which has hitherto seemed just beyond the grasp of our mind.

Worship is a door open to the rhythms of life. Through festivals, simple rituals, a weekly rhythm, worship marking morning and evening, the whole of life, time and space is claimed for God and given back to him. In the worship he gives it to us again, to use for him, and we know he is concerned with our hopes and fears, politics and problems, families and finance.

Worship is a door to our hearts open in obedience to God. He commands us to worship in spirit and in truth. We respond to the overwhelming majesty of his beauty revealed in creation, to his overwhelming love and grace revealed in his word and in his Son. And as we worship, we are changed...

Now, this is in no sense an agreed definition of worship. Rather, it is intended to stimulate local parish groups and worship leaders to arrive at some agreement on what they expect, or are longing for, in their worship.

Would we say more than this, or less? What is our own experience?

What should our Sunday worship include? What are the basic ingredients for our worship?



Discussion handout: Service structures – some historical background

A glance at history shows us the pedigree of the different strands of non-eucharistic worship which we find today in the all-age or 'family' service, Morning and Evening Prayer, and the first half of Holy Communion. In the early centuries of the Church's life there are three strands of non-eucharistic worship:

- * The Word Service (first part of Holy Communion)
- * Daily Prayer (Morning and Evening Prayer)
- * Services of Teaching or Instruction.

The evidence here is from the writings of Justin Martyr (who wrote in the middle of the second century) and the *Apostolic Tradition* (written in the early third century, and traditionally ascribed to Hippolytus), but it is also to be found in other places.

Justin's description of The Word Service consists of readings from the prophets or memoirs of the Apostles, read for as long as time allowed. This is followed by a

discourse, and common prayer. This core of material is still recognizable in all major traditions, even though other elements were added in the intervening centuries. Usually there is an approach, with prayer and praise, and possibly penitence; then the readings, the last of which is a Gospel reading, followed in turn by a sermon, the creed and intercessions. What sort of 'shape' does this give us? It would be possible to see the climax of such a service either in the reading of the Gospel (even though this is a later addition), or in the intercessions, as the response of faith – the living sacrifice of the Church responding to the Word proclaimed and preached.

The content of daily prayer in the *Apostolic Tradition* is less precise. It is prayer in the heart, with a few people, or many. The emphasis is on the *times* of daily prayer. The later evidence of East and West suggests that the main times were morning and evening, and the service consisted of praise, using fixed psalms, hymns and songs, together with intercession. Later developments included:

- * many introductory prayers;
- * the continuous recitation of the Psalter;
- * readings from Scripture of ever increasing length, along with other Christian writings.

The original core of daily prayer, praise to God at certain times of the day, eventually became obscured, and its structure distorted, by lengthy psalm-singing and readings.

The 'Teaching' type of service centring on instruction in the Word of God is referred to in the *Apostolic Tradition* and may be a direct offspring of the corresponding synagogue service, a Bible study with no particular liturgical shape.

As history proceeds, these three types of service, which major respectively on reading the Word, on prayer and praise, and on teaching, do not remain distinct. At the Reformation, Cranmer reduced the seven medieval 'hours' into Morning and Evening Prayer, combining prayer and praise with an emphasis on reading and teaching the Word.

Before we draw some conclusions from this, a further glance at history suggests that Christians in the early Church were not divided up according to *age*, but rather according to *stage*, so that catechumens (those preparing for baptism, however old they were) were excluded from the Eucharist. Their formal departure at the end of the Word Service would have been a dramatic feature of the liturgy in a large building, probably involving some upheaval in the congregation as a whole. Perhaps we might make similar structural provision today. As they did in the early Church, we are again providing not only for individuals but for whole families to move from a non-Christian to a Christian lifestyle. Should we still be organizing our church life and worship on the assumption that people grow from being less Christian to more Christian in parallel with their age (and so older people but not children are admitted to communion ...)?

Additions and insertions

Stories from the four churches



At **St Ann's** there is usually some kind of 'spot' which is particularly suitable for the children before they go out. Sometimes it is a fairly riotous action chorus which (depending on the mood of the service) usually fits best among the introductory choruses. Today there is a brief quiz (with scoring on the projection equipment) on the Old Testament story which is read in church and forms the basis of the teaching when they leave. This naturally comes straight after it is read. Sometimes there is an interview with a member of the congregation, or a visitor or past member of the church (always done with a microphone). Some interviews are lively enough to be done when the children are present, or of particular interest to them, and may come before or after one of the readings; others fit much better as part of the sermon or, more usually, just before the intercessions so that prayer follows naturally from them. Today there is a missionary couple who are returning overseas after home leave, and the farewell prayer and commissioning takes place after communion, immediately before the blessing. Apart from the notices (before the intercessions today) the only other 'insertion' is the laying on of hands for healing, which happens in a non-intrusive way as people come forward to receive communion.



Today is Rogation Sunday at **St Bartholomew's** and the archdeacon is there for Evensong in the afternoon. The congregation have saved up for a new electric organ to replace the old harmonium, and it is dedicated after the second lesson, before the small choir sing an anthem. After the sermon, everyone goes out in a haphazard kind of procession to the lych gate, where a pair of new gates, given in memory of a young farmer killed last year, are blessed. There is prayer for the family, and conversation with them as the procession moves off to the highest point at the top of the churchyard for the Rogationtide blessing of fields, crops, sheep and sea. The blessing of the people, present at the service and in the surrounding village, ends the service. Sometimes an insertion on this scale becomes the focus and climax towards which the worship moves.



The vicar at **St Christopher's** has studied Note 7 of *Common Worship* Holy Communion (*Common Worship* page 331), so silences are inserted at the appropriate points, and the service moves along with a clear and dignified rhythm of music, words and space for reflection. Today, ministers of the Eucharist are being commissioned to take communion to the sick, and this is most appropriately done immediately before the Peace, with some words of explanation, questions to them and a prayer of commissioning. This is the

point in the service where the annual commissioning of the PCC and church leaders takes place in April, using some of the Words for Dedication from Resource Section I of *New Patterns*, but other points are used when appropriate. A couple of weeks ago a new head chorister was installed after one of the readings before the choir led the singing of the psalms.



At **St Dodo's** the vicar knows he has a number of different things to get into the service, but has failed to sort out on paper where they should come. It is a Parade Service, and there is a baptism. He announces the first hymn and goes to the sanctuary to collect the assorted Scout and Guide flags which don't begin their slow procession from the back of the church until during the last verse. He gets impatient and flustered, and doesn't get back to his reading desk until after the Reader, trying to be helpful, has said 'Let us pray.' Oh dear! He had meant to welcome the baptismal party and give a few notices. Never mind: there is plenty of time to do this after the second reading because the churchwardens (despite his frantic signalling during the psalm) have failed to come forward with the stand, portable glass sugar-bowl font and water for the baptism. So, having begun the baptism part of the service, he realizes people can't insert the child's name into the prayer (their usual custom) as he has neither welcomed the baptismal party nor presented the child. He invites the parents and godparents to the front and introduces them while the wardens get things ready. To fill in time, he asks them a couple of impromptu questions (he has heard that other churches sometimes do this), but they don't seem very prepared for it, and get embarrassed. To give himself time to think, he puts an extra hymn after the baptism, but forgets that the third hymn is always the one when the collection is taken and so is faced unexpectedly with an approaching column of plate-bearers. In the confusion, he forgets that he had promised one of the Guide leaders that they could present a gift to one of their leaders who is moving away. He remembers just as the flag party are half way down the aisle to collect their flags in the last hymn and – rightly – judges it to be too late.



Interviews

Interviews have some advantages over inviting someone to talk for five minutes:

- * the interviewer is in control of the time taken;
- * the interviewer can direct the conversation to those things the congregation will be most interested in, and interrupt and curtail boring bits;
- * the variety in voices makes them easier to listen to.

How to prepare

- * Don't meet to 'talk it over' hours or days beforehand. It will taste like left-overs and be like trying to recapture a spontaneous joke when the circumstances are different. Meeting the victim three or four minutes before is plenty.

- * Do some reading and thinking around the background to the interview. Decide on an 'angle'. Be selective in what you want to ask. The informed interviewer can select what is most interesting or relevant to the congregation.
- * Have a simple outline you can hold in your mind, perhaps three or four basic questions that can be elaborated. Make sure there is a progression so that they lead on from one to the next.

How to do it

- * Use a microphone if one is available.
- * Be mobile: face the victim and also turn to the congregation.
- * Above all, be interested. If the interviewer is not interested in the answers to the questions, no one else will be. If the interviewer yawns, so will everyone else.



Notices

When in the service?

Sometimes it is tempting to see the notices as nothing more than an annoyance and an intrusion into worship. Perhaps the first thing to do is to recognize their value as part of the shared life of the worshipping community. Only then can questions about the best place for them be addressed, in the context of the structure and flow of the whole service.

Common Worship Holy Communion Note 9 suggests three possible places:

At the beginning:

- * Notices can be used to give the congregation some sense of unity, of being part of the same family, as family news and forthcoming events are shared. They can also help to set the atmosphere for worship.
- * Some people might miss them by arriving late, saying, 'It's only the notices'; on the other hand the notices may be so attractive and important that people get there in time for them.
- * People who go out to the children's groups or the creche can leave for their activities having heard the notices.
- * If not well done, they can get the service off to a bad start.
- * If at the beginning, they could be done before the president enters (in which case they should be done by someone else) or after the opening greeting (possibly by the president). This might be seen as marking them out as part of the worship, and spiritually important.

Before the intercessions:

- * They can be used to prepare and give information for the intercessions, so that people can pray for items of news or events to come.
- * It may help to provide a break in the middle of the service.
- * Notices here can disrupt the flow of the worship.

At the end:

- * Everyone has arrived by then.
- * The notices are seen as part of the Christian community going out to serve God in the world: things to fix our eyes on, to pray for, and times to meet again during the week.

- * It is too late to pray for these things in this service.
- * It may seem disruptive to those who want to go on quietly praying: notices are a community-centred activity, not easily mixed with private prayer. Which is most important at this point in this particular service?

How to do them

- * A printed weekly bulletin or notice sheet; if there are spoken notices as well, these should be used to highlight important items, not to add another long collection of details.
- * Vary the person who gives the notices: why should it be the function of the person leading the worship?
- * Try two people sharing the task as 'presenters', with media-style headlines.
- * Use visuals, such as a projector or some drama.
- * Be enthusiastic; look at the congregation; remember there is a spiritual purpose to the notices.
- * Evaluate and review both the place in the service and the method. Do they outweigh the sermon in length and importance? Do they contribute spiritually to the growth of the church at worship?



Questions to ask when putting something different into the service

- * Is this something covered by the Notes in *Common Worship*, or by the examples here?
- * Is it such a large item that it will change the feel of the whole service? If so, would it be better to construct a special service?
- * What is the effect of this item likely to be on the parts of the service around it? Where will it fit most naturally so that it contributes to and does not halt the flow of the worship? For example, if it is giving information, would this lead into prayer? If it is a special musical contribution, can it replace or be part of a Godward part of the worship? If a procession, can it happen at the beginning or end, or when there is movement anyway in the service?
- * Is it going to help or hinder the congregation's sense of God's presence and his purpose for them? If it is likely to hinder, is it really necessary?

Structures and 'specials'

Stories from the four churches

It's the fifth Sunday in the month, and each church is having a special 'family' service, exploring how to use A Service of the Word to help them produce something a bit different from the regular worship.



There are a large number of children and young families present in **St Ann's** for another in their series of thematic services. They have been trying to involve people of all ages in the action of the worship. As the service begins, everyone learns an acclamation:

**God has set his rainbow in the clouds:
he will remember his covenant for ever.**

Using the suggestion in Resource Section G, this is used as a 'shout' at intervals during the service, a reminder of the theme as the service moves from one section to the next. The drama group have some small pieces of drama, one for each section, based on the Bible story, but the main thrust of the action is to involve the whole congregation. The first section, considering God's problem of confronting sin in the world, leads into the responsive confession for creation (B42). The children in the drama saw and hammer to music, building the ark, and round up the animals into the ark, as the story is read. There is no sermon – the whole service is full of the Word, but there is time for two well-prepared testimonies to God's rescue operation before the service ends with a responsive thanksgiving for creation (G66) and the sharing of the Peace.



At **St Bartholomew's** the planning group have been looking at Example 2 – the conversation structure – in the section above on planning and preparing a Service of the Word (page 19). They have been struck by the idea that Morning Prayer is like a conversation, with God speaking and then the congregation replying, and have decided to use this to help people understand and benefit more from the regular services. Their service outline uses 'Hello', 'Sorry', 'Thank you', 'Please' as the headings for the main sections, held up on large visual aid cards as the service proceeds.



There are two children being baptized at **St Christopher's**, so that provides the overall theme for the worship. The clergy have looked at the *Common Worship* Baptism service, and decided to have a service which is not eucharistic, and which involves people as much as possible. They take as their basis the Holy Communion with Baptism Sample Service in *New Patterns*, ending with the Peace. One of the readings is dramatized, and a procession of children brings in the water, ceremonially poured from a large jug.



The vicar at **St Dodo's** called a meeting of his worship planning group, which has representatives from every organization in the church, many of them enthusiastic to take over the running of worship from the vicar. In generous mood, he said yes to all their ideas for the fifth Sunday all-age service, but didn't think it possible to get them to agree on a common theme and also forgot to make a note of what each was offering. He thinks it's just a matter of adding a few things in to Morning Prayer, but as the service unfolds we are treated to a disorganized concert-like jostling for position between the Guides parading to the front with their flags, the women's meeting (they used to be 'Young Wives') anthem for St Cecilia's Day, a rogue drummer from the youth group who tries to get in on every hymn, three dramatized versions of the Good Samaritan, one in full costume with trip-over lighting effects... All agree it is a very special service.

Music in Worship

Stories from the four churches



St Ann's has a music planning group which consists of the organist and representative members of the choir, the music group, the worship group, and the clergy. They meet regularly to look at themes for services, special occasions etc., to plan the music three months in advance.

Representatives of this group go to youth events and to diocesan music events so that they keep abreast of new music resources. A training day was recently held in the parish when a tutor from the RSCM came to introduce them to some new music for the *Common Worship* services, and new ways of singing psalms, as they felt that their eucharistic worship was in danger of being stuck in a rut musically. The organist and a member of the congregation who is a music teacher are working together to write some music for the Eucharist which will suit their congregation and musical resources.

The choir and music group have practised a new song, and some of the congregation have learnt it in their home groups. Today the music group is teaching the new song before the service starts, so that it is familiar before it is sung in the service later.



St Bartholomew's organist is very willing and enthusiastic, but only has limited time, as she also plays for the Methodist church down the road. She chooses the music for two Sundays a month, using the RSCM's guide, *Sunday by Sunday*.

The music group (two or three adults and a group of enthusiastic children) have been playing simple music together for a while. Because of their limited resources, they have been accompanying songs in the usual 'hymn slots' in the services, but have also been experimenting with using music in other ways. They have used Taizé chants as responses to the prayers. These chants work well as the music can be adapted to the number and skill of the instrumentalists available. Today they are playing a piece after the readings, when the congregation can have space to reflect on what they have heard. The music is simple enough for the children to join in, yet the skills of the adult musicians are also used in playing and singing the harmonies.

When the music group learn new songs, they are very keen to share them with the congregation. They have made a few mistakes along the way by using too much new material without giving people a chance to learn it, but, by and large, the congregation are pleased at the enthusiasm and commitment of the music group, and are happy to learn new music alongside using the traditional hymns which they know.



St Christopher's have an organ, but no one who can play it. Their large robed choir is now reduced in numbers and its members are all growing old; several can no longer get to church regularly.

There are no other musicians in the congregation, so the church decided to send one of their younger members, who can sing, to have guitar lessons. He is getting more proficient at basic chords and will soon be able to lead and accompany some simple songs for the congregation to sing.

Meanwhile, as they felt that using music adds something special to a service, the congregation have been trying unaccompanied singing. Today the songs are 'The Lord's my shepherd' and 'Amazing grace', which people feel they know well enough to sing confidently. They find singing hymns with a number of long verses difficult to sustain, so they are using music which is simple and short. The response to the prayers today is a sung one from Iona, 'Through our lives and by our prayers, your kingdom come'.

For the Eucharist, they have been contemplating using a simple cantor-led setting for the acclamations, which can be sung unaccompanied.



The organist at **St Dodo's** chooses all the music – without consultation with anyone. He tries to fit in with the theme or season, using the index in *Hymns Ancient and Modern*. He also directs the choir, who are a group of enthusiastic singers, many of whom don't read music. They lead the congregational singing and persevere with Anglican chant, but don't manage many anthems. Sometimes they're tempted to try pieces they hear on CDs made by their cathedral choir – like Schubert's Mass in G. When they tried part of it, it proved far too difficult for them and they faltered and then completely stopped halfway through.

The youth group would like to sing more up-to-date music, so for today's all-age service, the organist has agreed to play 'Sing Hosanna' and 'Shine, Jesus, Shine'. The vicar announces the number of the song, and reads out the first line, but his words are drowned out as the organist, keen to get the modern songs over, starts to play. There is a retired schoolteacher who has offered to involve some of the children who play recorders, and she has taught them to play a song from the Iona community, 'Will you come and follow me'. They haven't had much time to practise, and haven't checked how many verses there are. When they stop playing, the vicar says, 'There's another verse yet,' and there is a long pause while they all get ready to play again.



Teaching the congregation new music

- * Be positive: 'We are going to learn a song which fits with today's theme ...', not 'I know you don't like learning new music but...'
- * Know the music well enough to sing it in the bath yourself.
- * Pitch the music at a sensible level to suit everyone – if possible, get somebody to give you a note first.
- * If at all possible, use your voice to teach the melody – or at least, an instrument which plays the melody line, not full harmony.
- * It may help to sing the whole of a verse to the congregation, so that they get the gist.
- * Then learn the music line by line, unaccompanied. You sing a line, and let them sing it straight back to you. Warn them of any tricky bits, or point out where the tune repeats. If they make a mistake, put it right straight away. But always be encouraging.
- * Using your hand to show where the notes go up and down can be a helpful guide – both when singing each line to demonstrate, and when encouraging the congregation to sing it back.
- * Think about when you're going to teach the new song. Don't do it immediately before it's sung in the service – it breaks the flow of the worship. You could teach it before the service. Ideally, it could be taught the week beforehand, and then rehearsed briefly before the service in the week it is to be sung. If your church has a choir or music group, they can sing the song one week (if it is appropriate to the service), to help people to become more familiar with it.

Believe in the voice God has given you. It is the voice of an apprentice angel. Believe in the voices God has given other people.

John Bell, Iona Community, in *Heaven Shall not Wait*



Why use music in worship?

- * To make the text special, 'different' from everyday speech.
- * It is corporate, something we can all join in with, and encourages participation.
- * It is memorable, and helps us to remember the words.
- * It expresses feelings and emotions in a deeper way than words alone.



How to use music in worship

- * To 'break up' a section of a service or a whole service. It may be useful as a response after a period of listening, or to allow a change of posture after a period of sitting or kneeling.
- * To complement action. It is often used to 'cover up' an action, e.g. taking the collection, but is better used in its own right or complementing an action, e.g. singing a meditative prayer while giving people space to light candles or use some other symbolic action.

- * To heighten our awareness. Music makes us more aware of shape. Its use can make sound and silence more meaningful, and can give shape to the time we spend in prayer and praise.



Where to use music in worship

- * Gathering. This is not just music for the entry of the ministers, but music which will help the people of God to gather for worship. Thought needs to be given to the exact position for the music in the opening section of the service.
- * Praise. The obvious places are the Gloria, Gospel Acclamation and Eucharistic Prayer in a communion service, but praise as a response to God may come at various points and be expressed in different styles of music.
- * Response, e.g. after the readings and the sermon. How do we use psalms as a response to the readings, and is there a balance of word and song in that part of the liturgy? Music does not always have to have words in order for us to use it to respond to God – just as words do not always need to have a musical setting.
- * Proclamation of the Gospel. Do sung Gospel Acclamations heighten the expectation of listening to God's word? If they do, should we use music in a similar way around other readings from Scripture, or the sermon?
- * Affirming our belief. One of the authorized Affirmations of Faith is a hymn. Are there other ways in which we could affirm in song the underlying principles of our belief?
- * Prayer. Often sung responses are used. What other music would enable us to deepen our collective prayer?
- * Offering. We offer ourselves and our gifts to God. How do we express the joy of our offering in song?
- * Contemplation. There should be space for both silence and reflection in our worship. What kinds of music can contribute to that contemplation? Or is this a time for the music of silence?
- * Sending. We are sent out to the mission of the Church in the world. What kind of music enables and strengthens us for this task?



Questions to ask when choosing music

- * How does this fit into the overall theme of the service, or the readings?
- * How does it fit into the shape of the service, e.g. is it suitable for the gathering, or the offertory, or a prayerful response?
- * How does the music fit with the overall style of the service, e.g. is it a celebratory Eucharist or a meditative Evening Prayer?
- * Is the music well known to the congregation, or does it need to be introduced to them first?
- * What resources do we have? What is achievable by our musicians and congregation?

Children in Worship

Stories from the four churches



St Ann's has plenty of rooms and people, and so is able to provide a teaching programme for the children whenever they are not present in church for the whole of the service. At a recent meeting of the PCC, it was felt that although the children benefited from their own groups for teaching, they missed out on experiencing the worship of the whole church. It was decided, therefore, to have more services which were suitable for the whole church community to worship together. The worship planning group were sent off to come up with some ideas for involving the children in the whole of the liturgy. They suggested these areas for consideration:

- * Involving the children in preparation for worship – choosing hymns, preparing the holy table, giving out hymn books, joining in a procession, using opening responses which the children can join in (with simple or repetitive responses such as A28).
- * Having a worship theme table (see page 41) reflecting the theme of the service at different points in the church building in different seasons.
- * Using more visuals in all parts of the service, for example images on OHP or video projection, in the Penitence or Prayer sections or as an accompaniment to one of the readings (see page 41).
- * Making sure that some of the Liturgy of the Word actively involves children, either in the presentation of the readings, or in taking part in or responding to the sermon; the Gospel might be preceded or followed by a free adaptation, transposing it to a modern setting, perhaps in dialogue form.
- * Making more use of movement, letting the children move around the spaces in the church at appropriate moments, perhaps gathering under the big cross in the north aisle for the Prayers of Penitence, or around the font for the Affirmation of Faith.

They also suggested that some of the worship leaders and planners might visit the church junior school, and find out how interactive the lessons were, to gain more understanding of what the children were used to.



St Bartholomew's has Sunday school two weeks in the month and an all-age worship service once a month. On the fourth Sunday worksheets and pens are provided for the children to complete during the sermon. The worship leaders are working hard to find ways of integrating the children's contributions into a service which has to cater for everyone in the village. Some of the parents involved in planning and leading also teach in the Sunday school, so sometimes the children prepare something one week in Sunday

school for use in worship the following Sunday. This week they have produced a collage of loaves and fishes for a temporary altar frontal. The intercessions often involve the children, as well as the rest of the congregation, in writing their own prayers or suggesting topics for prayer. Sometimes symbols are used to help people focus their prayers. A group of mums and older children are willing to cut out paper shapes for prayers to be written on, or to give a lead in preparing items for prayer beforehand, e.g. bringing newspaper cuttings to church as a starting point for the prayers.

There is a music group which sometimes leads the worship. It usually consists of a couple of adults and several children of differing musical abilities playing assorted instruments. Sometimes this makes for interesting sounds, but the congregation are glad to have the children's offerings. The children in turn are very enthusiastic and have a wide range of favourite music encompassing all styles.



St Christopher's has few children, as there are not many living in the parish. Activity sheets based on the lectionary readings are provided for the children who come on Sunday mornings. They refer to what the children will be doing later in the service. People bring their concerns to the church for prayer, and the children are encouraged to join in as well. Some of the older children occasionally read the lessons, or take part with adults in a dramatic reading for several voices. Sometimes a small group of adults and some children meet together a few weeks before a service to prepare banners, or a throw-over frontal for the altar, to reflect the theme of a special service.

The alternative provisions from *Common Worship* are often used, such as a responsive form of confession. The question and answer form of the Creed is used at both all-age services and communion services, so that the children and families who start to come to communion after having come to all-age worship are familiar with at least some of the liturgy. In the communion services where children are present, the shorter Eucharistic Prayers are usually used, and sometimes the children are invited to come and stand around the altar, or help to serve. They regularly use the responsive Prayer at the Preparation of the Table (*Common Worship*, page 292, Prayer 8), as they bring the bread and wine:

With this bread that we bring
we shall remember Jesus.

They have occasionally experimented with longer insertions at this point (see page 42) and taken advantage of the provision for varying the words of the Preface in some of the Eucharistic Prayers (see Note on Thanksgivings in Resource Section G, page 222).



Today is the monthly all-age service at **St Dodo's**, to which children and families have been invited, and there is a baptism. The young people are taking part in a drama (the Good Samaritan – again!) but once this is over they get restless, as the remainder of the service is not especially geared to them. The baptism sounds like a long monologue, and the music consists of Victorian hymns that are all unfamiliar. The children in the Sunday school have been asked to lead the prayers, so the Sunday school teachers have written them on pieces of paper, and the children have some difficulty reading them. It is also difficult to hear what they are saying as the microphone is not adjusted to their height. There are some Bible story books (given to the church ten years ago) and colouring things at the back of the church, but most of the children are now too old for them, and feel that they have rather outgrown such entertainment.



Ideas for visual accompaniment to readings

- * Mime.
- * Tableau.
- * Drama.
- * Dance.
- * Puppets (shadow puppets are more easily seen by large numbers).
- * Projected slides or OHP transparencies of the story drawn by the children.
- * A procession of items referred to in the reading, brought up and arranged in a suitable space near the reader. (This has the advantage that it introduces movement without requiring a great deal of rehearsal. It provides concrete visual images and the people carrying the things up have to listen to the reading so as not to miss their turn.)



Worship theme table

Such a table, with items reflecting the theme or biblical material to be heard in the service, provides a concrete object of interest on arrival and throughout the service, both for children and adults. For example, on the first Sunday in Lent the table is below the pulpit. There is a large cloth covered with sand, in which are strewn a few large pebbles and the odd withering plant. Or on the fourth Sunday after Easter in Year A, there is a green felt cloth, a few toy lambs, a shepherd's crook or a large walking stick, a leather water bottle or perhaps a sheepskin. A group of people is always responsible for the preparation of the theme table and many people in the congregation are now used to contributing suitable items. Sometimes one of the flower arrangers provides an appropriate arrangement to complement the images and sometimes items are used during the address and then replaced.



Preambles before the Eucharistic Prayer

This might be a set of biddings or reasons for giving thanks, spoken by children or others, before the opening dialogue. Jewish-style questions and answers such as the following might be compiled, perhaps to echo the theme of the service. A child might ask the questions, which the president or deacon might answer, and not all questions need be attempted every time.

Q Why do we give thanks and praise to God?

A Because he has created all that is, and he has given us life. He is Lord of all, and yet loves each of us.

Q Why do we remember Jesus?

A Because he was sent from God and he gave up his life for us on the cross. God raised him from the dead so that we might see that death is not the end, but the beginning of a new life, the life Jesus showed us how to live.

Q Why do we use bread?

A Because Jesus took bread at the Last Supper. It is a sign of Jesus feeding us as we share with others around his table.

Q Why do we use wine?

A Because this wine is a sign of Jesus' saving love, poured out for us when he died on the cross.

(or)

Q Who are we remembering and who is here with us?

A Jesus Christ the Lord who lives today.

Q Why do we take this bread?

A To show that his body was given up to death for us.

Q Why do we take this wine?

A To show that Jesus shed his blood for our sins.

Q Why is there one loaf and one cup?

A Because we are one family; we belong to each other like the parts of a body.

Q Why do we come to his table?

A He invites us because he accepts us. We are his people and we share in his heavenly life.

Q For how long will Christians celebrate like this?

A Until Jesus comes to take us to be with God in heaven.

Whatever happens, the actions, style and approach of the president, while being accessible to children, should make clear that the Eucharistic Prayer which follows is addressed to God, in whose presence it is right to be filled with awe. The sense of mystery should not lose out to a chatty educational or instructional approach.

Discussion starter: All-Age Worship

If you have an all-age service in your church, compare it with what is described here.

If you are considering starting an all-age service, these questions and lists might help you compile a statement which begins 'Our all-age worship will be like this...'. Try some brainstorming, when people list answers to questions such as:

- * What is our aim in starting an all-age service?
- * What are the arguments against it?
- * What are the arguments in favour?

What is our aim in starting an all-age service?

- * Who is the service for? Who might come to all-age worship?
 - * Nuclear families with parents and young children.
 - * Children from the Sunday School or regular children's activities.
 - * Single parent families.
 - * Single people.
 - * Older people.
 - * Those whose children have grown up and moved away.
 - * Teenagers.
 - * Visitors to the church or area.
 - * Younger married couples.
- * Is the service basically the Eucharist (Holy Communion) with a new title to emphasize that it is for the whole church community, or that provision is made for children as well as adults?
- * Either for this or for a non-eucharistic service, are 'All-Age Worship', 'All-Age Service' or 'All-Age Communion' better titles than the often-used 'Family Service', to stress that people of all ages can worship together? Would it be better to invent a new, local name for the service?
- * Is it just a way of giving children's workers a monthly break?

What are the arguments against all-age worship?

- * Worship may seem 'childish'; the focus is on children to such an extent that adults are forced to deny their adulthood by joining in.
- * If proper care is not taken it can focus so strongly on the nuclear family that it makes those in other styles of household – the single, bereaved, divorced and elderly – feel less part of the church family.
- * Both structure and content can be so free and variable that people may see no links with traditional Anglican worship.
- * It can fail to act as a 'bridge' to more main-line eucharistic or Morning Prayer worship: some worshippers never move on from the monthly 'all-age service'.

- * Worship can become banal, superficial, focused on learning rather than worship, dominated by a strong teaching aim or a ‘compere’, and provide little God-centred worship.
- * It can easily become all-age learning rather than all-age worship, because it is much easier to find resources for the former than the latter.
- * Worship depends on the whim of the worship leader because so much is new; and because some people think it is not a ‘statutory’ service, there is sometimes little or no consultation with the PCC.

What are the arguments in favour of all-age worship?

- * All-age worship can provide a place where those unfamiliar with formal worship can begin to feel at home. One reason for this is that it can be a bridge, in reflecting local culture more easily than the rest of the Church’s worship. Another reason is that people sometimes welcome the excuse to accompany their children, and then find that they understand teaching which is simple and visual, and sometimes at a more ‘introductory’ level.
- * It is a place where genuine intergenerational activity can take place, with adults and children learning from each other and worshipping together.
- * It can help regular church attenders to discover new dimensions in worship.
- * It provides an opportunity for people to grow and use their gifts by sharing in planning, leading and contributing to worship.
- * It provides a way of introducing new elements into worship (in a congregation likely to be less critical of them?) – drama, dance, audio-visuals, new hymns or methods of teaching.

Space and Colour

Stories from the four churches



St Ann’s is a modern building with worshippers seated on movable chairs in a semi-circle around the shallow open dais. The amplification system is excellent and none of the furniture in the building is fixed. A creative group in the church makes banners and throw-away paper visuals which focus on the season or the teaching theme – and the children’s groups often contribute their own decorations. Using free-standing screens for some of these means that they need not always be in the same place and can be moved according to the needs of the worship. It also avoids sticky messes on the walls, though occasionally the wall is used, as when they went for a year or so with the words ‘Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again’ in well-designed paper letters on the wall behind the holy table.



St Bartholomew’s found some years ago that they could increase the sense of space in their tiny church by removing the back row of the choir, moving the front stalls back, and putting carpet right across the chancel and sanctuary. At the same time, they moved the altar forward far enough for the president to get behind it.

More recently, they have looked at the need for somewhere for a very small group to worship on Sunday evenings or for less formal midweek occasions. The result of this has been the transformation of a small side chapel. The floor has been levelled (a sanctuary step had been put in at some stage), an efficient independent heating system installed and the old wooden chairs replaced by stacking cushioned stools, whose upholstery matches the carpet and the new pastel wash on the walls. And the small Jacobean table, restored and no longer boxed in with hangings, is a fitting focus for the seven or eight who gather round. Other ‘focus’ items include an icon of the Trinity and a single candle. Worshipping in this situation, with a more personal relationship between the members of the congregation and the president, inevitably has an effect on what happens in the larger group on Sundays. It has also been suitable for trying some of the less formal structures in *New Patterns for Worship*.



St Christopher’s have only been back in church for a month. They worshipped in the school hall while the church was being re-ordered and decorated, and found this a surprisingly valuable experience. They took a deliberate decision not to cart bits of furniture out of the church into the hall to make the place ‘more like church’ – they had seen the odd effect of this in

another local church which used a community centre, with plastic chairs (each with its embroidered hassock) and metal tables (one of them with a Victorian frontal not quite fitting it), a heavy gothic lectern and sanctuary chairs to match.

Instead, they decided to use the school furniture as it was, with a white cloth on the table and all the links with church centred on the people and the colourful vestments of the ministers. Without hassocks, they stood for the whole of the Eucharistic Prayer – and quite a bit more in the worship – and decided to carry on doing this when they returned to church. Doing without the organ was a good experience, too, and opened up the possibility of using other instruments regularly. A flute, guitar and piano now practise each week for some of the items in each service, and taped music provides the background to receiving communion more often than the organ.

In the re-ordered St Christopher's, the choir stalls have been moved to the west end of the church, behind the congregation. The chancel, cleared of furniture, is made more spacious with a platform built forward of the chancel arch and a carpet unifying the floor area. Gone are the heavy oak clergy desks and ornate bishop's chair; they are replaced by simple seats for the president and his assistants, arranged to face the people. The lectern too is of a simple design. The altar has been brought forward, under the arch, with plenty of space for movement round it. There is also space at the side of the church for a modern one-piece font which is big enough for an adult to stand in and have water poured over her or him and incorporates a bowl at waist height for pouring.



St Dodo's is a bit like an old-fashioned museum, with generations of furnishings and clutter which no one is allowed to touch. The sanctuary houses banners from long-departed church organizations, a large three-dimensional marble monument on one wall, a threadbare strip of carpet with brass fasteners, and a holy table which is not a table but a boxed-in wooden framework to hold ancient frontals (and behind which the flower vases, spare candles and watering can are kept). The modern light oak reading desks (given in memory of a benefactor twenty years ago and therefore immovable – one reason why the table cannot be moved forward) contrast with the dark pine empty choir stalls. And there are some items taken from the now-demolished church in the next parish when it was amalgamated with St Dodo's – an enormous carved oak lectern, which is out of all proportion to the rest of the furnishings, and a large marble font. This was so heavy that a special concrete base had to be built for it at the back of the church (where it is never used). They even found space to cram in a few more pews at the same time, and all without thinking of seeking advice or getting a faculty.



St Ann's checklist

At their monthly worship planning meeting, the St Ann's leaders check through a number of items to do with space, colour and the use of the building:

- * Should the seating be in the normal arrangement or do we need to change it – make the aisles wider for a procession or dancing, for instance?
- * Are we making the best use of the different spaces?
- * Could we, for example, do a dramatic reading from different parts of the building?
- * Can we visualize the different colours in use on any one day, in the dress of the ministers, banners and other hangings or visuals? Are there times when we might need to use the coloured stage lights?
- * Plot the movement of people in each service, decide if there are clear 'ceremonial routes' for the ministers, e.g. moving to the font for a baptism with a family coming forward. Who is responsible for taking care of mechanical hiccups like moving an overhead projector or microphone stand out of the way?
- * What does the church smell and look like? Do we need polish, air freshener or incense?



How St Christopher's moved

- 1 Some months of teaching about worship led most people to conclude that the present layout could be improved.
- 2 Vicar and churchwardens met the archdeacon, who outlined possibilities and offered a list of other churches which had made similar changes.
- 3 The PCC set up a small group to visit other churches, get ideas, take measurements and report back.
- 4 In a full-scale on-site consultation, the PCC committee, architect, archdeacon and some members of the Diocesan Advisory Committee and the Diocesan Liturgical Committee looked at how the proposed changes might help or hinder the worship – bearing in mind the need for flexibility, since ways of worshipping might change.
- 5 The PCC rightly thought that it was important for people to have some idea of what it would be like before taking the final decision. They considered asking the architect to produce some artist's impressions of what the church would look like, viewed from different points, which could be mounted on large display boards. But they decided instead on an experimental moving of the furniture (by the congregation and therefore at no cost).
- 6 After a couple of months the PCC consulted every member of the congregation – which made raising the money easier, as everyone felt they had a stake in the decision.
- 7 The PCC decided unanimously to apply for a faculty, and discussed carefully how the cost could be cut by doing some of the work themselves.



Small groups

Small groups at worship include not only small Sunday congregations, but those who gather midweek, ministers and others praying daily, and one minister at prayer on his or her own.

St Bartholomew's discussed the importance of:

- * The scale of the worship area. A small group may be overwhelmed and made to feel insignificant by a large and lofty building.
- * Warmth and comfort. It is easier to worship when people are comfortable.
- * Colour. Gentle colours are better in a small space; more strident colours suit distant and dramatic viewing.
- * Flexible seating. This can be arranged so that people can look at each other or have as the focus altar table, icon, candle, banner, lectern or Bible.
- * Space, so that movement is possible, not only to come and go with ease, but to move during the worship.
- * The possibility of using the area for counselling, the ministry of reconciliation, ministry to couples, spiritual direction.

Common Prayer and the Law

Stories from the four churches



St Ann's PCC has recently had to discuss 'Who has the authority to change the worship in our parish church?' This is because a number of people in the church would like to see a return to the Prayer Book for some services. At the beginning of *Common Worship*, on the authorization page (page vii), is a summary of Canon B 3:

Canon B 3 provides that decisions as to which of the authorized services are to be used (other than occasional offices) shall be taken jointly by the incumbent and the parochial church council. In the case of occasional offices (other than Confirmation and Ordination), the decision is to be made by the minister conducting the service, subject to the right of any of the persons concerned to object beforehand to the form of service proposed.

The spirit of this Canon, and of the Worship and Doctrine Measure on which it is based, is that there should be agreement at local level. This is why there is no provision for appeal under Canon B 3, apart from cases where there is dispute over the form to be used for occasional offices. In cases of disagreement, *The Book of Common Prayer* or a form of service in use for two of the past four years is to be used. So it is important for the PCC to have regular discussions about the church's worship, and come to agreement on questions such as:

- * Is the overall pattern of services right? How often is A Service of the Word or A Service of the Word with a Celebration of Holy Communion used?
- * Does the PCC want to make specific recommendations on the contents of the service?
- * When will the PCC next review the pattern of worship?



St Bartholomew's group of churches has recently been looking at what authority is needed for lay people to conduct services. Canon B 11 (see page 51) speaks of two categories of lay person, as well as Readers: those authorized by the bishop of the diocese (in their diocese this is done after attendance at a group of diocesan courses on worship sponsored jointly by the adult training department and the Diocesan Liturgical Committee), and other suitable lay persons, invited by the incumbent. Because of the existence of the course, the diocesan bishop has given directions that where lay people are to lead worship regularly, they should be those authorized by him. So St Bartholomew's now has four lay people on the course. They are glad that, once authorized, these people will be able to lead not only A Service of the Word, which is the structure for their all-age service, but also the entire

Gathering and Liturgy of the Word sections of Holy Communion on those occasions when the vicar arrives half way through the service (see *Common Worship*, page 159).



In the church school attached to **St Christopher's** there is a real need for a Eucharistic Prayer which the children can understand. The vicar has a copy of some prayers from a non-Anglican church, and has written to the bishop to ask, 'Please will you authorize this Eucharistic Prayer for use with children in our church school?' The bishop replies warmly, enthusiastic about the work in the school, but suggesting that Eucharistic Prayers D, H or E with a special extended preface (see page 42) are used. He encloses a letter from his legal adviser, who says:

It does not matter legally whether the service is in school or in church. Canon B 1 limits Church of England ministers to using only the services it covers, unless he is claiming that the provisions of Canon B 5 apply, namely that it is a service for which no provision is made in the *Book of Common Prayer* or under Canons B 2 or B 4. Our common understanding is that Canon B 5 cannot be stretched to cover services of Holy Communion even if they are for specific occasions, age groups, or places not specifically provided for in the BCP or Canons B 2 and B 4. So a service of Holy Communion for St Swithun's Day should be regarded primarily as a service of Holy Communion (and therefore coming under Canons B 1 and B 2), and not as a special liturgy for St Swithun (for which the BCP etc. makes no provision, thus leaving the minister to his own discretion under Canon B 5).



The vicar of **St Dodo's** complains at the chapter meeting that the rural dean has used some illegal liturgy in the service which began the meeting. 'Where did that confession and absolution come from?' he asks, and is shown the pages of authorized forms of Confession and Absolution in *Common Worship* (pages 122–137).



Canon B 11.1

Morning and Evening Prayer shall be said or sung in every parish church at least on all Sundays and other principal Feast Days, and also on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Each service shall be said or sung distinctly, reverently, and in an audible voice. Readers, such other lay persons as may be authorized by the bishop of the diocese, or some other suitable lay person, may, at the invitation of the minister of the parish or, where the cure is vacant or the minister is incapacitated, at the invitation of the churchwardens say or sing Morning or Evening Prayer (save for the Absolution).



Common prayer in the Church of England

It may help to identify three aspects of the Anglican understanding of common prayer.

- 1 The valuing of patterns of worship which are recognized as the common possession of the people of God. This does not mean that nothing can change nor that every popular practice must prevail. It does not rule out any local variation. It does mean that worship must not simply be governed by the whim of the minister or the congregation. Corporate patterns of worship must exist and be developed which are recognized by worshippers as their corporate worship. It is therefore appropriate that these are approved and regulated by the Church.
- 2 The patterns and forms of worship must not be determined purely at the level of the local congregation but must bear witness to participation in the wider common life of the Church. For this reason it is right that common forms such as creeds, collects, confessions, and eucharistic prayers should be followed, as well as common approaches to the shape and content of Christian worship.
- 3 Patterns of common prayer play an important part in maintaining the unity of the Church in its confession of the Christian faith. For this reason,
 - * those authorized to lead worship promise to 'use only the forms of service which are authorized or allowed by Canon' (Declaration of Assent, *Common Worship*, page xi);
 - * while ministers have considerable liturgical freedom under Canon B 5, they are charged to ensure such services are 'neither contrary to, nor indicative of any departure from, the doctrine of the Church of England in any essential matter'; the section on page 52 sets out the things which need to be taken into account in assessing whether particular words and actions conform to the doctrine of the Church of England;
 - * in recent years the General Synod has taken great care that all liturgical forms that it has authorized can be used with a good conscience by the different traditions in the Church of England.



The doctrine of the Church of England

1 Canon A 5, Of the doctrine of the Church of England, states:

The doctrine of the Church of England is grounded in the Holy Scriptures, and in such teachings of the ancient Fathers and Councils of the Church as are agreeable to the said Scriptures. In particular such doctrine is to be found in the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, *The Book of Common Prayer*, and the Ordinal.

This canon is based on the Worship and Doctrine Measure 1974, section 5(1). It is under this Measure that alternative forms of service to those in *The Book of Common Prayer* and the Declaration of Assent for church office holders have been authorized.

2 The Worship and Doctrine Measure 1974 requires that 'every form of service ... approved by the General Synod ... shall be such as in the opinion of the General Synod is neither contrary to, nor indicative of any departure from, the doctrine of the Church of England in any essential matter' (section 4(1)). Section 4(2) states: 'The final approval by the General Synod of any such Canon or regulation or form of service or amendment thereof shall conclusively determine that the Synod is of such opinion as aforesaid with respect to the matter so approved.'

3 In considering whether any rite is contrary to, or indicative of any departure from, the doctrine of the Church of England in any essential matter, reference should be made to:

- i the Holy Scriptures;
- ii such teachings of the Fathers and the Councils of the Church as are agreeable to the said Scriptures;
- iii the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, *The Book of Common Prayer* and the Ordinal;
- iv such forms of service, canons and regulations as have received the final approval of General Synod.

Attention will need to be paid to (iv) in weighing matters that have recently been in dispute in the Church of England. Where, in controversial matters, General Synod has taken care not to depart from the teachings or usage found in (iii), this should be respected.

Discussion starter: Common prayer

1 Share together what different people mean by 'common prayer'.

- * Being able to walk into any church in the land and find exactly the same words to follow.
- * Recognizing some common features, some shared experiences, language and patterns or traditions as one does when visiting other members of the same family.

Even Archbishop Thomas Cranmer recognized the need for cultural diversity in worship from country to country, saying in his Preface to the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer*: 'it often chanceth diversely in diverse countries'. Accepting a variety of forms, dictated by local culture, is part of our Anglican heritage.

2 Make a list of the characteristics of Anglican worship that we might expect to find everywhere. Share these with your neighbour, and compare them with this list drawn up by the Liturgical Commission in 1989.

Some of the marks which should be safeguarded for those who wish to stand in any recognizable continuity with historic Anglican tradition are:

- * a recognizable structure for worship;
- * an emphasis on reading the word and on using psalms;
- * liturgical words repeated by the congregation, some of which, like the creed, would be known by heart;
- * using a collect, the Lord's Prayer, and some responsive forms in prayer;
- * a recognition of the centrality of the Eucharist;
- * a concern for form, dignity, and economy of words.

How far are these in evidence in your church's worship?

3 Do you think it is possible to identify a 'core' of Anglican worship? If so, what would it consist of? Try to identify things under two headings:

- * **Structures** At the beginning of almost every new service in *Common Worship* there is a page showing the service structure. The debates on the structures of A Service of the Word and the Holy Communion service have helped us to see those things on which there is agreement across the Church: 'An Anglican service looks something like this.'
- * **Texts** 'An Anglican service contains prayers like this, the ones we know by heart.' These are some of the things that hold us together, but what are they? Share your list with others and see if they are different.