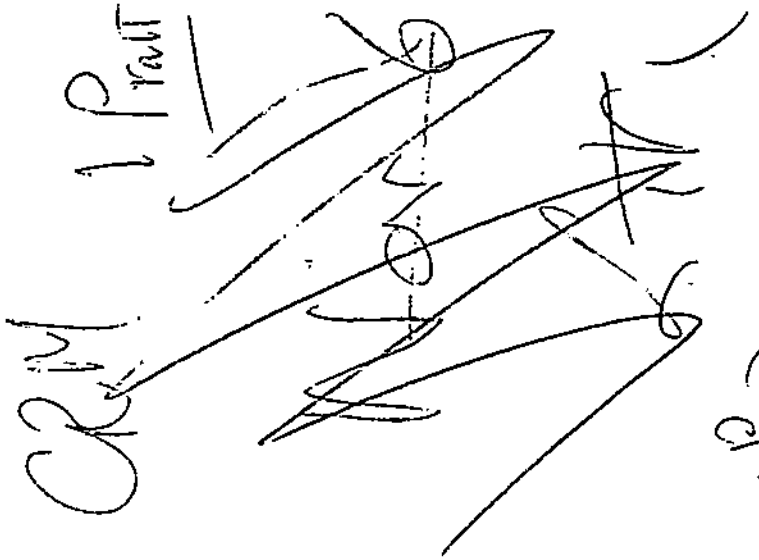
Euch- Winter 05

Spread the Light

Winter 05

Euchari

1 Pratt



(115 Elphs)

CWS

Women Word Spirit

SOME MOTHERLY/FEMININE IMAGES OF GOD

Blessing for a pregnant woman

May our Mother God keep you safe until the time of your deliverance.
May you, and those eagerly awaiting your 'hour' be enfolded in peace.
May our God of patient waiting be your strength during these days of anticipation.
May our Midwife God protect and comfort you during your labour.
May our God of love and life transform your labour pains into joy, in the gift of a healthy child.
May our Nurturing Mother God provide you with an abundance of milk, to nourish your newborn infant.
And may the blessing of the God who conceived us with joy, birthed us in pain, and transforms us in love, to fullness of life and fruitfulness; may this
Maria *Kersten* God bless you, and keep you in her womanly tenderness today and always. Amen.

157 Mother of infinite wisdom

Mother of infinite wisdom,
Christ of infinite compassion,
Holy Spirit, guarantee of change,
bring us to our knees in shame,
bring us to our feet in action,
bring us to our senses in prayer,
Kate *Millhugga* that with you we may all inherit
a new heaven and a new earth.

Blessing Song

May the blessing of God go before you.
May her grace and peace abound.
May her spirit live within you.
Miriam May her love wrap you round.
Therese May her blessing remain with you always
Winter May you walk on holy ground. **Amen.**

Benedicite omnia opera

All you works of God, bless your creator,
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Let the wide earth bless the creator,
let the arching heavens bless the creator,
let the whole body of God bless the creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

You returning daylight, bless your creator;
twilight and shadows, bless your creator;
embracing darkness, bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Mountains of God, massive and ancient rocks, bless your creator;
valleys and pastures, moorland and rivers, bless your creator;
ocean depths and lonely abyss, bless your creator,
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Storm and mighty wind, bless your creator,
bitter cold and scorching sun, bless your creator,
mist and cloud and tender rain, bless your creator,
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Seed and sapling, tree and vivid flower, bless your creator;
greenness and flourishing, withering and barrenness, bless your creator;
harvest and springtime and deadness of the year, bless your creator,
praise her and glorify her for ever.

first 6 verses - by Janet Morley

1 DEAR MOTHER GOD

1 Dear Mother God, your wings are warm around us,
We are enfolded in your love and care;
Safe in the dark, your heartbeat's pulse surrounds us,
You call to us, for you are always there.

2 You call to us, for we are in your image.
We wait on you, the nest is cold and bare —
High overhead your wingbeats call us onward.
Filled with your power, we ride the empty air.

3 Let not our freedom scorn the needs of others —
We climb the clouds until our strong heart sings —
May we enfold our sisters and our brothers,
Till all are strong, till all have eagles' wings.

Janet Wootton (1952 —)

"Dear Mother God" is a hymn, c.1991 Stainer & Bell Ltd. Reproduced from "Reflecting Praise" where the music by Sue Mitchell Wallace can also be found. The prayers are to be found in "Celebrating Women" ed Morley, Ward and Wild, SPCK.

Garden Eucharist July 06 - Creation and co-responsibility with God

Opening Song ? Christ be our light

Naming ourselves with the Galilee stone

Opening words by the Celebrant

Confession

Leader: God, you call us to act justly.
We often close our eyes to injustice.
We are deaf to the cry of those who are oppressed.
We give in to the pressure to conform.
We fear the cost of change, we lack a vision for tomorrow.

People: God, forgive us.

Leader: God, you call us to love mercy.
Fear, anger and hatred hold us back.
We judge others harshly.
Bitterness chokes our forgiveness.

People: God, forgive us.

Leader: God, you call us to walk humbly with you.
We live in arrogance and greed.
We forget that we are made from dust
and that our life depends upon the fragile network of all creation.
We have laid waste the earth and threatened the universe.

People: God, forgive us.

Leader: God, you call us to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with you.

People: Transform us by the power of your Holy Spirit
That we may live. Amen.

(Corrymeela Community)

Song

Go into groups - read the items on the sheet of readings in turn round the circle and then discuss.

On return all say:

Loving God, All your creation calls you blessed.
In love you have formed a universe, so diverse yet so related.
and into its web you call us forth
to walk the land and swim the sea
with all our natural brothers and sisters.
To the stars we seem no more than blades of grass.
Yet to you, each of us, as each blade of grass and each star,
is an irreplaceable treasure, an essential companion
on this journey of love.

LITURGY for CATHOLIC WOMEN'S NETWORK DAY, MARCH 2nd, 1986.

Theme of day - Women's Experience and Liturgy.

Theme of the liturgy - Women's experience of rejection.

Opening hymn

Amazing Grace (No 9, 100 Folk Favourites, Mayhew)

Introduction to theme

The Ring
The group formed a circle, all holding hands except for one outsider who was not to be admitted at all costs. As the outsider tried to break in a mixture of emotions were experienced. These included concern in case we were the ones to let down the rest by breaking the circle; being torn between loyalty to the group and sympathy for the outsider; feeling threatened by the vulnerability of the outsider; the outsider experienced a strong sense of rejection and resentment at the attempts to exclude her.
These feelings were discussed as part of our worship and related to our experience of women's exclusion in both church life and experience.

Reading

Luke 7:36 - 50. The anointing of Jesus by the woman with the flask of ointment.

Hymns and anointing

Following a few words of introduction all present mutually anointed one another with the oil of gladness saying:- The Spirit of God is upon me; she has anointed me. She sent me to bring good news to the poor, and to heal the broken-hearted.
During the anointing the hymns 'Lay your hands gently upon us' and 'The Spirit of the Lord' (nos 46 and 72, 100 Folk Favourites, Mayhew) were sung.

The Lord's Prayer

This version was used in conjunction with movement.

Stretching up - Creator, we delight in you,
rejoice in you

Bowing down - We ask you to remake the world in your own way,
We turn to you for food, for health, for life.

Kneeling, bowing head to floor. - We are dependent on you, forgive us, we need your forgiveness.

Holding hands, slowly rising to end with clasped hands raised - Teach us to forgive one another
Keep us from the evil that threatens us,
Power is yours
Tomorrow is yours
Life is yours
Everything belongs to you.

In unison Priesthood of the people

We are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people set apart to sing the praises of God who called us out of darkness into her wonderful light.

Litany

We have heard God's voice, we have been called to new life and given new strength.

We are called to open the ears of those who cannot hear, and bring sight to the blind.

We are called to bring prisoners liberty, and proclaim that the new age of freedom has come.

We are called to be prophets who are not afraid to speak out with strength and conviction.

We are called to be a priesthood and to celebrate God's law of love and justice.

We are called to be a holy nation, a people who live by the truth and challenge inequality and sin.

We are called to faith, to believe that we can change and a firm hope that the world can be changed.

We are called to follow Jesus, to reject the old law of empty obligations and hollow obedience, and assert his law of love.

Commissioning (from No Longer Strangers, WCC, p45)

God sends us into the world,
to accept the cost
and to discover the joys of discipleship.
Therefore go - carrying with you
the peace of Christ,
the love of God,
and the encouragement of the Holy Spirit,
in trial and rejoicing. Amen.

Hymn

I will be with you (No 43, 100 Folk Favourites, Mayhew)

Piazza Prayers

October'06

Lord, two thousand years ago you called your disciples to preach among all nations.
(Luke ch.24)

St Peter tells us "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ"
(1 Peter 2(5))

Lord, you called me to speak the truth. There are others you have called to do your work……..you can mention your own or another's.

Dear Lord, we trust you and thank you for hearing these, our prayers:

We bring to you our true joy at being called to do your work.
We bring to you also our sense of anguish and injustice; felt by all those women whose call has been denied.
We bring to you the help, support and encouragement given by those who share in this sense of injustice.
We also bring to you that loss of women's gifts, felt by all your peoples.

Heavenly Father, You who chose a woman to be
the first witness to the resurrection –Apostola Apostolorum*
and proclaimer of the greatest of good news,
strengthen us towards this goal of being rightfully acknowledged
as your witnesses in the world; as proclaimers of your word,
ministers of your sacraments, channels of your grace,
workers in your fields.

It is your path we are on Lord, we should not fear,
we have with us our heritage of priests – women and men-
who have gone before us, may their communion with us
give us strength and courage along the way.

Show us the way Lord, in your way,
open doors for us, open hearts and minds,
for what is your sign of this and all times.
In our era of new found freedom may we always
find you first in our hearts, souls and minds and may your
priesthood of women bring your church to a fuller,
more fruitful power and bring your Kingdom nearer for the
greater glory of God. Amen

*Apostle to the Apostles

Lord, we bring to you our own prayers this evening……

AS Oct' 2006

CWO
Walking Nov 2000

I. **Litany on collaborative authority**

0 Sustainer and giver of life, free your people from the temptations of power, from the urge to control rather than enable.

All: Come, Spirit, liberate us from the forces of domination

0 Loving Empowerer, help us to challenge abuse of authority wherever it is to be found, including in ourselves.

All: Come Spirit, give us strength not to walk by on the other side

0 Still Small Voice, help the People of God to learn to listen to each other, and for those in authority to understand the strength that comes from true consultation

All: Come Spirit of Understanding, deepen our insights

0 Loving Creator, help us to affirm ourselves and others, understanding that we are all uniquely created and have a voice that needs to be heard.

All: Come, Creator of Diversity and help us see the value of difference

0 God who made both women and men in your image, help your church not to deface its image by treating women as inferior beings. Help us to recognise and challenge discrimination based on sex, race, sexual orientation, clericalism and other excuses for exclusion

All: Come Spirit of Equality and imbue us with the values of inter-connectedness with all created nature, human and non-human.

All: 0 Loving God, lead us in your ways and breathe courage in your people so we may truly reflect in our lives the loving mutuality of the Trinity.

Reader I (Readings 1-3 from the Heart of Flesh by Joan Chittister)

What the world needs are more circles and fewer pyramids. Circles are strange and wonderful things. No one knows where a circle either begins or ends. No one can tell

what is its most accomplished part. There is no up to go to in a circle, no steps to climb to arrive there, no top to get to, no crowning point upon which to plant a flag or stake a claim or build a throne... ladders and pyramids assume a society of serfs, of peasants, of lackeys and underlings, of in-group and out-groups, of higher and lower classes. Circles on the other hand, assume a society of equals. It isn't that circles are disorderly or chaotic; its just that they depend more on consensus than they do on control.."

TI

A We are wayfarers, following roads
to the ends of the earth,
pilgrims on our way to the end of the age.

B **'Behold, I am with you**
to the end of the age.'

A We are travellers on the road to freedom,
a community of grace
with good news for all we meet.

B **'Behold, I am with you**
to the end of the age.'

A We'll travel lightly, travel together,
learn as we go; we are disciples,
our mission is love,
the journey is long.

B **'Behold, I am with you**
to the end of the age.'

A We travel with authority
fearful of none;
we are sent, opponents of evil,
heralds of hope.

B **'Behold, I am with you**
to the end of the age.'

A We'll travel with humility,
no task is too small;
we are servants, the cross is our compass,
love is our sign.

B **'Behold, I am with you**
to the end of the age.'

A When the way is uncertain,
shadows are sinister,
and dangers threaten,
we'll not be afraid, but take heart.

B **Behold, I am with you**
to the end of the age.'

From *Peace, Justice and Integrity of Creation*,
Advent '86 Campaign Kit (Centre for Mindanao Studies, Philippines).

MATTHEW 10 LUKE 10.1–2

Intercessions

I dream of a church - poem by Kate Compston
(Each verse said alternately by group A and B)

I dream of a church
that joins in with God's laughing
as she rocks in her rapture,
enjoying her art:
she's glad of her world,
in its risking and growing:
'tis the child she has borne
and holds close to her heart.

I dream of a church
that joins in with God's weeping
as she crouches, weighed down
by the sorrow she sees:
she cries for the hostile,
the cold and no-hoping,
for she bears in herself
our despair and dis-ease

I dream of a church that
joins in with God's dancing
as she moves like the wind
and the wave and the fire:
as church that can pick up
its skirts, pirouetting,
with the steps that can signal
God's deepest desire.

I dream of a church that
joins in with God's loving
as she bends to embrace
the unlovely and the lost.
A church that can free,
by its sharing and daring,
the imprisoned and poor,
and then shoulder the cost.

God, make us a church
that joins in with your living
as you cherish and challenge,
rein in and release,
a church that is winsome,
impassioned, inspiring;
lioness of your justice
and lamb of your peace.

Sharing of the grapes

All: We now share the fruit of the vine, these grapes, just as they are one bunch yet many fruits, so we too are brought together and are one though many (pass around saying "may this sign of our unity strengthen you on our journey." (*Then holding hands sing "Shalom")*

Liturgy for 04/09/15 — Change, balance + transformation

1. Introduction to each other. . How have our summers been?

2. A summary of Richard Rohr on change.

3. Penitential Liturgy

4. Discussion/reflection on what we need to change and what can be changed.

5. Edwina Gateley's Psalm.

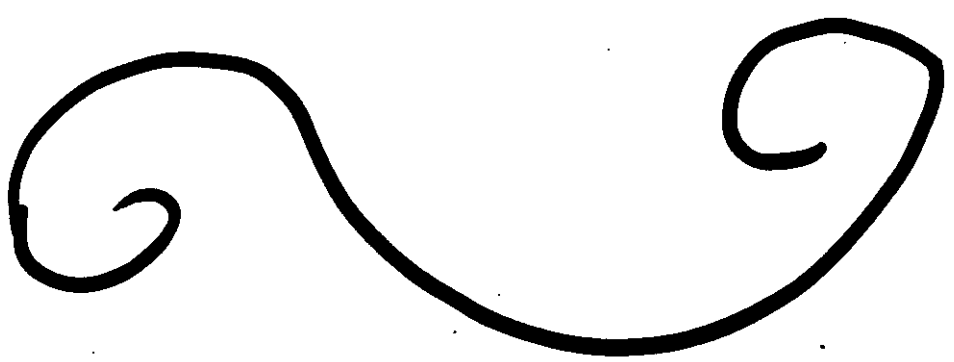
6. Contributions and intercessions.

7. Sharing of the Bread and Wine.

8. Iona Prayer

9. Helder Camara's Prayer

10. Shalom



Penitential Litany on harmony and balance

3

Reader O loving Creator, forgive us for not allowing ourselves time to be, nor the time to stand and stare, wondering at the glories of your creation

All Send us your spirit to guide us

Reader O Source of Love, forgive us for not loving ourselves enough, so that we neglect our own needs, to the detriment of others

All Send us your wisdom to infuse us

Reader O Caring God, forgive us for not seeking hard enough to listen to others, but yet not be swamped by their needs

All Send us your Spirit of discernment

Reader O Compassionate Creator, forgive us for our tendency to pass by on the other side, fearing the involvement of compassion.

All Help us to reflect in our lives the loving mutuality of the Trinity

Reader O loving Empowerer, forgive us for not sufficiently engaging ourselves in the struggle against patriarchy and the abuse of authority, whether in church or secular life

All Send us the courage to be your prophetic witness

Reader O Mother God, help us to see that there is more to mothering than physically giving birth Enable us to understand the nurturing role of all in fostering wholeness in the life of the spirit

All Enrich our sensitivity in our search for meaning

Reader O God of justice and mercy, forgive us for putting our own interests, individually or nationally, above those of our sisters and brothers in the underdeveloped world

All Give us new understanding of the inter-connectedness of all humanity

All O living God, who intends us to live in harmony with you, with ourselves and with others, give us new heart to strive for a balance in our lives and in our relations with our neighbours, both far and wide.

5

A. We are called to become
A perfect creation.
No one is called to become
who we individually are called to be.
It does not matter
How short or tall
Or thick-set or slow
We may be.

B. It does not matter
whether we sparkle with life
Or are silent as a still pool,
Whether we singf your song aloud
Or weep alone in darkness.

For we are called to become
A perfect creation
No one's shadow
Should cloud our becoming,
No one's light
Should dispel our spark.

B. For the Lord delights in us
Jealously looks upon us
And encourages with gentle joy
Every movement of the Spirit
Within us.

A. Unique and loved we stand
Beautiful or stunted in our growth
But never without hope and life.

All: For we are called to become
A perfect creation.
This becoming may be
Gentle or harsh,
Subtle or violent,
But it never ceases,
Never pauses or hesitates,
Only is -
Creative force -
Calling us
Calling us to become
A perfect creation

Edwina Gately

7. The Sharing

Ever loving God,
may we, the people of the bread,
live for a world in which no one hungers;
may we, the people of the vine,
live for a world in which no one is excluded;
and may all who have shared in
the body and blood of your Son
love our sisters and brothers
rejoicing to know that you loved us first, (Christian Aid)

a. Take bread for your journey + share it with others when you can.
b. Take wine for refreshment + share with many.

8 Prayer (from Iona)

Be still my children
My voice is not always
heard in the thunder and earthquakes
of your experience.
I do not only speak when you are
physically and mentally involved in living.
Be still - and in the stillness I will speak
when you are quiet
when you are resting
when you are aware of me pulsating within
you and around you
when you are waiting and listening
I will break through
and enrich your silence
releasing my peace and glory
and transforming your experience
until in the stillness
you find yourself longing
to shout for joy. Short Silence

9. Let every word
be the fruit
of action and reflection.
Reflection alone
without action
or tending towards it
is mere theory,
adding its weight

when we are
overloaded
with it already ...
Action alone
without reflection
is being busy
pointlessly.
Honour the Word eternal
and speak
to make
a new world possible.

Helder Camara, Brazil
The Desert is Fertile (Sheed & Ward 1974).

ISAIAH 55.8–11

Let us sing Shalom.

The Morning

Let us sing Glory.

Prayer (written shortly after the death of a beloved husband)

God the Motherer
The all-nurturing
Source of all loving relationship.
Empowering
Growth evoking
Supportive yet releasing

Creation sharing
Shelter in the dark
Impelling onwards the light
Strengthener and comforter
Mirrored in the love that enriches
In the times of shadow
Sustain us when the journey becomes hard

(IP)

ps 63

Oh God, the source of my creation
let my whole being long for you
Thirsty as in a land of drought,
let me find the living water you provide
Shelter me close to you
Let me sense your power and glory

Your constant love gives meaning to life
for this I praise you.
I will give thanks to you through my life
and raise my heart to you in prayer.

In the night I remember you
when I cannot sleep I recall your goodness
because you are alsways there to sustain me.
Feeling your closeness I sing for joy
for you will bring me safely through life

ps 8 (to be sung to the Gelineau tune)

How great, O God, is your name throughout the earth

In your hands is the power
from you flows goodness everlasting
Through you is evil confounded
your name is praised by all creation

How great, O God, is your name throughout the earth

We look up to the skies made by you
the moon and the stars given their place
what are humans that you spare a thought for us,
humanity that you cherish and love

How great, ..

Yet you have made us little less than yourself
crowned us with glory and splendour
given us the gift of your creation
an inheritance of the world to cherish

How great

We have been given a share in your power
the resources of the world are ours to share
for good or evil as we choose.
Do not abandon us to wasting our inheritance

How Great ....

IP 86.

Prayer Sheet 1.

4

Give us life

Holy Spirit, Creator,
at the beginning you hovered over the waters;
you breathe life into all creatures;
without you every living creature dies and returns to nothingness,

Come into us, Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit, Comforter,
by you we are born again as children of God;
you make us living temples of your presence,
you pray within us with prayers too deep for words,

Come into us, Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of Life,
you are light, you bring us light;
you are goodness and the source of all goodness,

Come into us, Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit, Breath of life,
you sanctify and breathe life into the whole body of the Church;
you dwell in each one of its members,
and will one day give new life to our mortal bodies,

Come into us, Holy Spirit.

Ant. 3 I put all my trust in you, O God,
and you have not failed me.

Psalm 28:1–3, 6–9

To you, O God, I call,
my rock, hear me.
If you do not heed I shall become
like those in the grave.

Hear the voice of my pleading
as I call for help,
as I lift up my hands in prayer
to your holy place.

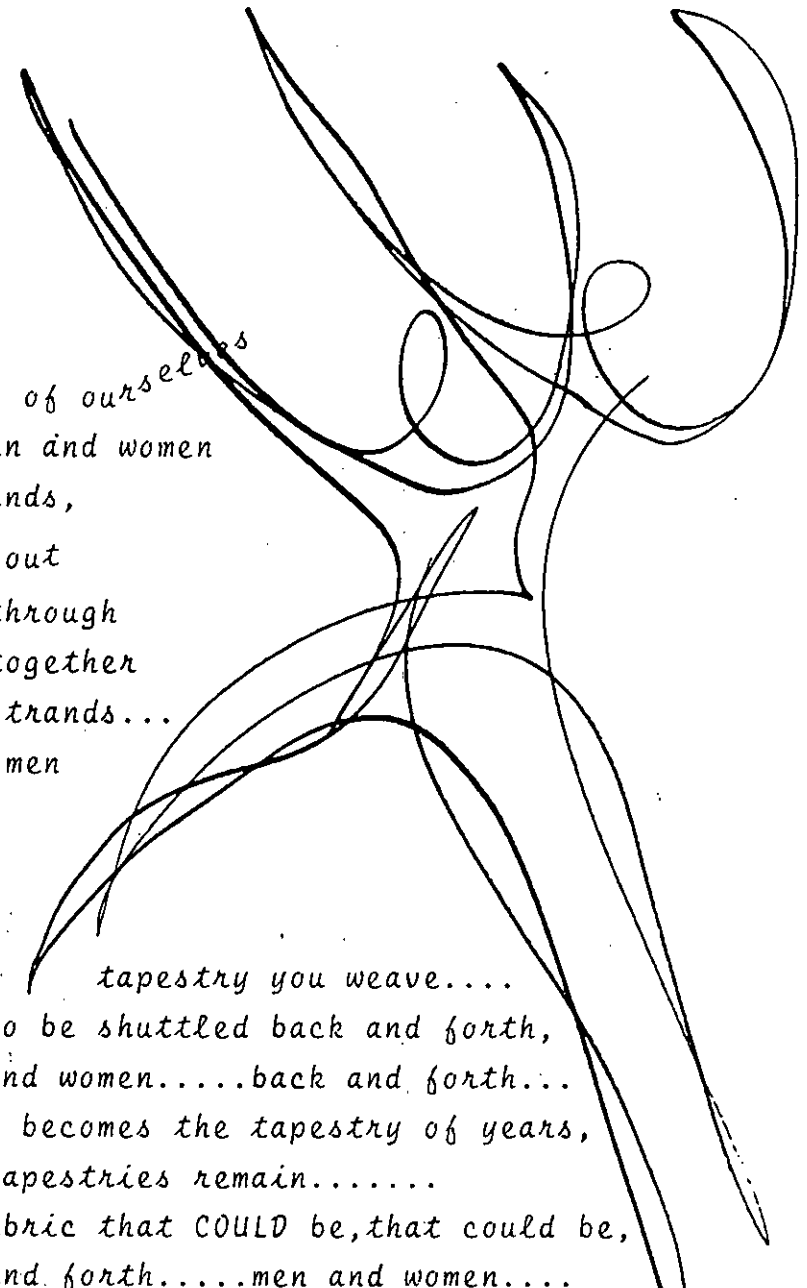
Do not drag me away with the wicked,
with the evil-doers,
who speak words of peace to their neighbors
but with evil in their hearts.

I bless you, for you have heard
my cry, my appeal.
You are my strength and my shield;
in you my heart trusts.
I was helped, my heart rejoices
and I praise you with my song.

You are the strength of your people,
a fortress where the anointed find salvation.
Save your people; bless Israel your heritage.
Be their shepherd and carry them for ever.

Glory be to the Creator, to the Redeemer, and to the Sustainer,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, amen.

Prayer by Sr Kira Solhdoost on the occasion of a meeting with St Joan's Alliance



LIFE LOOM
accept the offering of ourselves
women and men...men and women
our separate strands,
to be woven in and out
over and under and through
as we seek to become together
the strands...
men and women...women and men
a part of life
a part of church
A PART OF YOU
give us a vision of the tapestry you weave....
with our willingness to be shuttled back and forth,
women and men...men and women.....back and forth...
as the tapestry of days becomes the tapestry of years,
but the visions of tapestries remain.....
the patterns and the fabric that COULD be, that could be,
as we are shuttled back and forth.....men and women....
women and men....back and forth...the strands out of which
you weave a fabric.....a tapestry....OF LIFE....OF CHURCH....
OF YOU..... amen

Prayers connected with Healing and Wholeness

From Seeing Christ in others (Anthology by Geoffrey Duncan)

Through human lips
Christ is speaking
Through human hands
Christ is healing
Through our hearts
Christ is loving
Through us all
Christ is working
So behold the truth
God is living, loving
speaking and healing
through Christ our Saviour.

Richard Becher

Holy Weaver, life-giving Spirit
We draw near to each other in your presence.
You breathe, and we see afresh;
You startle, and we hear anew;
You cajole, and we act again with vigour.
Weave a pattern of peace between strangers,
Weave a pattern of love between friends,
Weave a pattern of hope among the hopeless,
Weave a pattern of joy among the sorrowful
Weave a pattern of passion between lovers-
For you, holy weaver, creator, son, spirit
Are the true lover of us all.
Bind us in your love, now and forever.

Ruth Harvey

Final blessings from the above anthology

Be still
And let God's peace wash over you
Like waves lapping over pebbles
Smoothing rough edges of insurmountable worries
To tiny insignificant grains of sand
Taking away the jaggedness of sin
To leave smooth shining love.
And let the peace of God,
The Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Be with us all today and every day.

Leslie Steel

God our reconciler, who, in the person of the Spirit, beckons us into community,
Guides us into the paths of peace
And inspires our longing to become more Christ-like;
Let your hand nudge us into the adventure
Of painting new visions, writing new words,
Building new structures, and carving new landmarks
To meet the challenges of our time
As you embrace us, may our hands embrace the world
to find that all our sisters and brothers – all living things share the same pulse of God-given life.

Kate Compston

From All Desires Known Janet Morley

Tender God
You have seen my affliction,
And unbound my eyes;
You have bereaved me of the burden
To which I used to cling;
You have woven my pain
Into patterns of integrity;
The wounds I cherished
You have turned into honours,
And the scars I kept hidden
Into marks of truth.
You have touched me gently:
I have seen you face, and live

God of the weary
Receive my tiredness
God of the hungry
Know my emptiness
God of those in danger
Hold my fear
God of the silenced
Hear my despair
God of the heavyladen
Give me rest
God of the hopeful
Fill me again with longing.

O God, life-giving Spirit,
Spirit of healing and comfort,
Of integrity and truth,
We believe and trust in you.
Warm-winged Spirit, brooding over creation,
Rushing wind and Pentecostal fire,
We commit ourselves to work with you
And renew our world.

From Human Rites

God be your comfort, your strength;
God be your hope and support;
God be your light and your way;
And may God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer
Bless you and remain with you
Now and for ever. Amen.

Joyce Yarrow adapted from NZ prayerbook

Thurs III

Information for workshop leaders preparing for Liturgy of Wholeness and Healing

Possible songs

In Hymn books
Be still and know that I am God (refers to healing)
Do not be afraid
Lay your hands gently on us
Lord of all hopefulness
Peace is flowing like a river
The Spirit lives to set us free

On sheets
A touching place (Iona) tape+ words and music on sheet.
Jesus Christ is waiting (tune now the green blade – refers to healing)

Scripture References

From Lion book of Bible quotations & the Concise Bible Encyclopaedia

Healing

And he [Elijah] stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. 1 Kings 17:21-22 KJV

So he [Naaman] went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God: and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. 2 Kings 5.14 RSV

[The Lord's promise to Solomon] 'If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.' 2 Chronicles 7:14 RSV

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases. Psalm 103:2-3 KJV

He sent forth his word, and healed them, and delivered them from destruction. Psalm 107:20 RSV

Jesus went all over Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, preaching the Good News about the Kingdom, and healing people who had all kinds of disease and sickness. Matthew 4:23 GNB

And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity. Matthew 10:1 RSV

Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ancle bones received strength. Acts 3:6-7 KJV

To another gifts of healing by the one Spirit . . . 1 Corinthians 12:9 RSV

Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. James 5:14-16 KJV

See also *Comfort; Illness; Suffering.*

Healing

One of the results of evil in the world is illness. People become sick, age and die as a result of the 'fall', the coming of sin into the world.

This does not mean to say that a person is ill because he has sinned. This idea was commonly held in Jesus' day, but he did not agree.

Jesus came to announce a whole new creation in which sin and sickness and death would be no more. The new creation has already begun, with the resurrection of Jesus, but it remains to be completed in the future. Those who believe in him will share in it.

So the power of Jesus to heal sickness as well as to forgive sins was a way of showing what the new kingdom was like, and that it was real. He applied to himself the prophecy of Isaiah: 'The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind.' His healing of the sick in mind and body was a sample, a foretaste, of the coming age.

Christ's healing work has been continued by his disciples ever since. Paul describes a gift of healing given to every church. James considers it natural to call in the elders of the church to pray for a sick person. He advises Christians: 'confess your sins to one another, so that you will be healed.' The salvation Jesus brings is for the whole person.

But until 'all things are made new' at the end of time, the church cannot reverse the whole process of sickness, ageing and death. Healings will still be the occasional demonstration of the kingdom, of God's love and power, until the spiritual reality of the kingdom reaches its complete fulfilment.

Genesis 3:14-19. *Some Old Testament healings:* Numbers 21:4-9; 1 Kings 17:17-24; Deuteronomy 7:12-15; 28:20-23; 2 Kings 4:18-37; 5. *Some of Jesus' healings:* Matthew 8:5-13, 28-34; 9:32-33; 17:14-18; Mark 7:31-37; 10:46-52; Luke 4:18-19; 7:11-15; 8:41-42, 49-56; 17:11-19; John 9; 11. Acts 3:1-10 and other passages; 1 Corinthians 15; James 5:14-16; Revelation 21:1-5; 22:1-2

M

M

Prayer: "Make us Aware" (Kate McIlhagga)
(all saying the last line of the verse and the last verse)

Reader 1
Merciful God, forgive
that we fall asleep
when you call us to watch and pray.
We fail to see the signs of your coming

Reader 2
Christ our Saviour, forgive
that we are not watchful
we do not choose to hope
or plant the seeds of hopefulness.
We fail to see the signs of your coming

Reader 3
Forgiving Spirit, forgive
that in the rush of the Christmas season
we forget to stop and listen for the sound of angel voices
we forget and stop and look for a star
to Guide us to Christ
We fail to see the signs of God's presence.

All
God over all
Christ within us
Spirit around us
hear our prayer
and send your messenger
of peace to us and to your sleeping world.

Pause for reflection

O O Donohue blessing

Ianthe Pratt

From: <lalawinkley@blackberry.orange.co.uk>
To: "Lala Winkley" <lalawinkley@blackberry.orange.co.uk>; "Pat Brown" <.patbrown-at.co.uk>; "Pippa Bonner" <pippabonner@ntlworld.com>; "Mary Anstey4" <maryanstey@googlemail.com>; "Michael Ward" <mikeward@abard.com>; "Morag Liebert" <moragl@connectfree.co.uk>; "Myra Poole" <MyraPoole@aol.com>; "Sue Williamson" <suemacliammor33@hotmail.com>; "Diana Edwards" <dpuedwards22@aol.com>; "Ianthe Pratt" <lumen@globalnet.co.uk>
Sent: 07 June 2009 19:50
Subject: Our Blessing

Apologies I did not have copies for you yesterday but this comes with my love and 'Blessing'

May you be blessed with good friends.

May you learn to be a good friend to yourself.

May you be able to journey to that place in your soul where there is great love, warmth, feeling and forgiveness.

May this change you.

May it transfigure that which is negative, distant or cold as stone in you.

May you be brought in to the real passion, kinship and affinity of belonging.

May you treasure your friends.

May you be good to them and may you be there for them; may they bring you all the blessings, challenges, truth and light that you need for your journey.

May you never be isolated; but may you always be in the gentle nest of belonging within the wisdom of your soul's friend.
(John O'Donohue
Sent using BlackBerry® from Orange

Harvest People

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,
who acknowledge Jesus as God's Son.
They will be like a tree planted by the water,
full of nourishment, vitality and strength.
Sending out its roots by the stream,
growing effectively with nourishment,
it does not fear when heat comes,
nothing causes them to become discouraged.
Its leaves are always green,
deeds of kindness are always apparent.
It has no worries in a year of drought,
utter confidence in God's provision
and never fails to bear fruit,
harvest yield is always excellent.

Frances Ballantyne P 29

God, in our selective thinking P163
Christ in your compassion
Spirit of perseverance
enlighten our God-given minds to the immense, basic needs of
women and men in struggling communities,
enable us to turn over the tables in the temples of greed
and to become the radical people of Christ,
encourage us to speak and act through the power of the Spirit.

Response: **In our hearts, Harvest God,**
we know that we must put people before profit.

Geoffrey Duncan

Spirit of Creation and Community P7

Let us give thanks to the Spirit
whose restless energy dances through all creation.
Spirit of creation and community
we celebrate your power.

Let us give thanks to the Spirit
whose tender embrace gives birth to our longing.
Spirit of creation and community
we celebrate your power.

Let us give thanks to the Spirit
whose urgent voice summons us to justice.
Spirit of creation and community
we celebrate your power.

Let us give thanks for the first-fruits of the earth
and rejoice in the Spirit who gives bread for our hunger.
Spirit of creation and community
we celebrate your power.

Let us give thanks for the cup of salvation
and rejoice in the Spirit who gives wine for our sharing.
Spirit of creation and community
we celebrate your power.

Let us give thanks for the food of today
as we long for the feasting of all creation.
Spirit of creation and community
we celebrate your power.

Jan Berry

Obstacles and Blocks:

Are you a peacemaker? What blocks are placed in the way of peacemakers? Which are your favourite readings on peace? These may be helpful to you.

Psalm 85 v 8-13; Isaiah 2 v 4; Isaiah 32 v 15-20; Ephesians 2 v 14-18

Peace I bequeath to you, my own peace
I give you, a peace the world cannot
give, this is my gift to you, do not let
your hearts be troubled or afraid." John 14 v 27

We must have no illusions.
We must not be naive.
If we listen to the voice of God,
we make our choice, get out of ourselves,
and fight non violently for a better world.
We must not expect to find it easy:
we shall not walk on roses,
people will not throng to hear us, and applaud,
and we shall not always be aware of divine protection.
If we are to be pilgrims of justice and peace,
we must expect the desert.

Dom Helder Camara

Prayer: We confess, O Lord,
that we have not listened to your voice
and have been silent in the face of
overwhelming violence in our world:
Lord, have mercy
that in our never-ending desire for an
easy life amidst the material goods of this
world, we have been deaf to the cries of
so many of our sisters and brothers who
are denied your justice and peace:

Christ have mercy
That we have spoken of and prayed for peace
but have not been active peacemakers for your sake.
Lord, have mercy
Pardon us, O Lord,
Replace our silence and complacency with the
courage to search for the all-embracing peace
promised by your Kingdom.
This we ask for your name's sake.

Amen

Preparation for next week:

Action for the week ahead: Take time in the coming week to look around and discover where peace is lacking in your home, church and community. Make an effort to bring about reconciliation where there is division.

Planning for next week: Take a few minutes at the end of the session to look ahead to next week's options and decide which main activity to follow.

Thinking ahead: Look for pictures of people who often go unloved and bring them with you.

SJ.nn 9p Feb 17

The Blessing of the Light

With you, O God, is the well of life
and in your Light shall we see Light

A Song of the Light...

O gladsome Light of the holy glory of the immortal mother
heavenly, holy, blessed Jesus Christ

Now that we have come to the setting of the sun
and behold the Light of the evening
we praise you.

For it is right at all times to worship you
with voices of praise,
O child of God and giver of Life:
therefore all the world glorifies you.

Reading

Meditation from Hildegard of Bingen...

Invisible life that sustains ALL
I awaken to life everything
in every waft of air

The air is life, greening and blossoming

The waters flow with life

The sun is lit with life

The moon, when waning, is again
rekindled by the son
waxing with life once more

The stars shine,
radiating with life-light

All creation is gifted with the
ecstasy of God's light



Let us bless the Lord
Thanks be to God ...

St Joan's AGM 9th September 2006 ***WISDOM***

As we light the candle say altogether:

The stars shine, radiating with life-light, all creation is gifted with the ecstasy of God's light!
There is no creation that does not have a radiance be it greeness or seed, blossom or beauty. It could not be creation without it!

Hildegard of Bingen

Reader:

I am Wisdom, I am better than jewels;
nothing you want can compare with me.
I am Wisdom and I have insight;
I have knowledge and sound judgement.
I was made at the very beginning, at the first,
before the world began.
I was born before the oceans,
when there were no springs of water.
I was there when God laid the earth's foundations.
I was there like an architect,
I was God's daily source of joy, and happy being present there,
happy with the world and pleased with the human race!

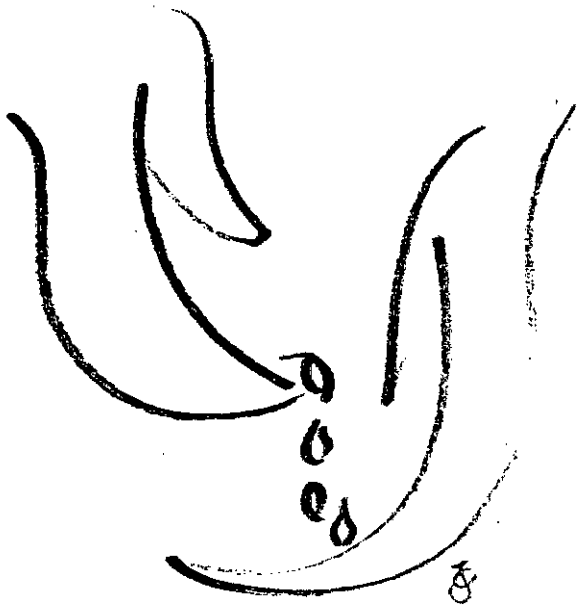
Prov.8

Song: Peruvian Gloria

Glory to God, glory to God, glory to the Creator,
To God be glory forever, Alleluia, Amen (x3)

Glory to God, glory to God, glory to the Redeemer,
To God be glory forever, Alleluia, Amen (x3)

Glory to God, glory to God, glory to the Spirit,
To God be glory forever, Alleluia, Amen (x3)



Listen, I am the earth
I cover the whole world over,
Above me is air and ocean
River and lake,
I spread beneath your feet.
You walk on me.
Tread softly.
Seeds planted in me grow
Nourished by the richness of your soil
Their roots burrowing down
Holding firmly to me
As they sway in the breeze
Or the waters flow.
Plants in the air,
Weeds in the water,
I make everything grow.

Anon

In the following passage, John the Evangelist hints at the Greek-Hellenistic search for WISDOM from the well of knowledge and spiritual experience. Samaria was a Hellenistic city with schools of spiritual learning. As we read in the Odes of Solomon: "Knowledge of the Unknowable God is a stream of fresh water. All those who are thirsty upon earth I, myself, will give to drink of it".

Reader:

Jesus left Judaea and set out once more for Galilee.

He had to pass through Samaria, and on his way came to a Samaritan town called Sychar, near the plot of ground which Jacob gave to his son Joseph and the spring called Jacob's well. It was about noon, and Jesus, tired after his journey, sat down by the well. The disciples had gone away to the town to buy food. Meanwhile a Samaritan woman came to draw water.

Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.'

The Samaritan woman said, 'What! You, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a Samaritan woman?' (Jews and Samaritans, it should be noted, do not share the same cups for drinking.)

Jesus answered her, 'If only you knew what God can give to you, and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would have asked and would have been given living water.'

'Sir,' the woman said, 'you have no bucket and this well is deep. How can you give me "living water"? Are you greater than Jacob our ancestor, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, he and his children, and his cattle too?'

Jesus said, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water that I shall give will never suffer thirst any more. The water that I shall give will be an inner spring always welling up for eternal life.'

'Sir,' said the woman, 'give me that water, and then I shall not be thirsty, nor have to come all this way to draw water'.

John 4,3-15

Discuss what this means for our own lives today for a while.

For our intentions, choose a shell and place it on the water while saying your prayer, then gently tip the shell so that it floats to the bottom of the glass.

Sing:-

'I thank you Lord for sunshine'.

EUCHARISTIC PICNIC - THEME THE NEW CREATION 1994

Opening Song: Will you come and follow me

" Prayer (Celebrant)

Peruvian Gloria (Responsorial)

Glory to God, glory to God, glory to the Creator,
To God be glory for ever, alleluia amen (x3)
(following verses glory to the Redeemer, to the Spirit)

Readings:

2 Cor 5:17-19. 6:1.

Poem from Iona based on Isaiah, Hosea and Revelation (below, right)

John 1 1-5

In place of a homily, there will be discussion in groups.
The penitential rite is partly to derive from these discussions, each group to prepare a shgort prayer expressing this (See separate discussion sheet) (20 minutes)
Children to activities in the kitchen with Ianthe.

Penitential rite (Prayers to end with Forgive us our trespasses, response as we forgive those who trespass against us)

Creed

I believe in God, the Father and Mother of us all, who has given the earth to all people.
I believe in Jesus Christ, who came to encourage us and to heal us; to deliver us from the oppressors; to proclaim the peace of God to humankind. It is amongst all people that the Lord lives. He is amongst us all, the living God.

I believe in the spirit of God, who works in every man and woman of good will.
I believe in the Church, given as a beacon for all nations, moved by the Spirit to serve all people
I believe that God will finally destroy the power of sin in us all and that humanity will share God's everlasting life.
I do not believe in the power of the strongest nor the force of arms, nor the power of the oppressors.
I believe in human rights, in the solidarity of all people, in the power of non violence.

I do not believe in racism, wealth or privilege. I believe that all people are equally human, that order based on violence is not order. I do not believe we can ignore things which happen far away.
I believe that the whole world is my home and that the field I plough and the harvest I reap belong to everyone.
I do not believe that I can fight oppression far away if I tolerate injustice here.
I believe that there is but one right everywhere, that I am not free if one person remains enslaved.
I do not believe that hunger and war are inevitable and peace unattainable. I want to believe in the beauty of simplicity, in love with open hands, in peace on earth.

I do not believe that all suffering is in vain, nor that our dreams will remain dreams, nor that death is the end.
But I dare to believe, always and in spite of everything, in a new humanity; in God's own dream of a new heaven and a new earth where justice and peace shall flourish

(creed used at a J & P conference, provenance unknown)

the peace All hold hands and sing sing shalom (shalom my friends shalom my friends shalom, shalom, the peace Christ I give you today, shalom, shalom)

Intercessions

Offertory procession (children) and Offertory Hymn Love (to tune of tell out my soul) on green sheet

Eucharistic prayer

PC Therefore do we thank you and praise you,
almighty Father,
that you are Light and Wisdom itself
before any other light was.
We thank you that you have graciously
given us to understand
that you knew yourself, and in the reaches of eternity,
that you shared this understanding with your Son,
only-begotten, God of God, Light of Light,
who is your Wisdom.
And together you shared the brilliance of your glory
with the Holy Spirit,
who gives witness that your sharing of light
is a sharing of love.
We thank you
that from darkness, you brought light;
from chaos, you brought reason and order,
creating the universe a thing of beauty and splendor.
We thank you
that from unconsciousness, you brought awareness;
and from simple awareness, you brought
comprehension of the world
and knowledge of the self and of others.
For finally you graced the earth with humanity
we who have the light to know ourselves
and each other together,
who can see and acknowledge you
when you show yourself to us,
and freely give our praise to your wisdom and power.
Therefore we join ourselves to every being
who knows you and bows down before you, crying out to you:

All Holy, Holy, Holy ....

PC And though we sin and dim this light,
you do not abandon us,
faithful and trustworthy Father,
in our darkness, to despair,
but send your Wisdom Himself--the way, the truth,
and the light, to enlighten everyone
who comes into the world.

All Blest is He who comes in the Name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

PC,CC For when the time came
which you had appointed,
your Son arose, the light of the world.
He knew what was in our heart;
and taught us the true way.
And knowing your will for Himself,
He made the sacrifice of obedience to you,
the sacrifice that was acceptable to you then
as we ask that it be acceptable to you now.

All For He it is who offers still to you,
O God of Light,
the clear offering of holding your ways,
the perfect doing your will.
He it is who without fail
did what you asked of Him, giving us the example
which we need but follow to come to you.

PC,CC For on the night before He died,
knowing fully what was to come to Him,
how He was to give the most perfect teaching
of His new commandment of love
by laying down His life for His friends,
He took bread, blessed it,
and raising His eyes to heaven to you,
He gave you thanks and praise.
Then He broke the bread,
gave it to His disciples and said:
Take this and eat it, all of you: this is my Body
which is to be broken for you.

After dinner was done,
He took the cup, and
handed it around to His disciples, with these words:
This is the cup of my Blood;
a covenant both new and ever-enduring;
the mystery of faith.
This blood is to be spilled for you and for all
for the forgiveness of sin.
Then He said: Whenever you do this,
do it as a memorial of me.

All And so it is in memory of your Son,
the Light of the world, that we perform this act.
We recall His life, His death, and His rising,
through which He worked our redemption.

PC,CC Joined with all the children of light
who have heard and accepted your revelation

through the ages,
joined first with the disciples themselves,
with whom He first shared the light,
then with His holy mother,
and with the martyrs and all the saints;

All we ask that this sacrifice be acceptable to you,
Almighty Father,
and that it may profit
all the living,
especially those of us gathered here
and those given into our care;
and the dead,
whom we beg may be brought into the light
of everlasting life.
Through Jesus Christ your Son.

Through Him and with Him and in Him
all glory and honor is yours,
almighty Father,
in union with the Holy Spirit,
from generation to generation,
through all days,
forever and ever.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

(Sung)

The Lord's Prayer (One Possible New Translation from the Aramaic)

O Birther! Father-Mother of the Cosmos,

Focus your light within us – make it useful:

Create your reign of unity now –

Your one desire then acts with ours,
as in all light, so in all forms.

Grant what we need each day in bread and insight

Loose the cords of mistakes binding us,
as we release the strands we hold
of others' guilt.

Don't let surface things delude us,

But free us from what holds us back.

From you is born all ruling will,
the power and the life to do,
the song that beautifies all,
from age to age it renews.

Truly – power to these statements –
may they be the ground from which all
my actions grow: Amen.

(From PRAYERS OF THE COSMOS. BY NEIL DOUGLAS-KLOTZ)

Poem (from Icons) In Bread of Tomorrow 146

If you were busier, Lord,
you would not bother with us.
But you have time to listen.

So we praise you,
for having all things in proportion,
and a time in your silence for us to speak.

If you were wiser, Lord,
you would not bother with us.
But you are foolish
and thus we are your choice.
So, we praise you
that your kingdom is indeed upside down;
that your standards are not the world's standards;
that you have bent down to touch us.

If you were content, Lord,
you would not bother with us.
But you are restless:
through anger, through excitement, and through love,
you will all things to change and be made new.
So we praise you
that your restlessness has been born in us
as the pain of the world,
the cries of your people,
the urgency of your gospel,
and your Holy Spirit.
Upset our easiness
and require us to respond.

Communion Song A touching place

Final Song We shall go out

HAIKUS written as part of the liturgy, Wimbledon Group, Feb 96

The ice in my soul
Melts in the warmth of God's love
Love amid my friends

Child frozen in ice
Crying to be hugged and loved
Feel the heat of my love

Ice pierced by the light
shattered into crystals stark
Mirror of my soul

Energy frozen
Branches burdened with silver
Need tenacious roots

The candle flickers
Darkness threatens to return
Light flares in my heart

Snow sheet on mountain
Sprung through with wild crocus spears
We too stretch to God

In the dark seeds grow
Life in the womb grows apace
Resurrection comes

Baby waits in womb
Christ waits in the garden tomb
So New Life begins

Dark shining silent
Frozen stillness. Thaw begins
Unexpected life

Bright yellow in snow
braves the ice warming the heart
tells us spring is nigh

Do not repent or
relent the heart God gave. The
Creator creates

You keep us waiting

You keep us waiting
You,
The God of all time
Want us to wait
For the right time in which
To discover who we are,
Where we must go,
Who will be with us,
And what we must do

All: *So, thank you for the waiting time.*

You keep us looking,
You,
The God of all space,
Want us to look
In the right and wrong places
For signs of hope,
For people who are hopeless,
For visions of a better world
Which will appear
Among the disappointments
Of the world we know.

All: *So, thank you for the looking time*

You keep us loving,
You,
The God whose name is love,
Want us to be like you
To love the loveless and the unlovely and the unlovable,
To love those near us without jealousy or design or threat,
And,
Most difficult of all,
To love ourselves.

All: *So, thank you for the loving time.*

And in all this
You keep us.
Through hard questions with no easy answers,
Through failing where we hoped to suceed
And making an impact when we felt we were usele
Through the patience and the dreams and the love
And through Jesus Christ and His Spirit,
You,
Keep us .....

All: *So, thank you for the keeping time*
and for now and for ever AMEN.

Pam Freeman

LET ALL CREATION REJOICE

Centring Music - Hail O Greenest Branch (Hildegard of Bingen)

Viridissima Virga

O viridissima virga ave, que in ventoso flebre scisitationis sanctorum prodisti.	Hail, o greenest branch, sprung forth in the airy breezes of the prayers of the saints.
Cum venit tempus quod tu floruisti in ramis tuis ave, ave sit tibi, quia color solis in te sudavit sicut odor balsami.	So the time has come that your sprays have flourished hail, hail to you, because the heat of the sun has exuded from you like the aroma of balm.
Nam in te floruit pulcher flos qui odorem dedit omnibus aromatibus que arida erant.	For the beautiful flower sprang from you which gave all parched perfumes their aroma.
Et illo apparuerunt omnia in viriditate plena.	And they have radiated anew in their full freshness.
Unde celi dederunt rorem super pratum et omnis terra leta facta est, quoniam viscera ipsius frumentum protulerunt, et quoniam volucres celi nidos in ipso habuerunt.	Whence the skies bestowed dew upon the pasture, and all the Earth was made joyful because her womb brought forth corn, and because the birds of the firmament built their nests in her.
Deinde facta est esca hominibus, et gaudium magnum epulantium: unde, o suavis virgo, in te non deficit ullum gaudium.	Then there was harvest ready for Man and a great rejoicing of banqueters, whence, o sweet Virgin, no joy is lacking in you.
Hec omnia Eve contempsit.	Eve rejected all these things.
Nunc autem laus sit altissimo.	Now let there be praise to the Highest.

Hildegard's Words

Reader 1. We are dressed in the scaffold of creation:
in seeing—to recognize all the world,
in hearing—to understand,
in smelling—to discern,
in tasting—to nurture,
in touching—to govern.
In this way humankind comes to know God,
for God is the author of all creation.

Reader 2 And so,
humankind
full of creative possibilities,
is God's work.

1 Humankind alone,
is called to assist God.

1 Humankind is called to co-create.

2 God gave to humankind the talent
to create with all the world.

1 Just as the [people] shall never end,
until into dust they are transformed and resurrected,
just so,
their works are always visible.

2 The good deeds shall glorify,
the bad deeds shall shame,
insofar as they have not been blotted out through penance.

Reader 3 BE STILL MY CHILDREN (Prayer from Iona)

Be still my children
My voice is not always
heard in the thunder and earthquakes
of your experience.
I do not only speak when you are
physically and mentally involved in living.
Be still - and in the stillness I will speak
when you are quiet
when you are resting
when you are aware of me pulsating within
you and around you
when you are waiting and listening
I will break through
and enrich your silence
releasing my peace and glory
and transforming your experience
until in the stillness
you find yourself longing
to shout for joy.

Relaxation and meditation

Put yourself in a position of relaxation, and think of aspects of God's presence in Creation that particularly appeals to you.

After 5 minutes, in groups of two or three share your thoughts.

Poem (All)

~~You~~ We are called to become
A perfect creation.
No one is called to become
Who ~~you~~ we are called to be.
It does not matter
How short or tall
Or thick-set or slow
~~You~~ We may be.
It does not matter
Whether ~~you~~ we sparkle with life
Or are silent as a still pool,
Whether ~~you~~ we sing your song aloud
Or weep alone in darkness.
It does not matter
Whether ~~you~~ we feel loved and admired
Or unloved and alone
For ~~you~~ we are called to become
A perfect creation.
No one's shadow
Should cloud ~~your~~ our becoming,
No one's light
Should dispel your spark.
For the Lord delights in ~~you,~~ us
Jealously looks upon ~~you~~ us
And encourages with gentle joy
Every movement of the Spirit
Within ~~you.~~ us

Unique and loved ~~you~~ we stand,
Beautiful or stunted in your growth
But never without hope and life.
For ~~you~~ we are called to become
A perfect creation.
This becoming may be
Gentle or harsh,
Subtle or violent,
But it never ceases,
Never pauses or hesitates,
Only *is*—
Creative force—
Calling ~~you~~ us
Calling ~~you~~ us to become
A perfect creation.

(Edwina Garely)

Finding and looking find a leaf, twig, a stone - whatever of nature is available to you - then try to draw it. This is not an exercise of art but of looking, it does not matter what you come up with, it is the doing that counts. If you are looking at bark you might like to try a rubbing.

Celtic God Prayer (the two sides of the group alternately)



I am the wind that breathes upon the sea,
All: I am the wave on the ocean,
I am the murmur of the leaves rustling,
All: I am the rays of the sun,
I am the beam of the moon and the stars,
All: I am the power of the trees growing,
I am the bud breaking into blossom,
All: I am the movement of the salmon swimming,
I am the courage of the wild boar fighting,
All: I am the speed of the stag running,
I am the strength of the ox pulling the plough,
All: I am the size of the mighty oak tree,
And I am the thoughts of all my people
All: Who praise my beauty and my grace.

Offertory and intercessions

Place your drawings in the bowl/basket, then place a flower or leaves in the vase, with a spoken or unspoken prayer

All God of Power Miriam Therese Winter

God of power.
God of people.
You are the life of all
that lives,
energy
that fills the earth,
vitality
that brings to birth.
the impetus
toward making whole
whatever is bruised
or broken.
In You we grow
to know the truth
that sets all creation free.
You are the song
the whole earth sings.
the promise
liberation brings.
now and forever.

Peace

Deep peace of the running waves to you
" " of the silent stars
" flowing air to you
" " quiet earth
May peace, may peace, fill you soul (x2)
let peace, let peace, make you whole(x2)

Agape
(Taken from the Didache)

Leader: Blessed are you, O Lord our God, creator of this food and drink that we share together as a sign of your kingdom, which is to come in glory, and yet is alredy here now in so far as you live among us in the love we have for one another.

All: We give thanks to you , our creator, for this wine, remembering Israel your people, brought like a vine out of Egypt, and planted in the promised land.

(the wine is poured and passed around, each saying to the next person "the new wine of life"

All: As we break the bread we thank you, O creator, for the life and knowledge of yourself which you gave us through Jesus Christ. To you be glory for ever

(the bread is passed round, each on breaking off a portion and handing it to the next person saying "the bread of sustenance")

All: As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let your children, Lord, be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever.

Song: Be thou my vision

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
Be all else but naught to me, save that thou art,
Be thou my best thought in the day and the night, Both
waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

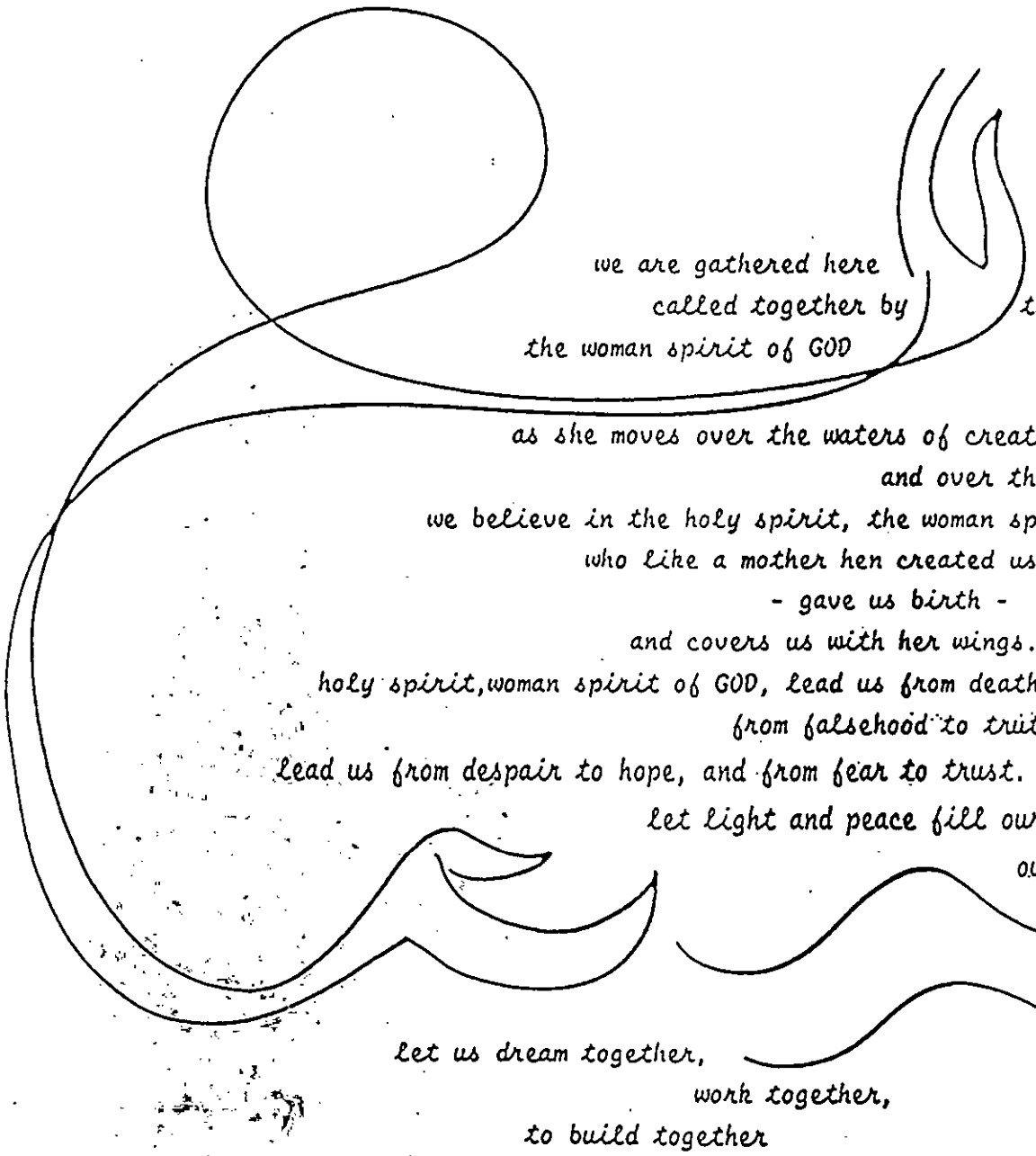
Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word
Be thou ever with me, and I with thee, Lord,
Be thou my great Parent and I thy true Child
Be thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.

Riches I heed not, nor ~~the~~ false praise,
Be thou my inheritance now and always,
Be thou and thou only first in my heart,
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.

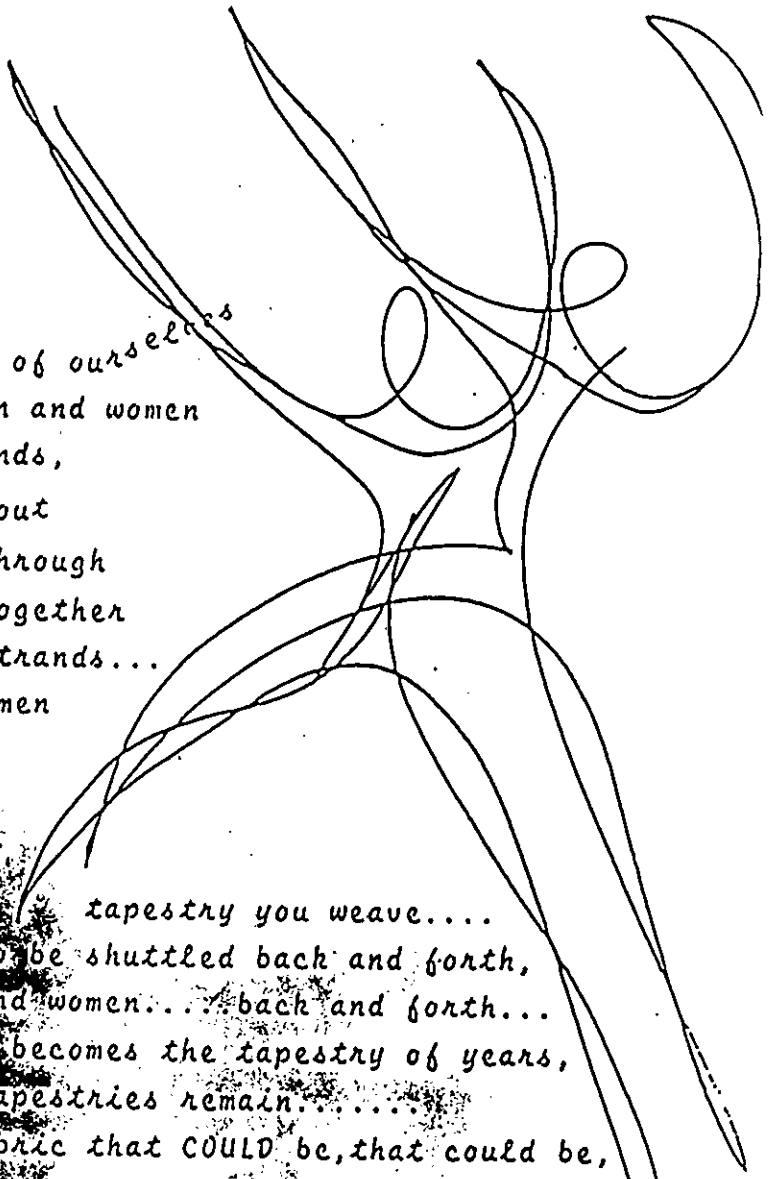


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W



we are gathered here
called together by the holy spirit,
the woman spirit of GOD
as she moves over the waters of creation
and over the earth;
we believe in the holy spirit, the woman spirit of GOD,
who like a mother hen created us
- gave us birth -
and covers us with her wings.
holy spirit, woman spirit of GOD, lead us from death to life,
from falsehood to truth;
lead us from despair to hope, and from fear to trust.
let light and peace fill our hearts,
our world,
our universe.....
let us dream together,
work together,
to build together
one world of equality,
ONE WORLD OF PEACE AND JUSTICE FOR
ALL.....
amen



LIFE LOOM

accept the offering of ourselves
women and men...men and women
our separate strands,
to be woven in and out
over and under and through
as we seek to become together
the strands...
men and women...women and men
a part of life
a part of church
A PART OF YOU

give us a vision of the tapestry you weave....
with our willingness to be shuttled back and forth,
women and men...men and women...back and forth...
as the tapestry of days becomes the tapestry of years,
but the visions of tapestries remain.....
the patterns and the fabric that COULD be, that could be,
as we are shuttled back and forth....men and women....
women and men....back and forth...the strands out of which
you weave a fabric...a tapestry....OF LIFE....OF CHURCH....
OF YOU.....

amen

W Leeds 86?

WE THANK YOU O GOD/
For your guidance and strength with us in our conflicts
WE THANK YOU O GOD. AMEN

INTERCESSIONS

Leader We pray for the peace and unity of your holy Church throughout the world .Look not on our sins of discord and division but on the faith of your people and grant us that spirit of concord and community which is according to your will,
Heavenly Father
ALL Your will be done,
LEADER We pray that we may come to know the mind of Christ in all things which vex and trouble our hearts. Lead us into all truth, guide us in right judgements, conform us to your will and grant us so to undersyand your saving purposes that we may become ever more effective instruments of the redemption of humankind.
Heavenly Father
ALL your will be done.
LEADER We pray for the world wide Anglican Communion for Robert Archbishop of Canterbury, the Primates and all our Bishops that they may so order and govern the Church in accordance with your will that our common life and fellowship may be strengthened and built up and your Gospel proclaimed in every nation.
Heavenly Father
ALL your will be done.
LEADER We pray for all those for whom the witness of our Church has become weakened by division and disunity for allthose who for conscience sake have already separated themselves from the one Communion and fellowship and for those who contemplate such action. Guide with your Holy Spirit all those in General Synod, that in the decisions which face them at this time they may do only those things which are in accordance with your will
Heavenly Father
ALL Your will be done.
LEADER We pray that your Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth and give us courage to move forward in faith.
Heavenly Father
ALL Your will be done.
LEADER Almighty God, to whom our needs are known before we ask, help us to ask only those things which are in accordance with your will and those good things which we dare not or in our blindness cannot ask grant us for the sake of yoiur Son Jesus Christ
ALL AMEN.

C Creation C

You knew,
beyond the shadow of doubt,
that outside yourself
a Creation
would necessarily be
finite, imperfect, bounded.

That didn't put you off . . .
And the Creation,
though bounded, imperfect, finite,
was certainly not born
of a Love less than genuine,
or bogus . . .

All things you have created –
for those with ears to hear –
tingle with the echo
of Love
pure and infinite!

Pause

(All) O God our mystery,
you bring us to life,
call us to freedom,
and move between us with love.
May we so participate
In the dance of your trinity,
That our lives may resonate with you,
now and for ever. (Janet Morley)

Pause

(All) The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, evermore.

W

PRAYER USED BY BEDE JARRETT OP
(language updated from thee to you)

We seem to give them back to You
O God who gave them back to us.
Yet as you did not lose them in giving,
so we do not lose them by their return.
Not as the world gives, do You give,
O Lover of souls.
What you give, you do not take away
for what is yours is ours also
If we are yours.

And life is eternal and love is immortal,
and death is only a horizon,
and a horizon is nothing,
save the limit of our sight.

Lift us up, strong Son of God,
that we may see further,
cleanse our eyes
that we may see more clearly:
draw us closer to Yourself
that we may know ourselves to be nearer
to our loved ones who are with thee.

And while you do prepare a place for us
prepare us also for that happy place,
that where You are
we may be also for ever more.

A work in progress ?

Jan 2013

Mrs Dilo Glee

You ask if God exists

Do I believe in God ?

I believe that

God the Father and Mother is

that part of us that is caring and loving

the capacity to be nurturing and supportive

to be empathetic and wise

to feel sorrow at pain and suffering

the capacity to care for the frail

God the Son or Daughter

is that part of us that

is open to new experiences and learning

the capacity to work for the common good

the capacity to seek to make a society

God the Spirit is not out there

but within

the capacity to act justly

the capacity to appreciate the vastness of the universe

and wonder with awe at the complexity and beauty

to be repelled by evil acts

The spirit is that which we must preserve in us

and pass onto future generations

Just as has been passed on to us

Do we need to discuss if God exists ?

Closing Commitment

We will refuse to stay outside
In memory of her

We will bring what is costly
In memory of her

We will break open our gifts
In memory of her

We will fill the house with our fragrance
In memory of her

We will anoint the body
In memory of her

We will insist on saying our names
In memory of her

We will retell her story, as we make our own
In memory of her

Hymn : We shall go out with hope of resurrection

(words by June Boyce Tillman
tune: Londonderry)

Come, Holy Spirit!

Father, we are waiting, waiting for Her, your Spirit.
Breathe on us, blow on us, send to us,
HER, your Spirit!
We are waiting, still waiting ,
for Her Who is Wisdom
to embue our dull minds
with HER Understanding .
We thirst for HER Counsel, ,
we seek Her discernment;
Send HER, Father, send HER! Send HER, your Spirit.
Alone we may flounder,
let HER Strength accomplish
the mission we carry
for HER new creation .
Christ, we are waiting, send HER, your Spirit!
We heeded your word
to remain in the city,
to remain with the people
who wait for the Spirit. (Lk 24:49)
We are waiting, still waiting, send Her, your Spirit!
Expectant we listen
for HER call to labour
until Freedom, HER Gift,
achieve all liberation.

Father!
Son!
We await Her -
Come Holy Spirit!

Ianthe, dear,

I've tried to make some sort of something out of the scribble I had prepared for the occasion. It seems very long ago - for my pre-occupation has been with my family. My 46 year old nephew died suddenly in South Wales - I've been invoking the Holy Spirit on the motor way - it's not been easy as that is the C of E (plus Moslem) branch of the family.Wife and 2 teenage kids are desolate. This came on top of the pope's bombshell. I read about the condamnation of Levinia's book in the Tablet. It's more than barbaric, its Satanic, in line with the Moslem fanaticism roused by Rushdie's "Satanic Verses". With the "punishment" threat from Rome, I tremble for the Catholic Citizen. I don't mind a little excommunication, but I would not like the Cath Cit of the Alliance condemned.

Anyway, thank you for the last Bulletin and all that came my way. (Have to change gear again and be "nursie": the chiropodist has been announced to trim our 6 elders this pm.)
Peggy Pascoe has just returned from an ecumenical affair in Germany; enjoyed the company of umpteen women clergy & bishops!
I wonder what Myra will find in Zimbabwe - shortage of priests?
I want to catch the post...
Keep the flag flying, but don't kill yourself!
Shalom....

Kira

29.7.1988

Psalm

How leaky are all the borders
we draw around our separate nations!
How many clouds cross those boundaries
daily without even paying the toll!
How much desert sand
simply sifts from country to country,
or how many mountain pebbles
hop down slopes onto foreign turf just like that!

Need I remind you of each and every bird
as it flies over, and now sits,
on a closed border-gate?
Even if it's small as a sparrow, its tail is abroad
while its beak is still at home.
And if that weren't enough, it keeps fidgeting!

Out of countless insects, I will single out the ant,
who, right between the guard's left boot
and his right, pays no attention to any questions of origin or
destination.

If only this whole messy affair
could be studied more, in detail,
all around the world!
Look! Isn't that familiar hedge on the far bank even now
smuggling its hundred-thousandth leaf
over the river?

And who else but the squid, unashamed
of the length of its arms, would violate
the precious boundary of our territorial waters?

How can we speak
of any semblance of order around here
when we can't even rearrange the stars
to show which one shines for whom?

Not to mention the fog,
which reprehensively goes wherever it pleases. Or that dust
blowing blithely all over the prairie
as if the land had never been partitioned.
And the voices gliding on the obliging airwaves! All these
conspiratorial gurglings
and suggestive sounds.

Funny, isn't it, how only what's human is truly alien? Everything
else is just mixed vegetation,
a few subversive moles, and the wind.

Wisława Szymborska
Translated by Mark Belletini

Wisława Szymborska (born 1923) is Poland's most celebrated poet and a 1996 winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature. Paradox and wit are the hallmarks of her poetry, and those who know her personally remark on her modesty. In her Nobel acceptance speech Szymborska reflected: 'Whatever inspiration is, it's born from a continuous "I don't know".'

christian aid

worship



This is Jusu Kanneh, a Sierra Leonean Muslim in his local mosque. Jusu was a master farmer before the war in his country but had to flee when rebels attacked. When he came back in 2002 there was nothing left. Christian Aid partner Association for People's Empowerment (APEM) gave him a bushel of rice seed to plant so he could begin rebuilding his livelihood.

His Muslim faith is very important to him. For him a Muslim is someone who is kind hearted and has a giving spirit. 'We do not nurture hate for friends, relatives, and those living around us. We are very honest.'

photo: Christian Aid / Simon Townsley

Prayers /08.05

Lord God, you humble me before the poor.
The more I have the more I want to cling to.

Jesus didn't grasp at divine equality but laid aside His glory,
Stripping Himself of privilege and security
To live a life under the conditions we live under.

He was a vulnerable child, unprotected from Herod's wrath, a refugee:
He was found alongside the lowest, the least, the lost
He gave all, even life itself.
Yet I hesitate to give some of my abundance.

Lord God, you humble me before the poor
Who when they have little to eat, share it,
Who, having nothing, yet seem to possess so much.

I cringe away from the sacrifice Jesus asked of the rich young man.
But I also believe I am not called to part with my possessions as he was.
Or am I? Search my heart; you know my innermost thoughts.

Teach me to handle the possessions you have entrusted to me
That whatsoever is asked of me,
They will be treated as yours, not as my own.

Teach me grace to give whatever you require of me,
And grace to refuse any false guilt.

Teach me to fight unjust systems which rob people
Of their share of Your provision;
Teach me to be alert to how I justify these systems to myself.

Teach me not to want to keep the poor in poverty
Teach me to want Your daily bread for everyone
Teach me to want Your Kingdom come.

We ask all of this in Jesus' mighty name.

£

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Amen.
Anonymous

This world I live in
this town I live in
this street I live in
may each be the focus of my prayer.

Those I live with
those I rub shoulders with
those I don't get on with
may each be the focus of my prayer.

Those who laugh
those who cry
those who hurt
those who hide
may each be the focus of my prayer.

Prayers centred less on self
and more on others
less on my circumstances
more on the needs of others.

May my life be likewise centred
less on self and more on You
and through You to the world
in which I live and move.

Amen.
John Birch, 2003, from his Faith and Worship website,
www.faithandworship.com

Look upon us, O Lord,
and let all the darkness of our souls
vanish before the beams of thy brightness.

Fill us with holy love,
and open to us the treasures of thy wisdom.
All our desire is known unto thee,
therefore perfect what thou hast begun,
and what thy Spirit has awakened us to ask in prayer.

We seek thy face,
turn thy face unto us and show us thy glory.
Then shall our longing be satisfied,
and our peace shall be perfect.
Amen.
Augustine, 354 – 430

'...because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the path of peace.'
Zechariah's Song, Luke 1:78-79 (NIV)

• Reflection
• Quotable quotes
• Church magazine article



Women's Ordination Worldwide

O Holy One, You who are Creator of all,
who made humanity in Your image,
Saviour of all, who called women
and men to witness
Your ministry, death and resurrection,
Inspirer of all who seek and serve,
we thank You for the women You
have blessed with Your call to
celebrate the eucharist,
to minister alongside their brothers
in a renewed Roman Catholic Church.
We pray that the Church will soon
welcome and nourish to the full
the gifts of women as priests,
prophets and leaders,
knowing, as Mary of Nazareth knew,
that with You all things are possible.

Lent 1 (Mark 1.9–15)

God of trackless desert,
whose Son walked untamed
in league with beasts and spirits,
whose kingdom is not distant
but breaking in among us:
give us time and space
to find a new identity
to let go of control
and walk the pilgrim way;
through Jesus Christ, the good news of salvation. Amen.

Lent 2 (Mark 8.31–8)

God of dispossession,
you rebuke our refusal
to give up our idols,
separate and safe:
send us with Jesus
on the way of the cross,
that we might lose our love of death
and take the risk of life,
through Jesus Christ, the new covenant. Amen.

Lent 2 (RCL alternative: Mark 9.2–9)

See Epiphany 9/Sunday next before Lent

Hands

I see, Lord, in my tightly clenched fists
a symbol of my self.
I grasp my life,
hiding all I don't want others to see.

I hold my pride:
my desire to appear right,
my desire to appear strong.

I hold my anxieties:
my fear that I won't be accepted as I am,
my inability to be who I am.

I hold my anger:
my violence that protects me
against anyone
who comes too close to my secrets.

I ache with this tension,
with the immense energy required
to hide myself –
from you, lest you change me,
from them, lest they hurt me.

With these fists, I want to strike out –
against you,
against them,
against all that threatens me.

(pause)

But I see,
in these whitened knuckles
and straining forearms,
what this is doing to me:
I am enslaved,
imprisoned within myself.
I am destroying myself and others.

(pause)

But I sense your presence, Lord,
your open hands
reaching out to me.

I slowly open my hands,
and release myself to you.
I offer all I have been grasping so tightly:
the fear of being known,
the anxiety of being alone,
the anger, the guilt, the pain.

Lord!
My arms no longer ache!
My hands can move again!
They can stretch and wiggle.
They are open and able to receive –
Fill them with your love!
Show them how to touch,
how to serve.

Freed from my own grasp,
I am suddenly aware of others.
I reach out to my sisters and brothers.
Let my hands be your hands
as I take their needs and ~~cares~~
and lift them to you.
Give us your sustaining grace,
touch us with your healing love.
Take us and shape us together
into the body of your Son.

Let our hands be your hands
to reach out to the world you love.

original author unknown
adaptation by Martha Keys Barker
and Patricia Beall

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NOVENA

A nine-day period of prayer

leading up to the vote on the Ordination of Women

at General Synod

(November 1992)



Traditionally, a *novena* is a nine-day period of interecession—so what are we praying for during these nine days? There's no single answer to that question: we shall be praying, individually and corporately, for all kinds of things. But what those of us who have prepared this material have had in the forefront of our minds is the acknowledgement that the forthcoming debate and decision in the General Synod about women's ordination to the priesthood will mean enormous change—whatever the final decision. We shall be in a different place, needing vision and energy for the future. Change is never easy, even when it's what we've worked for and longed for. The time immediately before the change is the most difficult: full of mixed feelings of anticipation and anxiety. It's rather like jumping a fence without knowing where you're going to land.

We hope that this novena will be used as an opportunity for preparing to make that jump. In these nine days we shall be gathering ourselves together to cross the threshold of change all-of-a-piece, with integrity, strength and vision. We have designed the material to be used either by individuals or by groups. If you are on your own, the opening questions and comments could be used to stimulate your own reflections; if in a group, they might prompt a discussion.

The biblical references and other passages are intended to offer further food for thought/prayer/discussion. Each day has a different prayer that can be used, as well as the prayer (adapted) said at a priest's ordination; we intend here for it to be said by everyone.

The material is offered only as a resource: individuals and groups are encouraged to shape their own reflection time; we certainly advise a good deal of silence and perhaps the marking of the beginning and end of each session with the lighting and blowing out of a candle. *Ulla Monberg, Hannah Ward, Jennifer Wild*

Day 1

REMEMBERING
WHO WE ARE

- **As individuals, made by God, and made too by those who have influenced us; as baptised Christians, each with our own faith history; as women and men in the Church; as members of MOW.**
- **On one level we are weak and insignificant, on another united and strong in willingness to work together for the good of the whole—be it Church or society.**
- **PAUSE to stand up inside ourselves before God, creator of all good.**

Exodus 19.5; 1 Peter 2.9

The human heart can go to the lengths of God.
Dark and cold we may be, but this
Is no winter now. The frozen misery
Of centuries breaks, cracks, begins to move;
The thunder is the thunder of the floes,
The thaw, the flood, the upstart Spring.
Thank God our time is now when wrong
Comes up to face us everywhere,
Never to leave us till we take
The longest stride of soul we ever took.
Affairs are now soul size.
The enterprise
Is exploration into God. *Christopher Fry*

Dear God
who made us
and empowers us
to live and to love and to learn
by all we do and suffer;
stay with us, go with us, come to meet us
and bless us
always and in every place
through Jesus our companion, Amen. *Jennifer Wild*

Holy Spirit of God, you have given us the will to undertake all manner of things, give us also the strength to perform them; that you may complete the work you have begun in us, through Jesus Christ, Amen. *ASB (adapted)*

Day 2

REMEMBERING WHERE WE'VE COME FROM

- **Those who have gone before us: the prophets and apostles, teachers and evangelists; known and unknown members of the communion of saints; especially women who have stood up to claim their true role; those who have been willing to cry out "whether they will hear or whether they will forbear". Think of MOW founders, and earlier workers.**
- **What qualities have they given us or inspired in us?**

Ezekiel 3.4-11

This feeling of being loved and supported by the Universe in general and by certain recognizable spirits in particular is bliss. No other state is remotely like it. And perhaps that is what Jesus tried so hard to teach: that the transformation required of us is not simply to be "like" Christ, but to *be* Christ.

The spirit of our helpers incarnates in us, making us more ourselves by extending us far beyond. And to that spirit there is no "beginning" as we know it (although we might finally "know" a historical figure who at one time expressed it) and no end. Always a hello, from the concerned spiritual ancestor you may not even have known you had—but this could strike at any time. Never a good-bye. *Alice Walker*

Holy God, our friend and fellow traveller, we give you thanks for all the events and people of our past who have influenced us in our search for your peace and justice and love. We stand in awe at the courage and bravery of women and men who have led the way and birthed the future. We look forward in hope and anticipation at our part in the unfolding of your promise. *St Matthew's, Auckland (adapted)*

Holy Spirit of God, you have given us the will to undertake all manner of things, give us also the strength to perform them; that you may complete the work you have begun in us, through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Day 3

REMEMBERING
WHERE WE ARE GOING

- **The particular vision—a whole priesthood.**

- **What is the broader vision that fuels us to work to fulfil this one?**

To be of use
The work of the world is common as mud.
Botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.
But the thing worth doing, well done
Has a shape that satisfies clear and evident.
Greek amphoras for wine and oil,
Hopi vases that held corn are put in museums.
But you know that they were made to be used.
The pitcher cries out for water to carry
And a person for work that is real.

Marge Piercy

Eternal God who travelled before our ancestors as a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day; may we lift up our eyes to catch a glimpse of your promise. May your spirit move amongst us encouraging us always, and empowering us for creative and lifegiving actions.

St Matthews, Auckland

Holy Spirit of God, you have given us the will to undertake all manner of things, give us also the strength to perform them; that you may complete the work begun in us, through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Galatians 3.28

Day 4

FACING OUR FEARS OF FAILURE AND REJECTION

- **Fear of being totally sidelined—carried off into captivity like Jeremiah.**
- **Fear of being left at the darkest moment with no sense of companionship.**
- **Whose failure do we fear?**
- **By whom do we most fear rejection?**
- **How do we meet and begin to deal with these fears?**

Luke 18. 1-5

I sometimes have dreams that convey important messages to me. There is one I have had all my life, or at least as long as I can remember. In it, I walk into a room full of familiar people. It is a living room, and they are sitting on comfortable chairs and sofas, in a semi-circle round a fire. I am standing in a doorway—they have not seen me yet. Some of these people are members of my family, others are old friends. It is a comfortable, cosy scene, with friendly talk going on. But I am going to say something that will change everything for ever. I do not know if the change will be for better or for worse. I walk forward, and some of them look up at me, unsuspecting. I open my mouth, but no words come.

Tracy Hansen

Creator God, You know what we need without our words. Hear our prayers and hear also our silence. Give us strength. Grant us those things we cannot or dare not voice. We make all our prayers through our brother Jesus. Amen.

Oxford Women's Liturgy Liz Campbell

Holy Spirit of God, you have given us the will to undertake all manner of things, give us also the strength to perform them; that you may complete the work you have begun in us, through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Day 5

FACING OUR FEARS OF DESPAIR

- **All around us the processes of good are painfully slow or (apparently) non-existent. Why should we fare any better: "I am no better than my fathers"—an ironic truth?**
- **How do we avoid sinking into despair and giving up?**

1 Kings 19. 1-9

Not even a beginning has been made in breaking down the peculiarly loathsome superstitions which bar the sanctuary to women. It is true that many people neither understand this prohibition nor are aware of its existence. It remains a fact that it crystallizes a prejudice indescribably insulting to womanhood, and one which, when a young women first hears of it, fills her with a very deep (and honourable) sense of resentment.

Maude Royden

God our Mother and Father, Living Water, River of Mercy, Source of Life, in whom we live and move and have our being, who quenches our thirst, and refreshes our weariness, bathes and washes and cleanses our wounds; be for us always a fountain of life and for all the world a river of hope springing up in the midst of the deserts of despair. Honour and blessing, glory and praise to You for ever.

From a MOW service

Holy Spirit of God, you have given us the will to undertake all manner of things, give us also the strength to perform them; that you may complete the work you have begun in us, through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Day 6

FACING OUR FEARS
OF OUR POWER

- **Can any good come of this? Power as *corrupting* and power as the *energy* of the Holy Spirit. Learning how to despise the one and receive and carry forward the other.**
- **The ordination of women is a powerful issue; we are powerful people. We have individual and collective power: what does it feel like to recognise this? What do we fear about our power? How do we meet and begin to deal with those fears?**

Jeremiah 1.4-10

It is nonsense to say that women have never had any power in the churches: they have had immense power, but power in the form of influence, which is irresponsible power. Nobody can call to account the wife or mother who gets her way with husband or son and is known to be the real director of his opinion and vote. This is the form of power to which women, especially very able women, have been confined by their exclusion from responsible power. Wherever democratic ideals prevail in society, influence of all kinds is discredited. Open attempts are made to prevent pressure on political leaders and on those who make appointments, issue honours and privileges and make executive decisions in every walk of life. That influence is discredited is not to say that it is abolished. Women have wielded influence with very great skill over the centuries and many still prefer it to any form of responsibility which brings them out into the open. But the choice between influence and responsibility is one that women have to make, and Churches have to make in relation to women. *Kathleen Bliss*

Spirit of energy and change,
in whose power Jesus was anointed
to be the hope of the nations;
be poured out also upon us
without reserve or distinction,
that we may have confidence and strength
to plant your justice on the earth,
through Jesus Christ, Amen. *Janet Morley*

Holy Spirit of God, you have given us the will to undertake all manner of things, give us also the strength to perform them; that you may complete the work you have begun in us, through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Day 7

GATHERING OUR STRENGTH AS PEOPLE OF FAITH

- **What does it mean to be a person of faith?**
- **We are those who have heard a call that gives energy for all eventualities, an energy that is recharged in action.**
- **What do we need to nourish our faith and sustain our energy?**

The "flesh" is the concrete person. The flesh is we who are present here—people just beginning to live, the vigorous adolescent, the old man nearing the end. The flesh is marked by time. The flesh is the actual human situation, human beings in sin, human beings in painful situations, the people of a nation that seems to have got into a blind alley. The flesh is all of us who live incarnate. The flesh, this frail flesh that has beginning and end, that sickens and dies, that becomes miserable or happy—that is what the Word became. The Word became flesh. *Oscar Romero*

Loving Word of God,
you have shown us the fullness of your glory
in taking human flesh.
Fill us, in our bodily life,
with your grace and truth;
that our pleasure may be boundless,
and our integrity complete,
in your name, Amen. *Janet Morley*

Holy Spirit of God, you have given us the will to undertake all manner of things, give us also the strength to perform them; that you may complete the work you have begun in us, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Luke 8.42-48

Day 8

GATHERING OUR STRENGTH AS PEOPLE IN COMMUNITY

- **We are people who know that true humanity grows in interdependence and interrelationship—between people, between people and the environment. We are the world's networkers.**

- **Specifically, what are our faith communities? What does a sense of community give us? How is "community" nourished?**

Romans 16.1-5

I believe that our world is on the verge of self-destruction and death because the society as a whole has so deeply neglected that which is most human and most valuable and the most basic of all the works of love—the work of human communication, of caring and nurturance, of tending the personal bonds of community. This activity has been seen as women's work and discounted as too mundane and undramatic, too distracting from the serious business of world rule. Those who have been taught to imagine themselves as world builders have been too busy with master plans to see that love's work *is* the deepening and extension of human relations. This urgent work of love is subtle but powerful. Through acts of love—what Nelle Morton has called "hearing each other to speech"—we literally build up the power of personhood in one another. It is within the power of human love to build up dignity and self-respect in each other or to tear each other down. We are better at the latter than the former. However, literally through acts of love directed to us, we become self-respecting and other-regarding persons, and we cannot be one without the other. If we lack self-respect we also become the sorts of people who can neither see nor hear each other. *Beverly Wildung Harrison*

Go-between God: inweave the fabric of our common life, that the many-coloured beauty of your love may find expression in all our exchanges. *Jennifer Wild*

Holy Spirit of God, you have given us the will to undertake all manner of things, give us also the strength to perform them; that you may complete the work you have begun in us, through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Day 9

GATHERING OUR STRENGTH AS PEOPLE OF VISION

- **What is the vision that sustains and energizes us?**
- **Draw it or write it down and keep it**

When our vision is clear, we can see the first steps we need to take. We cannot necessarily see how the ultimate transformation will take place. No revolution takes place as predicted, for change on the grand scale is a mystery, impossible to completely know or control. To open ourselves to that mystery should not make us passive, but eager to move forward, curious to see how events unfold. We move on as far as we can see the road; and from that vantage point a new horizon is revealed.

Our journey will necessarily encompass both resistance and renewal, acts that oppose the destruction and acts of creation. *Starhawk*

God who is with us
at our beginning and ending,
be with us now,
help us to find you
in the chaos of our lives,
let your light shine in our darkness
so that we may be guided
to walk in your ways, all the days of our life. *Ulla Monberg*

Holy Spirt of God, you have given us the will to undertake all manner of things, give us also the strength to perform them; that you may complete the work you have begun in us, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Isaiah 35.1-7a

I believe in God
who created woman and man in
the image of God
who created the world
and entrusted the care of the earth
to both sexes.

I believe in the totality
of the redeemer,
in whom there is neither Greek nor Jew
neither slave nor free, neither man nôr woman,
for we are all one in redemption.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the feminine Spirit of God
who gave us life like a mother bird,
and bore us
and covers us
with her wings.

Rachel Wahlberg

Acknowledgements::
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—Day 2 *Living by the Word, Selected Writings*, Alice Walker. The Women's Press. 1988.
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—Day 9 *Truth or Dare, Encounters with power, authority and mystery* Starhawk. Harper Collins, New York, USA. 1987.
—Back cover *Creed* Rachel Wahlberg.

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S. the sharing - Edwina Gately.

S

Taizé
O Lord hear my prayer ...

THE SHARING

Ed

A We told our stories–
That's all.
We sat and listened to
Each other
And heard the journeys
Of each soul.
We sat in silence
Entering each one's pain an
Sharing each one's joy.
We heard love's longing
And the lonely reachings-ou
For love and affirmation.

B We heard of dreams
Shattered
And visions fled.
Of hopes and laughter
Turned stale and dark.
We felt the pain of
Isolation and
The bitterness
Of death.

A But in each brave and
Lonely story
God's gentle life
Broke through
And we heard music in
The darkness
And smelt flowers in
The void.

B We felt the budding
Of creation
In the searchings of
Each soul
And discerned the beauty
Of God's hand in
Each muddy, twisted path.

A And God's voice sang
In each story
His life sprang from
Each death.
Our sharing became
One story
Of a simple lonely search
For life and hope and
Oneness
In a world which sobs
For love.

B And we knew that in
Our sharing
God's voice with
Mighty breath
Was saying
Love each other and
Take each other's hand.

Edwina Gately

(vc sh cl v.)

Song: **Bearers of Peace**

(join in once you pick up the tune)

People of Jesus, trusted to be
bearers of peace from God's living tree,
Peace that the world itself cannot know,
The peace that is given to plant and to grow.

Feel for the ones who have no more bread
Feel for the ones with children unfed.
Longing for food, they find in our hands
A mountain of weapons more sacred than land.

Feel for the ones whose homes are destroyed
Feel for the lives now shattered and void.
Waiting for loved ones nobody saw
the innocent people who suffer in war.

Stand with the ones who see a new way
People of faith who struggle and pray
Given the call to shape and rebuild
Our actions, our consciences, our broken world.

Pray for the day our children will see
War strange and distant as slavery
Work for a world where new ways abound
To meet and to dialogue till peace is found.

From "The Restless Heart" (Bernadette Farrell)

All Living God, the source of all life,
prompt us into new beginnings.
Ever-present God, travelling alongside us
guide us to walk in your way.
Ever-loving God, surrounding us with care,
help us to detect your presence.

Jan Berry
England

Blessing the world

(The order may be varied, and other names and phrases used, as appropriate)

Leader: People of Ireland,
torn and tired of being torn ...

ALL: GOD'S PEACE IS FOR YOU.

Leader: People of Africa,
exploited and tired of being exploited ...

ALL: GOD'S PEACE IS FOR YOU.

Leader: People of the Middle East,
turbulent and tired of being turbulent ...

ALL: GOD'S PEACE IS FOR YOU

Leader: People of South America,
silenced and tired of being silenced ...

ALL: GOD'S PEACE IS FOR YOU.

Leader: People of India,
divided and tired of being divided ...

ALL: GOD'S PEACE IS FOR YOU.

Leader: People of Eastern Europe,
anxious and tired of being anxious ...

ALL: GOD'S PEACE IS FOR YOU.

Leader: People of the West,
privileged and tired of being privileged ...

ALL: GOD'S PEACE IS FOR YOU.

Leader: May the God of all people and the Lord Jesus Christ
give us grace and peace this night and every night.

ALL: AMEN.

God of life

Leader: O God of life, of all life and of each life,
we lay our lives before you.
We give our lives to you,
from whom nothing in us is hidden.

Women: You are before us, God, you are behind;

Men: You are around us, God, you are within.

Leader: O God of life,
you know the secret thoughts of every heart.

Women: We bring the faith that is in us, and the doubt;

Men: We bring the joy that is in us, and the sorrow.

Leader: O God of life, you are in the light, and in the darkness.

Women: We bring the knowledge that is in us, and the ignorance;

Men: We bring the hope that is in us, and the despair.

Leader: O God of life, O generous Spirit,

ALL: RENEW US WITH YOUR LIFE,
TONIGHT, TOMORROW AND ALWAYS. AMEN.

PL

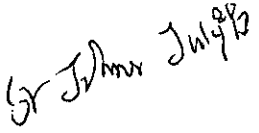
Praying the Labyrinth

As I enter the labyrinth
I move towards God.
I set my mind, heart and desire on God.
I let go to God all that holds me back.
I ask God's forgiveness, healing and love
to complete me.

I move slowly, prayerfully,
letting the path take me to the centre.
I pause when I feel led to.

I rest at the centre,
aware of God with me and in me.
I give to God all that I am.
I receive from God: life, light, healing,
understanding, love...

Having stopped for a while in the centre,
I follow the path out of the labyrinth.
I ponder what I have received
and its meaning for me.
I ask God to let this meeting shape me,
and flow into my life and relationships.



WORDING ON THE OBELISK IN THE PEACE GARDEN IN LAMBETH

Opened by the XIV Dalai Lama 13 May 1999

**WE HUMAN
BEINGS ARE
PASSING
THROUGH
A CRUCIAL
PERIOD IN OUR
DEVELOPMENT.**

**CONFLICT &
MISTRUST HAVE
PLAGUED THE
PAST CENTURY,
WHICH HAS
BROUGHT
IMMEASURABLE
HUMAN SUFFERING &
ENVIRONMENTAL
DESTRUCTION.**

**IT IS IN THE
INTERESTS OF
ALL OF US
ON THIS PLANET
THAT WE MAKE
A JOINT EFFORT
TO TURN THE
NEXT CENTURY
INTO AN ERA OF
PEACE AND HARMONY.**

**MAY THIS
PEACE GARDEN
BECOME A
MONUMENT TO
THE COURAGE OF THE
TIBETAN PEOPLE
& THEIR COMMITMENT
TO PEACE.**

**MAY IT REMAIN
AS A SYMBOL
TO REMIND US THAT
HUMAN SURVIVAL
DEPENDS ON
LIVING IN HARMONY
& ON ALWAYS
CHOOSING THE PATH
OF NON-VIOLENCE
IN RESOLVING OUR DIFFERENCES**

CWO NATCOG OCT 04

Opening Prayer (First 2 prayer from 'Prayer Like a Woman',

1 Open our lips (Antiphonally, groups A & B)

A We have heard the sounds of women's silence.
We have listened to our sisters' voices.
We have been stirred by their passion,
encouraged by their strength,
instructed by their wisdom.

B *We, like them, wish to speak out.*
We, like them, desire to speak truly.
We, like them, have a story to proclaim.
We long to midwife a new and living word for our time.

A But often we are afraid.
We fear the sound of our own voices.
We would not know our own strength,
we would not claim our power.

B We have no eloquence, no fine-sounding words or polished phrases.
Our speech is halting, we stumble and stutter over the words of life.
Our lips are sealed, like the tombs of the unliving.
Our tongues are heavy as stones within our mouths.

A *Come to us and speak to us in our weakness.*
Set the fire of your speech in our throats,
and the burning coal of your passion on our tongues.
Loosen our lips to proclaim your praise.

B O You, whose voice rolls over the waters
and thunders over the oceans,
whose word splits even the cedar trees
and breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon,

A whose voice makes the oaks shake and shudder,
and strips the forest bare,
whose word whirls the sands of the desert
and resounds through the mountains:

All *Open our lips and our mouth shall declare your praise.*

2 Letter to the Church (Read round the circle)

1 Dear brother Church:
I name you 'brother' not 'mother',
for your leaders are mostly men
and your ways are still too patriarchal.

2 I want to live passionately.
I will not hide my anger or my energy.
Will you face your own?

3 I want to act effectively.
I will not deny nor dissemble my power.
Will you admit your own and be willing to share it?

4 I want to think dangerously.
I will not set limits on what it is possible to ask or say or explore.
Will you open the gates of learning you have been guarding and let others in?

5 I want to pray deeply.
I will not withhold any part of my life from the divine gaze.
Will you plunge with me into the depths?

6 I will work with you,
but I will not work for you.

7 I will walk with you,
but I will not lead you nor will I follow in your path.

8 I will weep with you and laugh with you,
but I will not feel for you;
you must claim your own passion and pleasure and tears.

9 I will offer you the fullness of my being,
but I will not sacrifice myself on the altar of your impossible demands.

All Dear Brother church
We are standing here as women (and men)
struggling to be who we are.
We are speaking:
Are you listening?

3 Prayer (All)

Be with us this day, O Creative Spirit, as guide us in our reaching to new ways of being Church. Help us to act like yeast within our faith community, showing forth a way of being whole, where power is used to enable growth, and all are equally valued.

(I.P)

CAFOD Prayer of Oscar Romero

"It helps now and then
to step back and take the long view...

The kingdom....
is not only beyond our efforts...
it is even beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime
only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise
that is God's work

"This is what we are about...

We plant the seeds
that one day will grow...

We water seeds already planted...
Knowing that they hold future promise

We lay foundations that will need future
development

We provide yeast that produces effects....
Far beyond our capabilities

We are prophets of a future...
.....not of our own."

WOMEN AT LAMBETH - A CELEBRATION

TUESDAY 26 JULY 1988

CALL TO CELEBRATE

L: We join together to celebrate the forgotten feminine side of God and to affirm the importance of women in God's world.

And Mary said:

All: **Tell out my soul the greatness of God,**
Rejoice, rejoice my spirit in God my Saviour,
So tenderly have you regarded your servant,
Humble as she is;
From this day forth
All generations will call me blessed,
So wonderfully has God dealt with me.

Collect.

God of the outsider
who in your servant Ruth
established the line of our salvation:
give us her love and courage
with all the women who wait
like strangers in your church,
to travel a new path,
put our faith in the faith of a woman,
and boldly claim your promise,
through Jesus Christ,
Amen.

Reading

Ruth - Chapter 1 vs 6-18

Some time later Naomi heard that the Lord had blessed the people by giving them a good harvest; so she got ready to leave Moab with her daughters-in -law. They started out together to go back to Judah, but on the way she said to them, 'Go back home and stay with your mothers. May the Lord be as good to you as you have been to me and to those who have died. And may the Lord make it possible for each of you to marry again and have a home.'

So Naomi kissed them goodbye. But they started crying and said to her, 'No! We will go with you to your people.'

"You must go back, my daughters," Naomi answered. "Why do you want to come with me? Do you think I could have sons again for you to marry? Go back home for I am too old to get married again. Even if I thought there was still hope and I got married tonight and had sons, would you wait until they had grown up? Would this keep you from marrying someone else? No, my daughters, you know that's impossible. The Lord has turned you against me and I feel very sorry for you."
Again they started crying. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye and went back home, but Ruth held on to her. So Naomi said to her, "Ruth, your sister-in-law has gone back home to her people, and to her god. Go back home with her."
But Ruth answered, "Don't ask me to leave you! Let me go with you. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. Wherever you die, I will die, and that is where I will be buried. May the Lord's worst punishment come upon me if I let anything but death separate me from you!"
When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she said nothing more.

Intercessions

Please take your flower and place it in the platter nearest you as you name, either silently or aloud, your thanksgiving or concern.

The Peace

May the peace of God be always with you.
And also with you

The Thanksgiving.

May God be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to our God.
Let us adore and exalt our God.
It is right to offer thanks and praise.

O Eternal Wisdom,
we praise you and give you thanks,
because in the time of our desolation
you gave us loving arms to cling to,
and at the point of our despair
a companion for the way;
taking upon you our unprotected flesh
that you might travel our journey,
share our passion,
and lead us into life

Therefore, with Ruth, who left her mother's house,
becoming an alien for your sake,
Naomi, whose bitterness was turned to joy,
so that she remembered her anguish no more,
and with all those, throughout the ages,
who have stuggled with you
and claimed your promise,
we praise you, saying:

Holy, holy, holy,
vulnerable God,
heaven and earth are full of your glory;
hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one
who comes in the name of God;
hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is our brother Jesus,
whose people is our people, and whose God, our God,
who, on the night that he was betrayed,
took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said,
This is my body, which is for you.
Do this to remember me.
In the same way the cup, after supper, saying:
This cup is the covenant in my blood.
Do this, whenever you drink it,
to remember me.

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Come then life-giving spirit of our God,
as we await with eager longing
the redemption of our bodies;
brood over these bodily things,
and make us one body with Christ,
that we may labour with creation
to be delivered from its bondage to decay
into the glorious liberty
of all the children of God,
in praise of our loving creator,
our wounded redeemer,
and our disturbing comforter,
now and forever,
Amen.

All: God, lover of us all,
most holy one.
help us to respond to you
to create what you want for us here on earth.
Give us today enough for our needs;
forgive us our weak and deliberate offences,
just as we may forgive others when they hurt us.
Help us to resist evil and to do what is good:
for we are yours,
endowed with your power to make our world whole.

This bread is broken for the life of the world.
Unite us in this sign.

Post Communion Prayer.

God of all, we give you thanks and praise that when we were still far off you met us and brought us home.
May we who share Christ's body live his risen life; we who drink his cup bring life to others; we whom the Spirit lights give light to the world.
Keep us on the path to redemption you have set before us, so we and all your children shall be free, and the whole earth live to praise your name, through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Blessing.

May God who dances in creation,
who embraces us with human love,
who shakes our lives like thunder,
bless us and drive us out with power
to fill the world with her justice,
Amen.

Dismissal

Send us out in the power of the Spirit.
To live and work to God's praise and glory, Amen.

17th. CENTURY NUN'S PRAYER

LORD Thou knowest better than I know myself that I am growing older and will someday be old. Keep me from the fatal habit of thinking I must say something on every subject and on every possible occasion. Release me from craving to straighten out everybody's affairs. Make me thoughtful but not moody: helpful but not bossy. With my vast store of wisdom, it seems a pity not to use it all, but thou knowest Lord that I want a few friends at the end.

Keep my mind free from the recital of endless details, give me wings to get to the point. Seal my lips on my aches and pains. They are increasing, and love of rehearsing them is becoming sweeter as the years go by. I dare not ask for grace enough to enjoy the tales of others' pains, but help me to endure them with patience.

I dare not ask for improved memory, but for a growing humility and a lessing cocksureness when my memory seems to clash with the memories of others. Teach me the glorious lesson that occasionally I may be mistaken.

Keep me reasonably sweet; I do not want to be a Saint - some of them are so hard to live with - but a sour old person is one of the crowning works of the devil. Give me the ability to see good things in unexpected places, and talents in unexpected people. And, give me, O Lord, the grace to tell them so,

AMEN

CWN Friday Liturgy Group
5 June 2009 *The Spirit of God*



***Introductions** : Take an object from the basket. Share our names and why we chose the object. Place object on the table.*

Say together
Holy Spirit,
come like a mother
to tend the wounds of a hurting world.
Come like a lover
to inspire the unloved.
Come like a worker
to labour for justice and peace.
Come like a child
to open our eyes to God's love.
Come like a sister
to support us in our need.
Come with power and tenderness
to rule our hearts.
From The Green Heart of the Snowdrop by Kate McIlhagga

L. Come to our aid, Spirit of Power
All: Spirit who moves among us, strengthen us, we pray.
2. Come to us Spirit of compassion.
All: Spirit who transforms the face of the earth Turn our hearts to the needs of the poor.
3. Spirit of the living one, stay with us.
All Rouse us from our sleep and bring forth life in us
4. Spirit of God brooding over the waters of our chaos
All inspire us to generous living.
5. Wind of God, dancing over the desert of our reluctance
All lead us to the oasis of celebration.
6. Breath of God inspiring communication among strangers,
All make us channels of your peace.

READING AND DISCUSSION (see overleaf)
Sharing in twos. General sharing.
INTERCESSIONS
Red glass nuggets on the flame card.

A Prayer is offered and the bread is shared
L. As the seed falls into the earth and dies to give life to the grain,
7. As the corn is cut and crushed to make flour,
8. As the flour is baked and the yeast dies to give life to the dough.
9. As the bread is broken and consumed to give life to the body.
10. So Jesus, sitting with the disciples, took bread and broke and said
ALL. This is my body broken for us; Let us eat it and remember Jesus.

The bread is passed around the circle, using the words of your choice, and eaten when every one has a piece.

ALL. May we go in peace
And may God the mother keep us safe;
God in Christ take us by the hand;
And God the Spirit cover us
With her warm bright wings. AMEN.
From HUMAN RITES

We share the Peace in a group hug.

The table is prepared and the meal shared.
When all are seated, we hold hands around the table for a moment, then a glass of juice passed around the table using words of your choice.
WHEN THE MEAL IS OVER WE PRAY
All As we prepare to leave and embrace the challenges of our lives and our world let us ask for God's blessing
11. May God bless us with strength to seek justice..
ALL So Be It
12. May God bless us with wisdom to care for our earth.
All So Be It
13. May God bless us with love to bring forth new life.
All So Be It
14. May we go in peace and be witnesses of hope.
All. Thanks be to God.
Adapted from prayer of Canadian Catholic Organisation for Development and Peace In BREAD FOR TOMORROW

READINGS
Around the circle each reads a phrase:

The heavens are in the Spirit's hands
The earth is in the Spirit's care
Spirit of life
Spirit of peace
In you is all strength
Stronger than the sea
Stronger than the rock
Stronger than the fire
The Spirit of God moving on the face of the waters
The Spirit of God breathed life into the dry bones and gave life to them
The angel said to Mary 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you'.
Mary's cousin Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit
At Jesus Baptism the Spirit descended
When Pentecost day came round, they had all met together, when suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of a violent wind.
The Spirit came upon those in the Upper Room like tongues of flame
The Lord and giver of life
Through the spirit all creation, life and history is sustained
Paul wrote to the Romans: When we do not know how to pray properly, then the Spirit personally makes our petitions for us in groans that cannot be put into words.
The wind blows where it pleases, so it is with the Spirit.
Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
Spirit of God come as light
The Spirit is the healer of my soul
May the Holy Spirit shower on us a rich and bountiful blessing.

These ideas were taken from GOD TO ENFOLD ME: Praying in the Celtic Tradition by Mary Calvert

There will follow seven minutes silent meditation.

Do any of these phrases speak to you in your spiritual journey?

Following the silence, ended by a bell, we will go into twos to share our thoughts in the silence
A bell will end this time of sharing.

There will then be a general sharing.

The INTERCESSIONS will follow.

Verse for Veronica

A bright light will be leaving us

Our friend, full of life and vitality

New ideas welcoming, faith developing,

Using her energies for family and friends,

Her skills enhancing those of others' children

Rejoicing in the new grandchild

Facing this new stage of being

One perhaps of co-creating with her maker.

Yes, the lamp is going out for us, but for her the dawn is coming.

Ianthe

A Year's Gleanings

Each year

Each year
the Alfriston Road roses -
red, white and yellow -
garland the street
with their beauty.
Each year
the Alfriston Road roses
perfume the road
with their aromas.

Each year
the Alfriston Road roses
before the world
parade their glory.
Each year,
just off London's
South Circular carriageway,
the Alfriston Road roses
tell of creation -
and of God's glory.

Desert Lent

In the desert
I find - often -
only traces
in my mind
of the world
I have recently left.
In the desert
I find myself
alone in the
vast expanse
of sand, aware
only of timelessness
and space.

In the desert
the relentless sun
beats down
on my head
with no respite,
or place to shelter.
In the desert
I know - somewhere -
an oasis can be found
but it seems far away
and all I can see
is the vacant horizon..

In the desert
the cries of creation
seem louder and
unfettered by the
bustling cities
and the media age.
In the desert
the wars and the
rumours of war
focus my mind
on the thirst of
so many for justice
amid the cruelties of nations.

Yet in the desert
I know can be found
dates for nourishment
and in the desert
flowering cacti
have been both
observed and appreciated.
And in the desert
I hear a distant
echo of that cry
from the Cross 'I thirst'
which reverberates
across the planet
each Good Friday
to reveal that
in the desert
there is still
the possibility of
an awareness which
stabs us into new life
and a thirst for
righteousness despite
our - and creation's -
fears, pains and agonies.

Easter in Piccadilly

The bells of St. James's
ring out, loud and clear,
this Easter Sunday
in Piccadilly,
the sun overhead
as resplendent
as if in August.
Inside, the organ
echoes the Easter triumph
with cadences
of strength and unity
as we contemplate
the fabulous and the
restrained aspects
of the Resurrection
with its frightened disciples
who were changed and went on
to change the world.

Here placarded before us
is the story of joy,
suffused with suffering,
hope, despite despair,
love overcoming hate,
and new life despite death,
as worshippers are enjoined
again to believe
in the power of love
and the power of peace
to subsume conflict
while outside, this Easter
in Piccadilly, the Interim
Council of Libya, by a striking
picture of Police Constable
Yvonne Fletcher, who fell in
St. James's Square, 17 April 1984,
is remembered by them
with roses and other flowers.

April city

The city is alive
this Eastertide
with Arab and with Jew,
with black and with white,
European and Asian, too,
thronging its streets,
with eyes wide open.

The city is grieving
this Eastertide
for the loss of
those once loved and
those who have left
for other places and bases.

The city is singing
this Eastertide
with nature's beauty and
the joy of children
exuberant in the April sun
as people of faith reach out
for those things
alone which can abide.

Jesus speaks

'I will bring you
comfort
when your heart is breaking;
I will bring you
love
when your heart is aching
for I, too, have known despair.'

'I will bring you
support
when life seems to be taking
a dive into meaninglessness
and you will begin - slowly -
to repair.'

'I will bring you
hope
when your heart is shaking
for I also experienced
doubt and sorrow.
I will bring you
faith
which I found shaping
my darkness, God's silence
and my wounds, that
there could be
a glad tomorrow.'

'Then, despite my anguish,
I found my Father making
- in the Spirit's power -
a way through suffering
to peace, even though
the memories would
never, ever, cease.'

I'm walking down memory lane

I'm walking down memory lane;
I'll never be this way again.
Despite sunshine laced with
blinding rain I find
I can forgive all the pain
as I walk down memory lane.

I'm walking down memory lane
and counting the cost - and the gain
for the times both of conflict
and tears in the train of
my decades and years.

As I walk down memory lane
it is clear that the past
must always remain - a part of
my liberated now as I allow
a new found forgiveness to reign.

The good heart

Lord, I seek to look within
and hear the beating of
my renewed heart as I relish
the task of the coming years,
despite all my fears.

Lord, I ask to look around
and catch a glimpse of my companions
on the Way who want, like me,
to live with hearts that throb
with a desire to show love and
compassion for a world which has
forgotten You - and often only jeers.

Lord, I seek to look up and see
not just Your bleeding wounds
but Your good heart despite the pain,
the doubt and the tears, and all
those Jerusalem leers.

Christmas Light

As the lights go out across the city
this Christmas Eve Creator God
help Your people still to shine light
in its darkest corners
through Christ the dove.

As the lights fade this Christmas Eve
and the city is hushed with expectation
help Your people, in Christ's Spirit,
to be as lights set on a hill
whose beams radiate both peace and love.

As the lights illuminate our homes
help Your people this Christmas time
to be as lamps burning brightly,
bringing the city warmth and hope
as they seek Your power from above.

Dear Ianthe,

Hope you have had a good, and a creative, year. My year has been patchy in that I did my right arm in with a trowel and an obdurate weed and though not serious has inhibited gardening and housework until near the end of October/November. But it is almost better now with physiotherapy help. Have 'retired' as a Methodist preacher; and need to concentrate in the next period, as you know, I think, on my autobiography. It is going to take quite a time. But it is worth doing I judge; because it is all about the laity in the world. Am still in London for a week or so now and again and we could meet up for a meal. How about it in January? (The London no is 0207/223/5339). With love,

Bruce



Novena

a nine-day period of prayer

as we approach
General Synod
July 6th - 10th 2012

Women and the Church

Affirming ✧ Campaigning ✧ Transforming

W✧A✧T✧C✧H

✧ How shall we pray? ✧

With thanksgiving, unceasingly, in a quiet place, putting our trust in God, gathered in twos and threes, saying 'Your will be done', with dancing and singing: just do it. This set of prayers and readings is for you to use during the nine days (Novena) leading up to the vote in General Synod on women bishops.

In 1992 the Church of England decided that it was right to ordain women as priests. Twenty years on, General Synod faces the decision on whether to allow women to be consecrated as bishops. After 12 years of deliberation, consultation and painful compromise a way forward is open before us.

These prayers and readings range across the deeper issues that underlie the present debate. Some will be familiar to you, some have been especially written for this time. All of them have been chosen to allow you to join in reflecting on this decision, whether woman or man, lay or ordained, full of hope for the Church or clinging to the edge of it facing despair. The WATCH prayer expresses the longing of which women bishops will be a physical symbol: that women and men, made in God's image, can each offer all that they are in the service of God's world.

Use these resources on your own, in a small group, or as part of church services. Additional prayers and readings, suitable for a longer vigil or prayer meeting, are on the WATCH website www.womenandthchurch.org or from the WATCH Office: St John's Church, Waterloo Road, London SE1 8TY.

Let us pray.

The WATCH Prayer

Gracious, loving Lord,
we look forward with hope and joyful anticipation
to the time when
men and women
can serve you, and all people,
equally in every task
within your Church.
Thank you that every position held
and task done
is valued by you
and furthers your mission on earth.
Thank you Lord
for hearing our prayer.
Amen

Pamela Wilding

Invocation

Within solidarity of the sisterhood
we watch
Within blessings of the brotherhood
we wait
Within cherishing of the church
we witness
...the watching of the angels
...the waiting of the called
...and the witnessing of the world.
Be over us Watching One
Be beside us Waiting One
Be before us Witnessing One
...may the church, the angels
and the world rejoice.
Amen.

Elizabeth Baxter

Day 1 ✧ Faith

Sarah was never going to see ninety again, and Abraham had already hit one hundred, and when the angel told them that the stork was on his way at last, they both of them almost collapsed. Abraham laughed 'till he fell on his face' (Genesis 17.17), and Sarah stood cackling behind the tent door so the angel wouldn't think she was being rude as the tears streamed down her cheeks. When the baby finally came, they even called him Laughter – which is what Isaac means in Hebrew – because obviously no other name would do.

Sarah and her husband had plenty of hard knocks in their time, and there were plenty more of them still to come, but at that moment when the angel told them they'd better start dipping into their old age pensions for cash to build a nursery, the reason they laughed was that it suddenly dawned on them that the wildest dreams they'd ever had hadn't been half wild enough.

Frederick Buechener

Prayer for the day

Faithful God,
give us faith in you,
the one who answers
prayers beyond our
wildest dreams;
give us faith in you,
the one for whom
nothing is impossible;
give us faith in you,
the one who brings life
out of death;
give us faith in you,
the one whose kingdom
will come.
Amen

Kat Campion-Spall

Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7

Points for Prayer

We pray in faith:

- ✧ for all those who nurture the faith of others, both in formal ministries and informally as friends and family members
- ✧ for those preparing to make a commitment of faith, in baptism or confirmation
- ✧ for those whose faith is challenged by the failings of the Church
- ✧ for the faith that God's will for the Church will be done

The WATCH Prayer

Gracious, loving Lord,
we look forward with hope
and joyful anticipation
to the time when
men and women
can serve you,
and all people,
equally in every task
within your Church.
Thank you that every
position held
and task done
is valued by you
and furthers
your mission on earth.
Thank you Lord
for hearing our prayer.
Amen

Day 2 ✧ Hope

We believe that horizons of hope
are never fixed.
They always move beyond,
in the creativity of God.

We believe that powers of evil
cannot kill God.
God walks on free
and leaps off our crosses
in the risen Jesus Christ.

We believe that the Spirit
can never be confined.
She dances forth in the world
and is found in surprising places,
leading us on until the end of time.

Dorothy McRae-McMahon,
from Liturgies for the Journey of Life

Prayer for the day

Lord,
when we think only of our
own wants and desires,
we are impatient
to have them satisfied;
yet in our hearts
we know that such
satisfaction will crumble
to dust.
Give us that spirit of hope
which can enable us
to want what you want,
and to wait patiently on
your time
in the knowledge
that in you alone
is found true and lasting
pleasure.
Amen

Mozarabic Sacramentary
(3rd century)

Psalm 91

Points for Prayer

As we pray for a Church led by women and men together, we pray today for:

- ✧ women who have been prepared by God to lead the Church of England as bishops
- ✧ men and women who kept hope alive when the Church ignored or rejected their voices
- ✧ our sisters and brothers in the Roman Catholic Church whose wait is long and arduous
- ✧ protection from terror, pestilence and destruction for all who press on in hope at this time.

The WATCH Prayer

Gracious, loving Lord,
we look forward with hope
and joyful anticipation
to the time when
men and women
can serve you,
and all people,
equally in every task
within your Church.
Thank you that every
position held
and task done
is valued by you
and furthers
your mission on earth.
Thank you Lord
for hearing our prayer.
Amen

Day 3 ✧ Love

Love God; Love your neighbour as yourself. This trinity of love is at the heart of our Christian faith and they are interdependent – *you can't have one without the others.* The other side of the coin is the fact that God loves us.

A faith community that does not reflect this picture of love is failing in its mission. Women have been asked to give love unreservedly – we have been asked to accept second class status in the Church. We have been asked to be good girls.

But that time is over. Women are asking to be totally included – to be encouraged, to be affirmed, to be enabled to answer the call they have from God to serve God and God's people, in every way that is open to men.

We know that God loves us; we need to know that God's people love us too. Then the Church will be whole and we will have a message to the world that the world is longing to hear.

Lillalou Hughes

Prayer for the day

Bound, my soul,
up the steps
of heaven
like a child
come home
from a long
and weary day.

Leap, my heart,
and fall
into open arms
and press
tight against
your Mother's
laughing breast.

Sigh,
and be
at peace

Christina Robertson,
in Lifting Women's Voices

John 15:12; 1 John 4:19

Points for Prayer

We pray today:

- ✧ for a Church that shows forth the love of God
- ✧ for women who feel unloved
- ✧ for women longing to live out their vocation
- ✧ that our churches may be inclusive
- ✧ that all may see the love of Christ in others
- ✧ that we are willing to show "tough love" where necessary

The WATCH Prayer

Gracious, loving Lord,
we look forward with hope
and joyful anticipation
to the time when
men and women
can serve you,
and all people,
equally in every task
within your Church.
Thank you that every
position held
and task done
is valued by you
and furthers
your mission on earth.
Thank you Lord
for hearing our prayer.
Amen

Day 4 ✧ Loss

Paul's words to the early church in Corinth, written in the context of factions, infighting and suffering, are deeply grounding. Praise God, he says. Praise God, because when we are vulnerable, we are offered such love and comfort that we can go out to love and comfort others.

The details of the factions and infighting have changed, but 2000 years later, they remain, and Paul's injunctions remain as powerful as ever.

For some people, a vocation will be realised through an experience of loss.

The strange story of the crucified and wounded Jesus speaks a truth that we shall never fully understand – through our loss, we can bring healing. In dying to ourselves, others can find life.

Naomi Shihab Nye expresses something of this paradox in her beautiful poem, *Kindness:*

'Before you know what kindness really is,
You must lose things.'

Kate Tuckett

Prayer for the day

All praise to you,
God of grace,
who gives us the promise
of eternal love.
May we have the courage
to respond:
to live gracefully,
love generously, and
give as we have received,
so that we no longer live
for ourselves,
but for Christ
who died for us;
and in entering
into the life of Christ,
may we give life abundant
to the world.
Amen

Kate Tuckett

2 Corinthians 1:3-5

Points for Prayer

We pray today for all who suffer loss:

- *practical loss*: of homes and livelihoods, food and clean water
- *loss of opportunity*: of education, of prospects, of future (globally girls are many times less likely to receive an education than boys)
- *loss of dreams*: of vocation, of focus, of vision
- *loss of hope*: of faith, of the sight of healing and transformation

May we stand in solidarity with all who experience loss, and offer our love and comfort.

The WATCH Prayer

Gracious, loving Lord,
we look forward with hope
and joyful anticipation
to the time when
men and women
can serve you,
and all people,
equally in every task
within your Church.
Thank you that every
position held
and task done
is valued by you
and furthers
your mission on earth.
Thank you Lord
for hearing our prayer.
Amen

Day 5 ✧ Justice

And ain't I a woman?
That little man in black there say a woman can't have as much rights as a man 'cause Christ wasn't a woman.
Where did your Christ come from?
From God and a woman.
Man had nothing to do with him.
If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down, all alone,
together women ought to be able to turn it rightside up again.

From 'Ain't I A Woman?'
Sojourner Truth

Sojourner Truth was a black slave, who made this speech at the Women's Rights Convention in Ohio in 1852.

Prayer for the day

May God bless you
with a restless discomfort
about easy answers, half-truths
and superficial relationships,
so that you may seek truth
boldly and love deep within
your heart.
May God bless you
with holy anger at injustice,
oppression, and exploitation of
people,
so that you may tirelessly work
for justice, freedom, and peace
among all people.
May God bless you
with the gift of tears to shed
with those who suffer from
pain, rejection, starvation, or
the loss of all that they cherish,
so that you may reach out your
hand to comfort them and
transform their pain into joy.
May God bless you
with enough foolishness to
believe that you really CAN
make a difference in this world,
so that you are able, with God's
grace, to do what others claim
cannot be done. Amen

A Fourfold Benedictine Blessing
by Sr. Ruth Fox, OSB

Luke 1:46-55

Points for Prayer

We pray today

- ✧ for all who work for justice
- ✧ for law-makers and judges
- ✧ for peace-makers, peace-keepers and agencies working for those in need
- ✧ for women subject to gender-based violence, and those who offer safe refuge

The WATCH Prayer

Gracious, loving Lord,
we look forward with hope
and joyful anticipation
to the time when
men and women
can serve you,
and all people,
equally in every task
within your Church.
Thank you that every
position held
and task done
is valued by you
and furthers
your mission on earth.
Thank you Lord
for hearing our prayer.
Amen

Day 6 ✧ Wisdom

Julian

Truth sees God:
Wisdom gazes on God:
and of these is born a third,
a holy, wondering delight in God
which is love.
Where there is indeed truth and wisdom,
there, too, is love,
springing from them both.
And we reflect him, seeing and knowing
that we have been made for love:
and in that love
God keeps us everlastingly.

God

It is I!
It is I, who am the strength and goodness
of Fatherhood;
I who am the wisdom of Motherhood;
I who am light and grace and blessed
love;
I who am Trinity; I who am Unity:
I who am the sovereign goodness
of every single thing;
I who enable you to love and long;
It is I, the eternal fulfilment of every
genuine desire.

from a dialogue created by Alan Webster
from the words of Julian of Norwich

Prayer for the day

Wise God declared,
It is not good that man
should be alone…
Forgive our foolishness;
forgive our pride;
forgive us for not listening
to your Word.

Holy Wisdom,
open our ears
to hear your truth;
guide our walk
in the way of insight;
remind us once again of
God's wise words:
It is not good that man
should be alone.
Amen

Lindsay Southern

Wisdom 7:22-30

Points for Prayer

We pray today:

- ✧ that wisdom is shown in the deliberations at General Synod
- ✧ that loving wisdom is apparent where there is dissent
- ✧ that the desire of women and men for a whole church may be fulfilled

The WATCH Prayer

Gracious, loving Lord,
we look forward with hope
and joyful anticipation
to the time when
men and women
can serve you,
and all people,
equally in every task
within your Church.
Thank you that every
position held
and task done
is valued by you
and furthers
your mission on earth.
Thank you Lord
for hearing our prayer.
Amen

Day 7 ✧ Mission

I am much happier working with someone than working alone. Sometimes being alone with a task is unavoidable. But Jesus knows that two is better than one, our witness is better, our work is easier, the burdens and the joys are shared when we walk and work with someone else. So from all those who were following him he chooses seventy to go out and prepare the way for him. He sends them – they are apostles.

But do we assume these were all men? Luke doesn't say so and in fact they most probably weren't. So Jesus sends out women and men as apostles to prepare the way, to work together, representing rounded, complete humanity an image of creation in mission. For God realised at creation that 'It is not good that the man should be alone' and it is true in life, in mission, in ministry.

Andrew Nunn

Prayer for the day

Send me Lord,
to proclaim your word;
send me Lord,
to witness to your love;
send me Lord,
to speak of peace;
send me Lord,
to break the bread;
but send me
with my brother, my sister
for we work best together.
Amen.

Andrew Nunn

Luke 10:1-2

Points for Prayer

We pray today:

- ✧ for our prayer partners
- ✧ for our mission partners
- ✧ for those who minister alone
- ✧ that mission and ministry may reflect the perfection of creation

The WATCH Prayer

Gracious, loving Lord,
we look forward with hope
and joyful anticipation
to the time when
men and women
can serve you,
and all people,
equally in every task
within your Church.
Thank you that every
position held
and task done
is valued by you
and furthers
your mission on earth.
Thank you Lord
for hearing our prayer.
Amen

Day 8 ✧ Calling

Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
will you let my life be grown
in you and you in me?

Will you love the 'you' you hide
if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside
and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around,
through my sight and touch and sound
in you and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name,
let me turn and follow you
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you and you in me.

from The Summons
John Bell

Prayer for the day

Those who work for change
suffer resistance.
So make us strong.
Those who do new things
sometimes feel afraid.
So make us brave.
Those who challenge the
world as it is arouse anger.
So grant us inner peace.
Those who live joyfully are
envied.
So make us generous.
Those who try to love
encounter hate.
So make us steadfast in you.
Amen

The St Hilda Community

1 Thess 5:16-24

Points for Prayer

We pray today:

- ✧ that we may all respond to Christ's call to follow him, and discern God's will for our lives
- ✧ that we may value every vocation
- ✧ for the Church to be open to discern God's call to anyone, to any ministry, regardless of their gender
- ✧ for the women and men in our Church God is calling to be bishops

The WATCH Prayer

Gracious, loving Lord,
we look forward with hope
and joyful anticipation
to the time when
men and women
can serve you,
and all people,
equally in every task
within your Church.
Thank you that every
position held
and task done
is valued by you
and furthers
your mission on earth.
Thank you Lord
for hearing our prayer.
Amen

Day 9 ✧ Flourishing

Any junior school child will tell you what plants need to flourish: light, warmth, food and water. So what do humans require?

Catherine of Siena wrote:
The sun hears the fields talking about effort,
and the sun smiles and whispers to me,
'Why don't the fields just rest,
for I am willing to do everything to help them grow?'
Rest, my sweet ones, in prayer.

How shall we flourish, grow sweet blossom, bear fruit, bring forth life, resist evil? Remember that the fruit of the Spirit, like all fruit, comes without conscious effort. The lilies of the field do not toil or spin. If we rest in prayer we will flourish.

For centuries in the Church women have been excluded, marginalised, patronised and treated as the cause of sin and corruption. Yet they have contributed to the growth and holiness of the Church in myriad ways. How? Katherine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the US was asked how she maintained her resilience in all the adversity that she must face. Her answer: 'I know that I am beloved'.

How shall we cultivate such resilience? By dwelling on what is good, and by a rigorous realism about what is.

Hilary Cotton

Prayer for the day

God of life and growth,
entwine us with all
who work for the
flourishing of your Church,
bringing to fruition
Episcopal gifts
in those who are called:
both men and women.
Give us the will to dwell
on what is good,
the heart to know
the truth of your love,
and the mind to discern
and live by what is just;
that all whom you cherish
will bear good fruit
in the season of your Spirit.
Amen

Hilary Cotton

Philippians 4:4-8

Points for Prayer

- ✧ remember the ways in which you are beloved – by God, by friends and family
- ✧ pray for women you know who are living lives of honour and grace in difficult circumstances
- ✧ pray for Provinces where there are already female Anglican bishops, that they may know today that they are beloved.
- ✧ pray for goodness to abound at General Synod in July

The WATCH Prayer

Gracious, loving Lord,
we look forward with hope
and joyful anticipation
to the time when
men and women
can serve you,
and all people,
equally in every task
within your Church.
Thank you that every
position held
and task done
is valued by you
and furthers
your mission on earth.
Thank you Lord
for hearing our prayer.
Amen

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www.womenandthechurch.org

I

I lay me down to rest
I lay me down to wash
I lay me down to fast

Bird will carry me
Breath will carry me
Bed will carry me

In my boat of stone
In my boat of pain
In my boat of sleep

All alone on the ocean
All alone on the deep
All alone in the dark

I lay me down to sleep
I lay me down to die
I lay me down to rest

2.x.08

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12

Grandfather,
look at our brokenness.
We know that in all creation
only the human family
has strayed away from the sacred way.
We know that we are the ones
who are divided,
and we are the ones
who must come back together
to walk in the sacred way.
Grandfather, sacred one,
teach us love, compassion and honour
that we may heal the earth
and heal each other.

From the Ojibway nation of Canada
Quoted in Barbara Wood, *Our World God's World* (Bible Reading Fellowship 1986).

11

O God, whose word is fruitless
when the mighty are not put down,
the humble remain humiliated,
the hungry are not filled,
and the rich are:
make good your word,
and begin with us.
Open our hearts and unblock our ears
to hear the voices of the poor
and share their struggle;
and send us away empty with longing

A Thanksgiving Prayer

Thank you, Loving Creator . . .
for family and friends who gather in person or in spirit around our Thanksgiving table.

Thank you, Loving Creator . . .
for those who have gone before us in death, for good memories and kinship with them.

Thank you, Loving Creator . . .
for being our Inner Light, our Guiding Radiance, our Unending Source of Goodness.

Thank you, Loving Creator . . .
for food, shelter, clothing, and for the abundance we have beyond what we basically need.

Thank you, Loving Creator . . .
for disturbing us, challenging us, urging us by your grace to grow deeper and more whole.

Thank you, Loving Creator . . .
for the wealth of relationships, for the treasure of being able to love and be loved.

Thank you, Loving Creator . . .
for what we have that we most take for granted, and would sorely miss if it were not ours.

Thank you, Loving Creator . . .
for the amazing gift of our life, for the complexity and beauty of the human person.

Thank you, Loving Creator . . .
for the magnificence of our universe and the nurturing gift of our planet.

Book Title

Thank you, Loving Creator, for, oh, so much more:
sleep that restores, prayer that strengthens,
friendship that comforts, laughter that releases,
tears that heal, hearts and bodies that mend,
minds that find meaning, arms that embrace . . .
(Add your own additional thanks . . .)

Together we offer you our gratitude for the year that has passed since our last Thanksgiving. May our lives continually reveal our gratitude by the generous way we share of what we have graciously received.

JOYCE RUPP

V

From: Survivor's Poetry.
Under the Asylum Tree.
Pub: Survivor's Press 1995



Val Stein

SYLVIA, THANKS A BUNCH

I wrote this after reading the poems of Sylvia Plath and continually encountering hideous disability imagery. EG: describing trees blowing in the wind, she writes "So the deaf and dumb/Signal the blind, and are ignored . . ." Later, I came across the line "We touch like cripples . . ."

We touch like cripples,
like conspirators,
like those who understand
each other's lives,
reaching past the old tracked scars
the world leaves
as it rolls heavy over us.

At times with daily clumsiness
fumbling against our bruised places,
at times awed blank
or stone uncaring
at the chasm of our differences;
sometimes with deliberation
carving new cliffs with malicious pick,
but sometimes launching ourselves freely
into the dividing air.

And we touch like cripples together,
leaning one against the other,
holding those who have gone
for all their lives unheld,
reaching out to those against whom
walls have bricked in each possibility,
to those whom others have touched
with knives,
with drugs,
with ECT.
We touch with tenderness,
with knowing,
tentatively,
sensually,
raucously,
with laughter,
with fear,
with strength.

This is what I want to happen: that our earth mother
may be clothed in ground corn four times over;
that frost flowers cover her over entirely;
that the mountain pines far away over there
may stand close to each other in the cold;
that the weight of snow crack some branches!
In order that the country may be this way
I have made my prayer sticks into something alive.

ZUNI PRAYER

May the earth continue to live
May the heavens above continue to live
May the rains continue to dampen the land
May the wet forests continue to grow
Then the flowers shall bloom
And we people shall live again.

HAWAIIAN PRAYER

Potiphar's wife

Genesis 39

I know what I want
I know who I want
and it's him
that young Israelite, Joseph

I coax him
I entice him
'Come, make love with me'

Not once, not twice
but day after day
seeking him
eyeing him
lusting after him

I'm the prototype of the lascivious woman
the poor little rich girl
who has everything she can ask for
but wants more

the teasing temptress
the sex-hungry seductress
the bored wife
the middle-aged woman
seeking a new diversion

History blamed me
long after he did

God, listen to his self-righteousness!
I loved the smell of power on him
the ease with which he'd risen to prominence
I loved his youthfulness
I loved his vigour
I loved his cocky certainty

'Come out! come out!
Unstop your voices!
Open your mouths!
Speak the words you might have uttered
and never had the chance to say!'

We'll watch them all start up,
like figures in a frieze suddenly animated,
their frozen frames moving,
their limbs silently working,
their mouths opening and shutting as they gulp in the air,
try out their long-shuttered voices,
cry out their misery, antipathy, ambivalence, rage,
even their occasional joy.

Watch them spilling over the pages,
a stampede of women's feet
flattening the hills and prairies,
a cascade of women's voices
trilling and ululating over the sounds that have carried down to us
from the high places,
a swathe of women's bodies
moving through forbidden territory,
sweeping ancient pathways
clear of the dust and debris,
reconfiguring the continents.

And we're the ones who are to do it:
release the pause button
on history's long unrolling,
turn up the volume on the silent movies,
wind back the tape to replay the action,
watching for what was unnoticed, unremarked,
disappearing into the edges of the camera's viewpoint.
We're the ones, now, who'll unfreeze the frame.

A litany of women's voices

I am Eve. I argued with the snake and reached after wisdom.
For this I was banished from the garden.
Listen to me.

I am Miriam. I sang lustily
and led the women in praise of our God.
O hear me.

I am Deborah. I listened to my people's wrangles,
I weighed up evidence and judged between them.
Pay heed to the voice of my calling.

I am Ruth. I dared to declare my love of a woman
in words strong and true.
Let my cry come unto you.

I am Hannah. I wailed and begged and pleaded with the Almighty for my child,
never heeding men's disapproval.
O hear me.

I am Esther. I kept cool in time of great danger
and used diplomacy and tact to save the life of my people.
Give ear to me.

I am Anna. I discerned the presence of great power
in a common Jewish baby
and gave utterance to God's praise in the Temple.
Listen to me.

I am the Syro-Phoenician woman, whose love for my daughter drove me to Jesus.
I compelled his respect with my frank and daring words.
O hear me.

I am woman without a name,
yet my action of anointing Jesus spoke louder than words.
My story has been passed over in silence

though Jesus said it should be remembered
wherever the gospel is proclaimed.
Pay heed to the voice of my calling.

I am Martha. I recognized Jesus and named him the Christ.
I believed in his power over death.
For this, I have been consigned to the kitchen.
Let my cry come unto you.

I am Magdalene. My only sin was sickness,
yet men have defiled my name.
I risked ridicule and relinquished the joy of discovering my beloved.
I left the garden to go and proclaim the good news.
O hear me.

I am Mary. I gave my yes to God fiercely,
without reservation. I have kept my many thoughts
and secrets locked in the silence of my heart,
pondering them deeply,
while men set me on a pedestal and gazed at me from afar.
Give ear to me now.

We are the women who refused to keep silent.
We are the ones who claimed our power.
We named ourselves, we shaped our times,
we spoke the words of life.
We are the spokeswomen for the many who kept silent,
who, through fear, ignorance or brutal oppression,
never found their voices.
We are the guardians of the tradition of women's wisdom.
We are your mothers, your sisters, your friends.
Why, then, have you denied us?
Why have you refused our words?

Draft: **Garden Eucharist June 24 07 Theme: peace and reconciliation**
Opening song Open your ears

Opening words from the celebrant

Prayer (said by All)

Holy Weaver, life-giving Spirit
We draw near to each other in your presence.
You breathe, and we see afresh:
You startle, and we her anew:
You cajole, and we act again with vigour.
Weave a pattern of peace between strangers,
Weave a pattern of love between friends,
Weave a pattern of hope among the hopeless,
Weave a pattern of joy among the sorrowful
For you, holy Weaver, Creator, Redeemer, Spirit
are the true lover of us all.
Bind us in your love, now and forever. (adapted from prayer by Ruth Harvey)

R

Reading:
When the song of the angels is stilled
when the star in the sky is gone
when the king and princes are home
when the shepherds are back with their flocks
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost
to heal the broken
to feed the hungry
to release the prisoner
to rebuild nations
to bring peace among the people
to make music in the heart.

(Howard Thurman)

All together:
I believe in the woman of hope
that lies within me
I believe in her strength drawn
from the depth of her being
I believe in the power fired from
that great depth of
compassion and love
I believe in the gentleness of her strength
I believe she is a woman of dignity
reaching out to touch and be touched
at depth
I believe in the centre
she moves from and trust it fully
I honour
The wisdom and stillness
she offers me on life's journey.

15 Circ file

WOMAN-CREATED LITURGIES

2ND EDITION

Christian Women's Resource Centre
36 Court Lane London SE21 7DR

Liturgy on Women and Hope

(This is a liturgy worked out by three women from the Catholic Women's Network who were also members of the the Catholic Peoples Weeks, who were asked to lead a morning on Women and hope, Hope being the theme of this particular week held in Dorset in 1985.
Rather than having liturgy distinct from the rest of the input, the whole morning was conceived as being liturgy)

1. Leader A In the name of God the Creator, Jesus the Redeemer and God the Holy Spirit, welcome. (an explanation was given about how the morning had been conceived and how it was using methods which had been found effective in the Catholic Women's Network community days)

2. The Wheel (the women and men participating were asked to form two concentric rings, and to talk to the person opposite them, answering the questions put to them by Leader B. Each one in turn would give their reactions for about 4 minutes while the other erson listened, then the other person had her or his turn) At the end of the alloted time one of the rings was asked to move one person to the right, and the process was repeated)

Questions: A. Where in the institutional church do you feel most need for change?

B As a woman or as a man, at what times do you feel most undervalued in the Church?

C What is your vision of Church that truly reflects the resurrection

(25 minutes)

3. Song Magnificat (Taize)

4. Scriptural Study Leader C gave a brief introduction and read Mark 5 21-43 (The woman with the issue of blood)

People than gathered in small groups and were first asked to throw up key words that came out of the scripture reading - then to discuss "how dŏes this passage illumine what you feel about faith, hopelessness, healing, suffering, touching ritual, spontaneity, resurrection etc. 5 minutes before the end the main points to be put with makrers on wall charts which were then put up for people to look at during Coffee.

(45 mins)

5. Coffee

6. Penitential Rite

Leader: God forgive us for losing our trust in you, and for being too easily discouraged

All (sung response) O God our Creator, give us new confidence in your power

Leader: God forgive us for the times when we have not treated others as persons to be valued

All sing Jesus our Redeemer, help us to build your Church here

Leader: God forgive us for the injustices we have participated in through our own silence

All sing: Spirit of God, breathe new life into the world today

(the people then offered their own spontaneous prayers of repentence)
All (bowing heads) May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

Kiss of Peace

Leader: Let us all offer each other a sign of peace to show our forgiveness of each others (the peace is exchanged around the room each speaking to and/or embracing all the other participants)

Song: Shalom,my friends, Shalom my friends shalom shalom
The peace of Christ I give you today, shalom, shalom (x3)

Homily Hope and the Christian women's movement (Leader B) (15 mins)
(script can be supplied separately, 3 pages)

(followed by a short sharing with the person sitting next one about what has been said)

Offertory An offering of words or objects which symbolise hope to the persons offering them(eg a small sapling, a cross, a child's picture, a computer print out, various readings)

(30 mins)

Sung Our Father Rimsky-korsakoff

Wilderness Meal of Milk and Honeybread (as used outside Southwark Cathedral during the men only Petertide ordinations)

Blessing May the God of hope bring you such joy and peace in your faith that the power of the Holy Spirit will remove all bounds to hope

Final Song Freely (Songs of the Spirit)

LITURGY OF MARY OF THE MAGNIFICAT (SJIA AGM Liturgy 1988)

Song Where are you bound, Mary

Reading: The Visitation Lk.1 36-45

Reading from "Mary and Women" Catherina Halkes, Concilium "Mary in the Churches" (p70, para 2 summarising Rosemary Radford Ruether on Mary)

When Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth, she does not become enraptured because she is pregnant. On the contrary she glorifies God's liberating action precisely because she is herself the liberated Israel; those of low degree who are exalted. Her Magnificat is, as it were, a prelude in radical, subversive language to Luke's Sermon on the Plain and the opening address of Jesus in Luke 4. In other words, Jesus' message is first and foremost intended for all those marginalised people who are summed up in the insignificant woman, Mary. Because of her faithfulness and her belief in the Messiah, she is the best possible personification of the Church as the messianic Israel, but only when this image is viewed quite radically and in its most profound consequences, that is as pointing to a self-emptying and loss of power and a transformation of self into service. God emptied himself and became service in Christ and Christ emptied himself to liberate his people. In the same way Mary's task was to continue God's liberating activity in the world. The last shall be first and those who rule must, on their way to the kingdom, join the ranks of the poor, whose head and example is Mary.

Short silence

Magnificat of Now (from Miriam of Nazareth, Johnson)

Readings based on Introducing Liberation Theology, by Leonardo and Clovis Boff.

Reader A.

Mary is the prophetic and liberating Woman of the people. "All the theological greatness of Mary is based on the lowliness of her historical tradition. She is Mary of Nazareth, a woman of the people, who observed the usual customs of her day, visited her relatives, took part in wedding celebrations and worried about her son, following him even to the foot of the cross, as any mother would do. "Because of this ordinariness and not in spite of it" God did "great things" for her.

Leader O loving and sustaining God, help us to challenge the powerful and work to empower all so that they may use their gifts in building up your realm.

All Sung response

Reader B

Mary is the perfect example of faith responding to God. She did not understand the full extent of the mystery to be brought about through her but she trusted in God and concerned herself with others - her cousin Elizabeth, her son lost on pilgrimage, the guests with no wine "Persons can be liberators only if they free themselves from their own

preoccupations and place their lives at the service of others".

Leader Help us O loving and sustaining Creator to be as responsive to your word as Mary was, and to identify ourselves with the needs of others, particularly women who have suffered so much by the distortion of your word.

All Sung response

Reader C Thirdly, she is the prophetess of the Magnificat "anticipating the liberating proclamation of her son she shows herself attentive to the fate of the humiliated and debased, and invokes divine revolution in the relationship between oppressors and oppressed"

Leader O loving and Sustaining Redeemer, help us to live out the Magnificat in our attitudes and actions.

All Sung response

Reader D Finally in Latin-American popular religion Mary is seen as the champion of the poor. The masses bring their troubles to the centres of Marian pilgrimage where they are filled with renewed strength and hope to carry on struggling and surviving.

Leader O loving and sustaining Spirit, inspire us to free the image of Mary, Mother of God, from the pious distortions of the ages, and find in her a model of challenge and hope.

All: sung response

Responsorial song

Poem "a Blessed Embarrassment" from "Beginning with Mary" by T Carlyle, the American protestant scripture scholar

Photolanguage reflections (large photographs of women in many lands and situations will be handed round. reflections are invited from the participants)

Poem "Did the woman say" (Frances Croake Frank, in Celebrating women)

Silence

Song: The Bakerwoman

Concluding prayer
All move round table, link hands and sing blessing of the food.

(Sung responses and blessing from Housetop Communication centre songs, hopefully soon to be published).

LITURGY ON A THEME OF LISTENING
St Joan's International Alliance Feb 87

Opening Song Open your ears, O Christian People (inclusive language version)

From Psalm 40 (all say together)
I waited, I waited for you O God
and you stooped down to me;
you heard my cry.

You put a new song into my mouth
praise of you, my God.
Many shall see and fear
and shall place their trust in you.

How many, O God my Creator
are the wonders and designs
that you have worked for us;
you have no equal.
Should I proclaim and speak of them,
they are no more than I can tell!

You do not ask for sacrifice and offerings
but an open ear.
You do not ask for holocaust and victim
Instead, here am I.

In the scroll of the book it stands written
that I should do your will.
My God, I delight in your law
In the depth of my heart.

Leader As Christians we must be open to what God is calling us to do in our own particular circumstances, and in the face of the many problems of the world. But this openness is not just a vertical process, we cannot know the will of God nor carry out the command of love of our neighbour if we do not also listen to and respect the insights of others. Part of our particular situation is that we are part of a Church that is historically conditioned in many of its attitudes and structures. It is a sign of hope that our new understanding of the Church as the people of God leads to an appreciation of the value and co-responsibility of each and every one.

Reading from the Easter People:

The command of Christ to his disciples to love one another as he has loved us can find a variety of expessions in ordinary life - in caring for one another, in experiencing respect and affection, in being sensitive to other persons' needs and difficulties. Perhaps the most striking expression of Christian love which emerged from the National Pastoral Congress was that we trusted each other, and listened to one another, as each having something valuable to contribute, each with a unique witness to give. (para 16)

Baijan: Listen to your silent voice

Reading from One Step Enough p84 (Peter Cornwell)

Free form version of psalm 17. (each verse said antiphonally)

Loving Creator, hear our prayer
and listen to our call made in the spirit of truth.

You know what we are,
and that we seek to be faithful to you:
We search your word to find our way.
Let us walk in your footsteps
so that our feet do not slip.

We call on you, O Creator of life
and you answer us.
Listen to our voice and show us
your loving kindness, O saviour of all who flee evil.

Those who oppose us cluster around, breathing hostility
entrenched in their prejudices, their mouths utter parodies of truth.
Those who cling to the misunderstandings of the past are closing in,
seeking to overthrow us.

Rise up, O Source of all goodness and power,
and rescue us from distorting your word.
Enlighten all who subvert the good news.

Strengthen us in the struggle to do your will.
Let our reward be to see you face to face,
and come into your loving presence.

Scripture Reading
Remember this, everyone should be quick to listen but slow to speak and slow to human anger ... You must do what the Word tells you and not just listen to it and deceive yourselves. Anyone who listens to the Word and takes no action is like people who look at their own features in a mirror and go off and immediately forget it... Anyone who is wise and understanding among you should from a good life give evidence of deeds done in the gentleness of wisdom .. the wisdom that comes down from above is essentially something pure; it is also peaceable, kindly and considerate; it is full of mercy and shows itself by doing good; nor is there any trace of partiality or hypocrisy in it. The peace sown by peacemakers brings a harvest of justice. (James 1:19, 22-25: 3:13, 17-18)

Song Universal Song

Reading (from In God's image p74, reflecting on the insights of the WCC Sheffield consultation "the Community of women and men in the Church")

Penitential prayer

Group A Loving Creator,
who has breathed your own life into your people,
you have given us all creation to care for
- the tall trees of the forest and the crops of the fields,
- the fish that swim in the sea and the animals that roam the earth
All the good things that you made

Group B And we, what have we done with your gifts?
We have used the resources of the earth recklessly
plundered the riches of this planet with greed
refused to share with the poor and the hungry.

All Forgive us, O Source of all our Being, and bring us back into harmony with your universe.

Group A We are called to love one another in your name,
yet what have we done?
We talk about love with our lips

Group B But We pass on the other side when needs press in upon us,
rules matter more than compassion, the law than the spirit.

All Forgive us for our failure to listen to your call to show forth your love in our lives and that of the Church.

Group A We have been called to be sisters and brothers of Christ yet what have we done? We have allowed the dominations and oppressions of the world to enter into Christ's body.

Group B We have failed to listen to each other although we are all called to be a chosen race, a royal priesthood, and a consecrated nation.

All Send forth your spirit into our hearts so that we may truly share with one another the work of building up your realm here on earth.

Group A You created human beings in your own image "male and female God created them".

Group B Yet your people have treated women, made in the image of God, as inferior and defective.

All Help us to build up a true community of women and men in the church, where sexual and racial discrimination is overcome.

Group A God our liberator, through Christ's redeeming act we have been made free and brought out into the light.

Group B Yet we fear to act as prophets when we see that things need changing

All Forgive us O loving Creator for our lack of courage. Send forth your spirit and make your new creation truly effective in us. Help all your people to work together in love and trust to build up the body of Christ.

Silence, then people add in their own bidding prayers

The Peace (all hold hands and sing)

Shalom my friends, shalom my friends shalom shalom
The peace of Christ we share today, shalom, shalom (x3)

Blessing of the food

All: We share this loaf today, as a sign that we are all one in the body of Christ. Just as many grains came together into the one loaf, so we are all one in Christ Jesus. Help us to reflect the life giving love of the Creator, Redeemer and Spirit in all our relationships and actions.

Final song The light of my day is the love in your eyes

MAGNIFICATS

My soul weeps
and my spirit lies battered within me
for the world belongs to the heartless imagination of the wealthy
and greed for profit and fear of war rule the earth;
the powerless go unheard and the hungry are not fed
the poor and the weak are oppressed
and great things are done in the name of this generation.
Arrogant men and submissive women
squander the inheritance of our faith
and seeds of hope are left to die in the dust.
Who will save our children for the promise of your mercy?
Who will scatter the darkness of our disobedience to the calls for justice?
You who have looked with favour on your lowly servant Mary
will redeem your people in every generation.

Glory to the one who created us and who re-creates us,
glory to the one who redeemed us and who goes on redeeming us
Glory to the one who sanctifies and sustains us, now and for ever.
Amen (Terry Garley In MOW newsletter, Oct 84)

Part of Magnificat of Acceptance(from "Miryam of Nazareth-£5 p & p inc)

Yes, forever in the life of humankind
people will sing of this loving encounter!
through remembering this moment, the faithful
will know all things are possible in God
Holy is the place within me where God lives.
God's tender fingers reach out from age to age ....

I have experienced the creative power of God's embracing arms
and I know the cleansing fire of unconditional love.
I am freed from all earthly authority
and know my bonding to the Author of all earthly things.

I am filled with the news of good things;
my favour with God,
faithful trust in the gentle shadow of the Most High,
the mystery of my son, Jesus,
the gift of companionship with my beloved kinswoman,
Elizabeth, who believes as I believe.....

Magnificat used in "Widening the Web" celebrated at Embracing the Base, Dec 85, adapted from Phoebe Willett's version.

My heart is bubbling over with joy
with God it is good to be a woman
from now on tell all peoples, proclaim
it is a wonderful gift to be.
The One in whom power truly rests
has lifted us up to praise,
God's goodness shall fall like a shower
on the trusting of every age.
The disregarded have been raised up
the pompous and powerful shall fall ...
God has made good the word
given at the dawn of time

OUTLINE LITURGY ON THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN (for parishes, deaneries etc)

Lighting of the candle

All Lord, bring light into our darkness so that we may walk in your way and seek the truth.

Scripture reading Galatians 3 27-8 (or from 26 on adding "daughters" to sons.

Penitential Prayer either that in the "Garden Eucharist" (This depends on having both men and women present) or one taken from the WCC Vancouver worship book "Jesus Christ the Light of the World".

Reading Magnificat (from No Longer Strangers p 61, or the Jim Cotter version of the Lord's Prayer (see Epiphany Liturgy).

Short silence

Scripture Reading Lk 24: 1 - 11. (women as the first witnesses to the Resurrection. Spend the next 5-10 minutes talking to the person next to you (each in turn) about what this passage says to you.

Song "Woman in the Night" in Faith Looking Forward, Brian Wren, using the tune of "In the Bleak Midwinter" if preferred to the tune in the book.

Litany of Remembrance" cf sheet of this title.

Agape if desired. cf Epiphany service or other form of shared food blessing eg from a "Liturgy on a theme of Listening"

Final Prayer Let us affirm together our common humanity, seeing that whatever our race or gender we are unique human beings transformed by the power of Christ. let us keep the parable of the talents in mind and seek to build up Christ's kingdom, putting false stereotypes of women and men behind us, and freeing each and everyone to develop their potentialities in the service of Christ Our Redeemer.

Final Song eg Walk in the Light or God's Spirit is in my Heart
etc, We are one in the spirit (Replace "each man's dignity etc with each one's)
These are to be found in the Celebration Hymnal and elsewhere.

NEW YEAR'S EVE LITURGY

Prayer "God with us. Go with us" taken from "There's a Time and Place" J Wallace p34

Reader A As we step into 1988, grant us to know the love of Christ, and in our uncertainty to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner self.

Reader O loving Creator, your ways are higher than our ways and your thoughts longer than our thoughts. You are from everlasting to everlasting and a thousand ages in your sight are like an evening gone.

Reader Yet you have in love reached down to touch our little time with your eternity, and our life with life everlasting in Christ.

Reader Go with us now into the future you have in mind for us.
Cast out our fear; fill us with faith and hope and love; through the grace of Jesus your Son, our Saviour.

Scripture Reading Rev 21, 1-4 (new heaven and new earth)

Song "Let there be love"

Let there be love shared among us
let there be love in our eyes
may now your love sweep this nation
cause us , O Lord, to arise
Give us a fresh understanding
a sisterly/brotherly love that is real
let there be love shared among us
Let there be love

in the following verses replace the underlined word with

2 Peace
3 hope
4 faith
5 joy

Prayer no 4 from WCC Vancouver meeting worship book "Jesus Christ the Life of the World".

All: Creator God
breathing your own life into our being.
you gave us the gift of life; .....
:..... Call us yet again to safeguard the
gift of life.

Litany

Reader At the end of one year and the beginning of the next , let us turn to Christ, our promise of new life, and ask our Saviour's help as we traverse the coming year with its opportunities and set backs, its hopes and fears.

Reader Give us perseverence so that we do not give up in the face of discouragement and difficulty

All: Lord, guide us on our way

Reader C Help us to see you in our neighbour's need

All: Lord, guide us on our way

Reader A Renew in us a desire to work for your kingdom on this earth

All: Lord, guide us on our way

Reader B Show us the way to go when faced with complex decisions

All: Lord, guide us on our way

Reader C Let us find joy and healing in our faith in you

All: Lord, guide us on our way

Reader A Teach us to love ourselves and so be able to love others

All: Lord, guide us on our way.

Short silence

Prayer

All: God be in my head, and in my understanding
God be in mine eyes, and in my looking;
God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;
God be in my heart and in my thinking;
God be at my end and at my departing.

Psalm My shepherd is the Lord (Gelineau)

Blessing

All: Bless, O Lord, this fruit of the vine we drink in celebration of the passing of the old year and the coming of the new, remembering the new wine of Cana that was given as a sign of the renewal of creation. Let us go forth rejoicing into the New Year, to love and serve the Lord.

(The Peace is offered all round)

Sheffield Christian Feminist Group

Pentecost Celebration, Wednesday, May 21st, 1986.

Opening Hymn	There is a balm in Gilead.
Litany of Repentance	Each member of the group contributed her own thoughts to this litany.
Foot Washing Hymn	As a sign of mutual sorrow and forgiveness we all washed one another's feet. During this time the hymn 'Spirit of the Living God' and 'All over the world the Spirit is moving' were sung.
Reading	Gen.3:1-12 The dove shows peace returned to creation.
Meditation	A reading on the Holy Spirit ~~by~~ from Hildegard of Bingen.
Lighting of Candles	XXXX

ps 63

Oh God, the source of my creation
let my whole being long for you
Thirsty as in a land of drought,
let me find the living water you provide
Shelter me close to you
Let me sense your power and glory

Your constant love gives meaning to life
for this I praise you.
I will give thanks to you through my life
and raise my heart to you in prayer.

In the night I remember you
when I cannot sleep I recall your goodness
because you are alsways there to sustain me.
Feeling your closeness I sing for joy
for you will bring me safely through life

ps 8 (to be sung to the Gelineau tune)

How great, O God, is your name throughout the earth

In your hands is the power
from you flows goodness everlasting
Through you is evil confounded
your name is praised by all creation

How great, O God, is your name throughout the earth

We look up to the skies made by you
the moon and the stars given their place
what are humans that you spare a thought for us,
humanity that you cherish and love

How great, ..

Yet you have made us little less than yourself
crowned us with glory and splendour
given us the gift of your creation
an inheritance of the world to cherish

How great

We have been given a share in your power
the resources of the world are ours to share
for good or evil as we choose.
Do not abandon us to wasting our inheritance

How Great ....

IP 86.

VERSIONS OF THE PRAYER JESUS TAUGHT US

Jesus taught us to pray:-

God, lover of us all
Most Holy One,
Help us to respond to you
To create what you want for us here on earth.
Give us today enough for our needs,
Forgive our weak and deliberate offences
Just as we must forgive others
When they hurt us.
Help us to resist weaknesses and
to do what is good.
For we are yours
endowed with your power
to make our world whole. (L.W)

2.
Eternal Spirit, Life-giver, Pain-bearer, Love maker
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven!

The Hallowing of your Name echo through the universe!
the way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of Peace and Freedom sustain our hope and come on earth!

With the bread that we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever, Amen.

(J.C.)

Lord God, far above our understanding
Father and Mother to all of us
Blessed be your name in our hearts and our deeds
May your goodness reign in all our ways
Your will command our days.

Give us this day all consolation of our needs
Forgive us our faults and our wickednesses as we try to forgive the harm done
to us by ourselves or others
keep us from all evil-doing,
Let no injustices take over our minds
And give us strength against the temptations that beset us
For in you, Lord God, can be found all that is good and true, loving and honourable
For ever and ever.

(TVM)

Questions

1. Do you find repeating set prayers over and over dulls their meaning? Would the occasional use of different versions as above help? Which do you like best, and why?
2. Try writing your own Our Father.

WIDENING THE WEB Celebration of Christian women
at the EMBRACING OF THE BASE Indigo Gate, Greenham Common December 1965

Song- (sung in canon to the tune of By the Waters of Babylon)
By the wire, the wire of Greenham
we sit down and weep
and weep for this our land,
We remember, we remember, we remember Hiroshima (Nagasaki for 2nd verse)

Magnificat (adapted from Phoebe Willet's version)

My heart is bubbling over with joy
With God it is good to be woman
From now on tell all peoples, proclaim
It is a wonderful gift to be.
The One in whom power truly rests
has lifted us up to praise,
God's goodness shall fall like a shower
on the trusting of every age.
The disregarded have been raised up
the pompous and powerful shall fall.
Gpd has feasted the empty-bellied
and the rich have discovered their void.
God has made good the word
Given at the dawn of time.

Gospel. Story of the visitation
(one of the women then preached on this)

"Lords prayer"
Jesus taught us to pray:_

God, lover of us all
Most holy one
Help us to respond to you
to create what you want for us here on earth
Give us today, enough for our needs
forgive our weak and deliberate offences
Just as we must forgive others
when they hurt us.
Help us to resist weaknesses and
to do what is good
for we are yours
endowed with your power
to make our world whole.

Blessing of the Bread Carter Heyward. In No Longer Strangers p22

Sharing of the bread

(we need to recognise that women are the body of Christ and in our sufferings share in Jesus' death and resurrection. So we can all say to one another as we share the bread "you are the body of Christ"

After sharing the bread share thoughts and refelections with those near you, weaving all into a web as we make connections.

(A web had been prepared with 16 radial spokes made of strips of rag. Women stepped forward and as they weaved in strips over and under the spokes, they would contribute their prayers, reflections and thoughts.)

Song - Building Bridges

On the day itself once the web was complete, spontaneously the women holding the web went slowly to the Indigo Gate and attached it to it, across the opening where it stayed for some time until traffic came through.

(Prepared by theS.London Catholic Women's Network Group)

WOMEN'S ASH WEDNESDAY CEREMONY

psalm (said by all) A Woman's Miserere (each verse said antiphonally on either side of the room)

Reading Joel 2 12-18

Discussion On the meaning of lent in our lives, and the symbolism of Ash Wednesday.

Our 'Father' (from Jim Cotter's Prayer at night)

Eternal Spirit, Life-giver, Pain-bearer, Love-maker
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven!

The Hallowing of your Name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of Peace and Freedom sustain our hope and come on earth!

With the bread that we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever. Amen.

Symbolic burning of ashes (A palm from last year is burnt, and each traces in turn the sign of the cross on the person next to them)

Song Judas and Mary

bidding prayers

sharing of food and empowerment

each person in turn says to her neighbour

(name) ... take this food (or bread etc) which we share as a sign of the oneness we have with each other and with God.

All (holding the hands of their neigbours) Having found strength in each other and helped by the Spirit let us go out and change hearts.

Each turns to her neighbour embracing her saying "Go forth as a prophet to the world"

Final prayer

Glory be to the Creator, to the Redeemer and to the Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and ever more shall be.

Final song Shalom (holding hands in a circle)

PSALM 51 A WOMAN'S MISERERE

Have mercy on me, O Life-giver, through your goodness,
in your great tenderness soothe away my faults.
Cleanse me of my guilt:
do not hold my failures against me.

For I have come to see that I fail you,
when I have not acknowledged with my whole being
that I am made truly in your image.
In not walking in your ways
I have sinned against you.

You are love and truth itself
and seek sincerity of heart.
Teach me the secrets of wisdom
cleanse me from all that prevents me
from listening to your word.

Let me cry out with joy and gladness.
Leave behind me feelings of inferiority.
Do not hold it against me
that I have fallen in with prejudice.

Creator, call forth a willing response from me:
infuse in me a new spirit of confidence.
let me be aware of your presence
and draw strength from your Spirit.

Giver of life, source of salvation,
Let me rejoice in serving you.
Keep my spirit responsive to you
and I shall show forth to the unenlightened
the true way to you.

Save me from everlasting death, O God my sustainer,
and I shall acclaim your goodness.
Creator, give me the courage
to speak forth your truth,
and use all my being, body, mind and soul to give you praise.

You call for a contrite heart –
the placatory sacrifices on the altar did not please you.
Our sacrifice is to do your will –
to work unceasingly for the coming of your realm.

Show forth your love to the women you have created.
Guide us in building true community
and a new age come where all live out your love.

Litany of Remembrance

Reader We remember Eve, created in your own image and likeness

All O Source of all Life, help us to affirm your image in ourselves

Reader We remember Miriam, prophet and musician, who led the women dancing in celebration of the passage through the Red Sea.

All Liberating God, fire us with joy at all you have done for us

Reader We remember Deborah, who if she had to use violence, used it to free her people

All Liberating God, help us to find peaceful means of freeing ourselves and others

Reader We remember Naomi and Ruth who loved each other

All Loving God, help us as women to pattern our relationships on the love the Creator, Redeemer and Spirit have for one another

Reader We remember Mary, whose Yes to the incarnation made our redemption possible

All Help us to be ready to respond when you call

Reader: "You are Christ, the Son of God, who has come into the world"; We remember how Martha was among the first to recognise your Son for what he was, and to affirm her faith in the anointed one.

All Strengthen our faith in you

Reader We remember Mary of Bethany who, breaking all conventions, poured precious oil over Our Lord, wiping it away with her hair.

All O God who is love, help us to respond lovingly with the whole of our being

Reader We remember Mary of Magdala, made whole by your healing power, who was the first witness to your resurrection

All help us to be effective bearers of the Good News

Reader We remember Phoebe the deacon who led the Church at Cenchreae and who was a co-worker with Paul in ministry

All Help us not to bury our talents but to develop our God given gifts

Reader We remember Prisca, who with her husband Aquila, was a leader in the community centred on her house, and who travelled from city to city setting up missionary centres,

All O God of compassion and caring, help us to use our homes as centres of community and mission

Reader We remember the daughters of Philip, who were prophets.

All Almighty God, Strengthen us to fulfill our prophetic role, and challenge what we see to be wrong.

Reader We remember Dorcas, full of good works and almsdeeds.

All O God who sustains us, strengthen our commitment to work for the good of the communit

All Inspired by their example may we all, women and men alike work together to build up your community, using all of our gifts.

EUCHARIST - Feminine aspects of the triune God, Creator, Redeemer and spirit

Opening song: Open your hearts

Penitential rite:

Leader: Why have we all gathered here?

All: We have responded to the gospel of God's love for us in Jesus Christ, but so often we have failed. Lord have mercy on us

Leader: What do we hope..to do here?

All: We hope to be united with the faithful of all ages, tongues and races in praising the God of love and power, but so often we have failed. Lord have mercy on us..

Leader: With what mission will we be..sent from this place?

All: To be God's helpers in serving humanity, to spread the gospel, and to resist the powers of evil, but we have so often failed. Lord have mercy on us

All: Let us then draw near to God, who promises to forgive us, to fill us with courage, and to be present with us in this world and in the world to come. Amen

Sung Lord have mercy

Readings (These are done in each of the groups,not communally. The younger children will have activities in the kitchen, theteenagers will have their own group)

God said,'Let us make humanity in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves and let them be masters of the fish of the sea... God created humanity in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him: male and female he created them' Gen 1 26-27

'He found him (Israel) in a desert land,
and in the howling waste of the wilderness·
he encircled him, he cared for him

he kept him as the apple of his eye.
Like an eagle that stirs up its nest,
that flutters over her young,
spreading out her wings, catching them
bearing them on its pinions' Dt 32 10-11

It was I (God) who taught Ephraim to walk
I took them up in my arms;
but they did not know that I healed them.
I led them with cords of compassion
with bands of love ....
and I bent down to them and fed them Hosea 11 3-4

'Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you kill the prophets and stone the messengers God has sent you, how many times have I wanted to put my arms around all your people just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings' Mt 23 37

Discussion points All images of God are only approaches to reality, but the overemphasis on certain images has led to distortions. Many Christians believe God the father to be male, and one of the establishment arguments against the ordination of women is that women cannot be an ikon or likeness of Christ (ie male gender is of more importance than the many 'feminine' qualities Christ showed - 'feminine' being understood as those qualities or characteristics more often found in women than in men). Recent publications like the Church of Scotland Motherhood of God Report or Margaret Hebblethwaites 'Motherhood and God' do not seek to replace a male God by a female one, but indicate that emphasis on the masculine aspects of God has distorted our understanding of both God and humanity, and as the WCC study 'In God's image' puts it 'There is an urgent need - as persons and as community, to reach for descriptions of God that reflect the contemporary desire for wholeness'

Questions (you have approx 25 mins)

1 (using paper and marker) What qualities or characteristics are shown (in our culture) more often by women than by men (one/two word answers)

2 What are the main characteristics of Jesus as shown in NT (short answers as above.

2a. How do the two lists compare? What conclusions can you draw?

3 The relationship in the trinity is usually referred to that of Father-Son. Would it be appropriate to describe it as parent-offspring/child. Is it incidental or intrinsic that thehumanity Christ took on was male?

4 Both women and men are made in the image of God the creator: Does the way the churches tend to present God obscure this?

Offetory procession
Hymn - My God loves me

Our Father 'Lord God, far above our understanding, father and mother to all of us, Blessed be you name in our hearts and our deeds.
May your goodness reign in all our ways, your will command our days
Give us this day all consolation of our needs
Forgive us our faults and our wickednesses as we tryto forgive the harms done to us by ourselves or others.
Keep us from all evil-doing,
Let no injustices take over our minds
and give us strength against the temptations that beset us
For in you, Lord God, can be found all that is good and true,
loving and honourable, for ever and ever
(TVM)

The Peace Sing Shalom (3 times) linking hands

Shalom my friends shalom my friends, shalom shalom
the peace of Christ I give you today, shalom, shalom.

Eucharistic Prayer All say together the words of the institution

On the night before he died for us, our Saviour Jesus Christ took bread, and when He had given thanks to you, He broke it, and gave it to his disciples and said '

Take, eat; This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me'

After supper He took the cup of wine; and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them and said 'Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink this do this for the remembrance of me'

Communion Hymn Christ be beside me

(There will be a basket of blessed bread for the young children and anyone else not going to communion) FINAL HYMN One in the Spirit

GARDEN EUCHARIST JUNE 83

Song: How many times must my people exist

Opening prayer

Litany

All From hidden prejudice which prevents us from being fully human

response. Free us, Creator and Redeemer

men From being insiduously influenced by the rat race

Free us, Creator and Redeemer

women From playing the passive role in which society casts us

Free us, creator and redeemer

men From taking sexism less seriously than racism

Free us, creator and redeemer

women From lacking in compassion for women who are oppressed, because 'we're all right'

Free us, creator and redeemer

men From feeling threatened by the liberation of women

Free us, Creator and Redeemer

women From not seeing that men need liberating too

Free us, Creator and Redeemer

all From thinking in stereotypes rather than seeing each human as unique

Free us, Creator and Redeemer

all For not recognising in ourselves the wish todominate or accept domination

Free us, Creator and redeemer

Reader O God of justice and mercy you have brought us out of darkness into light

all Help us to disperse the darkness that still remains

Reader Let our relationships with one another show forth to the world your love

all Spirit of God, give us your liberating strength

Reader Help us to see beyond the stereotypes of gender and discover what being fully human means

all Spirit of God, give us your liberating strength

Reader You sent your prophets to shake the righteous from their complacency. Give us the courage to be prophets seeking a just society

all Spirit of God, give us your liberating strength

Readings

Gal 3 23-28 (no more distinctions)

Jn 4 5 30 - (the woman at the well)

The celebrant now shares some of her experiences with us

song when I needed a neighbour

prayers of the people (bidding/intercessory prayers contributed by those present)

Confession

All We, your people, gathered here tonight, confess that we have failed to prevent your Churches being run in an unChristlike way; Authority has dominated rather than served, humanity has been debased rather than upheld. We have allowed rules to replace compassion and the letter to be followed rather than the spirit. Strengthen your people, almighty God and Creator, so that we may renew our institutions so that they more truly reflect your truth, wisdom and loving care.

The Peace

All sing Shalom before greeting each other
The eucharistic prayer is from the American Prayer Book
Communion Each person says to their neighbour, on handing on the consecrated bread:

The body of Christ, the bread of heaven. response Amen

The chalice

The blood of Christ, the cup of salvation " "

Closing prayer

* all Eternal God, heavenly father, you have graciously accepted us as loving members of your Son, our saviour Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the sacrament of his body and blood. Send us now into the world in peace and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart, through Christ our Lord, amen.

Song We are one in the spirit

* (note the date when written - 1983 - today we would not use this phraseology in an inclusive liturgy.

EPIPHANY LITURGY

Song Seek ye first the kingdom of God (round)

Poem The Journey of the Magi TS Eliot

Reading: Listen p 52 The wise men come to Jesus (children's version of Mt 2 1-12)

Reader: B There is some mystery about the wise men from the East. Some think that they were learned in searching the skies for any understanding that the stars might bring, others that they were foreign rulers. It seems clear that they represent the pagan races called from afar to the infant Jesus, who was to rule not just Israel but all humanity. This is the feast which reminds us that Christ's call is to all people.

LITANY (using various readers)

Reader: The Magi journeyed far to find you, Redeemer and Saviour, we too must search for you all our lives

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: The Magi brought precious gifts to you. Our treasure must be the gift of building up your kingdom here and now

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: The coming of the strangers from the East, marked the showing forth of Christ to the whole world. As Christians we are called to show forth Christ's love in our everyday lives.

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: You were in the world but they did not know you. You came to your own and they did not receive you. There was no room for you at the inn. Is there any room for you in our hearts?

All: Help us to respond to you

Reader: The Magi were prepared to leave their homes to search for the new king whose sign was a star in the east. We too must be prepared to search and become a pilgrim people

All: Give us the strength to put false security behind us and live as if we were on a journey

Reader: God has called us out of darkness into the light. May we experience his kindness and blessing and be strong in faith, hope and love.

All: Because we are followers of Christ, who came as a light shining in the darkness, may we show the light of God to the people we find around us.

Reading (from "Truthfulness" Hans Kung p 235, para 1)

The Church, consisting of human beings, must constantly be journeying through the desert,through the darkness of untruth and untruthfulness.... the Church always has a final guiding star, as the ancient people of God long ago had a guiding star through the desert; God's word that constantly brings us afresh into the truth. In these last times God's definitive word has become manifest in Jesus, the Christ.

Gospel Mt 20 25-27

READING B (from To Change the World Rosemary Ruether p 54 para 3)

God as liberator acts in history to liberate all through opting for the poor and the oppressed of the present system.....the aim of this partiality (for the poor) is to create a new whole, to elevate the valleys and make the high places low, so that all may come into a new place of God's reign, when God's will is done on earth"

NEW LIFE RESOLUTIONS (enough grapes for the participants and 2 bowls full of earth are needed)

Leader" We have called this section "New Life" Resolutions. We would like to use the secular idea of New Year's resolutions as it has something very positive to say to us as Christians. It is about New beginning, making a fresh start. We are going to use grapes - these will be passed round, take one and hold it for the moment.

We will then eat the grapes, and reject the pip which each in turn will bury in the earth of the bowls coming round.

In order to be healed, to grow towards wholeness we need to rid ourselves of the bitterness in our lives. That bitterness may be due to our own inadequacies, our own shortcomings, our own misguided desires, our own sinful wishes or it may be due to the inadequacies or desires of others.

Whatever the cause of the bitterness or pain we need to be able to let go of it and to start anew. (the grapes are eaten and the bowls of earth passed round) As we eat the grape let us savour the richness of the flesh and the richness and sweetness in our lives. As we feel the hardness of the pips, let us recognise the bitterness in our lives. Let us leave it behind us now. To show that we have left it behind let us bury our bitterness.

GLORIA (TAIZE ROUND)

BIDDING PRAYERS (extempore by the participants)

OUR FATHER (from Prayer at Night, Jim Cotter)

(See item E in this pack "Versions of the Prayer Jesus Taught us". Each verse should be spoken antiphonally by the participants divided into two groups)

AGAPE - blessing of food and drink (taken from the prayers of the Didache)

Leader Blessed are you, O Lord our God, creator of this food and drink that we share together as a sign of your kingdom, which is to come in glory, and yet is already here now in so far as you live among us in the love we have for one another.
(wine is poured out)

All: We give thanks to you, our creator, for this wine, remembering Israel your people, brought like a vine out of Egypt,and planted in the promised land (wine is passed round)

(the bread is broken and passed round and all say)

All: As we break the bread we thank you O creator for the life and knowledge of yourself which you gave us through Jesus Christ. To you be glory for ever.

As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let your children, Lord, be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever. (all eat)

(all eat)

final song Rejoice alleluia (round)

(Put together by Ianthe and Oliver Pratt, Veronica and Peter Seddon, January 1986 for a house gathering of children, women and men who had previously participated in a "Catholic Peoples Week").

EUCHARISTIC PICNIC ON THE IMAGES OF GOD

OPENING SONG. Open your ears...

Penitential prayer

Peruvian Gloria.

Glory to God, Glory to God,
glory to the creator. (repeat)
To God be glory for ever.(repeat)
Alleluia, amen. Alleluia, amen.
Alleluia, amen. Alleluia, amen.

Glory to God ,Glory to God,
glory to the redeemer. (repeat).
To God be glory for ever,(repeat)
Alleluia, amen. Alleluia, amen.
Alleluia, amen. Alleluia, amen.

Glory to God, Glory to God,
glory to the spirit.(repeat)
To God be glory for ever.(repeat)
Alleluia, amen. Alleluia, amen.
Alleluia, amen. Alleluia, amen.

Readings These will take place in the groups (see the blue sheet)
There is about 50 minutes for this.

1. Each group hold a buzz session, throwing up images of God, to be placed on large sheet of paper.

2. spend 3-4 minutes each talking in pairs about which image of God you are most attracted to.

3 Read the blue sheet in turn round the group.

4. Using the ~~blue~~ sheet, some or all of the following can be used as discussion pointers.

A. Can we really separate out God the "Father" from the Son and Spirit? Do we neglect the important message of loving relationship of which the Trinity is the prime example

B. How do you see God when you pray? Is this different to how you think of God at other times?

C. Genesis tells us that God made humans male and female in the divine image. Traditionally all the emphasis has been on male imagery. What distortions have resulted by neglecting the female imagery of God?

D. If humanity is made in the image of God, what aspects in particular should we as christians be reflecting in our lives?

E God as liberator is a potent contemporary image. What do the People of God need t/ do to experience God as liberating?

EUCHARISTIC PICNIC 1988. THEME - THE IMAGES OF GOD

Finite words cannot encapsulate the infinite - we see through a glass darkly and in trying to understand God (the first person of the Trinity) we use analogies and metaphors. Each of these illuminates some facet of the divine but is not the truth itself. Some images are misleading (many people believe that because Jesus spoke of his "Father" God must be male, but theologians agree that God has no gender).
The following are just some of the ways in which we reach out towards the source of our being:

God as covenant maker: "This is the covenant I shall make with the House of Israel...within them I shall plant my Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I shall b their God and they will be my people. (Jer31;33-34)

"God is shield that protects me, saving the honest of heart. God is an upright judge, slow to anger, but a God at all times threatening for those who will not repent." (Psalm 7.10-11)

"I am the one who taught Israel to walk .. I drew them to me with love and affection, I picked them up and held them to my cheek, I knelt down to them and fed them" (Hosea 11). When the people of Israel claimed the Lord had abandoned them the answer was "can a woman forget her own body and love not the child she bore" Is 49.15 (the key biblical concept of compassion - pity, mercy, tender loving-kindness - comes from a root word meaning womb.

In Moltmann's essay "God as Father? on the motherly Father " it is argued that in the Bible God is called Father both metaphorically, to express goodness and kindness of his rule, and in a literal sense to express God the Father being the father of "his" Son. "if the Son comes forth from the Father alone, then this .. must be thought of as both "procreation" and "birth". But that means there must be a fundamental change in the father-concept. A father who both begets and gives birth to his son is no mere male father. He is a "motherly father" - the Council of Toledo 675 a.d. speaks of the son being made from the "womb" of the father (Concilium no 143).

"God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all (1 Jn 1:5)...We know we have come to know him if we keep his commandments (1 Jn 2:3) Whoever fails to love does not know God, because God is love. (1 Jn 4:8)

"Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father .. I am in the Father and the Father is in me"(Jn 14.9-10)

There is a strictly theological understanding underlying the preferential option for the poor: that the God of revelation is not a God who intervenes in a neutral fashion in human affairs. He is a God who takes the part of the weak, the poor and the oppressed" A Moser in Concilium "Ethics of Liberation" No 172)

"When you succeed in changing
all your abstract nouns
for a few concrete ones
whose meaning can be felt,
perhaps it will make sense again
for you to talk to us of Christ and God.
When it is seen to be true,
in a way that can be genuinely proclaimed,
that Justice has "pitched its tent in our midst",
and that Love has "dwelt amongst us"
then perhaps what your Bible calls
the "name of God"
can make itself known.(unnamed Brazilian poet in "Practical Theology of Liberation")

ADVENT CELEBRATION 1985 St Joan's International Alliance AGM

The candles are lit and all say

Thus says the Creator
Who made the heavens and spread them out
Who gave shape to the earth and what comes from it
Who gave breath to its people, and life to all that move on it.

I, your Creator have called you to serve the cause of right;
I have taken you by the hand and formed you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations
To open the eyes of the blind, to free captives from prison,
And those who live in darkness from the dungeon.

Reader A And Jesus said to the people
"I am the light of the world. They who follow me will not
be walking in the dark; They will have the light of life.

Reader B We who are the followers of Christ are gathered here today to celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ our Lord, and bring to mind that not only did he come as Saviour into the world when the time was ripe, but that the redeemer comes daily into our hearts, and we look forward to the saviour's promised return in glory.

Carol "Woman in the night" (tune: in the bleak midwinter)
(in Faith Looking Forward, Brian Wren)

Scripture reading Version of the Magnificat (Terry Cooley's Version - see page of Magnificats)

Litany of prophecy

Reader My servant will be a light to the nations and my salvation shall reach the ends of the earth

All Blessed is Christ who fulfills the promise (This response is made to each prophecy - each in turn acting as reader)

Readers The virgin is with child and will give birth to a son whom she will call Emmanuel

All Blessed ...

- A shoot shall spring forth from the stock of Jesse, a branch from its root

- For as the rain and snow came down from heaven and return not there but waters the earth, making it yield and give growth, to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so shall my world be that goes out of my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, without carrying out my will, doing that for which it was sent.

- This is the covenant I will make with Israel. Deep within them I will plant my law, writing it on their hearts. When those days arrive then I will be their God, and they shall be my people

- The law will go out from Zion, and the oracle of the Lord from Jerusalem. They will hammer their swords into ploughshares, their spears into sickles

- Nation will not lift sword against nation, for unto us is born a child, a son given to us, and the government shall be on his shoulders; and his name will be called "wonder counsellor, mighty God, everlasting father, prince of peace"

-I have endowed him with my spirit, that he may bring true justice to the nations. He does not break the crushed reed, nor quench the wavering flame. He will not fail or be discouraged, until true justice is established on the earth.

- A voice cries "Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert". Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill laid low. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it.

Silence or song

Litany of repentence (There should be a short pause after each response - participants take it in turn to act as reader, all responding)

Leader Our ancestors were asked to do penance in the desert to prepare for your coming on earth, O Lord. Help us, your faithful people, to turn back to God so that we may meet the light of your day

Reader Are our hearts and minds open to you, Lord?

All Help us to be ready for your coming (response throughout this litany)

Reader When can your will be done on earth as it is in heaven

All Help us . .

Reader How much of our lives have we kept from you, O Lord?

All Help us . .

Reader Will we give up what we are doing when something else is needed?

All Help us . .

Reader Have we had the courage to proclaim that in Christ there is neither jew nor greek, male nor female, bond nor free?

All Help us..

Reader Have we colluded with the distorted view of women's role and failed to act prophetically?

All Help us . .

Reader Have we used the gifts you have given us to build up the body of Christ to its fullness?

All Help us . .

Reader Have we been ready to wander as a pilgrim searching for the truth, a foreign land?

All Help us .

Reader Have we lived as if we really expected you to return?

All Help us

Reading: poem from Images p 30

Short silence

Litany of hope (the response is maranatha, which means come Lord, do not delay)

Reader You Lord are the living bread which has come down from heaven, your flesh given for the life of the world.

All Maranatha

Reader The grass withers, the flower falls but your word remains for ever

All Maranatha

Reader We are your people and you are our God

All Maranatha

Reader You gave yourself for the sins of many and we wait for the fullness of salvation

All Maranatha ...

Reader The lion will lie down with the lamb and humanity will not kill humanity any more

All Maranatha

Reader In the new heaven and the new earth righteousness will abound

All Maranatha

Reading from "on being a christian" on the meaning of Christmas
p 452 (hardback ed)

Bidding prayers (extempore)

Blessing of food and drink (taken from the agape prayers of the Didache)

Leader Blessed are you, O Lord our God, creator of this food and drink that we share together as a sign of your kingdom, which is to come in glory, and yet is already here now in so far as you live among us in the love we have for one another.
(wine is poured out)

All We give thanks to you, our creator, for this wine,remembering Israel your people, brought like a vine out of Egypt,and planted in the promised land (wine is passed round)
(the bread is broken and passed round and all say)
All As we break the bread we thank you O creator for the life and knowledge of yourself which you gave us through Jesus Christ. To you be glory for ever.

As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let your children, Lord, be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever. (all eat)

Final Song O Come O Come Emmanuel.

LIST OF LITURGIES CONTAINED IN "WOMEN-CREATED LITURGIES"
(£4 post free from Christian Women's Resource Centre, 36 Court Lane, London SE21 7DR)

Advent Celebration Worked out for St Joan's International Alliance AGM 1985

Epiphany Liturgy 1986 Created for a mixed group of women, men and children, using non sexist language, symbols etc.

Eucharistic Picnic - the Images of God.
Service sheet and discussion sheet for group use.

Feminine Aspects of the Triune God, Creator, Redeemer and Spirit Eucharist on this theme including discussion points.

Garden Eucharist 1983 For a mixed gathering, contains a litany of reconciliation said antiphonally by men and women in turn.

Litany of Remembrance Remembering Eve, Miriam, Deborah,the Maries, Martha, Phoebe, Prisca, Dorcas etc and relating it to our lives today.

Liturgy of Hope Outlines of a morning's presentation, in liturgical form, of hope and the christian women's movement done for a mixed gathering at a christian adult education week. Includes the wheel, prayer, scripture discussion, offertory, and "wilderness meal" (using milk and honeybread) which has been adapted from that used outside Anglican cathedrals while men only are being ordained within. (full text of this is in "Celebrating Women").

Liturgy of Mary of the Magnificat created for a conference on "Reclaiming Mary", held by St Joan's Alliance 1988.

Liturgy of Listening created for a St Joan's Alliance AGM worship.

Magnificats 3 rewritten Magnificats reflecting on women's experience.

Ministry of Women an outline service worked out for a diocesan event for use with those who are only beginning to look at the question.

New Year's Eve Liturgy

Pentecost Celebration Sheffield Christian Feminist Group 1986

Psalms rewritten versions of 63 and 8.

Versions of the Prayer Jesus Taught Us

Widening the Web Celebration of Christian Women at Embracing of Base, Indigo Gate, Greenham Common, Dec 85. Worked out by the S London Catholic Women's Network Group.

Women's Ash Wednesday Ceremony Prayer and symbol, sharing of food and empowerment.

A Woman's Miserere A version of the psalm using women's experience.

Women's Experience of Rejection Liturgy for CWN Day Sheffield March 86

(For a Resource list and further worship forms see the Association for Inclusive Language pack "Women, Language and the Church" £6.80 post free from the above address).

LANGUAGE AND LITURGY
Discussion Outline together with relevant extracts from the 1980 ICEL proposals for avoiding sexist language in the R.C. eucharistic prayers (now o.p)

ICEL (the International Commission for English in the Liturgy) in 1980 issued a consultative document on proposed revisions of the eucharistic prayers. One of the purposes of this revision was to avoid using "exclusive" or "sexist" language.\The Commission hold that it is not a minor or theoretical problem but a serious question that prevents the Church from expressing the fullness of the christian community. The USA, Canada and New Zealand have adopted the changes, Although in England and Wales a number of organisations including the National Board of Catholic Women and the Newman Association recommended the changes the Hierarchy turned this down, on the grounds that there was no pressure from below. However very few copies of the document were circulated, very few people were given the change to look at the situation and even one bishop had never heard of the recommendations!

REASONS GIVEN FOR THE SUGGESTED CHANGES
1 Language is a "powerful tool of communication" and must therefore be used with great care and precision, particularly as it affects the way people perceive themselves and others.
Words with a traditional generic use eg men or man, are increasingly understood as referring primarily or exclusively to males and therefore such language is ambiguous or misleading to many. Research has shown that where "man" is used the majority of people think only in terms of males and do not see it as relating to women as well.

2 Biblical texts are used extensively in liturgy but often these reflect the cultural attitude of the time they were written and relegate women to an inferior position.

3 Man is often used to translate words that meant human, not male, in the original text, eg homo, anthropos, and brotherhood and fraternity are used for koinonia which is not specific with regard to gender.

4 "Sound theology and pastoral sensitivity" require that the language used not just in the words of the liturgy but also in preaching should be such as to help, not discourage, women from full participation.

DISCUSSION POINTS
A Many people, including women are not bothered about language that appears to exclude women. Should they be? How far does it matter?

B What are your reactions to the words that ICEL suggests should replace brother, sons, man, he etc; ie brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, men and women, humanity, the human race, people, church, community, companion, friends, faithful, children, all/we/us, all creation, ancestors etc?

C What do you feel about the changes on p 1 and 2 of the following summary? If it is proving difficult to get Rome to agree to changes what might be done about sermons etc?

D ICEL suggests that certain texts need retranslating or should be carefully explained or be omitted. Could we rely on anything except retranslation? (when the new Easter Vigil was first issued there was reference to Israel being as unclean as a menstruating woman. This was only dropped after protests were made.

EXTRACTS FROM THE ICEL PROPOSED REVISIONS OF THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYERS (1980)

PREFACE by Archbishop Hurley, Durban.

Life involves growth and adaptation, and this is as true of language as of other living things "as societies grow, new values develop, new sensitivities emerge": much ecclesial language is changing with the new emphasis on the laity. We are no longer at ease with language that appear to exclude women from what should "have universal human extension" and because liturgy must reflect a deep concern for the whole people of God and the sensitivities of every part of it the Advisory Committee was encouraged to make a study of the issue.

The "Green Book" or consultative document contained the amended texts together with notes on the points of revision - which are less extensive than the opposition to change would lead one to believe.

The following summary and quotes only deal with revisions made on grounds of inclusive language.

A. Account of Institution

"Though the words "man" and "men" have a traditional generic usage, many people have come to experience them as referring primarily or exclusively to males, thus including women only in a secondary way, or in a derived sense, or omitting them altogether".

For this reason ICEL proposed dropping the word men from "It will be shed for you and for all (men)

(This has since (1987) been made official but not on grounds of avoiding sexist language but because it was a "better translation")

C 3 EUCHARISTIC PRAYER 4

The following text was emended to avoid the use of man, men, he, his: the use of "we", "our" throughout was not used because it would have obscured the stages of salvation history which are marked in this prayer. "Homo" could have been translated as "man and woman" but this would have obscured the sense of unity of the human creation contained in "homo" and the Genesis creation accounts. Hence a line from Gen 1 27 was added "to allow the text to move from the unified concept of the human race to the inclusive language of the following lines".

Original Text	Emendations
You formed (man) in your own likeness:	the human race
(new line inserted)	male and female you created them
and set (him) over the whole world	
to serve you,(his)creator,	their
and to rule over all creatures	
even when (he) disobeyed you and lost your friendship	they
you did not abandon (him) to the power of death,	them
but helped all (men) to seek and find you.	people
Again and again you offered a covenant to (man),	them
and through the prophets taught (him) to hope for salvation.	them

C4.
Original Text
He was conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary,
a man like us in all things but sin.

emended version.
Conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary
he became like us in all things but sin.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYERS FOR MASSES OF RECONCILIATION

3 emendations recommended for prayer 1, the original version intending inclusive reference to the human community but in translation appear to be referring primarily or exclusively to males.

D1 "You invite us to serve the family of mankind" (hominibus)
change to the human family

D2 "Father,from the beginning of time you have always done what is good for man"
change to people.

D3 "Therefore we offer you, God, ever faithful and true
the sacrifice which restores man to your friendship"
change to us

EUCHARISTIC PRAYERS FOR MASSES WITH CHILDREN

"The use of inclusive language is particularly important in the socialisation process of children, who discover their Christian identity through participation in the community liturgical life".

As well as the wording of the account of institution (A) above, ICEL recommended changes in prayer III for children.

"Yes, Lord you are holy; you are kind to us and to all men
change to everyone (the Latin hominibus intended to communicate the Lord's unconditional love for all people)

"INTRODUCTION" (The last section of the recommendations is entitled thus!)

As long ago as 1975 and 1977 the Advisory Committee to ICEL was expressing disquiet on the use of sexist (exclusive language) and calling for inclusive revisions , and the setting up of a subcommittee to make recommendations regarding:

a: removal of discriminatory language
b: principles and procedures for the future
c: attitudes which have given rise to past discrimination
d: commissioning study papers

"As a powerful tool of communication, language must be used in worship with the greatest care and precision. Modern studies have established the fact that language performs a highly important role in how one comes to perceive one's self and others. Furthermore the range of symbols and images used determines the scope of the religious understanding and practice of the people of God, and if this range of symbols is limited, so also will be their understanding and practice. The way one is named within the worshipping community - and whether one is named at all - could

affect the way one lives the Christian life.
The failure of much of liturgical and theological language adequately to recognise the presence of women seems effectively to EXCLUDE THEM FROM FULL AND INTEGRAL experiencing of the fullness of Christian community."

Exclusive language is not just a linguistic but theological and sociological problem. It is not a minor one. "It is an immediate, real and pressing problem for many Christians and therefore for the whole Church"... "The experience of many women leads some to conclude that the Church considers them unimportant participants in its life and worship. Because of this problem of exclusive language and the obstacles to heartfelt participation ... some people have felt constrained to abandon corporate worship".

We now have a greater recognition of the dignity and responsibility of each Christian to participate fully in the life of the Church, stemming from our baptismal anointing in the Spirit.

The introduction of the vernacular into liturgy has increased the awareness of the way "much traditional language in worship does not in fact permit full participation..by women".

Biblical texts are used extensively in the liturgy either directly or indirectly. Biblical language needs to be examined with respect to women's participation "especially as it grew out of and in some ways reflects a time and culture considerably removed from our own". The document goes on to refer to pilot project on the feasibility of making inclusive translations of the lectionary and psalter - this was later followed up by translations that are awaiting the approval of Rome.

GENERAL PRINCIPLE

"Both sound theology and pastoral sensitivity require that the language used in all liturgical texts, as well as in all other aspects of liturgy, for example, preaching, should not only permit but indeed facilitate the full participation of women in the worship of the Church".

SPECIFIC AREAS OF CONCERN

1.<u>Language addressing and referring to the worshipping community</u>.

a. Terms such as men, sons, brothers, brethren, fraternity and brotherhood are now understood to refer exclusively to males, although from the perspective of the history of language these words once had a broader meaning.

<u>It is no longer acceptable to use this type of language</u> in liturgy (unless the text is specifically aimed at males, or men only are present.)

b. Terms such as man, mankind, forefathers, family of man and certain uses of he his and him are now often used only to refer to males so "their use has become ambiguous and is increasingly perceived to exclude women. <u>"Wherever possible therefore these terms should not be used"</u>

In many biblical and liturgical texts the term "man" is used to translate "Adam", "anthropos" or "homo" words that actually mean HUMAN rather than male. In addition, brotherhood is often used to translate "koinonia" which is not specific with regard to sex.

ST.HILDA COMMUNITY PALM SUNDAY 19 MARCH 1989

OPENING RITE

This, the springtime of the year, is the season of new birth and re-creation.
This is also the week of the Passion and death of our brother Jesus.

We strip these branches of the buds of new birth, as we recall the divesting of Jesus in his Passion. (Please remove a bud from the branch passed to you.)

And as we are left with these torn and bare branches, we bring before God, the creator of all, the destruction and disfigurement of so much of that creation. (The bare branches are brought to the centre, and crosses formed.)

We stand in silence and repentance for our share in the sin of the world.

O God, the source of our Passion,
who took upon you our unprotected flesh,
kindle in us your anger and desire;
that in suffering we may not be consumed,
but hold fast to you through Jesus Christ, Amen.

(Each turns to their neighbour and gives absolution:)

N. God forgives you; forgive others; forgive yourself.

WOMEN OF THE PASSION

Readings:
John 12: 1-8, The Anointing at Bethany
Mark 14: 66-72, The High Priest's Servant
Luke 23: 27-31, 'Daughters of Jerusalem'
John 19: 25-27, 'Woman,behold thy Son.'
Mark 15: 40-47, The women at the end.

Followed by discussion in groups.

INTERCESSIONS

Light a candle while making your intercession;if aloud, say 'I light this candle for.....'

DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME (1)

O Eternal Wisdom, we praise you and give you thanks,because you laid aside your power as a garment, and took upon you the form of a slave.
You became obedient unto death, even death on a cross, receiving authority and comfort from the hands of a woman; for God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, and God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are.

Therefore, with the woman who gave you birth,the women who befriended you and fed you, who argued with you and touched you, the woman who anointed you for death, the woman who met you, risen from the dead,and with all your lovers throughout the ages, we praise you, saying:

Holy, Holy, Holy, vulnerable God,
heaven and earth are full of your glory,
hosanna in the highest
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of God,
hosanna in the highest

Blessed is our brother Jesus, who on the night before Passover, rose from supper, laid aside his garments, took a towel and poured water, and washed his disciples' feet, saying to them 'If I have washed your feet as your Lord and Teacher, you also ought to wash one another's feet. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. If you do not wash me, you have no part in me.'

Lord, not my feet only,
but also my hands and head

Come now, tender spirit of God, wash us, and make us one body in Christ; that, as we are bound together in this gesture of love, we may no longer be in bondage to the principalities and powers that enslave creation, but may know your liberating peace such as the world cannot give.

(Water is passed round, and we wash each others' hands in silence.)

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE (during which offerings may be made for the life and work of the Community.)

DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME (2)

The giftsof God for the people of God!

We, though we are many, are a single loaf, a single body,
for we all have a share in this bread and wine.

We act again the meal of Jesus with his disciples:

Jesus, while he was being betrayed, gave thanks for bread.
He took a piece, and broke it, saying:
My body is broken for you; share this among yourselves,
and remember me.
He passed round a cup, saying:
My blood is poured out for you, that you may live.
Share it and rejoice.

We give thanks for our common life;

For its broken-ness.

For the presence of Christ in our struggle

For the promise of freedom to the powerless

for the privilege of sharing

For the coming of Christ agian and again.

Now let us take this bread and break it. And share it in the name of Christ.....

Let us take wine , poured out for us, and drink it in the name of Christ.....

FINAL PRAYER

Christ, whose bitter agony
was watched from afar by women;
enable us to follow the example of their persistent love;
that, being steadfast in the face of horror,
we may also know the pleace of Resurrection, in your name. Amen

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Acknowledgements to Janet Morley's 'All desires known' for the prayers 'O God, the source of our Passion' and 'Christ whose bitter agony' and 'Do this in remembrance of me (1)'

This liturgy was created by Peter Kettle

EPIPHANY LITURGY

Song Seek ye first the kingdom of God (round)

Poem The Journey of the Magi TS Eliot

Reading: Listen p 52 The wise men come to Jesus (children's version of Mt 2 1-12)

Reader: B There is some mystery about the wise men from the East. Some think that they were learned in searching the skies for any understanding that the stars might bring, others that they were foreign rulers. It seems clear that they represent the pagan races called from afar to the infant Jesus, who was to rule not just Israel but all humanity. This is the feast which reminds us that Christ's call is to all people.

LITANY (using various readers)

Reader: The Magi journeyed far to find you, Redeemer and Saviour, we too must search for you all our lives

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: The Magi brought precious gifts to you. Our treasure must be the gift of building up your kingdom here and now

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: The coming of the strangers from the East, marked the showing forth of Christ to the whole world. As Christians we are called to show forth Christ's love in our everyday lives.

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: You were in the world but they did not know you. You came to your own and they did not receive you. There was no room for you at the inn. Is there any room for you in our hearts?

All: Help us to respond to you

Reader: The Magi were prepared to leave their homes to search for the new king whose sign was a star in the east. We too must be prepared to search and become a pilgrim people

All: Give us the strength to put false security behind us and live as if we were on a journey

Reader: God has called us out of darkness into the light. May we experience his kindness and blessing and be strong in faith, hope and love.

All: Because we are followers of Christ, who came as a light shining in the darkness, may we show the light of God to the people we find around us.

Reading (from "Truthfulness" Hans Kung p 235, para 1)

The Church, consisting of human beings, must constantly be journeying through the desert,through the darkness of untruth and untruthfulness.... the Church always has a final guiding star, as the ancient people of God long ago had a guiding star through the desert; God's word that constantly brings us afresh into the truth. In these last times God's definitive word has become manifest in Jesus, the Christ.

Gospel Mt 20 25-27

READING B (from To Change the World Rosemary Ruether p 54 para 3)

God as liberator acts in history to liberate all through opting for the poor and the oppressed of the present system.....the aim of this partiality (for the poor) is to create a new whole, to elevate the valleys and make the high places low, so that all may come into a new place of God's reign, when God's will is done on earth"

NEW LIFE RESOLUTIONS (enough grapes for the participants and 2 bowls full of earth are needed)

Leader" We have called this section "New Life" Resolutions. We would like to use the secular idea of New Year's resolutions as it has something very positive to say to us as Christians. It is about New beginning, making a fresh start. We are going to use grapes - these will be passed round, take one and hold it for the moment.

We will then eat the grapes, and reject the pip which each in turn will bury in the earth of the bowls coming round.

In order to be healed, to grow towards wholeness we need to rid ourselves of the bitterness in our lives. That bitterness may be due to our own inadequacies, our own shortcomings, our own misguided desires, our own sinful wishes or it may be due to the inadequacies or desires of others.

Whatever the cause of the bitterness or pain we need to be able to let go of it and to start anew. (the grapes are eaten and the bowls of earth passed round) As we eat the grape let us savour the richness of the flesh and the richness and sweetness in our lives. As we feel the hardness of the pips, let us recognise the bitterness in our lives. Let us leave it behind us now. To show that we have left it behind let us bury our bitterness.

GLORIA (TAIZE ROUND)

BIDDING PRAYERS (extempore by the participants)

OUR FATHER (from Prayer at Night, Jim Cotter)

(See item E in this pack "Versions of the Prayer Jesus Taught us". Each verse should be spoken antiphonally by the participants divided into two groups)

AGAPE - blessing of food and drink (taken from the prayers of the Didache)

Leader Blessed are you, O Lord our God, creator of this food and drink that we share together as a sign of your kingdom, which is to come in glory, and yet is already here now in so far as you live among us in the love we have for one another.
(wine is poured out)

All: We give thanks to you, our creator, for this wine, remembering Israel your people, brought like a vine out of Egypt,and planted in the promised land (wine is passed round)

(the bread is broken and passed round and all say)

All: As we break the bread we thank you O creator for the life and knowledge of yourself which you gave us through Jesus Christ. To you be glory for ever.

As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let your children, Lord, be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever. (all eat)

(all eat)

final song Rejoice alleluia (round)

(Put together by Ianthe and Oliver Pratt, Veronica and Peter Seddon, January 1986 for a house gathering of children, women and men who had previously participated in a "Catholic Peoples Week").

All say the Statement of Faith from the opening ceremony in this country of the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in solidarity with Women

We believe in God
- Maker, Redeemer and Sustainer of Life,
- without beginning or end,
- whose life-giving love was let loose on the first Easter Sunday - and whose life-giving love we share and proclaim here today.

We believe in God
- who gave up the divine life and submitted to the darkness and terror of the grave
- and who enters with us into every darkness and terror we shall ever face.

We believe in God
- who raised Christ from the death of the grave to glorious new life
- and who raises our lives from sin and despair to newness and hope again.

We believe in God

- who met the grief-stricken Mary Magdalene in the garden and called her into hope by the uttering of her name
  and who meets us in our grief and gives us courage to hope again by tenderly calling our name.

We believe in God
- who sent Mary Magdalene out from the garden to be the witness and apostle of the resurrection
- and who commissions us like her to be bearers of hope and good news in our world.

We believe in God
- Maker, Redeemer and Sustainer of Life,
- without beginning or end
- whose life-giving love we share and proclaim today
- to all women and men, wherever and whoever they are,
- loved, blessed and called by God, without beginning or end.

Blessing of the food

All: We share this loaf today, as a sign that we are all one in the body of Christ. Just as many grains came together into the one loaf, so we are all one in Christ Jesus. Help us to reflect the life giving love of the Creator, Redeemer and Spirit in all our relationships and actions.

Sources Song "Open Your Ears.... is to be found in the Celebration Hymnal p 242 but needs adapting eg "he" into "they". From the pack come two items, The Woman's Miserere (in the worship section) and Jim Cotter's "Our Father" (Versions of the Prayer Jesus Taught Us). The Advent Collects are by Janet Morley and come from All Desires Known. The Litany of Penitence and blessing of food are by Ianthe Pratt and come from a St Joan's International Alliance "Liturgy of Listening" (in Women-Created Liturgies). Messengers" by Marta Wilhelmsson is to be found in Who Are You Looking For p 18, as is the Statement of Faith by Nicola Slee (p 38) Responsorial songs used were by Jacky Clackson of Housetop and are not yet published. All publications mentioned above are available through A.I.L., 36 Court Lane, London SE21 7DR.

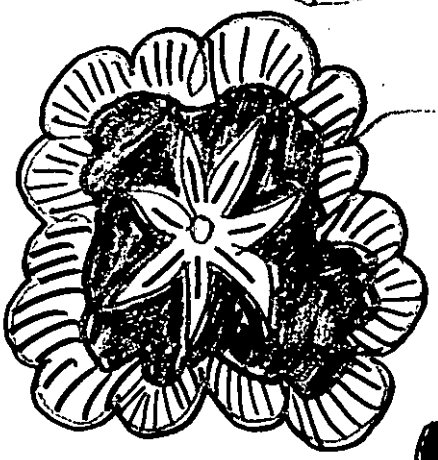
On Being 74.



Body Creaking,
Mind Leaping,
Age no bar,
to revolution.



Life Unfolding,
Spirit upholding,
Sowing not reaping,
Hope sustaining.



Simple pleasures;
feast and friends,
Irony making
the Church ashaking

Flowers bursting,
birds are singing,
cat is basking,
Joy is present



Still growing,
poetry pleasing,
new ideas
are formulating

There are shadows
but in proportion.
Life is abundant
and faith ~~gives the person~~ undergirds change

For this I'm praising
God the mother
the all sustaining
and love engaging.

The Community of all Creation (Based on opening service for CAFOD renew the earth campaign)

Blessed are you,
strong and faithful God.
All your works, the height and the depth,
echo the silent music of your praise.

In the beginning
your Word summoned light:
night withdrew, and creation dawned.
As ages passed unseen,
waters gathered
on the face of the earth
and life appeared.

When the time at last had ripened
and the earth grown full in abundance,
you created in your image
man and woman,
the crown of all creation.

You gave us breath and speech,
that all the living
might find a voice to sing your praise.

Filled with the knowledge
of your love for us
we now commit ourselves
to your service
and the renewing of all the earth.

2 Song Jesus Christ is Waiting (Iona)

3 **Psalm 103**

How many are your works, O Lord,
in wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your riches,
living things great and small.

You hide your face, they are dismayed,
you take back your Spirit, they die.
You send forth your Spirit, they are created
and you renew the face of the earth.

I will sing to the Lord all my life,
make music to my God while I live.
May my thoughts be pleasing to him;
I find my strength in my God.



4 **Prayer of Renewal**

Response: *We promise to care for your earth*

For the sun that gives light and for the air that we breathe
For the waters of the earth in rivers and seas
For the forests and fields of the land
For all animals that are threatened and endangered
For plants and flowers that are trodden under the foot of technology
For resources on and in our land
For people who are misused for profit
For people who are denied access to your gifts
For all people who fight for justice and for peace

All: *For the future we hold*
for our children's children
We promise to care for your earth

5 **Prayer of Blessing**

Deep peace of the running wave to you,
Deep peace of the flowing air to you,
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you,
Deep peace of the shining stars to you,
Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.

May the Lord walk with us along the way, and may he bless all that we d in his name.

CPW EUCHARIST. THEME - RECONCILIATION WITH THE WHOLE OF CREATION

Opening Song Now the Green Blade rises

Confession (from Renewing the Earth CAFOD campaign book, p 83-4)

A Prayer of thanksgiving and confession

Group A For the marvellous grace of your Creation –
We pour out our thanks to you, our God,
for sun and moon and stars,
for rain and dew and winds,
for winter cold and summer heat.

B We pour forth our praise to you
for mountains and hills,
for springs and valleys,
for rivers and seas.

A We praise you, O Lord,
for plants growing in earth and water,
for life inhabiting lakes and seas,
for life creeping in soils and land,
for creatures living in wetlands and waters,
for life flying above earth and sea,
for beasts dwelling in woods and fields.

B How many and wonderful are your works, our God!
In wisdom you have made them all! *(cf Psalm 147-148; 104:24)*

A But we confess, dear Lord,
as creatures privileged with your care and keeping of your Creation,
that we have abused your Creation gifts
through arrogance, ignorance, and greed.

B We confess risking permanent damage to your handiwork;
we confess impoverishing Creation's ability to bring you praise.

A Yet, we confess that your handiwork displays your glory,
leaving all of us without excuse
but to know you *(Romans 1:20)*.

B We confess that your handiwork
provides the context of our living;
it is our home,
it is the realm in which we live the life of your kingdom:
your kingdom that is now in our midst and coming yet more fully.

A We confess, Lord, that we often are unaware
of how deeply we have hurt your good earth
and its marvellous gifts.

B We confess that we are often unaware
of how our abuse of Creation
has also been an abuse of ourselves.

All O Lord, how long will it take before we awaken to what we have done?

A How many waters must we pollute?
How many woodlots must we destroy?
How many forests must we despoil?
How much soil must we erode and poison, O Lord?
How much of Earth's atmosphere must we contaminate?
How many species must we abuse and extinguish?

B How many people must we degrade and kill with toxic wastes
before we learn to love and respect your Creation;
before we learn to love and respect our home?

All For our wrongs, O Lord, we ask forgiveness.

A In sorrow for what we have done we offer our repentance.
We pray that our actions toward you and your Creation are
worthy of our repentance;
that we will so act on earth that heaven will
not be a shock to us.

All May your kingdom come and your will be done on earth!

Peruvian Gloria

Readings:

Psalm 85 (from Psalms Anew) (Readers A & B)
story/parable (from Renewing the Earth p 33) (Reader C)

Followed by short discussion in groups of 3 or 4 round the room

Song Will you come and follow me (Iona)

Bidding Prayers (each group of three prayers to be followed by the Taize Lord hear my prayer (x2) Come and answer me)

Eucharistic Prayer of reconciliation II

'Our Father'

All God, lover of us all
Most Holy One,
Help us to respond to you
To create what you want for us here on earth.
Give us today enough for our needs,
Forgive our weak and deliberate offences
Just as we must forgive others
When they hurt us.
Help us to resist weaknesses and
to do what is good.
For we are yours
endowed with your power
to make our world whole. (L.W)

The Peace Sung Shalom (all hold hands, then greet each other)

Final Prayers (continuation of Prayer of Confession from Renewing the Earth)

A In our hearts, Lord, we promise anew
to reverence Creation as a convicting witness
to your presence, eternal power,
and divine majesty *(cf Psalm 19 and Romans 1:20,*

B We promise to reverence your Creation as a
gracious gift entrusted to us by you, our God.

A We promise anew to be stewards
and not pillagers
of what you have entrusted to us.

B Indeed, we acknowledge
that you have entrusted your very Self to us
in Creation, through your Incarnation in Christ Jesus.

A For the Word through whom all Creation was made
and is upheld,
that Word "became flesh and dwelt among us,
full of grace and truth" *(John 1:14)*.

B Lord, you pitched your divine tent among us
and made our home your home as well.

All Creator God,
you have given us every reason
to learn and promote the wisdom of lives
lived in harmony with Creation.

May we, your servants, increasingly serve.
May we, your servants, increasingly come to love your Creation
as we also increasingly come to love you,
through Christ our Lord. Amen
(The North American Conference on
Christianity and Ecology)

Pause.

All Let there be peace on earth
And let it begin with me.
Let there be love on earth
And let it begin in my heart.
Let there be miracles on earth
And let them begin with my faith.
Let there be a future
And let it begin with my action – now.

Final Song

GARDEN EUCHARIST ON A THEME OF CREATION

Opening song - When God on earth (Song sheet)

Penitential prayer

Group A Loving Creator,
who has breathed your own life into your people,
you have given us all creation to care for
- the tall trees of the forest and the crops of the fields,
- the fish that swim in the sea and the animals that roam the earth
All the good things that you made

Group B And we, what have we done with your gifts?
We have used the resources of the earth recklessly
plundered the riches of this planet with greed
refused to share with the poor and the hungry.

All Forgive us, O Source of all our Being, and bring us back into harmony with your universe.

Group A We are called to love one another in your name,
yet what have we done?
We talk about love with our lips

Group B But We pass on the other side when needs press in upon us,
rules matter more than compassion, the law than the spirit.

All Forgive us for our failure to listen to your call to show forth your love in our lives and that of the Church.

Group A We have been called to be sisters and brothers of Christ yet what have we done? We have allowed the dominations and oppressions of the world to enter into Christ's body.

Group B We have failed to listen to each other although we are all called to be a chosen race, a royal priesthood, and a consecrated nation.

All Send forth your spirit into our hearts so that we may truly share with one another the work of building up your realm here on earth.

Group A You created human beings in your own image "male and female God created them".

Group B Yet your people have treated women, made in the image of God, as inferior and defective.

All Help us to build up a true community of women and men in the church, where sexual and racial discrimination is overcome.

Group A God our liberator, through Christ's redeeming act we have been made free and brought out into the light.

Group B Yet we fear to act as prophets when we see that things need changing

All Forgive us O loving Creator for our lack of courage. Send forth your spirit and make your new creation truly effective in us. Help all your people to work together in love and trust to build up the body of Christ.

Bidding prayers by the participants. After each 3 intercessions, the Taize O Lord hear my prayer to be sung.

Reading: from Hildegard of Bingen (p 89-90 CAFOD "Renew the Earth") followed by short silence.

Group work (Adults to use sheet of readings and questions, young people to work with Lala, children to the kitchen with Ianthe)

Offertory Procession by the children, while all sing Morning has Broken (HO & N 350)

Input by the young people's group

Circling dance

Declaration of faith

We believe in God the Father
who created all the world,
who will unite all things in Christ
and who wants all people to live together
as brothers and sisters in one family.

We believe in God the Son
who became man, died, and rose in triumph,
to reconcile all the world to God,
to break down every separating barrier
of race, culture or class,
and to unite all people into one body.

He is exalted as Lord over all,
the only Lord over every area of human life.
He summons both the individual and society,
both the Church and the State,
to seek reconciliation and unity between all
and justice and freedom for all.

We believe in God the Spirit,
the pledge of God's coming Reign,
who gives the Church Power to proclaim the good news
to all the world,
to love and serve all people,
to strive for justice and peace,
to warn that God judges both
the individual and the nation,
and to summon all the world to
accept God's reign here and now."

(Taken from S.Africa Outlook 1979)

"Our Father"

Eternal Spirit, Life-giver, Pain-bearer, Love maker
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven!

The Hallowing of your Name echo through the universe!
the way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of Peace and Freedom sustain our hope and come on earth!

With the bread that we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever, Amen.

(J.C.)

Shalom (sing first, holding hands, then greet one another)

Eucharistic Prayer (from the American service book of the Episcopal Church)

Cel. God be with you

People And also with you
C. Lift up your hearts
P. We lift them to God
C. It is right to give God thanks and praise.

God of all power, ruler of the universe, you are worthy of glory and praise.

P. Glory to you for ever and ever.

C. At your command all things came to be: the vast expanse of interstellar space, galaxies, suns, the planets in their courses, and this fragile earth, our island home.

P. By your will they were created and have their being.

C. From the primal elements you brought forth the human race, and blessed us with memory, reason and skill. You made us the rulers of creation. But we turned against you, and betrayed your trust; and we turned against one another.

P. Have mercy, O Loving God, for we are sinners in your sight.

C. Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous Law. And in the fullness of time you sent your only Son, born of a woman, to fulfil your Law, to open for us the ways of freedom and peace.

P. By his blood he reconciled us. By his wounds, we are healed.

C. And therefore we praise you, joining with the heavenly chorus, with prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and with all those in every generation who have looked to you in hope, to proclaim with them your glory, in their unending hymn:

All: Holy, holy holy, God of power and might ....

the celebrant (and people if so wished) continues

and so, we who have been redeemed by him, and made a new people by water and the Spirit, now bring before you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the night he was betrayed he took bread, said the blessing, broke the bread and gave it to his friends, and said "Take,eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering now his work of redemption, and offering to you this sacrifice of thanksgiving,

(All) We celebrate his death and resurrection, as we await the day of his coming.

C. God of our fathers and mothers, God of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Rebecca, of Jacob, Leah and Rachel, God of our Lord Jesus Christ, open our eyes to see your hand at work in the world about us. Deliver us from the presumption of coming to this Table for solace only, and not for strength; for pardon only and not for renewal. Let the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name.

P. Risen Christ, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread.

C. Christ our passover is sacrificed for us

P Therefore let us keep the peace

After communion is sung "Let there be love"

Final blessing

Final song Jesus Christ is waiting

coracle autumn 2012 issue 4/53

the magazine of the iona community

coracle

FOR ALL THE SAINTS GONE FORWARD: THE 2013 ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS ON IONA AND IN GLASGOW Peter Macdonald, p1

'IT WAS MAGIC!': THE PRIORITY AREAS HOLIDAY WEEK ON IONA AND MULL John and Molly Harvey, p3

KAIROS – SEIZING THE MOMENT, BUILDING A MOVEMENT/THE IONA CALL Jan Sutch Pickard, Mark Braverman and guests of the Kairos Week on Iona, p6



Work and worship, Prayer and politics, Sacred and secular ...

The Iona Community is:

- An ecumenical community of men and women from different walks of life and different traditions in the Christian church
- Committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to following where that leads, even into the unknown
- Engaged together, and with people of goodwill across the world, in acting, reflecting and praying for justice, peace and the integrity of creation
- Convinced that the inclusive community we seek must be embodied in the community we practise

So we share a common discipline of:

- Daily prayer and bible study
- Mutual accountability for our use of time and money
- Spending time together
- Action for justice and peace

And are, together with our staff, responsible for:

- Our islands residential centres of Iona Abbey, the MacLeod Centre on Iona, and Camas Adventure Centre on the Ross of Mull. And in Glasgow
- The administration of the Community
- Our work with young people
- Our publishing house, Wild Goose Publications
- Our association in the revitalising of worship with the Wild Goose Resource Group

The Iona Community was founded in Glasgow in 1938 by George MacLeod, minister, visionary and prophetic witness for peace, in the context of the poverty and despair of the Depression. Its original task of rebuilding the monastic ruins of Iona Abbey became a sign of hopeful rebuilding of community in Scotland and beyond. Today, we are almost 250 Members, mostly in Britain, and 1500 Associate Members, with 1400 Friends worldwide. Together and apart, 'we follow the light we have, and pray for more light.'

Coracle is the bi-monthly magazine of the Iona Community. Views expressed in it are not necessarily the policy of the Iona Community, but the Community seeks the exchange of thoughts and ideas as a basis for finding common ground.

Letters are welcome, but may be edited because of space restrictions. For **advertising** or **photography** specifications, please contact the editor. **Unsolicited material** is welcome (by email or on disk) but cannot always be included.

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Peter Macdonald

For all the saints gone forward: the 2013 anniversary celebrations on Iona and in Glasgow …

Next year the Community will mark two significant anniversaries – in May, the 1450th Anniversary of the Arrival of Columba on Iona and, in June, the 75th Anniversary of the Founding of the Iona Community. Leader Peter Macdonald fills us in on the 2013 calendar of events – let us all become more Pentecostally expectant! …

'On Pentecost Sunday we remembered in a wonderful way our gratitude to Columba and all the saints gone forward, by a great Act of Universal Communion. No historic denomination of Christendom that has ever served Scotland through the centuries was absent from the occasion, either in presence or benediction …'

So begins George MacLeod's account of the 1400th anniversary celebrations of the arrival of Columba on Iona. In bright sunshine and with a stiff breeze enlivening the Sound, pilgrims came from all over Britain and Ireland and from as far away as Switzerland and even Australia. That year, 1963, fortuitously, Pentecost and St Columba's Day began and ended the week for the hundreds of people staying in the camp. They were joined for the two main acts of worship by hundreds more who came by train, bus and steamship. As well as remembering and giving thanks for the past, participants were led in reflection upon *'the shape of things to come'*.

Fifty years on, preparations are well-advanced for next year's Pentecost celebrations, when we will mark the 1450th anniversary of Columba setting foot on Iona. In 1963, I am told, the islanders had little or no involvement in the celebrations. However, next year's events are being planned by a small group of folk representing the Parish Church, Cnoc a' Chalmain (the Roman Catholic House of Prayer), Bishop's House and the Iona Community. Invitations have been extended to leading political figures on both sides of the Irish Sea, senior representatives of the major denominations and local dignitaries. A proposed additional early-morning sailing from Oban will enable many other people to arrive on Iona in time for the service of thanksgiving.

The inspiration of the Columban mission will provide the focus for the week's programme in our centres, for guests who are involved in local ecumenical partnerships and initiatives.

Three weeks later, on Sunday 9th June, a large open-air service will be held on Iona to mark St Columba's Day. Associated cultural events are being planned by Argyll and Bute Council at four locations including Iona.

Members, Associates and Friends are invited to events being held in Glasgow, 7-9th June, celebrating the Iona Community's 75th anniversary. The weekend will include events such as the inaugural George MacLeod Memorial Lecture, performances of a play based on the early years of the rebuilding on Iona and of the Community, a service of thanksgiving in Govan Old and a family picnic in Elder Park.

We have booked exclusive use of the Glasgow Youth Hostel for the Friday

and Saturday nights. It is hoped that as many Members and their families can be with us for the weekend and that Associates, Friends and supporters will attend the special events planned. A parallel programme for children and young people is also planned. Here you will find the draft programme for both celebrations. More information will follow in due course.

Prior to the 1400th anniversary celebrations George wrote:

'If hundreds of people come to Iona on Pentecost determined to partake of the Sacrament together … if they have all been praying for a great day … is it really extraordinary that something should happen? As Christians in our modern world are we really expecting anything to happen?'

As we look forward to next year and to the anniversary of the founding of the Community – let us all become more Pentecostally expectant!

God bless,

Peter

2013 CALENDAR OF EVENTS: IONA/GLASGOW

THE 1450TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARRIVAL OF COLUMBA ON IONA

CELEBRATIONS: IONA, PENTECOST, MAY 2013:

Saturday 18th May

An Island between Heaven and Earth, Iona Village Hall: A play by Alistair Rutherford originally written for BBC Radio 4, now adapted for the stage and telling the story of a group of ex-shipyard workers and trainee clergymen who arrive on the island of Iona in 1938 and set about restoring its ruined medieval abbey.

Sunday 19th May

A Service of Thanksgiving, Iona Abbey

Buffet reception

The opening of Historic Scotland's new interpretation facilities for visitors to Iona

An Island between Heaven and Earth, Iona Village Hall

THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE IONA COMMUNITY

CELEBRATIONS: GLASGOW, 7-9TH JUNE 2013

Friday 7th June

Recounting: potluck supper and sharing 75 years of stories, 7-9pm, Renfield St Stephen's Church, Glasgow

Saturday 8th June

Accounting: AGM, including elections, 9:30am-12:30pm, Renfield St Stephen's Church

The Inaugural George MacLeod Memorial Lecture, 2-4pm (venue TBC)

An Island between Heaven and Earth, 7:30pm (venue TBC)

Sunday 9th June

A Service of Blessing, Commitment and Holy Communion, 11am, Govan Old Church

Wild Goose Family Picnic: for Members, Associates and friends of the Iona Community, 1pm, Elder Park, Govan

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John and Molly Harvey

'It was magic!' The Church of Scotland Priority Areas Holiday Week on Iona and Mull

Oban pier, 1:50pm, Saturday 14th July, 2012. Two bus-loads of excited people spill out onto the tarmac, heading for the ferry to Mull – that's due to leave at 2:00! The word goes out: 'Don't take time to look for your own bags – just grab what you can carry and RUN!' And we all got on – with all the luggage. What an exercise in trust – and what a great start to a holiday!

As anyone who has ever had to organise a group holiday to Iona with the Community will know, it takes a lot of work!

This summer, the Church of Scotland Priority Areas team, led by Martin Johnstone and Lynn MacLellan, took a group of 35 adults and 46 children to the Iona Community's three centres – the Abbey, the MacLeod Centre and Camas – for a week in July. The families came from ten Urban Priority Area parishes in Glasgow and three nearby towns. To accompany them, they assembled a team of 18 staff, including the two Iona Community Members in Residence at the Abbey and the Mac; and the whole week was brilliantly supported by the members of the Programme and Youth teams of the Community's staff on the islands.

And yes, it took a lot of work! A large amount of money had to be raised; it included a generous amount from the Community itself. Preparatory staff meetings were held throughout the preceding months in Glasgow. Detailed planning of the programme, with activities for every age group and for each day of the week, was thrashed out. Liaison with the staff on Iona took place; room lists and task groups were prepared; menus were mulled over; buses were hired and tickets bought; and a few weeks before the start of the week, there was a gathering in the new Gorbals church to which all the families and staff were invited, to get to know each other, share information and check on things like clothing and special needs. 100 packed lunches were prepared, along with 'eventuality travel sickness' bags.

So it was a pretty well sorted, very excited, and probably somewhat apprehensive group who gathered outside the Royal Concert Hall. We set off in two hired coaches – and just made it to Oban with ten minutes to spare, as one of the buses had to turn back after 15 minutes to pick up someone who had been left behind in Glasgow! CalMac weren't going to let us on, but a plea from a leader – 'We've got an adult in a wheelchair and a whole bunch of children' – got us past the barrier.

We couldn't have had a better arrival on Iona. Perfect weather – the island shining above the sparkling sea – and the Community had sent two vans over to Fionnphort, together with the Leader of the Community and the Convenor of the Iona Committee, to welcome us and to pick up all our luggage.

What were the highlights? The weather – stunning for the first three days, dreich and then soaking for the middle two – then stunning again for the last two. The islands of course – most folk managed to get to at least one beach, some more than once. The Centres – people loved the Abbey, and took over the Mac with gusto, while the teenagers revelled in all that Camas had to offer. The Community's staff who got involved with us – several going way beyond their allotted hours and job descriptions in offering help and support. The programme – we had stories from Jan Sutch Pickard, 'Worship in the Wild' with Jo Love, games all over the place with Neil Young and the Community's youth staff, two boat trips with Davie Kirkpatrick (to Staffa in the afternoon, round the south end of Iona in the evening), the off-road and on-road pilgrimages (the latter just made it to Martyrs' Bay for lunch, quite an achievement considering the various stop-offs for chips on the way – but we made it to the Machair in brilliant time to meet the off-roaders for flapjacks!), arts and crafts in the Mac, abseiling and kayaking at Camas, two ceilidhs, breadmaking, music-making, pizza-making, candle-making,





bedtime stories for the wee ones, an indoor barbecue, a closing concert. And we even had our very own 2012 Olympic Games, setting off at exactly 20:12 on Wednesday to meet the Olympic torch coming over from Camas; we had a beautiful homemade five-circle Olympic symbol. The games were held in the village hall, due to the weather, and ended with a race through the grounds of the Nunnery. We even had our own medal ceremony!

Did the families enjoy themselves? One granny, with tears in her eyes, confessed that 'no one has ever given me a holiday before'. People spoke of the unique experience of getting away as a family together; of the pleasure of getting food put down in front of them; of the programme for the children which gave them 'time off'; of the way everyone looked out for each other; of the beauty of the island and of the story of the Abbey. A mother shared her surprise at how religion on Iona was about 'the ordinary things – I expected it to be all holy!'; another called the whole experience 'humbling – a total privilege'. A single mum, who had been initially quite cautious about the holiday, shared how she gradually felt more and more comfortable, and 'I love the way you say the Psalms in the services'. 'It was magic!' someone else said of the time. An asylum seeker said that it was brilliant to get the opportunity to come here: 'When you are locked in Glasgow, you don't realise how beautiful places like this are.' Some had come expecting a bit more peace and quiet – most had really no idea of what to expect. One three-year-old, trying to explain how it felt on the boat trip to the south end of the island, as the swell began to rock the boat, pronounced 'the boat's gone kind of curly'! Tears and laughter were shared.

So yes – the families, overall, enjoyed the holiday. For some, especially mothers with young or particularly challenging children, there were times of struggle; one such mum, offered a wee while off while her children were in the crèche, announced gratefully: 'I'm just going to enjoy a shower to myself.' Older children often acted as 'au pairs' for some of the mums with younger children, which was a tremendous help. The end refectory table in the Abbey was set up with Lego for the wee children at mealtimes. As for the staff team, it's probably true to say that everyone felt it was a tremendously worthwhile week, and a privilege to be involved and to meet and get to know so many courageous and amazing people – even if it meant starting usually before 7:00 in the morning and finishing with a nightly meeting from 9:45 till 11:00, assessing the day and planning (and adapting) the programme for the next one.

A group of this size and make-up, with so many staff of its own and also with its own programme, was undoubtedly a challenge to the more fixed normal weekly programme of the Community. Overall, we came away with the sense that the Community staff had risen to the challenge with enthusiasm and grace – indeed, one volunteer said that 'this is what we had expected Iona to be about all the time'.

Tricia McConalogue, one of the staff team, writes: *'The staff at the Mac were brilliant at initiating conversation at the dinner table and getting to know the families. They also knew the children by name. Their patience with the children was great too, allowing them to ring the bell for mealtimes. The Mac was lively and vibrant and the staff seemed to welcome this buzz. One evening the people who were helping to wash the dishes in the kitchen started a sing-song. The staff joined in and afterwards one of the staff thanked the women, saying this really made her day … For me it had the attributes of Braendam House, that being there for each other, looking out for each other, noticing if someone wasn't at the table and going to look for them, just what Jesus would do. It would be great if Iona was made available for more families like this.'*

In conclusion, we'd like to think that George MacLeod, once he'd got over the sight and sound of all these children in the Abbey, was smiling down on it all, and saying softly to himself, in the words of one of his famous prayers: 'Thus shall these walls continue to be justified.'

Photos by Jo Love and Martin Johnstone ©

John and Molly Harvey are members of the Iona Community. They have been involved with Braendam Link, Bridging the Gap and ATD Fourth World, and were members of the Gorbals Group. John is the author of Bridging the Gap: Has the Church Failed the Poor?, Wild Goose Publications, www.ionabooks.com





Rev Paul Nicolson, Chair, Zacchaeus 2000 Trust

Deficit reduction hits the poorest hardest

I share the view of the Pro-Housing Alliance in their submission to the Parliamentary Commission on Banking Standards: the moral collapse in the banking industry began in the 1980s when Parliament deregulated lending, abolished rent controls and allowed the free movement of capital in and out of the UK. It is as if Moses went back up Mount Sinai, deregulated the Ten Commandments – and then wondered why there was so much theft, etc. The Libor scandal is the culmination of a long period of deterioration during which making profit overrode morality.

The Zacchaeus 2000 Trust serves the very poorest citizens of London struggling with a complex benefit system. The abolition of rent controls by the 1979 government, about which the 1997 government did nothing, hit housing benefit claimants very hard when the bankers' bubble exploded in 2008. The massive increase in private sector house prices, due to reckless lending into a market in short supply, had contributed substantially to the increase in rents and therefore in housing benefit payments; they rose in billions every year, from £5.4 billion in 1986/7 to a planned £19.7 billion in 2007/8 to £21 billion in 2009/10, and rising to the profit of private landlords. This was obviously unsustainable. However, when the crisis hit in 2008, instead of reintroducing rent controls to hit the landlords who had profited billions from housing benefit, the Labour government introduced the Local Housing Allowance, which capped housing benefit and forced many tenants into rent arrears with threats of eviction. Then, in 2010, the Coalition turned up the pressure of rent arrears on those with the lowest incomes by introducing the housing benefit caps; and in 2013 the Welfare Reform Act 2012 will introduce an overall cap of £500 a week on benefit payments, which will, particularly, damage large families living in high-rent areas. That is on top of the reducing value of social security and a new council tax benefit scheme which will be run by local authorities; there are anxieties that it will be a new poll tax.

The consequences are debt and forced migration. Zacchaeus 2000 runs the Next Door project, which is dedicated to helping tenants in Westminster hit by the 2010 housing benefit caps. The manager, Romin Sutherland, reports that he has engaged with a number of particularly difficult cases, including: a family whose 10-year-old son has a terminal brain tumour – they recently moved into temporary accommodation; a family receiving 24-hour support from social services because neither parent is currently well enough to care for their 10-month-old son – their future remains uncertain, and the likelihood is diminishing every day that we will be able to house them close to the schools and hospitals they rely on; a family comprising a mother who has been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia and two young children, both with developmental learning difficulties – they also recently moved into temporary accommodation, but over 11 miles away from where they were previously.

Some of the families are choosing overcrowding to make the rent fit the cap. Parliament has been oblivious to research which shows that overcrowding damages the health and wellbeing of families and the educational progress of children. Professor Peter Ambrose presented this research in the report *Housing Our Future*, launched by South London Citizens (SLC) in 2009. It dealt with the incidence of overcrowding in the homes of children attending four primary schools in Wandsworth Borough in south London. The situation first came to light in May 2008, when a parent with children at a primary school raised with the local priest and a teacher the shockingly overcrowded and damp conditions in their home. The family of five was living in one room, in a flat which had been declared unsafe by environmental health. The private landlord was refusing to carry out repairs, and the family still had five people ahead of them on the Council waiting list to be rehoused. Both parents and children were suffering damage to their physical and mental health. It is estimated by the Centre for Mental Health that mental illness cost the economy £105 billion in 2009/10

Many sad stories have been revealed, among them a man and wife sharing a one-bedroom with their four children: three boys, aged 12, 9 and 18 months and a girl aged 7. For this he pays £240 a week. The children have no space to play, eat properly or do their homework. The husband said: *'My oldest boy … has to leave home at six in the morning to go to school to do his homework, even in the winter.'* In 2008 the Government Office for Science reported in their Foresight Report, *Mental Capital and Wellbeing*, that recent analyses have indicated that *'out of control debts are the crucial mediating variable between low income and mental ill-health, and it may be that financial control is also a critical factor in mental wellbeing'.* They also report that *'there is a very marked increase in rates of the different disorders with increasing numbers of debts'.*

The cost of parliamentary and financial sector recklessness over the past 30 years has fallen disgracefully on the poorest citizens and their children. It goes a long way beyond cash, cutting deeply into their health, wellbeing, education and future employment prospects, which creates costs for the taxpayer.

Paul Nicolson is Chair of Zacchaeus 2000 Trust, http://z2k.org. He is an associate member of the Iona Community.

Jan Sutch Pickard

Kairos – seizing the moment, building a movement

It is Pentecost Sunday. Iona Abbey is packed. The Iona Community's Centres are full with people – many new to Iona – who have come to take part in the Kairos Week.

We hear the story of the first Pentecost read, after Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones. Then Mark Braverman, an American Jew, stands on the chancel step, and preaches. The congregation is silent, rapt, as he calls us, as Christians, to respond to the movement of the Spirit which has already produced the Palestinian Kairos document. 'In a kairos moment,' he says, 'God issues a challenge to decisive action.'

The Zionist narrative and the foundation of the State of Israel, in the year that he was born, seemed to him, as he grew up, a sign of hope for his people. Then, on a visit less than ten years ago, confronted by the 24-foot-high concrete separation wall in Jerusalem, he realised that he had to break down a personal barrier that prevented him from facing up to what his own people were doing to the Palestinians.

He realised the tragic irony that, from Yad Vashem, the Holocaust museum in Jerusalem, you look across at the ruins of Deir Yassin, a Palestinian village where more than 100 men, women and children were massacred by Jewish forces in 1948.

He became a committed advocate for the Palestinian struggle for human and political rights. And for five memorable days in Iona at the end of May, he led our thinking about what our own response might be.

Alongside him, Naim Ateek, Palestinian theologian and founder of the Sabeel Centre in Jerusalem, led us in profound and provocative Bible studies. These gave a useful counterbalance to the readings in morning worship for which, as it happened, the lectionary gave us the Book of Joshua! This was one of the healthy things about the week: in spite of the urgency and size of the subject matter, and the temptation to multiply sessions with intense and focused discussion, this wasn't a conference that happened to be in Iona. It was much more. It was a week in the Centres where people with many different experiences and perspectives gathered and community was built, as we shared chores and worship, as we walked together. While our minds were focused on the land that we call Holy, a place of pilgrimage for three great faiths over the centuries, we set out on pilgrimage together, with our feet on the holy ground and common ground of Iona. The Community's staff in the Centres were flexible in enabling different things to happen. The justice and peace display in the north transept developed in response to the sessions. Worship was as relevant as ever (yes, even the morning lectionary!). Ecumenical Accompaniers led the afternoon justice and peace prayers; a mixture of guests prepared an evening service flowing from the theme.

It was not all sweetness and light. During late-night films and conversations at table, many uncomfortable issues were faced. There were strong words in the sessions: Mark said, *'Israel is basically a rogue, criminal regime. As we sit here, the wall goes on being built, and the settlements. The Occupation is going forward, financed by my government, diplomatically protected – and your governments follow suit.'* What about the churches? The malign influence of Christian Zionism is clear; many church people choose to go on 'pilgrimages' which are little more than propaganda tours. Our different denominations constantly need to be challenged to speak out. But, with careful analysis of the Israel/Palestine situation, of the parallels with apartheid South Africa, and the Kairos responses of Christians, the message was not despairing. Both speakers recognised the challenges for Christians. Mark acknowledged that the guilt that we feel, about the way that Jews have suffered at the hands of Christians down the ages, can make us unwilling to address current injustices. Sometimes there have been attempts to play on that guilt. And often the churches have been silent or very cautious in their response. One reason given is respect for interfaith relationships. Yet many of our Jewish neighbours in Britain do not believe that their faith is represented by the State of Israel and its policies. Relationships and mutual respect are important to many of us, but so is the responsibility to speak truth to power.

Naim addressed the discomfort some of us felt over that week's lectionary. He offered questions we need to ask when looking at any biblical text: *'How close is it to the spirit of Jesus Christ … to the spirit of international law? … to recognising the humanity of the other? Does it lend itself to peace and harmony, rather than conflict and strife? Does this text benefit God?'* As a preacher, I will find these very helpful questions.

Mark says that he realised *'that devoting myself to the struggle for justice of the Palestinians was the most Jewish thing I could do'.* He calls himself a Jewish follower of Jesus, and says, *'We need Jesus today. What would Jesus*



Iona Abbey © David Coleman

do?' And what are we, a Pentecost people, going to do? His perception, shared by many there, is that in this kairos moment we are part of a movement through which God will bring about change.

As the week progressed, a drafting committee met, at some very antisocial hours, to try to put together a statement which represented the content of the talks and the response of the gathering. I have seldom been in a session as engaging as the one where the proposed text was put up on a screen and discussed, paragraph by paragraph, by more than sixty people – where we saw our revisions put in place. Amazingly, with all our different voices, we listened to each other and something coherent emerged: the Iona Call. This, too, was a Pentecost experience. There are 62 signatories to 'The Iona Call'.

Mark Braverman's Pentecost sermon and 'The Iona Call' follow. Read them now – and become part of the Kairos movement …

'CAN THESE BONES LIVE?', SERMON FROM IONA ABBEY, PENTECOST 2012, by Mark Braverman (Acts 2:1–21, Ezekiel 37:1–14)

It's a joy to be in your midst. You know, as a Jew who grew up in the synagogue, preaching from a prescribed set of scripture readings is familiar territory. Every Sabbath we read a section from the Torah, starting from Genesis and ending in Deuteronomy; it's a one-year cycle, 52 portions. But when I discovered the lectionary, I was so delighted – what an embarrassment of riches for the preacher! There is the Old Testament, with a psalm as a bonus, and the Gospels and Epistles. Growing up I was not supposed to read the New Testament; indeed even entering a church was a questionable if not dangerous act, such is the painful legacy of our shared history. And so to bring the scriptures together into one whole is a miracle for me, a wall coming down. And walls coming down is the topic of today's preaching.

Pentecost, of course, is the Jewish festival of Shavuot. Shavuot means, literally, 'weeks', and marks the completion of the 7-week counting period after Passover; and this, we must assume, is what the disciples were celebrating in Jerusalem that day. We have the unique phenomenon here of Christianity having preserved the name of the original Jewish festival, and I think this is right, because the themes of the two are remarkably linked. The Jewish festival commemorates the giving of the Law on Sinai: God descending upon the mountain, Moses going up to get the law, and the people ultimately – after a terrible but highly instructive false start – receiving it. There are Jewish legends about this festival: I remember as a child keeping myself awake as long as possible on the eve of Shavuot because it was told that on this night, the heavens, for one brief moment, would open.

But as important as they are, I don't want to talk so much about convergences, rather about departures, differences, revolutionary developments. Moments – like the giving of the law on Sinai, and like the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost – when everything changes, when history turns. To get to Pentecost, we count 7 weeks and a day; that is *chronos*, linear time. But Sinai and Pentecost are not seen in linear, chronological time – they are *kairos* events – times that shatter our human counting of hours and minutes and weeks and years, times that reshape human history, times that challenge our assumptions and the established social and political order itself. A kairos moment is, in the words of Robert McAfee Brown, a time *'when God offers a new set of possibilities, and we have to accept or decline'*.

Kairos presents what a friend once described to me as *'insurmountable opportunity'*. And even when – as is usually the case – the objective may be clear enough but the path to follow is uncertain – full of hazards, uncharted – you still must go. We call to mind George MacLeod's statement: *'Christians are explorers, not mapmakers.'*

To understand what happened on that particular Pentecost, we need to go back one chapter prior to our reading for today, to the very opening of Acts. It is 40 days past Easter. Jesus, having appeared on a number of occasions to the disciples, has told them not to leave Jerusalem, that they must wait just a few days for the fulfilment of the promise of the Father. In typical fashion, Jesus doesn't spend a lot of words explaining the why or the how of this. He says only this: *'that John had baptised with water, but that they will be baptised in the Holy Spirit'*. The disciples, as usual, are clueless. More than clueless – they get it completely wrong. Like so many times before, they proceed to ask the wrong question, a question that reveals that they *still* do not understand what Jesus has been talking about for the three and a half years of his ministry, even now, even after Easter. *'Is this the time?' they ask him. 'Is it now, Lord, that you will restore the kingdom to Israel?'* Even now, they do not comprehend what is meant by the Kingdom of God.

And so, at the close of this first chapter, we, like the disciples, are waiting to find out what it means to receive power, what happens when the Holy Spirit comes upon us. Jesus gives them, and us, a strong hint, and it is the very last thing he says before he ascends to heaven: *'The time will come,' he tells them, 'when indeed you will leave Jerusalem. You will be my witnesses, not only in Jerusalem, but to all the land of Judea and Samaria, but you will not stop there – it is to the ends of the earth that you must go!'*

This is the heart of the Pentecost message.

After a brief piece of business involving the election of the now-missing twelfth apostle, we find ourselves in chapter two, on the day of Pentecost. And the power of the Holy Spirit that Jesus had predicted arrives, but perhaps not in the way that was expected. It arrives not as a gentle bird of peace, not in a voice from heaven

saying, *'This is my beloved son'* – but as violent winds and tongues – tongues! – of fire that confer the ability to speak in all the languages of the known world! This is the power that came to the disciples. It was not about restoring the kingdom to Israel. It was not a restoration at all, not a return to a former state of glory or stability, not that kind of power. It is something completely new. From the kingdom of Israel we have moved to the ends of the earth – all places, all peoples, all humanity. And speaking in the native language of each – in other words, in a common language.

Contrast this astonishing story with the descriptions of God coming to humankind that precede it in the scriptures. In the book of Genesis, God speaks to Abraham, instructing him to travel to a specific land, which will be given as a possession to him and his descendants, along with the promise of wealth, progeny and blessing. The promise is reiterated to his grandson Jacob in the striking dream of the ladder reaching from heaven to – again – the land, the very land upon which he stands; and then of course again at Sinai, when God is depicted as descending upon a mountain. Contrast this with what we have here in the Pentecost story.

Pentecost tells a story, and the story is clear: it is the story of what humankind must now do if we are to survive, if we are to be with God. It is the movement away from possession of territory and toward the honouring of the entire earth, the movement from the particular to the universal. It is about what land means, to what use it is to be put. Make no mistake, these themes are contained in the Torah and the prophets; the building blocks are there and the prophets in particular strain toward it. But it is in the tongues and fire of Pentecost that the transition is now complete. Pentecost is the story of contrasts: between *'when will you restore the kingdom of Israel?'* and the power bestowed by the Holy Spirit to be *'my witnesses unto the ends of the earth'.*

In my own journey as a Jew born in the years immediately following World War II and within a month of the establishment of the State of Israel, I have lived that contrast. Growing up, I was taught that a miracle had blessed my generation. The State of Israel was redemption from 2000 years of suffering and slaughter. In every generation, so goes the Passover liturgy, tyrants rise up to annihilate us, and the Lord God saves us from their hands. Jewish history was a story of struggle, exile, oppression and slaughter that had now culminated, at last, in a homeland. We had been, literally, redeemed. The suffering and the helplessness were over.

The story of the birth of the State of Israel in which I was steeped, in which in fact the whole Western world has been schooled, partook of this narrative. The legacy of Europe that shaped my generation of Western Jews and the generations that followed was a sense of specialness, separateness and entitlement. Growing up Jewish was wonderful – but it also involved living behind a wall of self-preservation, vulnerability and a kind of brittle exclusivity. I embraced this narrative; I adopted this identity. I carried that wall inside myself.

Until I witnessed the occupation of Palestine. When I saw the dispossession and oppression being perpetrated in my name, it broke my heart and it challenged my assumptions and beliefs. I learned about another narrative: the, in Arabic, *Nakba*, 'the catastrophe', the dispossession of three-quarters of a million men, women and children to make way for the Jewish State. Most important, I met the Palestinian people and recognised them as my brothers and sisters. For me, the wall came down.

I realised that if my own people were going to survive, we had to transcend our sense of specialness and victim-tinged entitlement, a sense incubated for 2000 years that had now taken the form of political Zionism – the claim to the land as our particular inheritance and birthright.

Which brings us to our second reading, from the prophet Ezekiel, the well-known vision of the valley of the dry bones.

The connection between this and the reading from Acts seems clear: God comes in strong wind, and something changes dramatically. But how different this is.

The prophet Ezekiel, a member of the priestly class who had been exiled with the elite of the population to Babylonia, depicts his people in total despair: *'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.'*

'Can these bones live?' God asks Ezekiel rhetorically, and then in answer commands him: *'Prophesy to these bones, and say to them: "O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live"'.*

And what is this rebirth, this redemption from loss and exile? How does the Spirit of the Lord come to the people? It is, literally, in a restoration of the kingdom of Israel – a return to the land, a rebuilding of the Temple. *'I will bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel.'*

It is 2006. I am visiting Israel and the Israeli-occupied West Bank, and on this particular day I stand at the entrance of Yad Vashem, the State of Israel's national museum commemorating the Nazi Holocaust. As I enter the grounds of the museum, I am confronted by a huge stone archway inscribed with the words of the prophet Ezekiel from this same chapter 37, our reading for today: *'I will put my Spirit into you and you shall live again, and I will set you upon your own soil.'*

Contemplating this inscription, I was rooted to the spot. We had been in Jerusalem and the West Bank for four days. I was not feeling close to the redemptive Zionist dream.

Walking through the museum, I traversed the whole familiar story: from the laws enacted in the 1930s, the walls of isolation, privation and degradation closing in, to the Final

Solution: the ovens, the stacked bodies, the faces of the children. I felt I might never escape from this horror, this pit of evil and despair. And then, suddenly, ascending a wide flight of stairs, I was outside, in the light and the open air, standing on a wide patio that looked out on the Jerusalem hills. Again, I was rooted to the spot: this, I realised, was the final exhibit.

From the promise inscribed on the archway, through the suffering of all our long history, we had reached the reward. Our destiny. Our birthright. And here is the tragic irony – as you stand on that patio and gaze out on these hills, you are looking at the ruins of Deir Yassin, a defenceless Palestinian village where over 100 men, women and children were massacred by Jewish forces in 1948.

Dry bones indeed!

Shall these bones live? Shall we recognise that this is our Jewish narrative today, the story of what we have done to an indigenous population, an entire culture, in pursuit of our own redemption?

Can these bones live? Can we look in the mirror, see how far into sin we have fallen, see that it is not too late to create a society worth living in, a Jewish community in historic Palestine that is sustainable and legitimate, a society that expresses the real values of our faith and our history? Can this Spirit visit us, tongues of fire that enable us to speak this universal language, the fire of the Spirit that will open us to the suffering of those we have wronged, that can bring down the walls of exclusivity and privilege? Can these bones live?

I know that what I am saying here has come to be politically incorrect in an interfaith context. Because of the very appropriate Christian horror and shame about anti-Semitism, and the very important need to disavow replacement theology and Christian triumphalism, Christians have come to believe that they can't say anything that could even suggest that Christianity brought something new, that it took forward the magisterial social justice tradition of the Torah and prophets, took it in a direction that it needed to go and was meant to go. But it did, and it is this: The gospels record Jesus in the company of his disciples standing before the Temple the day they entered Jerusalem. The disciples, simple Galileans, are very impressed by the huge stones and massive buildings. But Jesus says to them, *'Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it up.'* And the disciples, again typically, are completely confused by Jesus' startling statement. *'Master,' they say, 'they have been building this for 46 years, how can you build it up in three!'* As usual, they don't get it. But the narrator explains, just to make sure that we get it: *'He was speaking of the temple of his body.'* Body of Christ: one humanity united in one communion. From empire and domination to the equal sharing of God's bounty in justice and compassion. The Temple and all it represents – the one percent oppressing and impoverishing the 99 percent – is gone – transformed into my Kingdom on earth. Talk about Good News!

The church is called. The church has done it before: the church can do it again. We recall the central role of the church in the civil rights movement in America, when the courage of African American pastors changed the political and social landscape of America, articulating a philosophy of nonviolent direct action that was an explicit evocation of the sacrificial spirit of the early church, when Christians were proud to be identified as troublemakers. We lift up the example of the South African church when, declaring its Kairos statement in the 1985 document *Challenge to the Church*, it summoned the church to speak and act against the evil of apartheid, challenging the very church theology that had supported the racist system. And in our day, the Palestinian churches have issued their Kairos statement, a call to the churches of the world, entitled *A Moment of Truth: A Cry of Faith, Hope and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering*.

Tongues of fire, indeed! Can these stones live?

The church is, once again, as it is always, called to read the signs of the times, to recognise that this is the favourable time, the moment of grace and opportunity when, in the words of the South African Kairos Document: *'God issues a challenge to decisive action.'*

Can the church respond to this challenge? Can the church be the church? Can these bones live?

The answer is yes. That is its nature. *'The church,'* wrote George MacLeod, *'is a movement, not a meeting house.'*

Can these bones live? Shall the church claim its heritage, understand what power we humans receive when we are open to the coming upon us of the Holy Spirit? Can these bones live? Can we stand up, renewed sinew, flesh and bone, a multitude speaking the universal language of justice, as the Spirit gives us the ability?

This is the clear and simple message of Pentecost. This is the story of that day. This is the story we have come to this place of worship today on this island to tell. This is the story and the Spirit to which this Community has been devoted since its founding in the 1930s, and indeed since its 'founding' over 1400 hundred years ago, as tradition has it, on Pentecost.

In closing, I would like to bring to mind the events that led to that Pentecost of long ago, the day Jesus entered Jerusalem. He was accompanied by a crowd of Jews, suffering horribly under the tyranny of Rome, who were joyfully – and noisily – celebrating the message and ministry of a leader who offered them dignity and hope in the darkest times.

The Gospel of Luke records: *'As Jesus was approaching the path down from the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for*

all the deeds of power that they had seen, saying: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest heaven!"

'The local authorities were displeased. "Your singing and praising and proclaiming," they told Jesus, "threaten to disrupt the establish order. Teacher," they said, "order your disciples to stop!" He answered: "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would shout out!"'

Whether praise or protest, you cannot silence the cry of the oppressed nor deny the hunger for justice. And what was all the noise about, after all? It was the spontaneous response of an oppressed, occupied people – a cry of love, adoration and sheer joy for the miracle of Jesus' ministry – his power to heal, to inspire, to lead. 'You can't stop this!' Jesus was saying. Nature itself, even these seemingly inert stones, resonates with the joy and life force emanating from the people.

My sisters and brothers, the time has come for us to do some shouting. The times challenge us to remain true to the principles that lie at the heart of our civilisation and our faith traditions. In these urgent, prophetic times, let us remember the shouting. God loves that shouting.

Let us pray: *Compassionate God, sometimes we feel dried up. We lose our hope, we cut ourselves off from the source of true power. Help us to receive the power of your Spirit, raise us to our feet so that we can stand, a multitude filled indeed with the new wine of prophecy. Let us remember the shouting of joy and praise of those seekers of justice, from long ago and in our own day. The times call us to discipleship, now as it was then, now as ever to receive the power and the fire of the Holy Spirit. Grant this in the many names you are called, to all who suffer oppression, and all who work for peace and to us today in this place. Amen*

www.markbraverman.org

THE IONA CALL

We, a group of Christians from many parts of the UK and beyond, gathered on the isle of Iona in Pentecost week 2012. Under the guidance of Rev. Dr Naim Ateek and Dr Mark Braverman we considered our response to the document *Kairos Palestine: A Moment of Truth – A Word of Faith, Hope and Love from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering* (2009).

This is our kairos moment – our moment of truth. We are called to respond boldly to the deepening suffering of our sisters and brothers in Palestine under occupation by Israel. We stand in faithfulness and solidarity with Palestinians and Israelis who are working tirelessly for a peace based on justice.

We believe it is necessary to challenge the deafening silence of most churches in the face of the continuing injustice of dispossession and denial of basic human and political rights. We agree with the Kairos document that the occupation by Israel is *'an evil and a sin'* (*Kairos Palestine* 4.2.1).

Therefore:

- We ask our churches and theological institutions to challenge how the Bible has been used to justify oppression and injustice. We encourage the development and use of educational resources to raise awareness, enrich worship and challenge misperceptions and apathy.
- We urge Christians to participate only in those pilgrimages which give opportunity to listen to the experiences of Palestinians and engage with the harsh realities of occupation. Palestinian Christians have called us to *'come and see'* (*Kairos Palestine* 6.2)
- We support Palestinians in their nonviolent resistance to Israeli injustice and oppression. We endorse their call for boycott, disinvestment and sanctions (BDS) and other forms of nonviolent direct action.
- We call on Christians to put pressure on governments and the European Union to demonstrate a commitment to justice for Palestinians and security for all people.

In pursuit of the above, we intend to establish a UK Kairos network, linked to the Kairos Palestine global movement, to alert our churches to the urgent situation in Palestine. We challenge Christians and churches to engage in prayerful study of the *Kairos Palestine* document in openness to what the Spirit is now saying to the churches (Rev 2:7). We must read the signs of the times and act in obedience to God's will (Matt. 16:3).

Difficult though this journey may be, we seize this kairos moment with conviction and hope. We recognise our responsibility as followers of Jesus Christ to speak the prophetic word with courage.

We are called to respond to the question from Palestinian Christians: *'Are you able to help us get our freedom back, for this is the only way you can help the two peoples attain justice, peace, security and love?'* (*Kairos Palestine* 6:1).

www.kairospalestine.ps



St Martin's Cross photo © David Coleman

Brian Quail

Trident and the Scottish Referendum

All the major national institutions in Scotland – the Church of Scotland, the Catholic Bishops, the STUC – along with the Muslim community are united in supporting Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament's (SCND) demand for an end to Trident. However, these groups are in something of a quandary at present, a discomfort which will intensify the nearer the referendum approaches.

The problem for them is that in this referendum there is one choice, and one choice only, which will mean an end to Trident, and that is independence. There is no way an independent Scotland could tolerate the continued presence of this British WMD on its land or waters. And all pro-independence parties have made it clear that they will not countenance Trident. Now, should these national institutions support independence or not? This is the dilemma. At present their policy seems to be along the lines of 'let's leave it to our individual members to make up their own minds'.

This sounds nice and democratic, fair-minded, and so on. In fact it is fatuous, and verging on the dishonest. I say dishonest, because it studiously ignores the one inescapable fact – as I have already pointed out – that only independence will get rid of Trident. Any compromise, such as devo max, means that we will still be left with the UK's WMD dumped on us. But because these institutions don't want to be seen as supporting one particular political party, they are reluctant to face this hard fact. But fact it remains.

The anti-nuclear movement is on the verge of achieving its historic goal. For over half a century CND has campaigned on the basic strategy of 'convert the opposition to our cause, then get it elected'. In Scotland, we don't have to do this. We have already won. The Scottish government supports nuclear disarmament. Of course, it does not have any power in defence. This can only come with independence, since the essence of independence is control over the life or death question of war and peace.

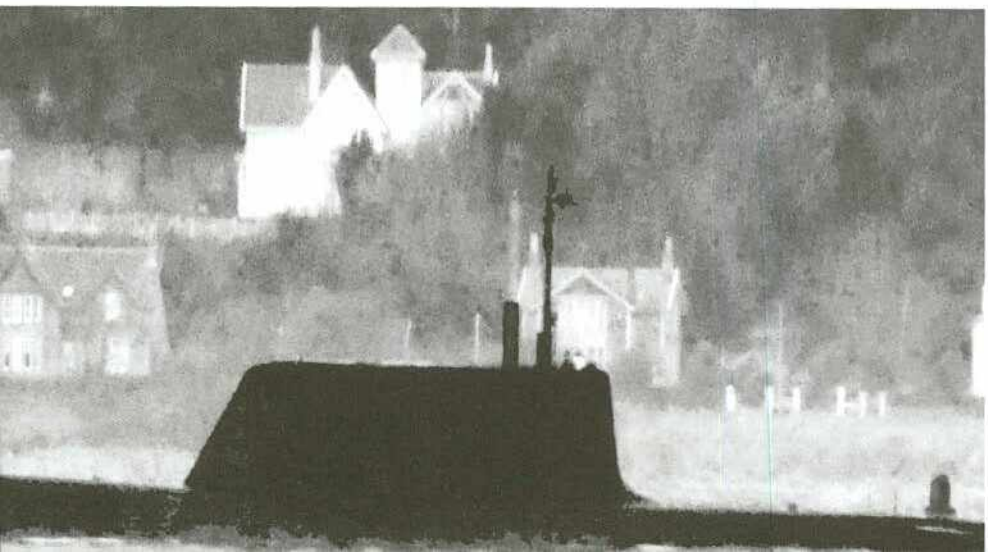
This reluctance to see the logic of the situation and support independence is, to some extent, understandable. We do not want to create in Scotland a reverse image of the old (and rather unfair) jibe about the Church of England being the Tory party at prayer. The Churches want to keep members of all respectable political parties on board, and are sensitive to any allegations of political bias.

However, this issue transcends party political boundaries. It is simply not true to claim independence is the prerogative of the SNP. This policy has the support of the Green Party also, as well as the SSP and other smaller parties. Paradoxically, some members of the SNP do not actually believe in independence, while a recent poll shows that some 15% of Labour voters do support it. So, were they to endorse independence, these institutions could not be accused of advocating support for the SNP, or of 'playing politics'.

Burns said 'whisky and freedom gang together'. Likewise, freedom from nuclear weapons and independence are inseparable. We see this most obviously in the case of Ukraine. At one time, when it was part of the Soviet Union, this country had the second largest arsenal of nuclear weapons in the world. Only America had more. Now it is nuclear-free. It achieved this goal as part of its struggle for independence. A big lesson for Scotland, surely.

It is essential that Scottish opposition to Trident is not presented to the world as a mere shift in UK defence policy. It must be based on us openly acknowledging the fact that Trident is now, and always has been, an illegal system. If Trident, the world's most powerful machine for the mass killing of human beings, is not a WMD – and as such in a prohibited class of weaponry – then nothing in the world is.

The Scottish Referendum has huge world significance. A nuclear-free Scotland means a UK without Trident, as John Ainslie demonstrates in his recent expert report *Trident: Nowhere to Go*. Using the MoD's own assessments, this timely document analyses why alternative locations to Faslane and Coulport are simply not tenable. With locations including the 2012 Olympics sailing venue, National Trust land and densely populated residential areas, there is simply nowhere for Trident to go. An independent Scotland means the end of Trident in the UK. As Bruce



Trident looming up against houses © David Coleman

Kent said: 'I'm an Englishman, but I support Scottish independence because it is the surest way to get rid of Trident.'

This can be our splendid gift to our English cousins – to free them from Trident, from enslavement to nuclear idolatry. A nuclear-free UK could then pressurise France to get rid of its absurd '*force de frappe*'. Europe could become a nuclear-free zone, and join the majority of the rest of humanity in renouncing nuclear WMD.

It is not often realised just how many countries in the world are already nuclear-free. The entire continent of Africa became nuclear-free by the Treaty of Pelindaba (1996); Southeast Asia by the Treaty of Bangkok (1995); the South Pacific, Australia, and New Zealand by the Treaty of Rarotonga (1985); and the whole of South America by the Treaty of Tlatelolco (1967).

Independence is a normal state for the nations in post-Cold-War Europe, and is, I believe, just and desirable per se. Apart from that, getting rid of Trident would be in itself reason enough to support it. And Scottish independence will play a major role in this global move to eliminate the threat of nuclear suicide from the world.

Our choice in the referendum will thus have global repercussions. This places an enormous moral responsibility on us. It is a unique opportunity for the people of Scotland to show real courage and vision, and exhibit a genuine sense of international responsibility.

The question is, will we be up to it?

www.banthebomb.org/ne

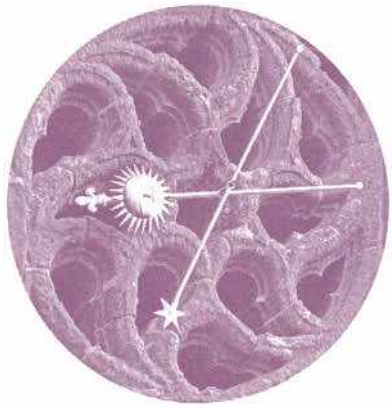
Trident: Nowhere to Go, by John Ainslie: www.cnduk.org/about/item/1324

* This reflection was written and went to print prior to the SNP Party conference on October 18-21, at which Scotland's membership in NATO, should Scotland become independent, was scheduled to be debated. Brian has been invited to reflect on the outcome of that debate and on that issue in a future Coracle. (Ed.)

Brian Quail is a member of the Iona Community.

David McNeish

Of mice and Big Ben



'Hickory dickory dock.
The mouse ran up the clock.
The clock struck one,
The mouse ran down,
Hickory dickory dock, tick, tock, tick, tock, tick, tock …'

I was singing this to my daughter one night before heading out to Family Group for a discussion on time. I had agreed to lead the discussion but somehow the time to prepare it had eluded me. So as I drove, I was trying frantically to think of a way to tie together some disparate thoughts, aware of the irony that time was against me – and with that moronic song rattling around the bones of my ears.

Warning – insight into the inner workings of my head follows: *'Daft old mouse … at the end of the song he's back where he started – at the bottom of the clock … nothing has changed … well, nothing except for the mouse, that is … for this is a mouse who has been to the top of the clock … he could write a book called* There and Back Again, *like Bilbo Baggins … the return journey was probably quicker and more direct … although there is nothing explicit in the text about the relative speeds of each leg … but you can bet when the bell sounded he took off at a clatter …'*

Here, I thought, is a mouse who understands the relativity of time. A leisurely journey up, exploring a clock, then an almighty noise and the speediest of journeys back to safety. The mountaineer Doug Scott described falling off a cliff as the longest and most intense 10 seconds of his life. If we could live life at that intensity all the time, he says, it would be both incredible and exhausting.

And here, too, is a mouse whose life is governed by the passage of time. The abrupt striking of the hour dictates his movements, determines his paths. We have an innate sense of the elasticity of time – its ebbs and flows, the elliptical paths of earth and moon – that clocks have no respect for.

One of Roger-Pol Droit's '101 Experiments in Everyday Living' is to live 'normal' life without wearing a watch or consulting clocks, in order to *'settle fully into the slightly disconcerting queasiness provoked by not having the time on you … If you persist,'* he says, *'if you discipline and habituate yourself to going watchless, you should discover another form of perceiving time. Internal and organic, relaxed, exact but not neurotically so. You will end up by learning to tell the time by your internal clock, without needing even to think about it. This in turn may lead you to meditate on the particular – and completely relative – form of violence and constraint imposed on us by dials, clock-hands and timetables.'*[1]

It's a fascinating argument – until you miss your train. Of course, trains have a lot to answer for – it was the railroad that heralded the imposition of standard time. The Benedictines often get a hard time for wanting to mark the hours and spurring the invention of timepieces. Yet they were interested only in hours, not minutes or seconds. Railways demanded not just precision but uniformity. This was often fiercely resisted in local towns but the station clocks quickly won out. Charles Dickens himself was not impressed, noting in

Iona Abbey clock, David Coleman ©

Dombey and Son: *'There was even railway time observed in clocks, as if the sun itself had given in.'* It led to greater efficiency and fewer accidents on the railroads but tightened the harness on humanity's relationship to the ever-ticking clock.

Of course, the whole reason that we were discussing time at Family Group is that it is part of the five-fold Rule of the Iona Community. And, in my opinion, it's the Achilles heel of many a member. Sharing news takes up a fair proportion of meeting together because everyone has been doing so much. Pursuing justice, peace and integrity of creation is time-consuming. We are a community that, like Dylan Thomas, rages against the dying of the light. Of course, it was disputes between the ministers and labourers rebuilding the Abbey on the effective use of time that led to the Rule being implemented by George MacLeod. As Ian Fraser pithily puts it: *'George invented the Rule on time, but he never kept it himself.'* This came to a head one day when, after being away for several months, he put a sign-up sheet on his study door for half-hour appointments with him, and his wife put her name beside every single slot. She had a point. It takes commitment to be part of the Community, but there is an ever present danger of over-commitment. The ways in which we seek to be accountable with our money raises many an eye outside the Community – it is an act of resistance against a society of rapacious consumption. Perhaps we need to see our use of time as a similar act of resistance.

Kathy Galloway made such connections between money and time in her *Coracle* article on the Rule and time in 2008: *'One effect of our market spirituality is a disordered relationship with time. In the "time is money" world, time too is becoming increasingly commodified. But it takes time to see the intrinsic worth and delicacy of feathers, shells and sea-shaped stones, to differentiate and appreciate the profound beauty of the ordinary, unglamorous, unexotic people and places and experiences that we take for granted in our "in-your-face" culture. It takes time to build real, respectful relationships.'*[2]

Just as the gift of money resists its commodification, we can also give the gift of time to others. Several members of our Family Group are involved in education, and during our discussion it became apparent that they must be slaves to the clock in order to gift time to the children. The children can lose themselves in the activity because someone has planned the time for it. Planning frees up time, but too much planning is another form of tyranny. It takes time to spend time wisely – but only a little time. Just as with money, time needs to be marshalled sometimes and squandered sometimes.

Sometimes such marshalling and squandering can be quite extreme. Brian Keenan, who spent four years as a hostage in Lebanon, considers that his childhood enjoyment of *'mind time'* proved helpful during his internment. *'The only way out was in, the only consolation was the inner journey. Sometimes it was illuminating, embracing. Sometimes it was fucking awful – you just didn't want to be in the mind that was in your head.'* Yet his fascination with such mind places led him to contemplate that if he was to be offered his freedom, at times he wanted to say, *'No, I'm not finished here.'*[3]

Such an attitude throws a completely different perspective on time, one that often is only revealed in the enforced constraint and isolation of imprisonment, or severe illness. Or the fear of death. Death is the ultimate time-stealer. Such fear can drive our use of time, as the mouse found out when the clock struck.

He ended up where he began, something Keenan thinks can be helpful: *'To me, travel and writing are both journeys. I have travelled a lot in my life, but you've got to come back to your point of departure to understand where you've been.'*[4]

Perhaps to really enjoy time, to thrive in its passage, we need to embrace death. Celebrate it, anticipate it, grieve deeply over it, understand our connection to the great community of saints through it.

George Mackay Brown saw this more deeply than most. As Ron Ferguson notes in his wonderful biography of Mackay Brown, *The Wound and the Gift*, he was captivated by an image in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* of life being like *'the swift flight of a single sparrow through the banqueting hall'.* In the same way *'man appears on earth for a little while – but of what went before this life or what follows we know nothing'.* In *For The Islands I Sing*, George Mackay Brown writes: *'A mystery abides. We move from silence into silence, and there is a brief stir between, every person's attempt to make a meaning of life and time.'*[5] There is more to this quote but you would do well to take time to read it in context, and again in Ron's biography *The Wound and the Gift* (St Andrew Press). Time well spent.

And so we return to the point of departure to understand where we've been. Life is fleeting and yet beautiful and rich in meaning. Like a sparrow flying briefly through the warmth and music and colour of a banqueting hall.

Or a mouse running up and down a clock.

Notes:

1. 101 Experiments in Everyday Living, Roger-Pol Droit, Faber and Faber, 2002, p.198

2. Coracle, April/May, 2008

3. Scotsman interview with Brian Keenan, by Susan Mansfield, 23/8/2010

4. ibid

5. For the Islands I Sing, Polygon, 2008, p.168

* The bulk of this reflection was written on a later occasion when I should have been at Family Group but was at home babysitting – because I had forgotten to write 'Family Group' on the family calendar before my wife, Sally, had arranged to go out. This may, or may not, be of central importance to the article.

David McNeish is a former hospital doctor, worship musician and campaigner for the CAB service who is training as a Church of Scotland minister.

Doug Dunlap

Finding hospitality on the Appalachian Trail

We saw a stranger yesterday,
We put food in the eating place,
Drink in the drinking place,
Music in the listening place,
And, in the sacred name of the triune God,
He blessed us and our house,
Our cattle and our dear ones.
As the lark says in her song:
Often, often, often goes the Christ in the stranger's guise.



On the 22nd day of each month, members and associates of the Iona Community are called to hold in prayer our Community's *'commitment to hospitality'*. The above Celtic rune, which may be found as part of the Welcome Service in the *Iona Abbey Worship Book*, and in many other Iona books of prayer, celebrates the call and mystery of hospitality. In a contemporary world which appears increasingly to distrust the stranger, and where folk often do not even know their next-door neighbour, a good question to ask is: 'How viable is hospitality to the stranger in our time?' I was moved to discover on a 3000 kilometre walk of the Appalachian Trail in 2011 – that hospitality thrives!

In mid-April I set out from Springer Mountain in Georgia, on what would be a nearly six-month journey. My destination was Maine, my home state, from where I had received many well-wishes from fellow Iona associates. I was starting the hike alone as many long-distance hikers do; one of an estimated 2500 people who attempt to cover the entire length of the trail in one season, 500 of whom complete the trek.

I was undertaking the hike as a pilgrimage in honour of my older brother Richard, who had died the previous year from complications of diabetes. Richard had been my first hiking mentor when I was a six-year-old boy growing up in rural New Hampshire. My Appalachian Trail hike was also a pilgrimage to raise funds for the CEVER School in Honduras, which my denomination, the United Church of Christ, has assisted for many years, and which provides vocational education for high-school-aged boys and girls and young men and women.* In the face of the global recession, CEVER was struggling to purchase teaching materials and even to pay its teachers – who continued to work out of dedication. Donated funds would go a long way there.

The Appalachian Trail runs the north-south length of the Appalachian Mountain chain in the eastern US. I was treated to stunning moments – including an Easter sunrise from a Tennessee mountain, wild ponies grazing near my tent in a high meadow in Virginia, a black-bear cub playing with my trekking poles outside my tent as they shone in the light of a New Jersey full moon, and endless views of pristine forest from rocky high peaks in New Hampshire and Maine.

But the most enduring memories of the trail concern hospitality. When I stopped at a sandwich shop in a trailside North Carolina town, the proprietor, upon learning that I was a hiker, gave me a free green salad and a free dessert of a corn muffin and delicious biscuits. When I hitched a ride back to the trail, the man giving me a ride insisted on playing his banjo for me as a send-off. There I stood by the roadside, pack on my back, trail leading off into the mountains – enjoying a banjo riff! An infected toe caused me to hobble into a mountain lodge to enquire about the nearest medical clinic. The lodge desk clerk told me the clinic was 20 miles away and that there was no public transportation – then offered to give me a ride!

When the trail crossed a road, often we hikers would find picnic coolers filled with cold drinks and sandwiches. Sometimes people from nearby towns set up barbecue grills and prepared chicken, hot dogs, hamburgers – even veggie burgers! Others simply drove to these crossings and waited for hikers each day, offering rides to town for shopping or lodging. One garden supply shop near the trail supplied water and shaded benches for resting out of the hot sun, and gave out its postal address in order that hikers could have food

Showing hospitality to the stranger on the trail © Doug Dunlap

packages mailed to them from home. At a florist shop the owner placed cold drinks in a refrigerator, just for hikers, and stocked a supply of hiker-friendly snack foods.

Churches were extraordinarily generous. Some opened their church halls as places for hikers to sleep, with the use of the kitchen – along with showers and laundry facilities. A number of churches provided free hiker breakfasts. One church in a tiny village in Virginia, which had a total membership of only 20, provided hot all-you-can-eat breakfasts, takeout food for lunch and even notecards complete with postage for hikers to send messages home. Some churches simply stocked a cooler of food and bottled water each day, and brought it to a trail crossing with a note reading 'For Hikers', returning each day to take the empty bottles back and refill the coolers. Others left notes or signs: 'Welcome hikers!'

Then there were acts of kindness by individual families. In New Hampshire I was twice invited into private homes for a hot meal and to spend the night – as a stranger, known to those who welcomed me only as a hiker. In Pennsylvania one family reserved tent sites at a state park for a full week in the middle of August, then offered hikers free overnight camping at these sites, along with supper, breakfast and a lunch for the following day's walk.

One bright morning – as I stood alone on the summit of Wayah Bald Mountain in North Carolina, touched by a bit of homesickness after three weeks on the trail – a man and woman who had hiked up on a side trail struck up a conversation with me. The man identified himself as a Baptist minister, and enquired if I would like a word of blessing for my hike. I welcomed the prayer and the three of us joined hands. There were many times when people out for a hike offered to pray for my wellbeing.

Who are the hikers? Young and old – chefs, carpenters, nurses, doctors, store clerks, veterans of the armed forces, returned Peace Corps volunteers, retired church ministers. There were people who had lost their jobs, and who wanted to accomplish something with their lives during the period they were out of work. I met, hiking together, mothers with daughters, fathers with sons, mothers with sons, fathers with daughters. There were rich people, and poor people; folk representing all the world's races: the peoples of the Americas, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and New Zealand – even a woman who had lived in Antarctica for three years.

... Time and time again, someone would appear from a trailside town with words of welcome and kindness ...

For many their hike served as a pilgrimage: a time to think deeply about the meaning and purpose of life; to honour people precious to them who had died; to take stock of what matters in life, and to think about how one's gifts might be applied for good purpose in the years to come.

For all the excitement of living in the mountains for many months, enjoying long views and seeing nature up close – in an iridescent blue butterfly, in a succession of brightly coloured wildflowers – an Appalachian Trail hike can be lonely at times. We missed family members and others close to us. There were difficult days in stifling heat or numbing cold, great dryness or drenching rain. The hospitality I and other hikers found meant the world to us, and sustained us in the difficult moments. Time and time again, someone would appear from a trailside town with words of welcome and kindness. And I was reminded continually of the Iona Community's commitment to bold hospitality.

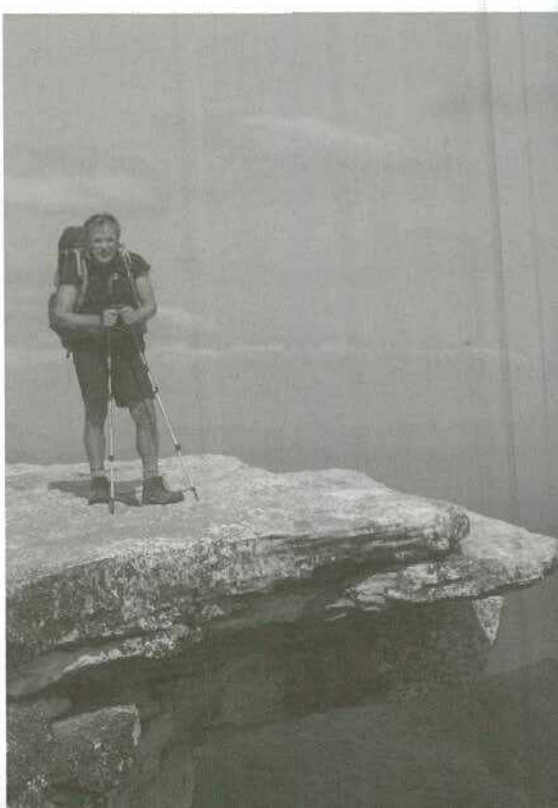
I have returned home now, and am organising a trail hospitality ministry in Maine: the Oaken Staff Outreach Ministry. In the ancient tradition of welcoming strangers on the road of life, I hope to organise churches and other faith groups, community service organisations and individual citizens to embrace Iona-like hospitality and extend that hospitality to those walking the Appalachian Trail. To receive hospitality as a stranger on the trail has brought home to me how precious hospitality is – a very old way, which is also a new way, to *'touch the lives of all'*.

* The CEVER School is a vocational school in Yoro, Honduras which serves students between the ages of 12 and 24. Students study in the technical areas of automechanics, welding, industrial mechanics, sewing and woodworking and also have the option of pursuing basic educational courses: www.theceverproject.org

Doug Dunlap has been an associate member of the Iona Community since 2000. He has served as a parish minister and as a hospital chaplain. He has also walked the West Highland Way.

Photo: Doug at a lookout along the trail ©

For more on hospitality along the Appalachian Trail, see the Kirkridge Retreat Center's website. Kirkridge is a partner of the Iona Community. (Ed.) http://kirkridge.org/



I WAS A STRANGER AND YOU WELCOMED ME

John Dillon

Personal reflections of an immigrant

Member John Dillon is President of the Iona New World Foundation and a minister in Crystal Lake, Illinois, outside of Chicago. Each week he and his congregation visit those held as Immigrant Detainees in the local county jail ...

The USA is a land of immigrants – I know because I am one. However, it is not always welcoming, even for a white, English-speaking (OK with a Scottish accent), legal, documented and employed individual.

Depending on who you listen to, the country is either a) overrun by job-stealing, undocumented criminals or b) can't be run economically without a pool of cheap labour.

So I was surprised to discover that one-third of our local county jail inmates are held on behalf of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Almost 200 Immigrant Detainees, the majority, but not all, undocumented, are held in McHenry County Jail for 6-24 months. Almost all were employed and paid taxes; some are students, and were brought to the country as babies; others are fleeing religious or political oppression; some speak no English; a few are felons – all are fleeing poverty. Many were arrested for traffic violations or minor crimes. (Even legal immigrants/Resident Aliens can have their green cards revoked and be deported if they commit a crime.) Public assistance is not available to detainees. Legal support and commissary supplies have to be paid for by their families. Family visits are rare (many families fear that they too will be arrested) and only by video link within the building. Video is also extensively used for court appearances, to lessen costs and increase security. Unless they personally hire a private lawyer, detainees have no right to legal advice or representation because immigration is a civil offence, and only criminal defendants have a right to a Public Defender. Since 2009 one of the only privileges they have been given is the right to receive pastoral visits.

So, in the only programme in the country, six members of my congregation join 75 other volunteers, from at least eight denominations and faiths, in a weekly visiting rota. Every Tuesday, 12-16 volunteers engage in 20-minute one-to-one conversations with 5-8 detainees each: stories of families ripped apart; tears of mothers and fathers separated from their children; pending deportations to foreign 'countries of origin' without the native language, support, jobs: a return to the very poverty they or their parents fled; frustration and suffering caused by a slow and brutal bureaucracy ... All of these things bring home the fact that this is not 'an issue' – this is men, women and children in dire straits. This is families thrown out on the street; children scared to go to school in case they return and find Children's Services, rather than their parents, waiting at home.

Where appropriate, Bibles, Korans and prayer resources are supplied. $5 is weekly put into each detainee's prison account for toothbrushes, soap, phone cards. Volunteers offer a sympathetic ear, telephone a relative, offer a prayer, share a tear. No contact other than a handshake is permitted.

President Obama has recently proposed that those who *'enter the country as children, are in school and have no criminal record'* should have their immigration cases quickly reviewed. Some say he is just trying to gain support from minority voters; others see it as at least a start. However, it is not enough: it is only a promise of review, not citizenship, and it depends on vulnerable folk coming forward and putting themselves at the mercy of the system.

The Supreme Court has struck down some of the harshest anti-immigration laws introduced in individual States, but has upheld the law which allows law enforcement to demand you prove your immigration status *'if they have reasonable suspicion'* that you are undocumented and they have had grounds to talk to you *'for other reasons'*. This can be as insignificant a reason as a faulty tail light on your car.

Every attempt to find a solution to these problems in America has been blocked by anti-immigration politics, and no pro-immigration politician or party seems willing to really tackle it.

And so we fight on, with Matthew 25:31-46 our congregation's reason and prayer in this work.

PRAYER

Gracious God, who came in Christ to give eyesight to the blind, voice to the unheard, and to loose the chains that bind us, grant us compassion: allow us to share the pain of others, to see people not as 'them' but as other children of God. Let us not sacrifice our brothers and sisters on false altars of fear or ideology but learn to do justice and let mercy run down as a healing stream. Amen

The New World Foundation:
www.iona-nwf.org

I WAS IN PRISON AND YOU VISITED ME MATTHEW

Elaine Bishop

North Point Douglas Women's Centre

Associate Elaine Bishop is Executive Director of the North Point Douglas Women's Centre, located in an impoverished neighbourhood in Winnipeg, Canada. The Centre was started in a former cornerstore by a group of women wanting to make a difference to their community – and is about hope, change and transformation

The clock said 3:06 when the telephone rang in the middle of that night. It was Effie: 'The cops are here again,' she says. Her task is to stay calm, to be as respectful as possible, despite this being one of many such visits in Effie's conflict with a child welfare agency that seized her children six months ago. Effie's call to me is to help her stay cool. She knows that we care deeply. One official voice says: 'Everything looks good.' Another one tells her: 'Please hang up the telephone!' The last thing I hear from Effie before the phone is hung up is 'Please come over!'

Winnipeg, Manitoba is halfway across Canada. I grew up here, knowing it as the 'Gateway to the West'. The settler community began here in 1811 when the Hudson's Bay Company 'granted' 116,000 square miles of aboriginal territories to Thomas Douglas, 5th Earl of Selkirk, and he moved some of his tenants here from Scotland. The colonial attitudes and power that initiated Newcomer relationships with the First Nations are reflected in the issues we deal with on a day-to-day basis at the North Point Douglas Women's Centre (NPDWC).

We are located in the oldest part of Winnipeg. Home of the city's wealthy in the 1860s, we are now a diverse community with lots of poverty and the associated issues. More than half of our children grow up in poverty. Many are not school-ready when they start school. As of last December, four of the 20 children who graduated from grade 6 had quit school. Unlike most of Winnipeg, over half of the people living here rent. Some of the housing conditions are appalling! But for more than a year our city has had a zero percent vacancy rate, making it almost impossible for people to move out of poor housing. North Point Douglas has a high proportion of First Nations and Métis people, many without jobs and with poor education. Hunger exists here as those on welfare often have to use food money to pay the rent.

The North Point Douglas Women's Centre flourishes in the midst of this. Our vision is *'a safe, healthy, vibrant community for women and families in which all forms of violence against women are addressed by engaging the community in prevention and remediation strategies'.* Every day, and one person at a time, we respond to community needs and hold up the vision of being transformed as individuals and as community!

NPDWC started as a group of women wanting to make a difference in their community. We purchased a small cornerstore in 2002, and opened the Women's Centre in May 2003.

The heart of our work is our drop-in. It offers a safe place for women and their children six days a week, with refreshments always on. During set times, men, also under-served in the community and with huge needs, can come in and access some of our services. Donated houseware and clothes are available for women and children. A woman came in one day in the middle of winter, from a temperature of 30 below, in her stocking feet. Her partner had thrown her out without even letting her get her shoes. We found her a pair, got her some emergency care and have helped her find a new place to live. We have newspapers, a community phone and community computers that anyone can use. Our staff offers support, provides information on issues such as housing, welfare and child welfare and does advocacy when needed. We have a counsellor in three days a week. Our bus ticket loan programme allows people to get around and pay us back through work for the Centre.

Summer is our busiest time. Twice a week we take mums and children on recreation trips to fun places, getting people there and back, and providing a healthy lunch. We offer a variety of programmes through the drop-in: our parenting programme supports mums to respond more effectively to the needs of their children; the local public health nurse drops in regularly, and we work with the nearby community health clinic to provide other health programming.

We believe that food insecurity is a form of violence against women! So we work with the Residents' Committee to provide community gardens. Our community kitchen offers the opportunity for socialising while learning how to create healthy meals on a welfare budget. We have started an urban orchard in the local park – and this year we are building the first community oven in Winnipeg. An old-fashioned, outdoor, wood-fired oven has been built by the river, not far from the future orchard. It can bake 20 loaves of bread at a time. A summer project had a group of young people creating a community mosaic which will decorate the outside of the oven. As well as pizza evenings, we have a vision of evening midwinter community gatherings – with folk eating freshly baked bread, drinking hot chocolate and singing songs and carols in the snow.

Like many poor areas we live with violence, drug dealing and the temptation to our children of getting involved with gangs. When I moved here (I live a block from the Centre) North Point Douglas was known as a 'high crime' area. No longer! The

community working together has shut down drug houses and reduced the violence. Domestic violence continues to be a significant threat though. NPDWC works with survivors, putting protection plans in place. We are working with the community health centre to create a healing programme for men who batter. We have two youth outreach workers who get to know our children and youth. They do anti-bullying interventions, hang out at local youth programmes and do daily safety audits. This summer we operated a youth employment programme, enabling youth to earn clean money while learning employment skills. We put on annual bike rodeos and street festivals. This summer we also undertook a major 'safety and experience of crime' survey, from which we will create a safety plan for the community.

We face the challenges common to small non-profit organisations. Staffing and funding are low and the needs are high. In the year ending March 31, we had more than 13,000 visits. We are committed to being present and to affirming and building on the strengths and gifts of the women who come to the Centre. We use the butterfly as a logo: we are privileged to see women transform, stretch their wings and fly! We also journey with them through places of darkness, holding out that there is light.

That night I did walk to Effie's place. It was a warm night with stars visible even in the city. By the time I got there, there were no marked police cars anywhere and the house was dark and quiet. No one answered my knock. A waste of time? No. It is what you do when you are about community and transformation.

www.northpointdouglaswomenscentre.org

Elaine Bishop has worked for the Quakers in Canada and Scotland, and spent four years living with and working for the Lubicon Cree Nation on their unceded land in northern Alberta.

On the 20th day of the month, the Iona Community prays for the rights of indigenous peoples …

Elaine Bishop

Truth and Reconciliation Commission: truth-telling, confession and reparation

Prior to the arrival of Newcomer Peoples from Europe, Canada was a land fully peopled by over 200 First Nations. These nations had their own languages, cultures, leadership structures and were fully self-sufficient on their lands, with economic and diplomatic relationships. The historic relationships between First Nations and Newcomer Peoples have left legacies of colonialism and profound loss: of land, languages, cultures and self-sufficiency. One of many strategies used by the colonial authorities across Canada was residential schools. Children of First Nations were, by law, taken from their parents and home communities, as young as four, and placed in schools, generally run by different Churches. Although some suggested that the purpose was to prepare these children for a different life in Canada, the schools existed to *'de-Indianise the Indian'*. Residential schools operated in Canada from the latter half of the 19th century until 1996. Despite the caring response of some of those working in some schools, all taken from their parents experienced trauma and profound loss. Many also experienced physical and sexual abuse.

Canada now is about midway through a five-year Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) focusing on the harm done by residential schools. Regretfully this is not an initiative of the Canadian government. The Commission was ordered as part of a legal decision: the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. Three Commissioners are hearing the stories of those affected by residential schools across Canada, including those whose parents were in schools. For the first time survivors are speaking of their experiences, many painful and some positive. In its Interim Report the TRC stated: *'It is clear that one of the greatest impacts of residential schools is the breakdown of family relationships.'*

One of the most challenging tasks of the TRC is to contribute to an environment that will enable reconciliation between the Original Peoples of this country and its Newcomer Peoples. Although the Canadian government has offered an apology for residential schools, equality and reconciliation are still far distant. First Nations peoples are far over-represented in Canada's prisons. Many First Nations now call the child welfare agencies in Canada the new residential schools. Aboriginal children are far over-represented in care of those agencies. More First Nations peoples are poor than other Canadians. Treaties still being negotiated between First Nations and Canada continue to demand unfair and unequal conditions in Canada's favour. Many of the Newcomer Peoples to Canada, whether their ancestors arrived here generations ago or, like mine, recently, do not understand the need for the truth-telling (confession) to repair the damage, to engage in just relationships, and the need to seek reconciliation.

Many churches in Canada are taking leadership in being in alliance with First Nations peoples. Some national Churches have issued their own apologies for residential schools. A national inter-church coalition, Aboriginal Rights Coalition, has been involved in education and advocacy for almost 40 years. Perhaps the greatest challenge to today's faith communities in Canada is to engage in a process of confession in relation to our having been the beneficiaries of the unjust process of colonialism, to seek processes of reparation and to be prepared to do justice and engage in reconciliation with the original peoples of this land.

www.trc.ca

Alastair McIntosh

THE LIBERATION THEOLOGY OF PUSSY RIOT

This e-mail was sent out by Alastair McIntosh to contacts concerned with issues of socio-ecological and spiritual activism in today's world, following the 'trial' of Pussy Riot in Russia ...

Dear Folks,

Today my American colleague Chris Reed, who is President of Friends of Hudson, sent me these remarkable passages which he has extracted from the closing trial statements of Pussy Riot. I am sending them on to you, who are concerned with issues of socio-ecological and spiritual activism in today's world.

There is also a link to their full statements, and I have to say that those of Masha and Nadia in particular are quite the most exceptional and conviction-packed treatises of liberation theology that I have seen for a very long time. (I would define liberation theology as that which liberates the flow of life by liberating theology itself; specifically, Gustavo Gutiérrez emphasises that *'To liberate = to give life'* and speaks of *'a radical aspiration for integral liberation'*.) I note that Masha cut her teeth in ecological activism, doing a kind of Tripping Up Trump by combating the desecration of protected nature by the rich.

The spiritual courage combined with the astute theological cogency of these three Russian women has hardly featured in Western media reports. These have been more concerned with the more comfortable ground of tracing their musical rather than their theological influences. I urge all of you who might be interested in spiritual activism to have a read of their full statements, and to tweet them or whatever you do.

Taken together with what has been happening with Islamic liberation theology in the Arab Spring and some of the reflection that came out of Occupy at Westminster Abbey, I am wondering if we are at last starting to see an awakening of the receptivity towards power of the Spirit in confronting the world's burning issues.

What a laugh! And these three women laughed as they were sentenced, because, as they say, they had inner freedom ...

EXTRACTS FROM PUSSY RIOT'S CLOSING STATEMENTS

Masha Alyokhina: *Speaking about Putin, we first of all mean not Vladimir Putin, but Putin as a system created by him. The vertical power structure, where all governing is being carried out almost manually. And in this vertical power structure public opinion is completely disregarded ...*

Modern education institutions teach people from childhood to live automatically, do not introduce key issues appropriate to their age, foster cruelty and intolerance to dissent. From childhood a person forsakes his liberties ...

Humility, one of Christian[ity's] principal notions, is existentially understood not as a way of purification, empowerment and eventual deliverance of the human, but in contrast as a way of his enslavement ...

'It is not for a good work that we stone you but for blasphemy' (John 10:33). It's interesting that it's this verse that [the] Russian Orthodox Church uses to express its opinion about blasphemy ... Expressing this opinion [the] Russian Orthodox Church refers to it as to a static religious truth. Gospel is no longer understood as revelation, which it was initially, but as a kind of solid block which can be torn up to quotations and tuck[ed] anywhere, into any document, used for any purpose. [The] Russian Orthodox Church didn't even bother to examine the context in which the word 'blasphemy' is used, that in this case it is applied to Jesus Christ himself ...'

Masha Alyokhina's full statement at: http://freepussyriot.org/documents

Nadia Tolokonnikova: *Every day more and more people realise that if this political system has ganged up to this extent against three girls for a 30-second performance in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, it means the system is afraid of the truth and afraid of our sincerity and directness ...*

People can sense the truth. Truth really does have some kind of ontological, existential superiority over lies and this is written in the Bible, in the Old Testament in particular ...

We are freer than the people sitting opposite us for the prosecution because we can say everything we like, and we do, but those people sitting there say only what political censorship allows them to say ...

Stasis and the search for truth are always in opposition to one another and, in this case, at this trial, we can see people who are trying to find the truth and people who are trying to enslave those who want to find the truth ...

Christ didn't associate with prostitutes for nothing. He said, 'I help those who have gone astray and forgive them' but for some reason I can't see any of that at our trial, which is taking place under the banner of Christianity. I think the prosecutor is defying Christianity.

Nadia Tolokonnikova's full statement at: http://freepussyriot.org/documents

Katja Samutsevich: *The fact that Christ the Savior Cathedral had become a significant symbol in the political strategy of our powers-that-be was already clear to many thinking people when Vladimir Putin's former [KGB] colleague Kirill Gundyaev took over as head of the Russian Orthodox Church. After this happened, Christ the Savior Cathedral began to be used*

openly as a flashy setting for the politics of the security services, which are the main source of power [in Russia] ...

In our performance we dared, without the Patriarch's blessing, to combine the visual image of Orthodox culture and protest culture, suggesting to smart people that Orthodox culture belongs not only to the Russian Orthodox Church, the Patriarch and Putin, that it might also take the side of civic rebellion and protest in Russia ...

I now have mixed feelings about this trial. On the one hand, we now expect a guilty verdict. Compared to the judicial machine, we are nobodies, and we have lost. On the other hand, we have won. Now the whole world sees that the criminal case against us has been fabricated. The system cannot conceal the repressive nature of this trial. Once again, Russia looks different in the eyes of the world from the way Putin tries to present it at daily international meetings. All the steps toward a state governed by the rule of law that he promised have obviously not been made. And his statement that the court in our case will be objective and make a fair decision is another deception of the entire country and the international community ...

Katja Samutsevich's statement at: http://freepussyriot.org/documents

Iona Community letter in support of Pussy Riot: At summer Community Week on Iona, members of the Iona Community composed a letter in support of Pussy Riot, and sent it to the Russian Embassy in London, the Russian and British governments, Amnesty International and Churches Together in Britain and Ireland. To read the letter, go to: www.churchestogether-connect.org/profiles/blogs/iona-community-statement-on-the-pussy-riot-trial-in-moscow

Alastair McIntosh is the author of a number of books, including Soil and Soul: People Versus Corporate Power (Aurum Press); Hell and High Water: Climate Change, Hope and the Human Condition (Birlinn); Rekindling Community: Connecting People, Environment and Spirituality, Schumacher Briefings (Green Books); and Love and Revolution: Poems (Luath). He is an associate of the Iona Community.

www.alastairmcintosh.com

John M. Hull

Training ministers for a prophetic church

New understandings of mission have been developing for the past half-century. The source of mission is now seen to be the Holy Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – whose eternal decree is to be God-for-us. Whereas once mission was thought of mainly in terms of evangelisation and the conversion of individuals, now it is seen to be as wide as the love of God for all humanity and for the creation.

The five marks of mission of the Anglican Communion and other Churches reach a turning point between the third and fourth marks, the third being loving care for the community and the fourth to transform the unjust structures of society. What are unjust structures? For whom are they unjust? How does it happen that they continue to exist if they are unjust? Moreover, unjust structures are often abstract, involving large and complex issues, and are challenging for a Christian faith which during the modern period has been accustomed to think in individual and even internal forms of spirituality. It is for reasons like this that institutions preparing people for ordained ministry need to provide special training in the fourth mark of mission.

In the Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education in Birmingham, all candidates for ordained public ministry are encouraged to acquire experience in the social justice leadership of their future congregations. This is variously described as 'social justice', 'prophetic ministry' or 'prophetic witness'. It involves the selection of a number of public issues each year, about which students are invited to campaign. These issues have included nuclear weapons, human trafficking, fair trade, protests against the arms trade and in favour of environmentally friendly government policies, since the fifth mark invites us to care for the integrity of creation.

The selection of such issues is subject to a number of criteria, the application of which is in itself a form of theological education. We ask whether the issue has arisen from our corporate worship and whether it will feed back into worship, whether the local or international church has issued guidelines on the topic, and whether there is a history of Christian opposition in this area. We ask whether the area invites cooperation from other religious and secular groups, and whether it can be pursued by entirely peaceful means. We also ask whether we have doubts about the issue, because actions conducted without some degree of cautious doubt can easily lead to dogmatism and even fanaticism.

In recent years we have become aware of the demand for a tax on financial transactions. This is known as the Robin Hood Tax, since even a tiny tax of 0.2% would yield huge sums to be devoted to health and welfare. We were encouraged by the support for the Robin Hood Tax given by Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and by a number of European leaders.

On an action, one of our students dressed up as Robin Hood, carrying a big scroll and accompanied by two trumpeters, one on either side. Robin took up his position outside one of the high street banks, the trumpets sounded and Robin proclaimed from the scroll the demand for the rich to be taxed in favour of the poor. He concluded *'Are you with me?'* and the group of thirty staff and students surrounding him responded with a shout: *'We are with you, Robin!'* Robin, with a few of his Merry Men and Women, then entered the bank, gave chocolate coins to customers and staff, and distributed leaflets about the proposed tax. This action was repeated in three more high street banks. Some were friendly and amused, others were slightly nervous. As one bank manager fumbled with his keys to close the door and lock them in,

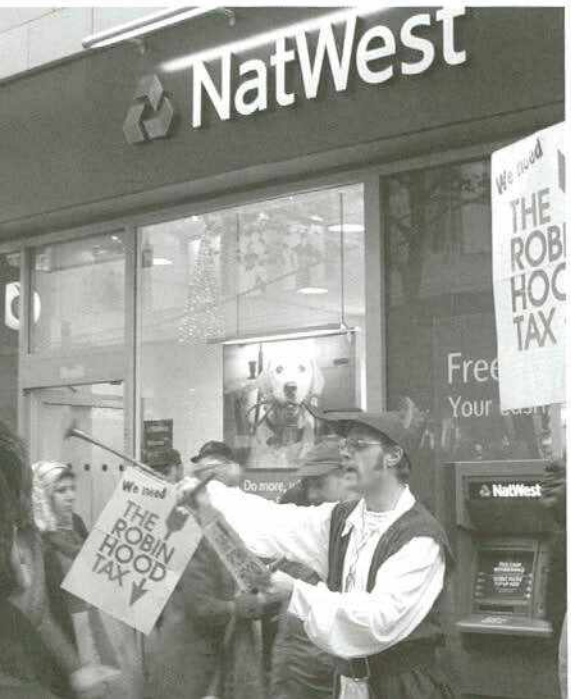
Robin and his party, in true Hollywood style, slipped through the closing door and escaped. Local students filmed the event and it soon appeared on YouTube, attracting hundreds of viewers.

One of our major preoccupations at present is the campaign against drones, the unmanned flying vehicles used by the USA and the UK to carry out extra-judicial executions. Near Birmingham there is an Israeli-owned factory where drone engines are made. Every term a protest vigil takes place outside the factory, including Pax Christi, Sabeel (UK) and many local churches, as well as our students. Our most recent vigil also included Muslims, and the series seems to be growing steadily in size.

It is difficult to measure the impact upon the students who take part in these events. Some are transformed; many are challenged. For some future ministers, a new frontier is opened up between the Bible and the public, and a new form of Christian evangelism is appearing. What seems to impress people is that in these events the Church is not seeking for its own growth but is demanding justice for the whole community.

www.queens.ac.uk

John M. Hull is Honorary Professor of Practical Theology at the Queen's Foundation for Ecumenical Theological Education and Emeritus Professor of Religious Education at the University of Birmingham.



Robin Hood proclaiming outside of Nat West, photo ©

John Dale

From 'Bron yr aur' to 'Tan y bryn' to Iona Community Carbon Coordinator

Some *Coracle* readers may remember that the summer 2011 edition had an article by me about living off-grid in our cottage Bron yr aur. Mainly for reasons of health, we decided to move from Bron yr aur ('Breast of gold') to Tan y bryn ('Under the hill'): from a 19th-century cottage to a 21st-century bungalow.

As I look across the valley towards the mountain we used to live on, I spy an osprey, and then hear, and see, the train that goes by every 2 hours: sign of the larger world we had tended to lose sight of at Bron yr aur.

The lightness of the rooms in Tan y bryn, with their large windows, is wonderful, as is the general warmth – no stone walls! My wife, Sue, has her own writing room/library in the garden shed, and it is now just a 10-minute walk to the shops. The bungalow is totally electric: electric night-storage heaters, electric water-heating (2 immersion heaters, 1 day, 1 night) and electric cooker. We had a 1.6kW solar photovoltaic system (which paid us £512 in the first 12 months), solar water-heating panels and a wood-burner installed before moving in, so we have done our best to keep our carbon footprint low, thus doing our best to respect the integrity of creation.

The main difference at Tan y bryn is having to pay for water (previously free from an adjacent stream) and electricity (I had generated my own at Bron yr aur) – and the biggest challenge was to find a suitable electricity deal.

Whilst looking at electricity comparison sites, I confronted the difficult decisions to be made: How 'green' to go? Totally green – it looked as though this would cost us at least £15 per month more – or use a 'halfway house' such as OVO, which has a tariff with 15% 'green' electricity, compared with major companies who offer about 7%? How to balance having a cheaper deal, thus allowing more money for charitable giving, with what is claimed to be less destruction of the environment through using a totally 'green' tariff? How to weigh in the fact that Ecotricity invests more in new renewable energy generation than other companies; and the importance of finding a company that has no electricity from nuclear sources?

Not being at all certain of our likely annual usage, I opted in the first year for the OVO deal. I recognise that this was a compromise but feel that it was a realistic choice. And I now know that in our first year we have used 12380kWh, so a search for a new supplier will be better informed. It would be interesting to know how other Iona Community members have made their decisions.

Recently I was appointed the Iona Community's Carbon Coordinator. A short history of how this new position came into being: At the 2007 Community weeks, the Community agreed to sign up to the Christian Aid 'Climate Change Campaign', thus committing the Community – individual members and the organisation – to a reduction in carbon emissions of 5% a year on a continuing basis. Christian Aid has reduced its carbon footprint from 4000 tons in 2005/6 to 3020 tons in 2010/11, which is slightly more than a 5% reduction year on year. In June 2010, the Carbon Issues Working Group of the Iona Community was set up; and their final report was accepted at the Council meeting in June 2012, where I was appointed.

Now comes the difficult part of implementing the Council's recommen-

dations. Family Groups are in the process of each appointing a Carbon Coordinator, and in 2013 members will be asked, as part of the 'With us' process, to state their individual carbon footprint. When I have analysed these figures the Community will have a base from which to monitor, year on year, the overall carbon footprint of its members.

One question that often arises when calculating carbon usage is which carbon calculator to use. The various calculators have somewhat different emphases. This issue was explored and then discussed at Council, and it was agreed that, to gain direct comparison, all members should use the 'Act On CO2 calculator', which measures home energy and transport. These two areas account for 46% of a person's carbon emissions and are areas where it is easiest to make changes to one's lifestyle.

If you are looking for further ways of reducing your carbon footprint, I recommend the free leaflets from the information service of the Centre for Alternative Technology: www.cat.org.uk, and for a fuller practical treatment, including a good introduction to CO2 e-calculations, see *The Home Energy Handbook,* CAT, 2012.

PRAYER

We confess that the way we live today is changing the climate, the seas and the balance of life, dispossessing the poor and future generations. Build our lives into an ark for all creation, and, as you promised Noah never to repeat the Flood, so make us heralds of a new rainbow covenant: choosing life for all that is at risk – for creation, for neighbours near and far, our children and ourselves.

From the Operation Noah prayer, in *A Heart for Creation: Worship Resources and Reflections on the Environment*, Chris Polhill, Wild Goose Publications, www.ionabooks.com

WILD GOOSE PUBLICATIONS

NEW BOOKS AND MUSIC

The Truth that Sets Us Free: Biblical Songs for Worship, Wild Goose Collective (including John Bell and Graham Maule), CD: £16.99, songbook: £10.99 (plus post and packing)

What we sing shapes what we believe – this is an incontrovertible truth as regards the song of the Church. It has led many Westerners to believe that Jesus was a silent baby (Away In A Manger) and a docile child (Once In Royal David's City). It has suggested that militarism is an apt metaphor for discipleship (Onward Christian Soldiers) and this misconception is closely allied to decay (Abide With Me). It has also led to the assumption that, as regards religion, 'the West is the best' (O'er Those Gloomy Hills of Darkness, etc). This is not to discount the value of these and other favourite texts. It is, rather, to suggest that the songs we sing reflect the theology of our times, and theology is always in process because God is always on the move.

The songs in this collection are not the antidote but rather a supplement both to traditional hymnody and to the narrow spectrum of biblical and emotional content in much praise and worship material. They are songs intended, as the title (which comes from the words of Jesus) suggests, to liberate us from limited horizons ...

Dazzling Darkness (book), Rachel Mann, £9.99 (plus post and packing)

Dazzling Darkness is a true story about searching for one's authentic self in the company of the Living God. Rachel Mann has died many 'deaths' in the process, not the least of which was a change of sex, as well as coming to terms with chronic illness and disability.

Through these experiences she has discovered that darkness is as much a positive place as a negative one, inhabited by the Living God – the Dark God, the Hidden God. This is the God that many of us, because we try to make our lives safe and comfortable, are too afraid to meet. This is the God who is most alive in those things we commonly associate with the Dark – failure, loss and brokenness. This is the God who will not be used and made to serve our ends.

The Christian church has legitimated certain ways of talking about God – male, fatherly, monarchical and so on. These descriptors have been so dominant that many believe they tell the exhaustive truth about God. In accepting the complexity of her sexuality and identity, Rachel Mann has been able to explore with a greater freedom what God might look like to an 'unconventional creature' like her.

This passionate and nuanced book brings together poetry, feminist theology, and philosophy and explores them through one person's hunger for wholeness, self-knowledge and God.

Rachel Mann is an Anglican parish priest and writer. She is Resident Poet at Manchester Cathedral and her work has been widely published in magazines, anthologies and newsprint.

A Way of Knowing (book), Joy Mead, £9.99 (plus post and packing)

A Way of Knowing is about small things and little occasions, the smells, colours, sounds, the looking, perceiving, thinking, remembering of our lives and the love that makes them significant. In a mix of poems, stories and material suitable for private or public reflection the book explores our knowing and our unknowing. It celebrates the validity of all experience, singing the creation and resting in the beauty of silence.

The Buddha was once asked, 'What makes a person holy?' He replied, 'Every hour is divided into a certain number of seconds and every second into a certain number of fractions. Anyone who is able to be totally present in each fraction of a second is holy.' There is nothing common about common life – it takes an awakened sense to see what is mysterious in each ordinary moment, to ponder in our hearts, to really see people and things – not our preconceptions of them ...

The Still Small Voice: A Book for Busy People, Neil Paynter, £9.99 (plus post and packing)

Life just seems to be getting busier and busier! And even when we're not 'doing' our minds seem eternally busy – life so full of distractions, different messages: babble ... So, a book of short daily readings for the year from a range of Wild Goose books to help folk still themselves. Short because at times it feels like there are enough words in the world! The world is so crowded with words it makes it hard to focus on the Word. This is a book for those who feel themselves travelling at an increasingly frantic pace each day, and are hungry for snatches of nourishment to feed their souls – energy and inspiration and wonder to help keep them on the Way. Jesus lived a balanced life of reflection and action, of times rooted in prayer and contemplation, and times engaged in the tangled messy thick of it. This is a book to help with the balance.

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS BOOKS AND DOWNLOADS FROM WILD GOOSE

Light of the World, Going Home Another Way, Candles and Conifers, Hay and Stardust, Cloth for the Cradle, Hear My Cry, Doing December Differently, Advent Readings from Iona, The Jesse Tree, Gobsmacked, Innkeepers and Light Sleepers, Disturbing Complacency, Good News of Great Joy ...

TO ORDER: 0141-332-6292
admin@ionabooks.com
www.ionabooks.com

A TRIBUTE TO IONA COMMUNITY MEMBER DAVID LEVISON, by Chris Levison

David was the third son of Sir Leon and Lady Kate Levison. Born in Edinburgh, he was educated at George Watson's College, Edinburgh University, Westminster College Cambridge, and New College Edinburgh.

He began his ministry as assistant at St Cuthbert's Church in Edinburgh, where in 1942 he married Cecilia, an English honours graduate. Thereafter he was asked by George MacLeod to go to Perth to St John's, the Kirk of Perth, where he was ordained in 1943. While there, with members of the Youth Fellowship, he turned the old Perth prison into a remarkable youth centre with a wide range of facilities and a daily act of worship in one of the refurbished cells. He was now a member of the Iona Community, and began taking groups of young people to Iona.

He moved to his first parish of Gorebridge, Midlothian in 1946, a mining parish with two working mines. The miners equipped him with the necessary helmet, elbow and knee pads, boots and overalls so he could visit them along the damp narrow tunnels of the mines. A popular innovation in Gorebridge was the 'Penny Pictures' where he introduced youngsters to the delights of Charlie Chaplin and the Keystone Cops. He also wrote a regular column for the local press.

In 1954 he was invited to join the secretariat of the Foreign Mission Committee in 121 George Street, at a time when the Church of Scotland had 320 missionaries serving in 18 mission fields. In 1959, because he wished to return to parish work, the National Church Extension Committee appointed him to the central parish in the new town of Glenrothes. He called the new church St Columba's. Among several innovative things, there were daily short evening acts of worship and the house church.

After 11 years in Glenrothes, he became convenor of the Ethical and Moral Welfare Committee of the General Assembly, and decided to seek a parish near Edinburgh. In 1971 he was inducted to the rural parish of Pencaitland. He served there until retiring in 1982.

During his time leading the Ethical and Moral Welfare Committee he wrote much about the changing attitudes to marriage. As a result of this, he and Cecilia were asked to represent the British Council of Churches at a world conference in Tanzania, Familia '74, where he spoke on world population; and before going on to visit the South African Church Council, he was asked to make a presentation to Julius Nyerere, the first President of Tanzania.

Immediately on retirement, David and Cecilia went to London to live with their eldest son to help bring up four grandchildren whose mother had died suddenly. He was in London for three years, joined the Presbytery of England, was involved and took services in several United Reformed congregations. Returning to Scotland, he and Cecilia settled in Haddington.

In 1984 he and Cecilia were asked to join a team of 20 led by Dr John Fleming, an ex-missionary from China, now lecturing in St Andrews. The team went to China where they successfully contacted the young church in the aftermath of the counter-revolution.

Back in Haddington, David was invited to act as associate minister in St Mary's Collegiate Church, where he produced an 18-page colour brochure of the church`s history, which ran to over 5000 copies. He was then appointed chairman of the East Lothian Council of Social Service, out of which sprang the Haddington Day Centre and the East Lothian branch of Cruse Bereavement Care, which he chaired for 8 years. Still ready to occupy pulpits, he looked after St Magnus Cathedral in Orkney for two consecutive Octobers to give the incumbent his holidays, and also the Scots Kirk in Paris for the same reason.

Throughout his years in different parishes he taught a weekly school class, which he considered an important part of his ministry, bringing the gospel to many young people who had no other church connection. He was a keen supporter of the ecumenical movement and strove to bring different branches of the church closer together. He was moderator of three different presbyteries during his ministry.

His was a varied and exciting ministry, owing much to his membership of the Iona Community, and especially to the unstinting support of his wife, who served as the president of the women's guilds in his congregations, a national vice president of the Guild, and with whom he celebrated 70 years of happy marriage a fortnight before his death. There are three children (two doctors, one minister), 13 grandchildren and 23 great grandchildren.

David's hobbies were gardening, oil painting, writing poetry and sailing. He enjoyed adventurous holidays with his family, caravanning in the north west Highlands, always with a canoe on the car roof. He had a warm sense of humour and took a lively interest in sport and politics. He wrote to MPs and Prime Ministers even into his 95th year, making suggestions and taking an active part in the democratic process. Altogether he lived a rich and fulfilled life both in the centre of his family and in the service of the home and the world church, for which we give thanks.



David enjoying time with a great-grandson, family photo ©

review

For this edition's review: 'The Forgotten Faithful: A Window into the Life and Witness of Christians in the Holy Land', Naim Ateek, Cedar Duaybis and Maurine Tobin (eds), Sabeel, Jerusalem, 2007, reviewed by Colin Douglas, go to the web address below. There you will also find links to some of the Wild Goose books on p.22:

http://www.iona.org.uk/coracle.php

A touching place: news and letters

NONVIOLENT PEACEFORCE

Nonviolent Peaceforce is an NGO which fosters dialogue among parties in conflict and provides a protective presence for threatened civilians. NP peacekeeping teams are presently deployed in the Philippines, South Sudan and the South Caucasus. Former Iona volunteer Mel Duncan is a founder of Nonviolent Peaceforce. For more information on the work of Nonviolent Peaceforce, go to: *www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org*

NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

From member Chris Gidden, Co-Chair Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CCND):

We in the Iona Community believe that the use and threatened use of nuclear weapons and other WMDs is theologically and morally indefensible. Many of our associates and members are active protesting at sites where WMD are handled and researched. We need to reach out more to all churches throughout the United Kingdom to make congregations and hierarchy understand exactly what is being done in their name.

Major new decisions which will involve unimaginable amounts of our taxes and borrowings to meet the continued holding and developing of new WMDs are imminent – this is a programme the country cannot afford.

There are now several strands of campaigning to pressure the UK government not to renew the current fleet of weapons' platforms and nuclear weapons. In the light of this, Christian CND is in the process of reproducing a new churches' pack for parishes. We hope to have it available in January 2013. It would be helpful to have advocates out there to help promote and ensure distribution as widely as possible, at every level and denomination. If you are interested in receiving this pack, please e-mail: *Christians@cnduk.org*, or contact me through the Members' book.

Blessings, Chris

FAIR TAXES WORSHIP

A liturgy prepared by Jo Love of WGRG, available from Church Action on Poverty: *www.church-poverty.org.uk/pray/pray-1/fairtax-esworshippdf/view*

THE PRICE OF ECONOMIC BARBARISM: AN UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTH, a report by Cathy McCormack

Cathy McCormack is Commissioner on the Church of Scotland Special Commission on the Purposes of Economic Activity, an anti-poverty campaigner and author of *The Wee Yellow Butterfly*: *www.churchofscotland.org.uk/speak_out/poverty_and_economics*

COWP THE TABLES: A LETTER

From member Ian M. Fraser:

If a prize were to be offered for drawing connecting lines between the Conservative Manifesto plus pre-election promises and what has happened on the ground, I doubt if anyone would bother entering. Priorities were designed not for implementation but to get hands on levers of power. George Osborne, cushioned from reality by his privileged background, holds to the failed ideology which is market-led, privatisation-prone with inept trickle-down assumptions which lead him to protect the wealthy at the expense of others. A double-dip recession has been his creative input.

Privatisation is playing its part in wrecking the country. Propaganda which suggests it is more efficient and economical than public enterprise is quite unfounded. As for efficiency, the G4S fiasco should puncture that claim forever. Before government undermining, the NHS was given top ranking internationally for both efficiency and economy of operation. All that is becoming past tense. More economical it is not – as might be expected when speculators cream off finance which should sustain services. Corners are cut, objective judgements interfered with – the private company Atos, supposed to train doctors to assess disability beneficiaries, has a secret intention which interferes with objective judgements – an acceptable total must not be surpassed, whatever is suffered by those left out. Why the unusually big hike in postal costs? Privatisation looms.

Public enterprise needs to be reappreciated and reappropriated. When I was Streets and Lighting Convenor of Dunfermline Town Council we had to start a Works Department to get assignments dealt with efficiently and on time.

Where money is boss, people suffer.

Pray this prayer: *Lord Christ, cowp the tables of dissembling, fleecing money manipulators as you did with those in your earthly life. We will do our bit alongside you. Amen*

THE GREAT TRANSITION, a report from the New Economics Foundation

From NEF:

Creating a new kind of economy is crucial if we want to tackle climate change and avoid the mounting social problems associated with the rise of economic inequality. *The Great Transition* provides the first comprehensive blueprint for building an economy based on stability, sustainability and equality: *www.neweconomics.org*

CALLING IONA COMMUNITY MEMBERS, ASSOCIATES AND FRIENDS WITH AN AFFINITY FOR ROMAN CATHOLICISM

From member Mike Mineter:

During summer Community week on Iona, a few members with

affinity for the Roman Catholic Church met to discuss some recent actions by the Vatican. These include the imposition of a revised text for the Mass in English (no longer using ecumenically agreed texts), the silencing of some theologians by the Vatican, and the attempt to eliminate discussion of having married and women priests. We began to reflect on their impact on parishes, as well as ourselves, and to test contentions that these are symptoms of an impoverishing move away from Vatican II, and towards increased clericalism and centralisation of power, with an isolationism that will hamper ecumenical progress.

If you share an affinity for Roman Catholicism and wish to join in further exchanges following on from the meeting at Community week, then please contact me at: *mike.mineter@gmail.com*

PUBLICATION OF INTEREST

Engaging Mission: the Lasting Value of Industrial Mission for Today, by Iona Community member Peter Cope and Mike West, Grosvenor House Press. Peter Cope and Mike West are Anglican priests whose ministries have been almost entirely in industrial mission.

WELLSPRING COMMUNITY, AUSTRALIA

Member Peter Millar has been in Australia this autumn visiting Wellspring. Member Jan Sutch Pickard has been invited to come over in 2013 to speak at the National Gathering. The Iona Community sends its love to members of Wellspring and to all friends of our purpose in Australia. To see what's happening at Wellspring: *www.wellspringcommunity.org.au*

THE RULE OF THE IONA COMMUNITY AND BIBLE READING: A LETTER

From member Stephen Wright, following on from conversations at summer Community Week:

Do you read your Bible every day? The Rule asks that we do.

It can be tough to maintain a daily discipline of prayer and reading, and arguably the Bible might not be the only source of spiritual learning and inspiration. Some in the Community have questioned whether we should be so restrictive as to specify one book. There's strength in the argument on both sides, but perhaps it does not have to be either/or but both?

Perhaps it's also worth considering that there are other 'books' than the Bible. Philip Newell mentioned on a course some years ago how the Celtic tradition saw the Bible as a main (little) book of learning, but also read the (big) 'book of Creation': God present in the unfolding reality all around us, offering teachings as rich as any of those in scripture.

Jesus offers us some lessons here. First of all he does indeed regularly refer to scripture (though often to challenge it) and we have at least one account of him reading in the synagogue from what we now call the Old Testament. Secondly, he offers us the Book of Nature. Many of his stories and parables are peppered with examples drawn from nature (the lilies of the field, foxes with dens, and so on) to illustrate his teachings.

Third, there is the Book of Humanity. Jesus offers many stories of the human experience (the sowers in the field, the prodigal son, the labourers in the vineyard) as well as stories of human encounter with him (the rich man, the centurion, the blind man, the haemorrhaging woman). All of these present us with enriching examples of the human condition from which to learn.

Lastly, there is the Book of the Heart, the way of contemplative prayer, the going inwards to that 'inner chamber' where we open to a direct encounter with the divine. Jesus prays regularly and the accounts tell of his seeking solitude and silence. It is in the inner chamber that we come into the loving Presence in an intimate relationship, the soul opening to the divine splendour where we are inwardly transformed in order to outwardly act in the world.

And so, we might read our Bible or perhaps other spiritual books and pause to reflect on what is being said to us. Then sit and appreciate the natural world we live in. Then reflect upon and integrate a human story we have read about in the newspaper or encountered. Then slip quietly into contemplative prayer and seek to be open to the One in whom *'we live and move and have our being'*. With all of these, how many books are we thus reading?

Approaching our 'reading' consciously, with awareness, expands the possibilities of daily Bible study. It's risky in some ways because this can be a cop-out for a lack of discipline or undermine (if we are not rooted in the Bible) a claim to being a Christian tradition. At the same time, being responsive to a wider interpretation of 'scripture' sets us free from self-punishment for 'not being good enough' or 'not doing it right' and opens us to the countless ways God is speaking to us beyond the written word.

Bread for the road

Personally consumed of the here and now, we must discover the sense of God as Here and Now.

– George MacLeod

Prayer of the Iona Community

O God, who gave to your servant Columba the gifts of courage, faith and cheerfulness, and sent people forth from Iona to carry the word of your gospel to every creature: grant, we pray, a like spirit to your church, even at this present time. Further in all things the purpose of our community, that hidden things may be revealed to us, and new ways found to touch the hearts of all. May we preserve with each other sincere charity and peace, and, if it be your holy will, grant that this place of your abiding be continued still to be a sanctuary and a light. Through Jesus Christ. Amen

Alison Swinfen

Prayers of thanksgiving for the common life

From a prayer written during summer Community Week on Iona for a service of thanksgiving for the work and witness of the Islands Staff

Loving God, we thank you for the sounds of the common life of these Island Centres: the swish and the scrub, the plane and the polish, the click and the conversation, the ring and the riotous laughter, the song and the silence.

May you encircle us with the sounds of your community.

Loving God, we thank you for the smells of the common life: the freshly laundered linen, the compost heap, the damp and sweat of pilgrimage day, the sweet and savoury of mealtimes and kitchens, the pungent mingling of scents in the herb garden.

May you envelop us with the fragrance of your love among us.

We thank you for the taste of the common life: the wonderful simplicity of soup and bread, for salads and roast dinners, for great trays of bakes, for the signs of your creative glory in chocolate puddle pudding and raspberry roulade.

May you nourish us with your grace in sharing.

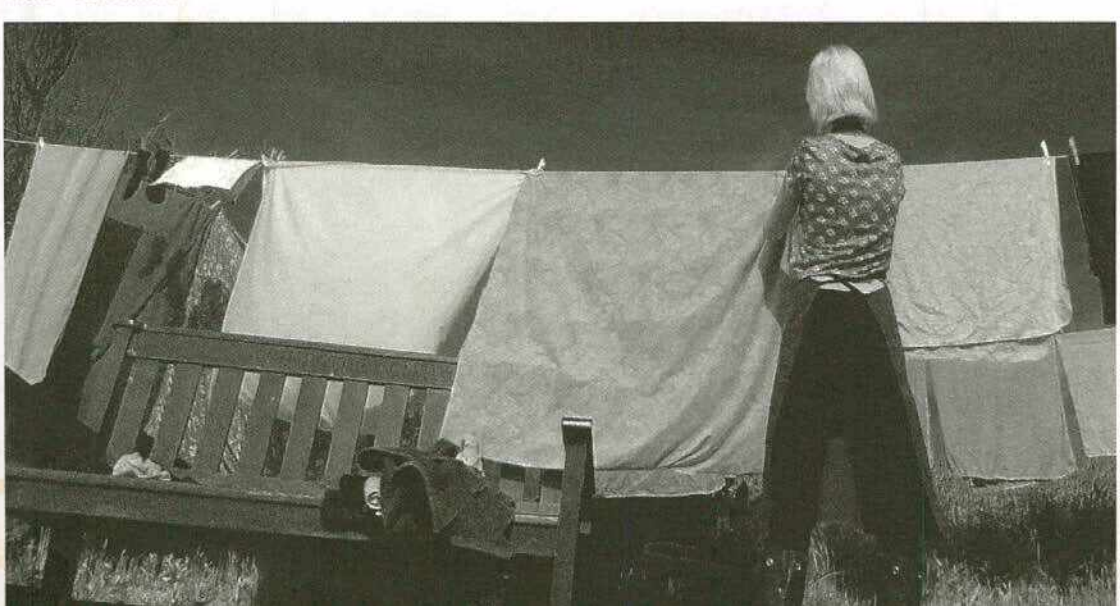
Loving God, we thank you for the touch of the common life: the keyboard and keypad, first-aid phone and flapjack, candles and cushions, spanners and spades, kayak and cleaning cloth, boxes of books and children glorying in glue and games.

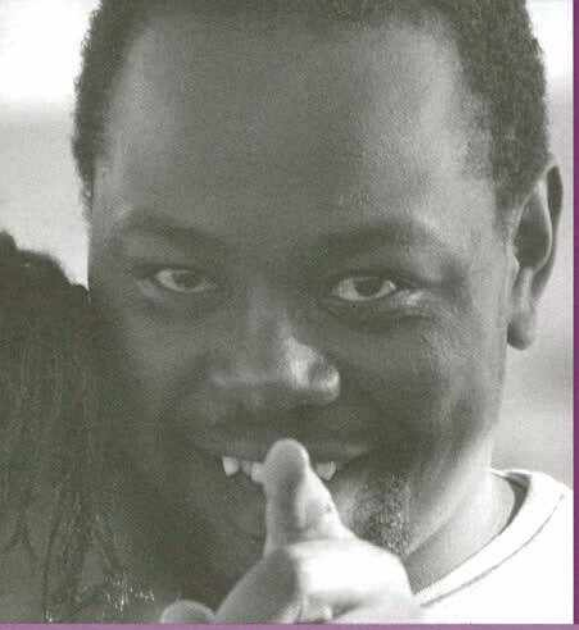
May you enfold us in the warmth of your restful embrace.

And we thank you for the staff and volunteers here in this time and place. May they know your love and pleasure in their commitment to the common life.

And for all who live on this island working to offer hospitality and refreshment, we give you thanks.

Photo © David Coleman





A TIME TO MEND

Through
hunger,
injustice,
poverty,
violence,
and the other
sorrow-filled markers
of our age,
there is a time
to pause,
to listen,
to laugh,
to see beauty,
to seek truth,
to love deeply,
and to mend our broken
but beautiful
human fabric.

And maybe,
just maybe,
that time is
now –
today,
right where we are.

Peter Millar

Cover photo by Martin Johnstone ©

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e: coracle@iona.org.uk **w:** http://www.iona.org.uk/coracle.php
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WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO MAKE PEACE?

It will take people!

*prophet-people who dare to lay bare the fallacies
that choke and blind us
even if we cannot hear their words nor dream their dreams;
*parent-people who look with love
at the work of their creation
and refuse to leave their children
only a heritage of destruction;
*nurture-people who grow plants and feed birds
and pick up dirt from the earth
and love what is green, fresh and growing;
*healing-people whose hands touch others
into life and well-being
struggling always against the forces of death;
*poet-people who call us beyond where we are,
point to the lastingness of life,
the folly of choosing death ever;
*fun-people who lift up and lighten
and laugh others into fruitfulness
and courage for the long haul;
*women-people whose role through time has been to nurture,
to empower others,
to make grow,
to make clean,
to make new again;
*soul-people whose eyes are clear and open,
inviting trust and the kind of bonding
that draws us together;
*young-people who have nothing to gain
by destruction and death but death itself;
*justice-people who cry out
against the oppressors of people,
the destroyers of the earth,
those who would bomb and burn and obliterate;
*little-people who don't know themselves as special
but who are in truth the 'salt of the earth',
feeding and clothing and housing the human family
from one end of day to the next.

We are the people who will prevent nuclear war
and we are on the march!

Jane Blewett
Center of Concern

From "I am because we are" Riley pub Center of Concern 3700 13th St NE Washington DC 20017

EDGE

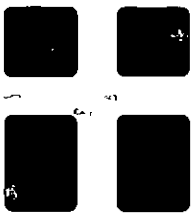
Come into the deep
where the ocean floor
shelves steeply away
under the thrust of your
feet. Swim out
beyond your depth.
Plunge into waters
cold and sweet.

Come into the free,
across the boundaries
of home and foreign place,
out into open space
where earth and heaven meet
and the land recedes
beyond your sight.
Taste the wide air,
sharp and sweet.

Come over the edge,
where the rocky ledge
gives way to vastness,
sudden stark. Dive
into wild air, wide time,
beyond your sense.
Freefall into space,
sheer and sweet.

This is the leap into
life and death
way out beyond all
sense and sight and
depth, where the empty
air and water and abyss
call: Come.

Nicola Slee
8th February 1998



International Catholic Movement for Peace

For more information on our work contact:

Pax Christi
St Joseph's
Watford Way, Hendon
London NW4 4TY
Tel: 020 8203 4884
www.paxchristi.org.uk

(Additional copies - £2.50 per 50)

Pax Christi Daily Prayer

Thank you loving God
For the gift of life
For this wonderful world which
we all share
For the joy of love and friendship
For the challenge of helping to build
your kingdom.

Strengthen
My determination to work for a world
of peace and justice
My conviction that, whatever our
nationality or race,
we are all global citizens,
one in Christ
My courage to challenge the
powerful with the values of the Gospel
My commitment to find nonviolent
ways of resolving conflict
- personal, local, national and international
My efforts to forgive injuries and to love
those I find it hard to love.

Teach me
To share the gifts you have given me
To speak out for the victims of injustice
who have no voice
To reject the violence which runs
through much of our world today.

Holy Spirit of God
Renew my hope for a world free from the
cruelty and evil of war so that we may all
come to share
in God's peace and justice. *Amen*

As I go into the Earth, she pierces my heart. As I penetrate further, she unveils me. When I have reached her center, I am weeping openly. I have known her all my life, yet she reveals stories to me, and these stories are revelations and I am transformed. Each time I go to her I am born like this. Her renewal washes over me endlessly, her wounds caress me; I become aware of all that has come between us, of the noise between us, the blindness, of something sleeping between us. Now my body reaches out to her. They speak effortlessly, and I learn at no instant does she fail me in her presence. She is as delicate as I am; I know her sentience; I feel her pain and my own pain comes into me, and my own pain grows large and I grasp this pain with my hands, and I open my mouth to this pain, I taste, I know, and I know why shes goes on, under great weight, with this great thirst, in drought, in starvation, with intelligence in every act does she survive disaster. This earth is my sister; I love her daily grace, her silent daring, and how loved I am how we admire this strength in each other, all that we have lost, all that we have suffered, all that we know: we are stunned by this beauty, and I do not forget what she is to me, what I am to her.

SUSAN GRIFFIN

As we are together, praying for peace, let us be truly with each other.

Let us pay attention to our breathing.

Let us be relaxed in our bodies and our minds.

Let us be at peace with our bodies and our minds.

Let us return to ourselves and become wholly ourselves. Let us maintain a half-smile on our faces.

Let us be aware of the source of being common to us all and to all living things.

Evoking the presence of the Great Compassion, let us fill our hearts with our own compassion—towards ourselves and towards all living beings.

Let us pray that all living beings realize that they are all brothers and sisters, all nourished from the same source of life.

Let us pray that we ourselves cease to be the cause of suffering to each other.

Let us plead with ourselves to live in a way which will not deprive other beings of air, water, food, shelter, or the chance to live.

With humility, with awareness of the existence of life, and of the sufferings that are going on around us, let us pray for the establishment of peace in our hearts and on earth. Amen

THICH NHAT HANH

Share the message

World Week for Peace in Palestine and Israel' offers us all an opportunity to pray, take action and tell others about the situation. Many people are concerned about what is happening in Palestine and Israel. You may have taken part in Christian Aid's 'Journey to Jerusalem' Lent action. Carry on learning by taking a symbolic action, using a stone, and pledge to deepen your understanding using the resources mentioned in this leaflet.

Why choose a stone?

A stone is part of the land.

A stone links us to the homes destroyed over the years

A stone can be part of rebuilding

A stone can be a memorial

A stone resonates with the Christians living in this land who are called 'The Living Stones'.

Use your own ideas to develop this theme further

The United Nations have designated 2009 as the International Year of Reconciliation

Prayer for the week

Living God, today we pray for all the people in Palestine Israel, that they may discover the courage and humility to build peace together. We pray for those with power and influence, that they will seek a just path of reconciliation.

We pray for those who are in dire need today, that their human rights to food and shelter and medical care will be urgently met. We pray for international aid agencies as they work to bring hope to devastated communities.

We pray for all those in the land who have suffered over the years of struggle: for those who are grieving for their lost loved ones; for those whose lives have been changed forever because of injuries, mental and physical; and for those who bear the lasting scars of being displaced and dispossessed. Living God, their pain is so great today. Bring your healing, bring your peace, to Palestine israel.

For our Muslim brothers and sisters in Palestine Israel this day, we pray *Assalamu Alaikum.*

For our Jewish brothers and sisters in Palestine Israel this day, we pray *Shalom Aleichem.*

For our Christian brothers and sisters, the Living Stones, in Palestine Israel, this day, we pray *The Peace of Christ.*

Actions

- ***Ask everyone to bring a small stone which can be used to build a cairn in your place of worship***
- Hold a vigil near the cairn during the week
- Use the stone to meditate
- Encourage people to paint their pebble and make the cairn a work of art
- Let the stone be a reminder of the 'Living Stones'
- Use the stone to remember those who have had their houses demolished.
- Make use of the prayer as you build the cairn or in a church service or meeting.
- Learn more about the situation in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (see resources)
- Contact local media to tell them what you are doing and why. Write to your MP and MEP
- Have a light shining all week to remember all those in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories
- Tell others about what you have learnt.
- ***Tell www.christianaid.org.uk/pilgrimage about what you did, which will encourage the 'Living Stones'***

Ecumenical and International links

USPG: Anglicans in World Mission
www.uspg.org.uk

Baptist Union
www.baptist.org.uk

Church of Scotland, World Mission Council

Www.churchofscotland.org.uk

Christian Aid
www.christianaid.org.uk

Commitment for Life (United Reformed Church)
www.cforl.org.uk

Ecumenical Accompaniment Programme in Palestine and Israel (EAPPI)
www.quaker.org.uk/eappi, www.eappi.org

Friends of Sabeel UK

www.friendsofsabeel.org.uk

Israeli Committee against House demolitions
www.icahd.org.uk

Methodist Church
www.methodist.org.uk

Pax Christi UK
www.paxchristi.org.uk

Scottish Episcopal Church
www.scotland.anglican.org

World Council of Churches
www.worldweekforpeace.org

ACTS Action of Scottish Churches Together

www.acts-scotland.org.uk

Resources

The Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel Information Pack produced in conjunction with Christian Aid. Price £5. jfarnsworth@baptist.arg.uk

God's People: A series of four biblical studies which consider the teaching about God's calling of a people, the light shed by Jesus, and then some reflections by the first Christians. Written by Revd Dick Jones. The studies can be downloaded from www.methodist.org.uk

'A Question of Viability' and **'Lifelines'** (a pack for campaigners) www.christianaid.org.uk

Articles and Palestinian children's prayers :

www.paxchristi.org.uk

Commitment for Life.(United Reformed Church):

www.cforl.org.uk

USPG: "Different Truth', a book featuring the stories of ordinary people at the heart of the Israel/Palestine conflict.

www.uspg.org.uk

Articles about daily life in Palestine/Israel

www.eappi.org

World Week for Peace in Palestine Israel

Joint actions for a just peace convened by the World Council of Churches



4-10 June 2009

A week in which to take action for a just peace in the Holy Land

The Community of all Creation (Based on opening service for CAFOD renew the earth campaign)

Blessed are you,
strong and faithful God.
All your works, the height and the depth,
echo the silent music of your praise.

In the beginning
your Word summoned light:
night withdrew, and creation dawned.
As ages passed unseen,
waters gathered
on the face of the earth
and life appeared.

When the time at last had ripened
and the earth grown full in abundance,
you created in your image
man and woman,
the crown of all creation.

You gave us breath and speech,
that all the living
might find a voice to sing your praise.

Filled with the knowledge
of your love for us
we now commit ourselves
to your service
and the renewing of all the earth.

2 Song Jesus Christ is Waiting (Iona)

3 **Psalm 103**

How many are your works, O Lord,
in wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your riches,
living things great and small.

You hide your face, they are dismayed,
you take back your Spirit, they die.
You send forth your Spirit, they are created
and you renew the face of the earth.

I will sing to the Lord all my life,
make music to my God while I live.
May my thoughts be pleasing to him;
I find my strength in my God.



4 **Prayer of Renewal**

Response: *We promise to care for your earth*

For the sun that gives light and for the air that we breathe

For the waters of the earth in rivers and seas

For the forests and fields of the land

For all animals that are threatened and endangered

For plants and flowers that are trodden under the foot of technology

For resources on and in our land

For people who are misused for profit

For people who are denied access to your gifts

For all people who fight for justice and for peace

All: *For the future we hold*
for our children's children
We promise to care for your earth

5 **Prayer of Blessing**

Deep peace of the running wave to you,
Deep peace of the flowing air to you,
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you,
Deep peace of the shining stars to you,
Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.

May the Lord walk with us along the way, and may he bless all that we d in his name.

F

FREE PRAYERS OF THANKS

THE LORD'S PRAYER

SCRIPTURE READINGS

SILENCE

Reflect on the gospel
and remember
that God is with those
who are poor and betrayed

INTERCESSIONS

Peace between nations
Peace between neighbours
Peace between lovers
In love of the God of life.
Peace between man and woman
Peace between parent and child
Peace between brother and sister
The peace of Christ above all peace.
Bless O Christ my face
Let my face bless everything.
Bless O Christ my eyes
Let my eyes bless all they see.

Recall the events of the day
and pray for justice and peace

EVENING

You are behind me
and before me O God
You lay your hand
upon me

[Ps 139.5]

SILENCE

Be still
and aware of God's presence
within and all around

OPENING PRAYER AND THANKSGIVING

As I utter these prayers
    from my mouth O God
In my soul may I feel your presence.
The knee that is stiff
    O healer make pliant
The heart that is hard,
make warm beneath your wing
The wound that is giving me pain,
O best of healers, make whole
And may my hopes and my fears
Find a listening place with you.



LOVE'S PERSISTENCE

Love is patient and kind
and knows no envy.
Love never clings,
is never boastful, conceited, or rude.
Love is never selfish,
never insists on its own way.
Love is not quick to take offence.
Love keeps no score of wrongs,
nor gloats over the sins of others.
Love rejoices in the truth.
Love is tough:
there is nothing it cannot face.
Love never loses trust
in human beings or in God.
Love never loses hope,
never loses heart.
Love still stands
when all else has fallen.

Cairns Cards
Series A · Set 1 · No. 1 in a set of six meditation cards

Based on part of 1 Corinthians 13

This version © copyright by Jim Cotter 1991



THE FIVE COMMANDMENTS

This is the Wisdom of Jesus:

Abide in my love.

Love your enemies.

Love your neighbour as yourself.

Love one another as I have loved you.

Above all, love God with the whole of your being.

Cairns Cards
Series A · Set 1 · No. 2 in a set of six meditation cards

From the Gospels

This arrangement © copyright by Jim Cotter 1991



THE GOSPEL WAY

Love your enemies.
Do good to those who hate you.
Bless those who curse you.
Pray for those who abuse you.
Do good and lend,
  expecting nothing in return.
For God is kind
  to the ungrateful and selfish.
Be merciful
  as your father is merciful.
Judge not,
  and you will not be judged.
Condemn not,
  and you will not be condemned.
Forgive,
  and you will be forgiven.
Give,
  and it will be given to you.
The measure you give
  will be the measure you receive.

Cairns Cards
Series A · Set 1 · No. 3 in a set of six meditation cards

From the Gospel according to Luke
This arrangement © copyright by Jim Cotter 1991



DWELLING IN LOVE

If you dwell in the Divine Love,
if you join the Dance of the Trinity,
the Lover, the Beloved, and the Mutual Friend,
if you are caught up in the Love
that is generous and overflowing,

you will find yourself loving and being loved
with the whole of your being,
loving your neighbour as yourself,
and loving even your enemy;

and, as surely as night follows day,
you will never use force –
though you will refuse to let others
escape from love and truth;
you will never use others merely to provide
what you want –
though you will respect and acknowledge
your own needs;
you will never take advantage of others'
ignorance or immaturity –
though you will try to increase their knowledge
and wisdom.

Cairns Cards
Series A · Set 1 · No. 4 in a set of six meditation cards

From *Pleasure, Pain & Passion*
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THE ADVERBS OF LOVE

Love others, and receive their love –

passionately, on wings of flame;
fiercely, eager for truth;
honestly, without illusion;
courageously, bearing the hurts;
gently, with no hint of cruelty;
sensitively, giving room to breathe;
respectfully, without possessing;
responsibly, aware of consequence;
trustfully, without fear of rejection;
welcomingly, without demanding change;
forgivingly, open to being reconciled;
generously, without thought of return;
wholeheartedly, full of faith and loyalty.

Cairns Cards
Series A · Set 1 · No. 5 in a set of six meditation cards
From *Pleasure, Pain & Passion*
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LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

Neither condemn nor destroy your enemies.
Keep in contact with them –
  even when you cannot keep 'in touch'.
Strive powerfully with them,
  struggling shoulder to shoulder,
  until you see each other face to face.
Be angry with compassion, not with hatred.
Do not yield to bitterness or fury.
Be strongly and persuasively gentle –
  with others and with yourself.
Where there is icy hatred in your heart,
  let it be melted by the Spirit of Love.
Do not meet oppression with violation –
  for we have all been too much hurt.
Your enemies are human beings like yourself:
  do not picture them as less than human.
And keep a sense of proportion –
  and a sense of humour.
With expanding heart, *love* your enemies.

Cairns Cards
Series A · Set 1 · No. 6 in a set of six meditation cards

From *Prayer at Night* (adapted)

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Beatitudes for Women



Blessed is she who gives simply, loves deeply,
and walks joyfully in life,
for she has sincerity.
Blessed is she who lives intensely
and sing life's alleluias,
for she has awareness.
Blessed is she who speaks gently, lives humbly,
and chooses to give freely,
for she has dignity.
Blessed is she who listens and hears.
and extends her hands as a friend,
for she has understanding.
Blessed is she who suffers with the very young.
the very old and the lonely,
for she has compassion.
Blessed is she who greets the world with joy,
laughter and anticipation,
for she has courage.
Blessed is she who has sincerity, and awareness,
freedom and dignity,
understanding, compassion and courage,
for she is a woman, a gift, a blessing.

J.L.Timmer@lse.ac.uk

Swank calk fem Th 9/0 -

Garden room

Grow this space upwards from the ground
root it in Stirchley's poor clay soil
cluttered with nails, tin cans, broken crockery and glass

Raise its walls in strong sunlight
wash its lines in rain

Let the lilac scrape against its cedar sides
Bramley, rowan and May wave their branches through its windows
clouds reflect their changing shapes

Let the summer sounds of cricket enter its open door
birdsong in the morning
next door's yapping dog
and children playing in the afternoon

Let it sit empty for a long time
breathing its own emptiness

Before the placing of desk or chair or shelves or books
let one slight, grey-green wooden figure
stand in the cool emptiness
inclining towards infinity

Day after day, look down from the kitchen window
towards the empty room
listen to its dark, humming silence at night
watch it growing

Do not hurry to accommodate this space
print your designs upon it

Let it put out its intentions toward you like tendrils of a tree
let it draw you into itself
write the poem of your life in its thick solitude

23.x.12

Nicola Slee

from 'Celebrating one world

our understanding of fellowship, but also expressing solidarity with them. We pray that our actions will reflect our prayers.

1. You asked for my hands
that you might use them for your purpose.
I gave them for a moment,
then withdrew them, for the work was hard.

You asked for my mouth
to speak out against injustice;
I gave you a whisper that I might not be accused.

You asked for my eyes
to see the pain of poverty;
I closed them, for I did not want to see.

You asked for my life
that you might work through me.
I gave a small part, that I might not get 'too involved'.

Lord, forgive me for my calculated efforts to serve you
only when it is convenient for me to do so,
only in those places where it is safe to do so and
only with those who make it easy to do so.

Father, forgive me,
renew me,
send me out
as a usable instrument
that I might take seriously
the meaning of your cross.

A prayer from Africa
Joe Seremane, South Africa

2. An ancient Rabbi once asked his pupils how they could tell when the night had ended and the day was on its way back.

'Could it be,' asked one student, 'when you can see an animal in the distance and tell whether it is a sheep or a dog?'

'No,' answered the Rabbi.

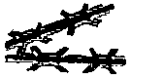
'Could it be,' asked another, 'when you can look at a tree in the distance and tell whether it is a fig tree or a peach tree?'

'No,' said the Rabbi.

'Well then, what is it?' his pupils demanded.

'It is when you look on the face of any woman or man and see that she or he is your sister or brother. Because if you cannot do this, then, no matter what time it is, it is still night.'

Old Jewish Story
Source unknown





3. We talk of 'living in Christ with people' – what people?
We have torn ourselves apart from the rest of our body.
Lest you turn aside from us,
we reach out our hands to grasp our severed limbs,
we reach out to the unloved, the unwashed, the ulcerated.
We reach out to those imprisoned: imprisoned behind bars,
imprisoned behind masks, imprisoned in endless labour.

Litany of darkness and light

1 We wait in the darkness, expectantly, longingly, anxiously, thoughtfully.
2 The darkness is our friend. In the darkness of the womb, we have all been nurtured and protected. In the darkness of the womb, the Christ-child was made ready for the journey into light.
You are with us, O God, in darkness and light.

1 It is only in the darkness that we can see the splendour of the universe – blankets of stars, the solitary glowings of distant planets.
2 It was the darkness that allowed the Magi to find the star that guided them to where the Christ-child lay.
You are with us, O God, in darkness and light.

1 In the darkness of night, desert peoples find relief from the cruel relentless heat of the sun.
2 In the blessed desert darkness Mary and Joseph were able to flee with the infant Jesus to safety in Egypt.
You are with us, O God, in darkness and light.

1 In the darkness of sleep, we are soothed and restored, healed and renewed.
2 In the darkness of sleep, dreams rise up. God spoke to Jacob and Joseph through dreams. God is speaking still.
You are with us, O God, in darkness and light.

1 In the solitude of darkness, we sometimes remember those who need God's presence in a special way – the sick, the unemployed, the bereaved, the persecuted, the homeless; those who are demoralized and discouraged, those whose fear has turned to cynicism, those whose vulnerability has become bitterness.
2 Sometimes we remember, in the darkness, those who are near to our hearts – colleagues, partners, parents, children, neighbours, friends. We thank God for their presence and ask God to bless and protect them in all that they do – at home, at school, as they travel, as they work, as they play.
You are with us, O God, in darkness and light.

1 Sometimes in the solitude of darkness our fears and concerns, our hopes and our visions rise to the surface. We come face to face with ourselves and with the road that lies ahead of us. And in that same darkness we find companionship for the journey.
2 In that same darkness, we sometimes allow ourselves to wonder and worry whether the human race is going to survive.
We know that you are with us, O God, yet we still await your coming. In the darkness that contains both our hopelessness and our expectancy, we watch for a sign of God's hope.

(Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand)

Hands

I see, Lord, in my tightly clenched fists
a symbol of my self.
I grasp my life,
hiding all I don't want others to see.

I hold my pride:
my desire to appear right,
my desire to appear strong.

I hold my anxieties:
my fear that I won't be accepted as I am,
my inability to be who I am.

I hold my anger:
my violence that protects me
against anyone
who comes too close to my secrets.

I ache with this tension,
with the immense energy required
to hide myself –
from you, lest you change me,
from them, lest they hurt me.

With these fists, I want to strike out –
against you,
against them,
against all that threatens me.

(pause)

But I see,
in these whitened knuckles
and straining forearms,
what this is doing to me:
I am enslaved,
imprisoned within myself.
I am destroying myself and others.

(pause)

But I sense your presence, Lord,
your open hands
reaching out to me.

I slowly open my hands,
and release myself to you.
I offer all I have been grasping so tightly:
the fear of being known,
the anxiety of being alone,
the anger, the guilt, the pain.

Lord!
My arms no longer ache!
My hands can move again!
They can stretch and wiggle.
They are open and able to receive –
Fill them with your love!
Show them how to touch,
how to serve.

Freed from my own grasp,
I am suddenly aware of others.
I reach out to my sisters and brothers.
Let my hands be your hands
as I take their needs and cares
and lift them to you.
Give us your sustaining grace,
touch us with your healing love.
Take us and shape us together
into the body of your Son.

Let our hands be your hands
to reach out to the world you love.

original author unknown
adaptation by Martha Keys Barker
and Patricia Beall

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Boars Hill Feb 15 03. Peace Liturgy CPW

Worked out by group of 10

Opening music – Protecting veil Taverner, first 5 mins up to jagged passages.(tape)

Silence

Short pentitential prayer, written by two participants, interspersed with sung Kyrie

Silence

Prayer of Peace (Pax Christi) All read together

Bach cello concerto (tape) when faded out various readings on peace (people had been asked to bring these to the weekend)- the Bach is played between each reading This included words from Berrigan, Gandhi, Helder Camara, Constitution of UNESCO, 14thc monk etc. Ends with a passage from Micah 4:1-4

Silence

Quiet prayer while lighting of small candles (tea lights) to Faure's In Paradisum music.

Silence

Prayer of Peace for Iraq (Pax Christi prayer for peace in Iraq and the Middle East) read by a participant

Sign of Peace. (the enfolding of other's joined hands so that it goes right the way round with some words such as peace be with you. As we were not sitting in a circle but two quarter sections opposite the altar, it was necessary to indicate to the last person on the left to go to the first person on the right, and at the end the person starting it went to receive the blessing from the last person).

All sing the Taize chant Send me Lord, send me Jesus.

(this took exactly one hour as intended)

See over for the Pax Christi prayers.

Bach cello concerto (tape) when faded out various readings on peace (people had been asked to bring these to the weekend)- the Bach is played between each reading This included words from Berrigan, Gandhi, Helder Camara, Constitution of UNESCO, 14thc monk etc. Ends with a passage from Micah 4:1-4

Silence

Intercessory prayer while lighting of small candles (tea lights) to Faure's In Paradisum music.

Silence

Prayer of Peace for Iraq (Pax Christi prayer for peace in Iraq and the Middle East) read by a participant

Prayer for Peace in Iraq and the Middle East

We come to you, God Creator.
You are the source of life and beauty and power.
Your son Jesus is the way of faith and hope and love.
Your Spirit is the fire of love, the fount of wisdom, the bond of unity.
You call us at all times to be people of the beatitudes,
Witnesses to the Gospel of peace and love and forgiveness.
You call us at this time, when war and rumours of war, weigh heavily on the peoples of Iraq and the Middle East.
Their lives are already broken by suffering and violence.

We renew our acceptance of your call.
We promise to work:

- *To bring the light of the Gospel to those living in darkness,*
- *To bring the hope of the Gospel to those living in despair,*
- *To bring the healing of the Gospel to the lonely, the disadvantaged, the marginalized,*
- *And to bring the peace of the Gospel to a divided world.*

Amen.

Sign of Peace. (the enfolding of other's joined hands so that it goes right the way round with some words such as peace be with you. As we were not sitting in a circle but two quarter sections opposite the altar, it was necessary to indicate to the last person on the left to go to the first person on the right, and at the end the person starting it went to receive the blessing from the last person).

All sing the Taize chant Send me Lord, send me Jesus.

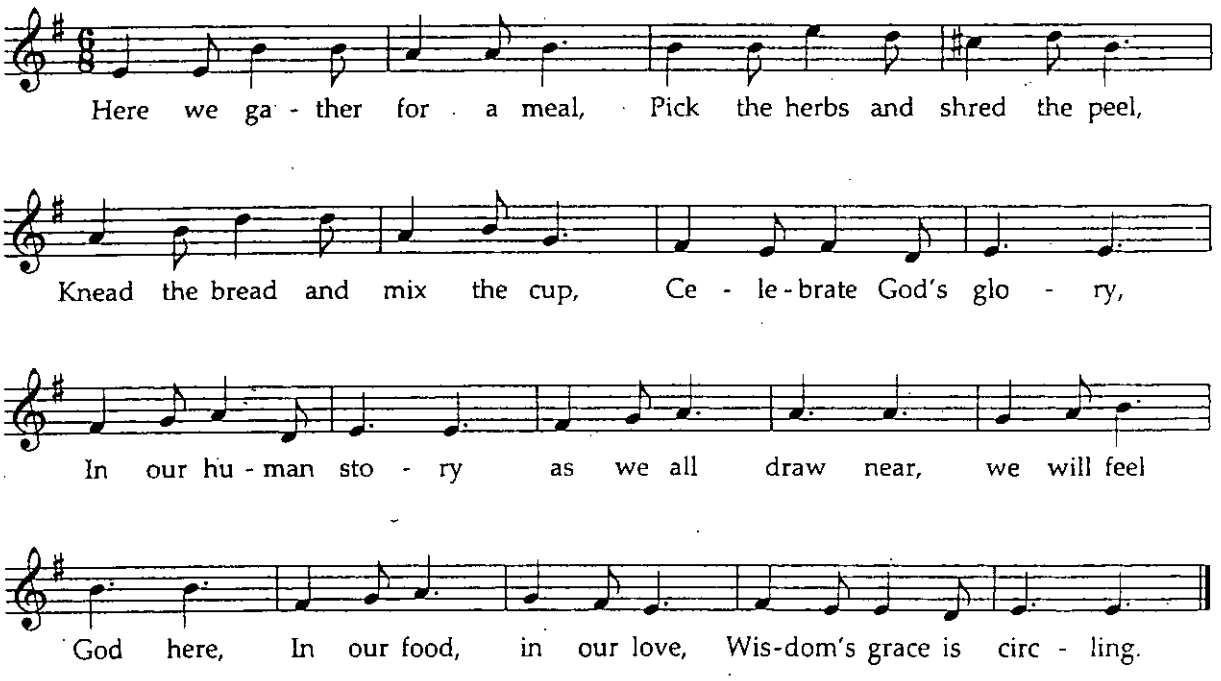
(this took exactly one hour as intended)

Women's Passover Songs

21

144 Grace for a Meal

Adapted from Personent Hodie by
June Boyce-Tillman (1943–)



GO DOWN, MOSES

The slaves saw a parallel between Israel's slavery in Egypt and their own. This great spiritual is said to be connected with the escaped slave Harriet Tubman, who risked her life to lead her people into freedom via the underground railroad. Their rallying cry was "Let my people go", which has been made the title of a book by the late Chief Albert Luthuli, the Nobel Prize winner from South Africa. Here are just a few of the innumerable verses.



1 When Israel was in Egypt's land, Let my people go;
Oppressed so hard they could not stand, Let my people go.
Go down, Moses, way down in Egypt's land;
Tell old Pharoah to let my people go.

2 The Lord told Moses what to do, Let my people go;
To lead the children of Israel through, Let my people go.
Go down, Moses . . .

3 Your foes shall not before you stand, Let my people go;
And you'll possess fair Canaan's land, Let my people go.
Go down, Moses . . .

4 O let us all from bondage flee, Let my people go;
And let us all in Christ be free, Let my people go.
Go down, Moses . . .

5 I do believe without a doubt, Let my people go;
That a Christian has a right to shout, Let my people go.
Go down, Moses . . .

Negro Spiritual, arranged P.D.S.

© 1967 *by Galliard Ltd.*

Reading from Iona - said antiphonally groups A and B

A The |desert will sing and rejoice
and the wilderness blossom with flowers

B All will see the Lord's splendour,
see the Lord' greatness and power

Tell everyone who is anxious:
be strong and don't be afraid.

The blind will be able to see:
the deaf will be able to hear;

the lame will leap and dance
those who can't speak will shout.

Your will hammer their swords into ploughs
and their spears into pruning knives;

The nations will live in peace;
they will train for war no more.

This is the promise of God;
God's promise will be fulfilled.

All say (Is 11 1-4)

On him the spirit of the Lord will rest:
a spirit of wisdom and understanding,
a spirit of counsel and power..
with justice he will judge the poor,
and defend the humble in the land with equity.

Piazza Liturgy

I.

All)

Divine Breath,
each genesis daunts us.
each sunrise rekindles u.
We cross thresholds into young stories
One step brings hope, the other shouts doubt.
O God, midwife us into our beginnings.

We long for familiarities;
We recognise possibilities.
Rowing between the tides of transformation and resistance,
O God, midwife us into our beginnings.

Our roots stretch tender into this new soil;
our fabrics are patterned with coloured strands.
This unknown country will reveal itself one heartbeat at a time
O God, midwife us in all our beginnings.

Keri Wehlander, from a World of Blessings

Justice Litany
(read round the circle)

L God of justice, you call us from despair, depression and death
R keep us from being overwhelmed by the darkness without and within

L give freedom to those who are oppressed
R and let us play our part in creating it

L be with those who face starvation in different countries
R and with those who work to feed them

L be with all who are imprisoned unjustly or tortured
R and help us to see where we too are oppressors

L be with those who suffer needlessly from illness or disease
R and strengthen those who care for them

L touch the hearts and minds of those with power
R that they may release the resources needed to help and to heal

L be with those who suffer from brokenness in relationships
R and let us stand alongside them

L be with those who have been bereaved, especially through violence in this community
R even in their despair let them know that you are there

L be with those who have killed or have planned killings
R let them see that there is a better way

L God, you desire justice for those who are oppressed
R: give us a vision of your purpose and let us play our part in it.
Amen.

II

Celebration of Hope (from the Corrymeela community)
(All)

2
A Celebration of Hope

In the midst of hunger and war
We celebrate the promise of plenty and peace
In the midst of oppression and tyranny
We celebrate the promise of service and freedom
In the midst of doubt and despair
We celebrate the promise of faith and hope
In the midst of fear and betrayal
We celebrate the promise of joy and loyalty
In the midst of hatred and death
We celebrate the promise of love and life
In the midst of sin and decay
We celebrate the promise of salvation and renewal
In the midst of the dying Lord
We celebrate the promise of the living Christ.

Intercessions

III

Version of the Beatitudes (Lala) Said antiphonally

A Blessed are you who touch the grass roots, the powerless, yet are filled with a passion to grow and make good. You understand God's purpose.

B Blessed are you who have found such depth of expression in your grief. You will find comfort in what you have caused to change.

A Blessed are you who understand that justice must be made present now. You shall see it happen.

B so on

B
etc

Blessed are you who show compassion to those who repulse you .You shall experience compassion yourself.

Blessed are you who do not judge but see everyone with clear, clear eyes.

You see God in all creation.

Blessed are you who are peacemakers. You, you are my own.

Blessed are you who are excluded, suffering abuse, judgment and slander for what you are doing for me.

To you I give my deep unstinting love.

Be happy my prophets, you know you are not the first, and will not be the last,

but I love you for what you are doing.

You are the Salt of the Earth, bringing integrity to my world. You shine as a

light on the world, oh my People, illuminating cities, lands and continents exposing injustice.

Shine your light for all to see, you understand who I am and what I am asking of you, this day.

Sharing fruits, followed by Shalom my friends (*holding hands*)

CWN ? 99.

INTIMATIONS

Though I recall no word, no glance, no tone
Whereon my ailing memory might repose
Yet, like the earth where sprung the Persian rose
I feel a higher life inspire my own.
And since that higher life I have been near
Some aura, some mysterious effluence
Transcending all scope of thought or sense
Enfolds me like a rarer atmosphere.

By a prisoner in Perth

And dwelling now in this new element
My world of daily pain exalted seems.
I walk therein as in the realm of dreams
Following the thought that leads me on intent,
As if a stream that wandered aimlessly
Had heard at last the murmur of the sea.

4. We have to be in touch with the power and authority of a new symbolic. We have to become mythmakers, storytellers of a new symbolic order. We have suffered enough from the symbolism of being Fallen Eve, Fallen Angels, or the reverse symbolism of being Angel in the House ! We are neither angels or monsters- but creatures of flesh and blood, both fierce and tender. So, though we may be banned from the altar, let us tell the stories of the sacred power of women. But let us tell the tales in such a way that we are generous, that we make room in this new creation we are birthing for our menfolk, bruised and damaged as they are, like us, from the disordered relations of patriarchy!

From the Women's Synod Bunda

Today we celebrated Eucharist with some whom the world calls handicapped
And as I gazed around I realised
That in Your Body, Lord, there is no such thing!
For those who cannot walk, there are legs to help them;
For those with twisted hands, there are loving ones to assist them;
For those who cannot see, there are voices to describe the wonders of Your world;
And for those who weep, there are arms to enfold them.
All share in the love that refreshes like the summer rain.
The only handicapped in Your Community, Lord,
Are those who cannot give or receive love.

Maureen Roche

LITURGY OF MARY OF THE MAGNIFICAT (SJIA AGM Liturgy 1988)

Song Where are you bound, Mary (Hymns Old and New 614)

Reading: The Visitation Lk.1 36-45

Reading from "Mary and Women" Catherina Halkes, Concilium "Mary in the Churches" (p70, para 2 summarising Rosemary Radford Ruether on Mary)

When Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth, she does not become enraptured because she is pregnant. On the contrary she glorifies God's liberating action precisely because she is herself the liberated Israel.....Mary's task was to continue God's liberating activity in the world. The last shall be first and those who rule must, on their way to the kingdom, join the ranks of the poor, whose head and example is Mary.

Short silence

Magnificat of Now (from Miriam of Nazareth, Johnson)

Readings based on Introducing Liberation Theology, by Leonardo and Clovis Boff.

Reader A.

Mary is the prophetic and liberating Woman of the people. "All the theological greatness of Mary is based on the lowliness of her historical tradition. She is Mary of Nazareth, a woman of the people, who observed the usual customs of her day, visited her relatives, took part in wedding celebrations and worried about her son, following him even to the foot of the cross, as any mother would do. "Because of this ordinariness and not in spite of it" God did "great things" for her.

Leader O loving and sustaining God, help us to challenge the powerful and work to empower all so that they may use their gifts in building up your realm.

All Sung response

Reader B

Mary is the perfect example of faith responding to God. She did not understand the full extent of the mystery to be brought about through her but she trusted in God and concerned herself with others - her cousin Elizabeth, her son lost on pilgrimage, the guests with no wine "Persons can be liberators only if they free themselves from their own preoccupations and place their lives at the service of others".

Leader Help us O loving and sustaining Creator to be as responsive to your word as Mary was, and to identify ourselves with the needs of others, particularly women who have suffered so much by the distortion of your word.

All Sung response

Reader C Thirdly, she is the prophetess of the Magnificat "anticipating the liberating proclamation of her son she shows herself attentive to the fate of the humiliated and debased, and invokes divine revolution in the relationship between oppressors and oppressed"

Leader O loving and Sustaining Redeemer, help us to live out the Magnificat in our attitudes and actions.

All Sung response

Reader D Finally in Latin-American popular religion Mary is seen as the champion of the poor. The masses bring their troubles to the centres of Marian pilgrimage where they are filled with renewed strength and hope to carry on struggling and surviving.

Leader O loving and sustaining Spirit, inspire us to free the image of Mary, Mother of God, from the pious distortions of the ages, and find in her a model of challenge and hope.

All: sung response

Poem "a Blessed Embarrassment" from "Beginning with Mary" by T Carlyle, the American protestant scripture scholar

Photolanguage reflections (large photographs of women in many lands and situations are handed round. reflections are invited from the participants)

Poem "Did the woman say" (Frances Croake Frank, in Celebrating women)

Silence

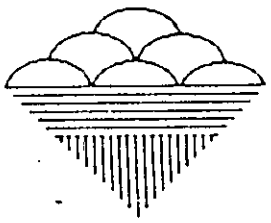
Song: The Bakerwoman (Hymns Old and New 517)

Concluding prayer
All move round table, link hands and sing blessing of the food.

(Sung responses and blessing from Housetop Communication Centre songs, as yet unpublished)

Get into 4 groups, one each in the South, North, East and West. Then each group speaks for its direction

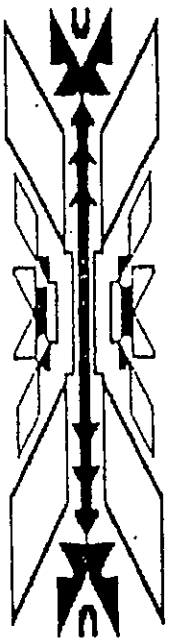
NAVAJO PRAYERS (
groups)



Direction of the North

We greet you, O Spirit of the North. You are the cold wind that blows across our land, stripping the earth of all that is dead and decayed. AYou rob us of the false securities, so easily blown away. Teach us to plant our feet securely on the earth and to see things as they really are, that the coming of your Spirit may find us standing firm in integrity. Make us strong in our desire to be peacemakers.



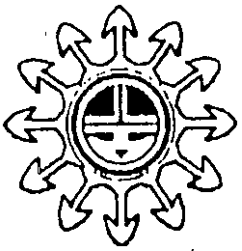


Direction of the West

We greet you, O Spirit of the West. It is you who usher in the setting sun. It is by your power that the sun hangs suspended for endless moments before you catch it with your breath and carry it off into the night. Guide our steps at end of day. Fill us with your peace as you enfold us with your great mystery of night that we might rest securely in your arms until morning calls us forth again.

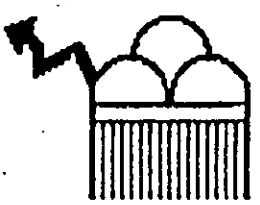
Direction of the East

We greet you, O Spirit of the East. You usher in the dawn of the breeze; you stretch forth your fingers and paint our skies. Awaken in us with each new day, new hopes, new dreams of colors, loves and joys, new desires for justice never before imagined. Fill our bodies with your breath; invigorate us. Carry us to the farthest mountains and beyond. Inspirit us that we might reach out to you boldly to grasp the miracles that are given birth with each new dawn.



Direction of the South

We greet you, O Spirit of the South. You bring the winds of summer and breathe on us the warmth of the sun to soothe and heal our bodies and spirits. You thaw and soften the coldness of our world; you nudge the seedlings to break through the soil to the light. Make our hearts loving, so that we might feel the oppression and pain of all peoples, especially the poor and marginated. Heal our selfishness that we might become a more generous and sharing people.



From: Prayer Service opening Provincial Play Day
(Navajo)

Poem (D H Lawrence)
(14 lines)

When we get out of the glass bottles of our ego,
and when we escape like squirrels turning in the
cages of our personality
and get into the forests again,
we shall shiver with cold and fright
but things will happen to us
so that we don't know ourselves.

Cool, unlying life will rush in,
and passion will make our bodies taut with power,
we shall stamp our feet with new power
and old things will fall down,
we shall laugh, and institutions will curl up like
burnt paper.

Sharing of the fruits of the earth

Groups N and S read the lst and 3rd verses, E and W the2nd and 4th verses, all together the 5th verse

1. We belong to one another and all creation and through this bond to Jesus, who, on the day he handed over his freedom to those who would abuse him, had a meal with his friends,eating and drinking with them.

So we eat together as a symbol of sharing our common humanity.

2. We celebrate our freedom to choose, born of the breaking down of old ways
We proclaim the possibility of new life
We declare our intention to live in that hope.

3.Now we are joined together, women of faith, with all who seek God's freedom
We live and search together for a shared vision of cosmos in which all are free to enjoy God's generosity.
We keep alive the memory of the Crucifixion of Jesus together with his Resurrection
We root the possibility of our freedom in this experience

4 Strengthening God, take away all that prevents us achieving this
Strengthening God, take away all that prevents us achieving this:
Strengthening God, give us true peace

(ALL)

We pray that we will be made new to live our life in the peace born of true freedom.
We choose from these fruits symbols of God's generosity

(pass bowl of fruits to the person next to you, saying "choose freely of the fruits of God's generosity" or some similar expression.

CIRCLE DANCE

Acknowledgements: Gifts of women - unknown origin.
points of compass prayers come from a USA Navajo RC Church:
The Lawrence prayer is in "Earth Prayers". The Agape is by
June Boyce Tillman

Prayers about the issues of climate change

Global climate change is having a devastating impact on the lives of people around the world.

Christian Aid partners are working hard to support communities working to protect their livelihoods.

And in the UK, Christian Aid campaigners are lobbying the government to give the poorest people a voice in climate negotiations.

Support our partners and the campaign by bringing the issues to God in prayer.

Christian Aid's prayer for the climate change negotiations

Christ our Lord,
when we remember the sacrifice you made for the world,
remind us that we are called to care for the world and its people,
and challenge us to see how our actions change the world.
Be with us as we act to make a difference.

Christ, whom we remember in the bread,
remind us of those who are hungry,
and challenge to us to see how our actions change the world.
Christ, whom we remember in the wine,
remind us of those who are thirsty,
and challenge us to see how our actions change the world.

Christ, as we remember your perfect sacrifice,
inspire us to follow your example
and to work with you to restore a broken world.
Motivate us to take action,
and grant wisdom and courage to the world's leaders
that they can negotiate a fair deal for the world's poor in Copenhagen.
Remind us that you are with us,
and that when we live lives of service,
we live them in your name.
Amen.

Find out more about our climate change campaign

- Countdown to Copenhagen

Theology of climate change

Read **All creation groaning**, our paper that explains more about the theology that underpins our response to the changing climate.

Christian Aid is a registered charity in the UK (no. 1105851)

Reading from Hildegard of Bingen

Truly the Holy Spirit is an unquenchable fire

Bestowing all excellence, sparking all worth, awaking all goodness, igniting speech, enflaming humankind.

Holy Spirit, all creation praises you
creation has life because of you

You are a precious salve for broken bones, for festering wounds.
You transform them to precious gems.

(short pause)

Who are the prophets? They are a royal people
who penetrate mystery and see with the spirit's eyes.

In illuminating darkness they speak out

They are living, penetrating clarity.
They are a blossom blooming only on the shoot that is rooted in the flood of light.

Discussion in 2s and 3s
How do you feel about the analogy of growth in nature and in ourselves. What parts of us need to grow? - how can we be good gardeners of our own growth and that in the religious and secular spheres?

Intercessions go round the garden finding sprigs of flowers or leaves - plant these in bowls of earth while making intercessions, or silently

Into the house to make a collage on the fruits of nature

Return to garden, placing collage in the centre.

From the 1999 Day of Prayer for Women's Ordination, 25th March.

O compelling God,
announcing your presence
not among the mighty
but in obscurity.
You move us with a compulsion
to acknowledge the injustice in our midst,
to reject the structures and attitudes that discriminate
and to bring insight
and the possibilities of change
to all those in position of power.

Remove the obstructing, divisive, shadow
of ignorance, prejudice and institutional greed
which clouds the vision of your church.

Send your Spirit of hope
to overshadow us.
Make us worthy leaders
in the transforming work you have planned.

Give us energy and determination
in our choosing
to co-operate with you,
to build a new way
through Jesus Christ incarnate.

Intercessions

Pax Christi - Prayers for Hiroshima and Nagasaki vigils

Introduction: In our prayer today we will **remember** the events of 6th and 9th August 1945 and the legacy that has been created.... We will **mourn** the loss of life ... we will **repent** of our involvement in nuclear war preparations and we will **pray in hope** for the future peace of our world.

Song: *In the Lord is my true salvation, in the Lord my lasting joy. He became my strength and my song: I trust in him and I shall not fear, I trust in him and I shall not fear* (x 4)

Reading *(Choose one appropriate to your needs/audience)*
Litany of remembrance – to be shared among those present

- We remember each child born since the dawn of the Nuclear Age, the miracle and sacredness of each living being.
- We remember the image of the first mushroom cloud of the Trinity atomic test rising above the earth in New Mexico.
- We will remember the words of Robert Oppenheimer, director of the Manhattan Protect, *"I am become Death, the Destroyer of Worlds."*
- We will remember "Little Boy" and "Fat Man", the bombs that destroyed the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6th and 9th, 1945. We remember the 300,000 people in Hiroshima and Nagasaki who died as a result of the atomic bombs. May they rest in peace.
- Sixty years later, the people of the earth remember the terrible destructive power and violence latent within us and made manifest in the bomb. We will meet this power of destruction by drawing on the rich sources of our human and spiritual traditions and the deep wells of faith, beauty, humour, and creativity of the human spirit in order to nourish a culture of nonviolence and peace.
- We will remember the peacemaker visionaries who have come before us, and we will give thanks for their witness and their commitment to live.
- We will remember the cost to all life of our commitment to death.
- We will remember the Indigenous people, on whose lands we mined for uranium, tested our nuclear weapons, and now fill our nuclear waste.
- We will remember the plants and animals of the earth, whose waters, soil, and air we contaminate in the name of "security".
- We will remember our children and grandchildren and all beings of the future whose toxic radioactive inheritance we cannot keep from them.
- We will remember our nuclear history so that we will not repeat it.

Reading: Jeremiah 14: 17-21

Prayers of repentance & peace – to be shared among those present

- We repent that we continue to defence our privileged way of live with nuclear weapons and nuclear threats instead of sharing the resources of the earth justly with all people

- We repent that we have ignored the needs of the poor, the elderly, the homeless when we allow resources to be used in war preparations rather than in projects that give life to the poor.

- We repent that we have not recognised the violence within ourselves, our communities and workplaces.

- We ask for the courage to question and challenge all those things that bring oppression and violence to our world.

Canticle of Mary

O God, you are wonderful;
I rejoice in you.
I, who was no-one,
am blessed above all,
for you have made me great.

O God, you are holy,
you are merciful,
you are strong,
you are just,
you are compassionate.

You have kept your promises
to Abraham and Sarah
by your great gift to me.

Sue Allerton
written post-Noddfa

He invites people to log onto the web site www.whatifwesaidwait.org and make their voices heard. This of course applies to America but it would be useful to see how things develop.

Fr Michael Ryan is a brave priest to stick his neck out and publicly say what many say in private. He has been pastor of St James Cathedral in Seattle for many years and serves on the board of the national Cathedral Ministry Conference. If you want to read the article in full log onto www.americamagazine.org/content/article.cfm?article

His is not the only voice: there is a great deal of dissatisfaction boiling up all over the world. One instance is 300 priests in Spain issuing a statement deploring the take-over of power by the Curia.

I.P.

CHRIST ACCORDING TO YOUR MEASURE
Tune "Austria" words Diana Carroll :

1. Christ, according to your measure
you have given each one grace.
Once, for us to earth descended,
now you fill all time and space.
And to this, your humble body
you have given gifts indeed.
So today we thank and praise you
for the gift of those who lead.

2. Some are prophets, some apostles.
Some are preachers of good news.
Some are pastors, some are teachers.
All are gifted as you choose.
To equip God's chosen people
for the work of ministry:
Building up your holy body
till we come to unity.

3. Christ, who led us to this calling
make us worthy of the call.
One in faith and one in spirit,
one in God who is in all.
With humility and patience,
help us keep the bond of peace,
bearing with each other's failings,
so that hope and love increase.

4. Christ, we are your living body,
knit together, each to each,
growing up into your stature
till maturity we reach.
As we seek a deeper knowledge
of the One whose name we bear,
Give the gifts that are most needed.
Lead us in the work we share.

Permission to use this hymn can be obtained from Diana Carroll at
30 S 22nd Street, apt 4, Philadelphia PA19103 USA

Piazza Vigil during the Papal Interregnum 2005

Job Description Prayer - the qualities needed for the next Pope

All. We call upon the Holy Spirit to lead the conclave to appoint a Pope who is/has:

A deeply prayerful, loving and humble personality

All respond: Come Spirit and inspire your Church

A desire to reconcile rather than confront

All respond Come....

Truly collaborative in outlook, valuing the insight of bishops, national hierarchies and the people.

All respond: come...

A reformer of the curia so that it acts as an executive, not policy maker

All: Come....

An openness to change where church law is a hindrance not a help, while keeping a balance between tradition and renewal

All: Come...

An appreciation of the insights of contemporary theologies (contextual, feminist, black, interfaith and ecological)

All Come...

A visionary leadership which welcomes all those qualified to follow their call to priestly ministry whatever their gender, marital status or sexual orientation

All Come...

A respecter of the consciences of catholics who call for a genuine dialogue on moral and other theologies which are experienced as harmful.

All: Come ....

A solidarity with the marginalised and oppressed, and a seeker for justice within the institutional church as well as in secular life.

All: Come.

Enthusiasm for encouraging the full participation of all the baptised such as proclaimed in "Christifidelis Laici".

All Come...

All: Lord, hear the voice of your people lamenting in the wilderness

Intercessions for the needs of our world

Prayers for strength and inspiration

Lord you are in this place,
Fill us with your power,
Cover us with your peace,
Show us your presence.

Lord help us to know,
We are in your hands,
We are under your protection,
We are covered by your love.

Lord we ask you today,
To deliver us from evil,
To guide us in our travels,
To defend us from all harm.

Lord give us now,
Eyes to see the invisible,
Ears to hear your call,
Hands to do your work,
And hearts to respond to your love.

In the silence of the stars,
In the quiet of the hills,
In the heaving of the sea,
Speak, Lord.

In the stillness of this
In the calming of our minds
In the longing of our hearts
Speak, Lord.

In the voice of a friend,
In the chatter of a child,
In the words of a stranger,
Speak, Lord.

In the opening of a book,
In the looking at a film,
In the listening to music,
Speak, Lord,

For your servants are
listening

PRAYER

Moved by a compulsion of the Holy Spirit
we cannot remain ignorant
of this injustice in our midst.

We long for all humanity
to be acknowledged as equal, particularly
among your community of the church,
so we pray grieving for the lost gifts
of so many women.

We ask you, God of all peoples,
to bring insight and humility
to all those in positions of dominance,
and an understanding that
the ascended Lord called us all to act
doing Christ's work here and now.

We ask this of you,
God our Creator
Jesus our Redeemer
Spirit our Sustainer.

catholic women's ordination

catholic **w**omen's **o**rdination

PRAYERS ON A THEME OF WATER

Poem Envoi (verses spoken round the room)

A A stone is thrown
into a calm lake
and the stone makes waves
spreading, reaching to the far side.

B Let us throw stones into the deadly calm
of the lake that is our world, no matter how small
is the stone,
no matter how small is the wave.

A The stone brings awakening,
the stone is a movement
and the movement spreads
when all of us
standing on all sides
around the lake
keep throwing
our little stones.

All The wave will never cease
till the whole lake
starts bubbling with life.

Silence

(one line each)

My Lord is the source of Love: I the river's course
Let God's love flow through me. I will not obstruct it.
Irrigation ditches can water but a portion of the field.
the great Yangtze River can water a thousand acres.
Expand my heart O Lord, that I my love yet more people.
The waters of love can cover vast tracts,
nothing will be lost to me.
The greater the outward flow, the greater the returning tide.
If I am not linked to Love's source, I will dry up,
If I dam the waters of Love, they will stagnate.
Can I compare my heart with the boundless seas?
But abandon not the measure of my heart, O Lord.
Let the waves of your love still billow there!

translated from the Chinese

All

May the earth continue to live
May the heavens above continue to live
May the rains continue to dampen the land
May the wet forests continue to grow
Then the flowers shall bloom
And we people shall live again.

HAWAIIAN PRAYER

PRAYERS ON A THEME OF WATER

Poem Envoi (verses spoken round the room)

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into a calm lake
and the stone makes waves
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HAWAIIAN PRAYER

Liturgy Reclaiming Mary Magdalene
(All starred items are in the appendix)
Song: Judas and Mary (Sydney Carter)

Leader: But who is the Mary in the Song?
(group throws up suggestions)

Leader: Mary Magdalene according to scripture

*Readings from:
A) Elizabeth Moltman Wendell
B) Dinah Cormick

*(A sheet of distorted visual images is passed around, when it gets back to the first person it goes round again, each participant tearing the paper (or part of it) into two - which then goes in a metal waste paper bin and is burnt.)

*Song: A Woman in her Grief (June Boyce Tillman in "In Praise of All Encircling Love"

Reading: John 20 1.18

Discussion in pairs What was happening between Jesus and Mary Magdalene in the Garden? Some translate "do not touch me" with "do not cling to me" What difference might this make?

*Poem: - Blessed be God for the faithfulness of Mary (Nicola Slee, in "Easter Garden" p 189)

Discussion in pairs What are we clinging to that we need to give up?

Intercessions As each person offers this up, aloud or silently, a candle is lit (either small lights, or larger candles placed in a bowl of sand.

Song You are my witnesses
(Miriam Therese Winter in "WomanSong")

Agape

Blessing of food and drink (taken from the agape prayers of the Didache)

Leader Blessed are you, O Lord our God, creator of this food and drink that we share together as a sign of your kingdom, which is to come in glory, and yet is already here now in so far as you live among us in the love we have for one another.
(wine is poured out)

All We give thanks to you, our creator, for this wine, remembering Israel your people, brought like a vine out of Egypt, and planted in the promised land (wine is passed round)
(the bread is broken and passed round and all say)
All As we break the bread we thank you O creator for the life and knowledge of yourself which you gave us through Jesus Christ. To you be glory for ever.

As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let your children, Lord, be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever. (all eat)

Reclaiming Mary Magdalene
READINGS

Leader:
There are a confusing number of women called Mary in the New Testament and some of these have got mixed up, not only with each other but with other women briefly mentioned in Gospels.

Mary Magdalene has been caught up in the confusion over the number of accounts of women who anointed, and in particular with the unnamed woman "who had a bad name in the town", in Luke 7.36. Modern scholarship holds that there is no justification for identifying the sinful women with Mary Magdalene (who appears in the next chapter (8.2) where she is shown as having been healed from possession by seven devils (most likely to have been mental illness) and was accompanying Jesus along with other women and the Twelve men.

The confusion of the women does not appear until the 4th century but since then, reinforced by Gregory the Great's advocacy, it has been a powerful force.

But what do we know of the biblical Mary Magdalene? Apart from her healing and accompanying Jesus we find her given a place of preeminence among the women at the foot of the cross (Mt 27.56, Mk 15.40, JN 19.25), at the burial (Mt 27.61) and at the appearances on Easter day (Lk 24.10, Mt 28.1, Mk 16. 1-9, Jn 20 1-18)
Mary Magdalene is not portrayed as anointing the living Christ but going to the tomb to anoint the dead body of her Lord.

Let other voices tell us their insights.

A. From Elizabeth Moltmann Wendell "The women around Jesus"
Anyone who loves the biblical Mary Magdalene, and compares her with the (quotes) Christian (unquote)Mary Magdalene must get very angry. Even now for most people Mary Magdalene is the "great sinner". Literature and at in the Western tradition, stories and pictures of the repentant woman whose past beauty can still be seen have stamped our picture.... but the great sinner of Luke 7 and
Mary Magdalene, of whom all four Gospels report, have as little to do with each other as Peter and Judas"

She goes on to speak about Mary Magdalene's experience in the garden, being told not to touch her risen Lord "We cannot eliminate the shock which this remark necessarily causes. This is no longer the tender, friendly Jesus,. It is no longer possible to touch or anoint his body. He cannot be brought back and held fast. Mary Magdalene may no longer spontaneously throw her arms around him... (she) experienced physical salvation in a way which went beyond almost everyone else. She loved Jesus personally. Without him, her life did not seem worth living. She showed tenacity and staying power. She never doubted him. But now she begins to cling to him. It is not the dead Messiah which makes her doubt, but the lost body of Jesus. It is here that she experiences death: her existence falls apart"

Moltmann Wendell then writes that she would prefer "to translate the words "Don't touch me" like this: "Grow up, be mature! Accept

the grief of parting"

B. Reading from Dinah Cormick (MA thesis on the Visual Portrayl of Mary Magdalene,: a case study in feminist ethical issues)

In her examination of over 400 visual images of Mary Magdalene, the overwhelming emphasis has been the ignoring of scripture and the concentration on Mary Magdalene as a supposed repentant sexual sinner, often using erotic imagery.

Dinah writes in her conclusion:

"the Church has utilised the visual imagery of Mary Magdalene do diminish her role as a most favoured disciple of Christ. The missionary role has been undermined, her covenantal call disregarded. Instead the patriarchal Church has nourished and promoted the portrayal of (her) as the repentant sinner...

The imagery proclaims an unfair notion that women are inherently sinful and in continuous need of repentance. This interpretation of a woman solely within a sexual context is a narrow viewpoint. For it ignores the holistic perception of her worth and experience as a thinking, feeling human being..the theological implications of this visual imagery lend support to the negative attitude the Church has towards women...

the visual portrayal of Mary Magdalene in Christian art has failed to do her justice. The underlying message of this visual portrayal is that women are not fit to be direct disciples of Christ in the Church... (yet) it is Mary Magdalene who remains at the foot of the cross. It was she who returns to the tomb at the break of the following day. It was she alone, who first recognises the risen Christ. Chosen from among the disciples, Mary Magdalene is commissioned by Jesus to proclaim the keynote phrase in the Christian mystery, "He is risen"."

Blessed be God for the faithfulness of Mary,
who went out from the garden
to do her beloved's bidding,
who joyfully proclaimed his resurrection
to those to whom he sent her,
and risked her self in bold believing.

In her proclamation we find courage to speak out.
In her acclamation we gain strength to share our stories.
In her vindication we know the recognition of our redeemed and vindicated lives.

Make us faithful like Mary,
when faith is sent out
into the noon of Easter morning,
Until we come at last
to share in the full glory
of Resurrection Day.

***Nicola Slee*[45]**

yo3/Marymag2



17. Crucifixion
by David Jones (1895-1974)
(Tablet 1955:13 April,frontispiece)

Liturgy Reclaiming Mary Magdalene

Song: Judas and Mary (Sydney Carter)

Leader: But who is the Mary in the Song?
(group throws up suggestions)

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Readings from:
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Discussion in pairs What was happening between Jesus and Mary Magdalene in the Garden? Some translate "do not touch me" with "do not cling to me" What difference might this make?

Poem: - Blessed be God for the faithfulness of Mary (Nicola Slee, in "Easter Garden" p 189)

Discussion in pairs What are we clinging to that we need to give up?

Intercessions

Song You are my witnesses
(Miriam Therese Winter in "WomanSong")

Agape

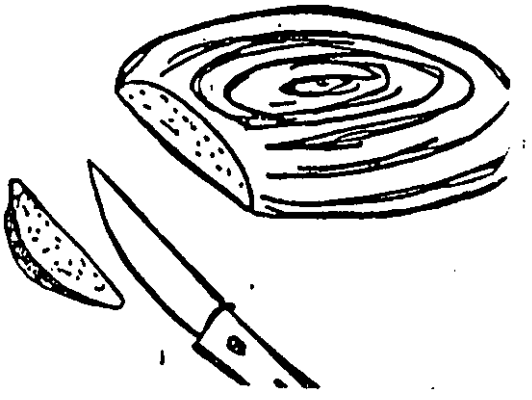
Blessing of food and drink (taken from the agape prayers of the Didache)

Leader Blessed are you, O Lord our God, creator of this food and drink that we share together as a sign of your kingdom, which is to come in glory, and yet is already here now in so far as you live among us in the love we have for one another.
(wine is poured out)

All We give thanks to you, our creator, for this wine, remembering Israel your people, brought like a vine out of Egypt, and planted in the promised land (wine is passed round & drunk.
(the bread is broken and passed round and all say)
All As we break the bread we thank you O creator for the life and knowledge of yours which you gave us through Jesus Christ. To you be glory for ever.

As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought togeth and became one, so let your children, Lord, be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever. (all eat)

Final Song



needs

Flowers picked

(vase)

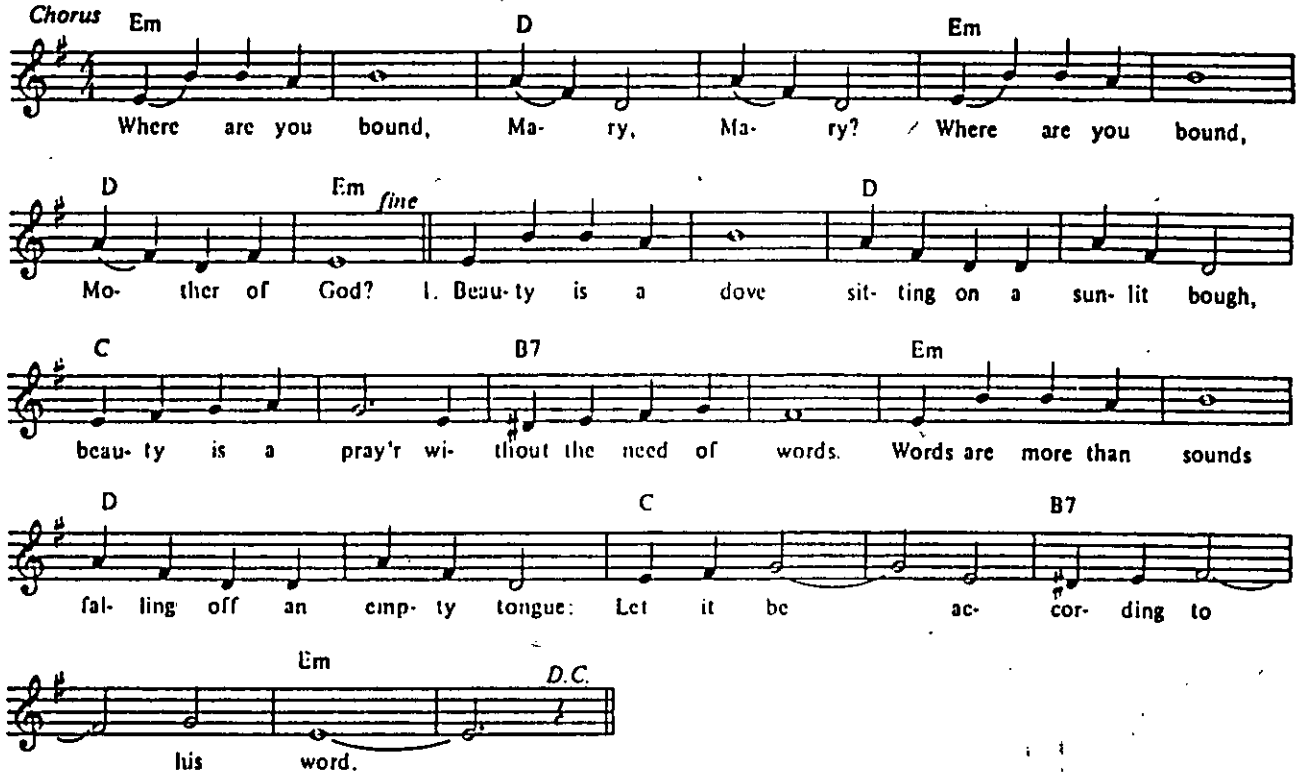
pebbles – bin -

cloth for centre

bird wind

Reclaiming Mary. Liturgy CIwN June 93

WHERE ARE YOU BOUND, MARY?



2. Mary heard the word spoken in her inmost heart;
Mary bore the Word and held him in her arms.
Sorrow she has known, seeing him upon the cross
– greater joy to see him rise again.

3. Where are we all bound, carrying the Word of God?
Time and place are ours to make his glory known.
Mary bore him first, we will tell the whole wide world:
Let it be according to his word.

Reading from "Mary and Women" Catherina Halkes, Concilium "Mary in the Churches" (p70, para 2 summarising Rosemary Radford Ruether on Mary)

When Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth, she does not become enraptured because she is pregnant. On the contrary she glorifies God's liberating action precisely because she is herself the liberated Israel.....Mary's task was to continue God's liberating activity in the world. The last shall be first and those who rule must, on their way to the kingdom, join the ranks of the poor, whose head and example is Mary.

Short silence

In twos or threes talk about the significance of Mary to you, whether positive, negative or both.

Reading from Miryam of Nazareth "Magnificat of Now"

Chose a picture from the selection on the floor - think about it on your own for about 5 minutes - then in turn, unless we wish to pass in silence, talk about why we have chosen this picture

Readings based on Introducing Liberation Theology, by Leonardo and Clovis Boff.

Reader A.

Mary is the prophetic and liberating Woman of the people. "All the theological greatness of Mary is based on the lowliness of her historical tradition. She is Mary of Nazareth, a woman of the people, who observed the usual customs of her day, visited her relatives, took part in wedding celebrations and worried about her son, following him even to the foot of the cross, as any mother would do. "Because of this ordinariness and not in spite of it" God did "great things" for her.

Leader O loving and sustaining God, help us to challenge the powerful and work to empower all so that they may use their gifts in building up your realm.

All Sung response (Taize Magnificat)

Reader B

Mary is the perfect example of faith responding to God. She did not understand the full extent of the mystery to be brought about through her but she trusted in God and concerned herself with others - her cousin Elizabeth, her son lost on pilgrimage, the guests with no wine "Persons can be liberators only if they free themselves from their own preoccupations and place their lives at the service of others".

Leader Help us O loving and sustaining Creator to be as responsive to your word as Mary was, and to identify ourselves with the needs of others, particularly women who have suffered so much by the distortion of your word.

All Sung response

Reader C Thirdly, she is the prophetess of the Magnificat "anticipating the liberating proclamation of her son she shows herself attentive to the fate of the humiliated and debased, and invokes divine revolution in the relationship between oppressors and oppressed"

Leader O loving and Sustaining Redeemer, help us to live out the Magnificat in our attitudes and actions.

All Sung response

Reader D Finally in Latin-American popular religion Mary is seen as the champion of the poor. The masses bring their troubles to the centres of Marian pilgrimage where they are filled with renewed strength and hope to carry on struggling and surviving.

Leader O loving and sustaining Spirit, inspire us to free the image of Mary, Mother of God, from the pious distortions of the ages, and find in her a model of challenge and hope.

Building of the Cairn

Each person takes one or two pebbles (depending on the weather these are either fetched now from under the elderberry tree or will be handy) These are either hjettisoned into a waste bin or placed as part of a cairn in the middle. This is either laying down a burden of a distorted image of Mary, or of a mother/child relationship, and a building up of a signpost for us for the future. We either speak about what the pebbles represent or place it on the heap in silence.

Song "Mary" by June Boyce Tillman (tune Quem Pastores)

Mary, chosen to be mother
Of a child in mystery hidden,
Not o'ercome by fear or terror,
Teach us how to persevere.

Mary, wandering through the desert,
Travelling on uncertain, anxious,
Held by arms, supporting, loving,
Teach us how to persevere.

Mary, reaching Bethl'em's safety,
Resting in a place so lowly,
Giving birth in painful hoping,
Teach us how to persevere.

Mary, dreaming of a future
When her son would grow to manhood,
Loving, trusting, planning, hoping,
Teach us how to persevere.

Mary was prepared to fly in the face of social custom in her yes to God. We too need courage to stand out against patriarchal mind sets and reclaim liberation for ourselves. As we place the flowers we have already gathered in the vase, we can silently or out loud pray about these aspects of liberation.

Blessing of food and drink (taken from the agape prayers of the Didache)

Leader Blessed are you, O Lord our God, creator of this food and drink that we share together as a sign of your kingdom, which is to come in glory, and yet is already here now in so far as you live among us in the love we have for one another.
(wine is poured out)

All We give thanks to you, our creator, for this wine, remembering Israel your people, brought like a vine out of Egypt, and planted in the promised land (wine is passed round)
(the bread is broken and passed round and all say)
All As we break the bread we thank you O creator for the life and knowledge of yourself which you gave us through Jesus Christ. To you be glory for ever.

As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let your children, Lord, be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever. (all eat)

Reclaiming Mary. Liturgy

CWN June 93

WHERE ARE YOU BOUND, MARY?



2. Mary heard the word spoken in her inmost heart;
Mary bore the Word and held him in her arms.
Sorrow she has known, seeing him upon the cross
– greater joy to see him rise again.

3. Where are we all bound, carrying the Word of God?
Time and place are ours to make his glory known.
Mary bore him first, we will tell the whole wide world:
Let it be according to his word.

Reading from "Mary and Women" Catherina Halkes, Concilium "Mary in the Churches" (p70, para 2 summarising Rosemary Radford Ruether on Mary)

When Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth, she does not become enraptured because she is pregnant. On the contrary she glorifies God's liberating action precisely because she is herself the liberated Israel.....Mary's task was to continue God's liberating activity in the world. The last shall be first and those who rule must, on their way to the kingdom, join the ranks of the poor, whose head and example is Mary.

Short silence

In twos or threes talk about the significance of Mary to you, whether positive, negative or both.

Reading from Miryam of Nazareth "Magnificat of Now"

Chose a picture from the selection on the floor - think about it on your own for about 5 minutes - then in turn, unless we wish to pass in silence, talk about why we have chosen this picture

Readings based on Introducing Liberation Theology, by Leonardo and Clovis Boff.

Reader A.

Mary is the prophetic and liberating Woman of the people. "All the theological greatness of Mary is based on the lowliness of her historical tradition. She is Mary of Nazareth, a woman of the people, who observed the usual customs of her day, visited her relatives, took part in wedding celebrations and worried about her son, following him even to the foot of the cross, as any mother would do. "Because of this ordinariness and not in spite of it" God did "great things" for her.

Leader O loving and sustaining God, help us to challenge the powerful and work to empower all so that they may use their gifts in building up your realm.

All Sung response (Taize Magnificat)

Reader B

Mary is the perfect example of faith responding to God. She did not understand the full extent of the mystery to be brought about through her but she trusted in God and concerned herself with others - her cousin Elizabeth, her son lost on pilgrimage, the guests with no wine "Persons can be liberators only if they free themselves from their own preoccupations and place their lives at the service of others".

Leader Help us O loving and sustaining Creator to be as responsive to your word as Mary was, and to identify ourselves with the needs of others, particularly women who have suffered so much by the distortion of your word.

All Sung response

Reader C Thirdly, she is the prophetess of the Magnificat "anticipating the liberating proclamation of her son she shows herself attentive to the fate of the humiliated and debased, and invokes divine revolution in the relationship between oppressors and oppressed"

Leader O loving and Sustaining Redeemer, help us to live out the Magnificat in our attitudes and actions.

All Sung response

Reader D Finally in Latin-American popular religion Mary is seen as the champion of the poor. The masses bring their troubles to the centres of Marian pilgrimage where they are filled with renewed strength and hope to carry on struggling and surviving.

Leader O loving and sustaining Spirit, inspire us to free the image of Mary, Mother of God, from the pious distortions of the ages, and find in her a model of challenge and hope.

Building of the Cairn

Each person takes one or two pebbles (depending on the weather these are either fetched now from under the elderberry tree or will be handy) These are either hjettisoned into a waste bin or placed as part of a cairn in the middle. This is either laying down a burden of a distorted image of Mary, or of a mother/child relationship, and a building up of a signpost for us for the future. We either speak about what the pebbles represent or place it on the heap in silence.

Song "Mary" by June Boyce Tillman (tune Quem Pastores)

Mary, chosen to be mother
Of a child in mystery hidden,
Not o'ercome by fear or terror,
Teach us how to persevere.

Mary, wandering through the desert,
Travelling on uncertain, anxious,
Held by arms, supporting, loving,
Teach us how to persevere.

Mary, reaching Bethl'em's safety,
Resting in a place so lowly,
Giving birth in painful hoping,
Teach us how to persevere.

Mary, dreaming of a future
When her son would grow to manhood,
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Mary was prepared to fly in the face of social custom in her yes to God. We too need courage to stand out against patriarchal mind sets and reclaim liberation for ourselves. As we place the flowers we have already gathered in the vase, we can silently or out loud pray about these aspects of liberation.

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All As we break the bread we thank you O creator for the life and knowledge of yourself which you gave us through Jesus Christ. To you be glory for ever.

As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let your children, Lord, be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever. (all eat)

(1)

PRAYER OF PRAISE AND PENITENCE.

A. Praise the Lord
For a world of wonderful diversity
For inviting us to unity but not uniformity
For making both women and men in your image.,

B. Praise the Lord
For sustaining us, each as unique individuals, in your love
For calling us to value relationships above status or possessions
For giving us hope of new creation

A. Forgive us, loving Creator,
For colluding in the ways of patriarchy
For not challenging the abuse of power
For paying only lip service to valuing the marginalized.

B. Forgive us, loving Creator
For not challenging the use of excluding language
For lacking wholeheartedness in our search for justice
For not taking the beatitudes seriously

All. Help us to mirror in our lives the loving and equal mutuality of the Trinity.

I.P.

Prayer and Blessing (Linda Jones, in Celebrating one World)
(slightly adapted and abridged)

God who listens and hears when we pray,
We know that you are with us on our journey through life;
You have told us that you are with us always.
Help us to believe in a more just and equal world.
Help us to dream a new vision.
Give us the openness to work with others to make a difference.
Hold us up when we stumble, when there are obstacles and we don't know the way forward.
Give us the confidence to challenge injustice, and to nurture the flame of justice until it burns brightly.

And may the Spirit of justice, equality and community
Accompany us throughout our life.

Ianthe Pratt

From: "Lala Winkley" <winkley131@gmail.com>
Date: 21 August 2014 13:50
To: "Ianthe Pratt" <lumen@globalnet.co.uk>
Subject: Fwd: Re: A Prayer Jesus might have taught his elderly friends to say...

---------- Forwarded message ----------
From: "Lala Winkley" <winkley131@gmail.com>
Date: 21 Aug 2014 13:46
Subject: Re: A Prayer Jesus might have taught his elderly friends to say...
To: "Ianthe Pratt" <lumen@globalnet.co.uk>
Cc:

How about this?
On 21 Aug 2014 13:17, "Lala Winkley" <winkley131@gmail.com> wrote:
>
> Compassionate God, Our trusted Carer.
> Life sustaining us enough for our needs.
> Help us to know what you want of us at this time
> Depriving no one of their needs.
> Let us try to forgive those who have hurt us
> As kindly as we are forgiven our failings.
> Help us in overcoming our many weaknesses,
> And do as you would have us do, 'love one another'.
> For we are yours, still created in your image and filled with your grace to make our world whole.
Amen
>
> I particularity like the notion that even physically decrepid, visually sallow and indented with wrinkles and of course with skin much covered in brown spots we still image our God. It is proof that there is God in every person she created/birthed no matter how changed now and unattractive from aging.
> Good, eh ?
>
> Much love and thanks for our enjoyable chat.
> Lala

green christian

THE MAGAZINE OF CHRISTIAN ECOLOGY LINK

Earth be Glad



Letting loose hope
Local Action – Global reflection

Issue 62: Winter/Spring 2006/7 £3.50

www.christian-ecology.org.uk

Pull out Poster
Earth be Glad: caring for creation in your faith and life

Christian Ecology Link

www.christian-ecology.org.uk

Christian Ecology Link (CEL) is an inter-denominational UK Christian organisation for people concerned about the environment. It offers insights into ecology and the environment to Christian people and churches and offers Christian insights to the Green movement.

Basis of Faith
We affirm our belief in God as Creator of all things and in Jesus Christ as Lord, looking to the Holy Spirit for guidance through the Scriptures, and seeking to hear Him in the challenges of the present time.

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Green Christian incorporating CEL's Bulletin, is intended as a forum for Christians of all traditions to reflect on, and contribute to, current thinking in the Green Movement.
The opinions expressed by guest authors do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors but are welcome for their sincerity and insight.
Items mailed with *Green Christian* reflect the views of their authors or publishers and not necessarily those of Christian Ecology Link.

Submissions
Contributions should ideally be on 3.5" IBM PC-compatible diskette or e-mailed as attached files. Alternatively, clear typescript is acceptable when negotiated with the Editor. Accompanying photos and drawings are encouraged. An early phone call to the Editor to indicate an intention to write is very helpful.

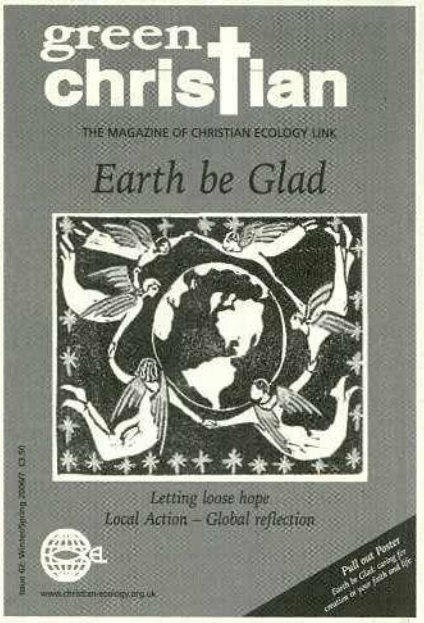
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green christian

Next Year is CEl's 25th Anniversary Year
Green Christian Issues 63, 64 and 65 will all contribute to a **Celebration** of those 25 years and a **Commitment** to the future

The next issue will be published before our Anniversary event (see back cover).
We welcome contributions about our on going work, but also would be interested in reflections about the last 25 years, photographs memories, stories of transformation and change.

There will also be a full version of the new Mission Statement (see Bulletin p.16)

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Copy deadline January 31st 2006

Patrons: Rt Rev James Jones, Fr Sean McDonagh, Rev Dr Ruth Page, Sir Jonathon Porritt, Prof Sir Ghillean Prance, Dr Elaine Storkey

As I go into the Earth, she pierces my heart. As I penetrate further, she unveils me. When I have reached her center, I am weeping openly. I have known her all my life, yet she reveals stories to me, and these stories are revelations and I am transformed. Each time I go to her I am born like this. Her renewal washes over me endlessly, her wounds caress me; I become aware of all that has come between us, of the noise between us, the blindness, of something sleeping between us. Now my body reaches out to her. They speak effortlessly, and I learn at no instant does she fail me in her presence. She is as delicate as I am; I know her sentience; I feel her pain and my own pain comes into me, and my own pain grows large and I grasp this pain with my hands, and I open my mouth to this pain, I taste, I know, and I know why shes goes on, under great weight, with this great thirst, in drought, in starvation, with intelligence in every act does she survive disaster. This earth is my sister; I love her daily grace, her silent daring, and how loved I am how we admire this strength in each other, all that we have lost, all that we have suffered, all that we know: we are stunned by this beauty, and I do not forget what she is to me, what I am to her.

SUSAN GRIFFIN

As we are together, praying for peace, let us be truly with each other.

Let us pay attention to our breathing.

Let us be relaxed in our bodies and our minds.

Let us be at peace with our bodies and our minds.

Let us return to ourselves and become wholly ourselves. Let us maintain a half-smile on our faces.

Let us be aware of the source of being common to us all and to all living things.

Evoking the presence of the Great Compassion, let us fill our hearts with our own compassion—towards ourselves and towards all living beings.

Let us pray that all living beings realize that they are all brothers and sisters, all nourished from the same source of life.

Let us pray that we ourselves cease to be the cause of suffering to each other.

Let us plead with ourselves to live in a way which will not deprive other beings of air, water, food, shelter, or the chance to live.

With humility, with awareness of the existence of life, and of the sufferings that are going on around us, let us pray for the establishment of peace in our hearts and on earth. Amen

THICH NHAT HANH

Neil Squires

I will seek peace

I will seek peace at heart
Try to overcome my fears, my anxieties and troubled, anxious mind
I will look for solace
Search for comfort
I will seek peace at heart

I will seek peace at home
Reach out to those who are victims of abuse through age or gender or sexuality
I will challenge those who are perpetrators
Speak up for those who have no voice
I will seek peace at home

I will seek peace in the virtual world
Encourage young and old to dream the right dreams
live creatively, have real adventures –
which are free from violence or aggression
I will seek peace in the virtual world

I will seek peace with the earth
I'll campaign for the forests
Buy fairtrade products, recycle, keep a compost
and wonder at the beauty of nature
I will seek peace with the earth

I will seek peace in the marketplace
Live humbly and responsibly
Share my wealth and my home
Stand up for the rights of the poor and exploited
I will seek peace in the marketplace

I will seek peace not war
Study non-violence, resolve conflict,
campaign against arms, lobby governments
and challenge apathy
I will seek peace not war

And in my seeking
I will live with hope
Strive for change
Act with humility … courage … and faith
And choose love not hate …

Written for worship at an Iona Community plenary; reflecting on themes from the World Council of Churches' 'Decade to End Violence'

Neil Squires is a Member of the Iona Community.

letting loose hope

Editorial

e.g.

Radical Confession

Where have all the preachers gone – the preachers who, seized by the Spirit of God, call God's people to account? They call the people of God to live now as if under God's judgement. This is not the characteristic of some abusive imaginary 'dictator' in the deluded minds of 'religious' people. The offer of judgement is the astounding energetic longing of the creator of all things to empower his people to take part with him in the transformation of the whole created earth, beginning with the poor, the diseased, the oppressed, the dispossessed, the captives and the outcasts. That is to say, the people of God are constantly being offered the opportunity, the time and the moment to change the way they live.

The stark choice is between ways of life which result in suffering and death for others, or ways of living which produce joy, celebration and life for others. The preacher's task is to identify, and clearly state which actions and lifestyles lead to death and which lead to life. That is unless we live according to the ways of the Word of God, unless we love the Christ-born ways of being and act on them, then we are people who belong to the principalities and powers who are dedicated to death and destruction.

According to Biblical prophetic tradition, preachers, avatars of hope, must first acknowledge and face the catalogue of dread and destruction, the terrorism of the berserk and disordered world and the catastrophes of power and market economics. Only then can hope be released. This is because only when we look planetary destruction in the face and acknowledge that the cause is our own way of living, can there be any real confession.

In an article, *Abandonment and Hope* by William Stringfellow, a theologian and lawyer and, back in 1982 (the year of CEL's birth), a contributing editor to the Sojourners Magazine commenting on Psalm 22 writes:

"The psalm betells the helplessness of humanity against the relentlessness of the great array of death. That is the human destiny; more than that, that is the destiny of the whole of creation, apart from the event of the Word of God in history".

It is this radical confession of helplessness which is both the beginning of faith and the release of hope precisely because the Word is made flesh in history, our history *now*.

"God so loved the whole created earth that he sent his Son..."



Precious Planet

So Stringfellow continues:
"the attribute which chiefly distinguishes Christians is, simply, that they fear the Lord now – or already – before the Day of Judgement. That means specifically that they acknowledge that they live and act in the constant reality of being judged by God. Thus, nowadays, when people assemble as congregations in praise and worship of he Lord, this is an anticipation or preview of the Judgement".

Further the preacher's mission is to proclaim and demonstrate the power which can move us from death-spreading to life-giving.

Loosening our tenacious grip on a way of life which brings death, also lets loose a storm of hope. It is hope that Kingdom dreams are made of. When hope is on the loose the preacher's call to action against the odds makes sense and becomes possible because there is new freedom. There is freedom now from all the lifestyle conformities to death - gentleness and self control in the face of persistent consumerism. There is freedom now from the fear of death - peace and joy to live alternatively to the dominant economic system. There is freedom now from the bondage to the idolatry of death – generosity and faithfulness to worship God and not our present way of life. There is freedom now to live patiently because we live in the constant reality of being judged by God.

In other words the fruits of the Spirit are ecological virtues. The same Spirit who hovered over the chaos and brought order, is the same Spirit who hovered over Mary's womb calling the Word into flesh; is the same Spirit who hovers over the people who, for instance, appear in this magazine inspired to local and global action.

So we are reminded again through Advent, Christmas and Epiphany that the hovering Spirit now is filling us with those Kingdom dreams and the humility and boldness to preach through our own lifestyles. We celebrate with joy and hope because the Word of God is the Lord of history, the Word is made flesh.

Where have all the preachers gone? We are the preachers. So, as preachers we will once more make that confession and live the Word made flesh – letting loose a storm of hope.

Not only is Audrey Bryant's Countdown (p.4) a fascinating record of denial, but it is also a revelation of hope. Throughout the years the lovers of earth and heaven, the prophets, have been constantly speaking out. You will find the origins of CEL in the list and it is in celebration and thanksgiving for these twenty five years that we have been developing a new statement of CEL's Vision to re-engage the passion, energy and hope of those beginnings in order to equip us to face the crucial early years of the twenty-first century.

This vision is based on four keys phrases which describe CEL's convictions and aspirations for the future:

Letting loose hope
Pioneering practical discipleship
Equipping prophetic witness
Empowering agents of change

The full text of the new Vision Statement will, after final consultations with members, be available in the next issue of *Green Christian* the first of three 25th anniversary year editions. Mean while this issue indicates our renewed calling.

COUNTDOWN – a Stern Warning

by Audrey Theodosia Bryant

Countdown | **'Among so great a cloud of witnesses'**

Saint Francis knew about the earth, the sky
And all our lives that are comprised in it;
Brother sun and sister rain and all the beasts.
0 Thomas Treherne saw the attributes of nature
As attributes of God. He knew – not only by his intellect
But as a poet knows, in revelation, in his vision of the wheat;
And William Temple knew the spirit of the earth –
(and I was not yet born, but all our forebears lived).

Saint Francis
Meister Eckhardt
Hildegard of Bingen
Thomas Treherne

Archbishop William Temple

1962 Aldous Huxley knew! How many others knew?
Knew what? As yet partial knowledge, straws in the wind,
13 Disturbing dreams, a silent spring..... 'Silent Spring' ?
Rachel Carson knew and wrote her book
About where we were heading; she was derided
By the money-men, by 'industry' that had invested
In pesticides that were killing every bird –
(and less than a year later I also knew).

Rachel Carson's 'Silent Spring'

Aldous Huxley's Santa Barbara Conference

Huxley called on the wise ones,
Philosophers, great scientists, economists,
12 Captains of industry, of the Marshall Plan,
To look at the future and to prophesy.
Wisdom is better than knowledge, it gathers
And breathes the truth behind the facts,
It senses the climate and snuffs the wind and knows –
(but I had no-one to talk to, no-one around me).

with
Justice William Douglas,
Paul Hoffman, Dr Harrison Brown,
Sir Robert Watson-Watt,
Dr Jonas Salk, Dr Kenneth Boulding,
Ray Bradbury and others.
Alastair Cooke's reporting
Satish Kumar's 'Resurgence'

1972 Ted Goldsmith knew, he of 'The Ecologist',
His 'Blueprint for Survival' mapped the way,
11 An antidote to doom, to make a plan
That shook the press for a moment of their time
Before their dizzy heads were turned elsewhere.
"Tomorrow has been cancelled for lack of interest"
Said the Radio Times and closed its eyes –
(but I bought all the books, knew all the names).

Adlai Stevenson
Bishop Hugh Montefiore
John Seymour
Alister Hardy's Gifford Lectures
Edward Goldsmith
Dennis and Donella Meadows
The Club of Rome's 'Limits To Growth'
Amory Lovins
Paul and Anne Erlich
The Stokholm Conference
Jaques-Yves Cousteau
Barbara Ward and Rene Dubois
Jay Forrester

1975 Growth and more growth, the race for power,
Power and great wealth built on oil and gas,
10 Built on iron ore and many minerals more;
Growth of cities in response to population growth,
Growth of herds of beef and fields of soya bean
Sucking the planet dry at her great breasts
Because economic growth eats up the earth –
(and I had nightmares, wrote my fears in rhyme).

Ronald Higgins' 'The Seventh Enemy'
Barry Commoner
Buckminster Fuller at Findhorn
(earth meets spirit)

*The World Wildlife Fund

1978 Jonathon Porritt and Sarah Parkin knew, and Martin Palmer;
The 'greens' had known for seven years or more
9 And now they were a force to reckon with;
Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace and WWF*,
Across the Atlantic the Berrys prophesied,
The Sierra Club gathered momentum
But still the world was blinkered and sceptical –
(and I campaigned and formed my little group).

Fritz Schumacher's 'Small is Beautiful'
Alvin Toffler's 'Future Shock'

Thomas Berry
Wendell Berry
Sam Berry
'WAYEMAP' (Where are your ecology, mercy and peace?)
The Conservation Society
Petra Kelly: the German Greens
The Ecology Party (later The Green Party)
'The Brandt Report'
'The Brundtland Report'

1980 Competing priorities, the lifestyles that we value,
Seductive promises of more and even more;
8 And our children's future? What would they stand to lose?
A species here and there, the butterflies
And our campanion animals, the wild ones,
Whales and rhinos, tigers and giant pandas;
Lake Baikal dried up, the ozone hole –
(and I was apalled, afraid for my children's lives).

Norman Myers
Paul Heinie – Zero Population Growth
Jonathan Schell's 'The Fate of the Earth'

1982 Tory and Labour leaders of our lives, big voices
And short sighted minds; the five-year term — Scientists for Social Responsibility
7 In office boxed them in; tornados, hurricanes — Henry Doubleday
The storms and floods and famines rang no bells. — James Lovelock's 'The Gaia Hypothesis'
The economic gospel, money-men and trade — Arne Ness
Said our free-markets would redeem the world. — Tim Cooper, Judith Pritchard
CEL* had seen the signs and set to work – — *Christian Ecology (Group) Link
(and I was there, and I was one of them). — Edward and Barbara Echlin

1985 James Robertson knew! TOES* emerged upon the scene — *The Other Economic Summit
Camped beside the G8 nations with their myopic agenda, — The New Economics Foundation
6 To tell the world that its symbolic money language — Hazel Henderson
Stands for substantial capital and precious finite things, — Ralph Nader
The 'family silver' of the whole wide earth was being spent, — The warning of the 'elder brothers'
Such enterprise leads only to bankruptcy. Renewables — from the Columbian mountains
Suddenly were the stars, to live on income not on capital – — Prince Philip
(and I was very hopeful and made plans for us). — The Assisi Pilgrimage (of all faiths)
The Right Livelihood Awards

1989 Surprised and frightened, the western world asked questions, — (the alternative Nobel Prize)
Voted 'green' and banged their politicians' heads — Lester R Brown's 'World Watch'
5 Together – all manifestos took on a grassy hue. — Satish Kumar and 'Resurgence'
Competing for power. Fear and greed invented another name, — Martin Palmer and ARC
'Green growth'; more cars, more choice, more imports, — 'Advent and Ecology' in many
More aeroplanes wafting people to exotic countries — great cathedrals
On the fringe of poverty – to show we cared for them – — Francisco (Chico) Mendes
(and I went electioneering for the popular green vote!) — Jose Lutzenburger
Rio de Janeiro Conference

1994 Climate change! Wangari Maathai, Vandana Shiva knew! — Wangari Maathai
The developing world, ignored, took centre stage, — Vandana Shiva
4 Timber was suddenly seen in context, the lungs of the earth, — The Schumacher Lectures
Our greenhouse thermostat, our indispensible resource – — Lord Melchett
Trees! Not just a means to pay off third world debt! — John Elkington
The oceans were now seen as precious vaults, the sea — Jeremy Rifkin
Fatally over-harvested, the balances disrupted to our shame – — Donald Reeves
(and I, with my white hair, campaigned again). — The Kyoto Conference
Richard Mabey

2003 Earthquakes, tsunamis, tornados, hurricanes, — George Monbiot
The disappearing snow on mountains, glaciers melt, — Tony Juniper
3 Sea levels rise and cities wash away. We have sowed devastation — Mary Grey
And reap the consequential chaos. Children in their classrooms — Prince Charles
Know much better than their parents, what we are; — Caroline Lucas
Profligate prodigals, so caught up in our little lives — Jean Lambert
We haven't seen what we, en masse, are up to – — Clare Short
(am I too old, too weary to cry out "It's not too late"?) — Bishop James Jones
Archbishop Rowan Williams

2006 Al Gore knows the score! Sir Nicholas Stern has learnt — Al Gore
A thing or two, has written his Report to make us hurry up. — Sandra Postel.
2 They speak with all of us who fear the worst — Sir Nicholas Stern
And hope the best and try to wake the world.
Some said that, never fear, economics in the end will call the tune
And bring us all to book. The end! The money-gods, the demons of desire
Who would destroy us, wake us up before it is too late – — The Nairobi Conference
(I pray for mine and all the children everywhere).
Many men (chiefly the men) have influenced our road;
Saints and barbarians, war-lords, prophets, kings. They cried,
1 "My vision is conquest" (of Jerusalem) or "cleansing" (Inquisition and Mein Kampf)
Or "the harvest of resources" (trees and oil and fish), and the best excuse of all –
"God told me to!" "Allah commanded it!" that brooks no argument;
"I'm not the author of my deeds, a higher One than I inspired me!"

2012 Fifty years on - will we have changed? Will Stern pronouce our sentence?
(I shall be gone – but young and loved ones still remain).
Envoi We'll have to answer for it, every one of us, for what we've done, are doing
To our blue home, green home, our daisy-world of creatures, sentient life,
0 Our one and only planet. "Not me, me, me – I am not guilty!" None of us lives alone
But in relationships expanding from our birth to include all races,
Species, flora, fauna, tides and the tender atmosphere that wraps us round.
Our present peril is not only to be extinct, freeing the earth
Of the voracious human swarm, but also at last to hear and fear God's judgement –
(and I am also guilty for not crying loud enough).

Audrey Theodosia Bryant, a founder member of CEL and the second CEL National Coordinator and latterly chair of the Journal Committee. She started LEAP, the Local Emergency Accommodation Project that launched a series of hostels for the homeless.
Audrey has just celebrated her 79th birthday. She has ten grandchildren who are token to her of all the children on earth who we have to care for now. She is a portrait painter and a poet. She says, "CEL is wonderful as it brought my faith and my love of the green world together."

Are We at the Beginning of a The New Age?

by John Smith

We are living at the beginning of a New Age, perhaps even a New Renaissance, a time when the basic paradigms that underwrite our society are changing. It is a time when the old certainties are being lost and the new ones not yet established. It is however a time when a possible vision can be outlined, implemented and a new destiny defined. According to Colin Tudge it is a future that could be either dire or glorious. It is hard to be more precise, but there is a choice.

There are countless groups and individuals that believe that the planet is undergoing a shift in consciousness that will produce a new way of living. Many adherents to this belief put intuition above intellect and seek a new earthly paradise. This New Age must embrace both these valuable human characteristics.

Humanity is at a point when, to some degree, it can choose its own evolution, its own place in the myriad of the communities and complexities we call life. We are also at a point of inevitable change. We understand enough of the origins of our universe to be able to understand the processes that led to our evolution through both the geological record and DNA analysis. Humanity, the 'wise' apes, can look back, if not yet with 20/20 vision, with a research base that explains what we are and where we came from. Having acquired such wisdom about our origins and history the question arises why cannot we apply that wisdom to our future? We can apply the prophetic visions that our scientists and others model and now describe as our potential future. We can test out the accuracy of these models historically but refuse to believe their forecasts. Humanity can control its population and knows enough to live sustainably within the generous limits of the planet. Humanity could choose to live generously and well with our Mother Earth. Cannot we now choose our own paradise, our own evolution as the moral ethical politics of our time for the whole of creation? Practical hope is now more effective and possible in what is a unique geological and historical time. This is either an opportunity or a crisis for humanity and the planet. There is 'an inconvenient truth' in all this and our generation has this responsibility.

Can we change to a New Eco-Centric Renaissance?

We are part of creation and the life of the planet, and as a species we must share so as to survive. We must act unselfishly (ecocentric) and not be species selfish. (anthropocentric). That is an economic paradigm change that has not yet been fully understood. We humans are not above, or superior to, other life forms. We are part of God's miracle of evolution. An evolution that is not a hierarchy of development, but one that is random, operates in fits and starts and one that responds to environmental changes and catastrophes. It is a process that has been happening since the last Ice Age (10,000 years) and for three and a half billion years, or even longer. Species interact with the Earth's life systems and the atmosphere, and co-evolves in mutual support and development. The more complex life is the more it is able to resist the effects of natural disasters, small and large, local and global, that regularly affect and are part of the living system on which we depend. Natural catastrophes are part of the planet's activity that adds to its life processes. Evolution also continually perfects life and with it the constantly changing environment. Life and the conditions for life, given certain parameters, are always as good as they can possibly be (God saw that it was very good (Gen 1.31). Evolution leads to perfection, or to quote Darwin 'As natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress towards perfection'. But, and it is a big but, there are catastrophes that upset and change the course and the progress of evolution. The meteorite that hit the earth some sixty million years ago changed the progress of the world from one that supported the dinosaurs to one where the mammals became a dominant species. A similar catastrophe, a nuclear war and consequent winter, might and could change evolution radically. Humanity and all life is living a creative uncertainty. Life would seem from one perspective to be a lottery. We live in a predictable/unpredictable world, but one that needs compassion. Uniquely in these times our species understands all this. That gives Homo Sapiens unique opportunities and responsibilities.

This New Age lives on the cusp of change. It can go one way or another, from disaster to success, either a descent into a global catastrophe or an evolutionary success, and the choice rests directly with the dominant global species of the New Age – humanity. Some scientists, such as James Lovelock and Fred Pearce, already suggest that it is too late. Others like Donella Meadows and Al Gore advocate that although the time is short, change for the better is possible. And others such as E. O. Wilson and Jonathon Porritt plead for the possible. The Tyndall Centre suggests that we have five years (2006). We have already noted the possibility of nuclear warfare and winter but we are now at a point in this new era when the dominant paradigms of economics, capitalism and profits that are damaging our planet must change to ones of ecology, concern for all life and a human lifestyle that lives sustainably within the vital processes and limits of the planet as all other species do. We are experiencing the beginning of a sixth global extinction and its cause is not astronomical activity or Earth processes but the results of greedy, self-centred human activity continuing to destroy the living systems of the planet. Reports in journals and books describe how the effects of man-made global warming are causing a twenty-five percent species loss because of humanity's greed or over-dominance of life on the Earth. Reliable scientists, such as Mervyn Rees, question whether the effects now being studied and measured will lead to the extinction of Homo Sapiens before the end of this century. The complexity of life at this time would appear to be better without us. That is a reasoned warning that humanity should use to look for a good future. This goodness and compassion is possible – God must be ecocentric.

The end of the Roman Empire and the end of the Medieval period share four characteristics with our present time: economic imperialism, ecological degradation, bureaucratic ossification and flight from reality. The loss of the North African grain lands through over exploitation leading to desertification caused the end of the Roman civilisation. The ecological disaster that was Europe at the end of the fifteenth century was saved only by the unexpected discovery of the Americas by Columbus, and was a disastrous attitude subsequently transferred to the New World. Cabot, Henry VIII's explorer, saw the value of the cod fished off the Grand Banks, which are now closed because of over-fishing, with the loss of this once common food. Today we need to recognise the damaging nature of global, profit-centred economics with no ecological awareness or responsibility; a governance, that in the dominant USA and elsewhere, seems unable to recognise a society that is not fossil fuel based, or a world information culture that acknowledges, but does not yet apply, the reality of global warming, loss of biodiversity and species, and the overpopulation that threatens our global 'civilisation' and our species. There is now no other place to go. We humans, with the planet and whatever we do it, are at a point of radical change. The problem is that we humans are

the origin of the threat of these catastrophes. Or can we change to a New Eco-Centric Renaissance for the benefit of creation and ourselves? Advice on offer is to find another planet. But we have no other planet to inhabit; human ingenuity touches and damages all the corners of the Earth.

Is this change the end of an era and the beginning of a new one? Scientists such as Richard Leakey and E.O.Wilson are describing these times as the sixth extinction. An extinction catastrophe that has not been experienced by this planet for sixty-five million years. The cause is uniquely the activities of one species, humanity; Us. There is a responsibility here that has not been seen before and an awareness of the cause and its reasons and an appreciation of beauty, science and ethics that is unique to our species and our time. Our unique intelligence is the cause and could be the solution. We have a choice between degradation and paradise, dire or glorious.

There are four main threats,

- Global warming caused by the excessive use of carbon fuels leading to quantities of carbon dioxide waste beyond which the natural sinks – the systems of the planet – cannot cope. Changes in sea levels, and temperature bands (30% increase) provide the prospects of severe flooding and droughts. Already the 'magic gates' of permanent environmental change are being seen in the Pacific El Nino.
- Loss of species caused by the activities of humanity displacing some life forms and introducing other life forms in places where they destroy eco-systems. Climate Change exacerbates this. We rely on wilderness for life support systems for the planet.
- Pollution, especially of the vital ozone layer. This is now in remission, showing we can act and change given the right information and leadership.
- Overpopulation – over the twentieth century humanity's numbers have risen from one and a half billion at the beginning of the century to six billion at its end, with the prospect of nine billion by mid way through this century. The ideal is 2.5-3 billion, half the current total. This could be achieved naturally.

We should not exclude from the litany pollution, acid rain, cutting down the vital rain-forest, over-fishing and pollution of seas and fresh waters, the way we treat our food sources, especially other sentient creatures on which we depend, and new diseases such as AIDS, and infections such as influenza, TB and malaria. There are other contemporary crises caused by humanity: resource shortage, fresh water misuse, starvation, nuclear abuse, wars and unregulated scientific and technical activity. All these are compounded by political inertia, by the lack of concern for individuals, and by politicians who do not wish to know, as well as many convinced who do. Given this threatening list are we at an inevitable point of crisis or change? Is the possibility of a New Age, a new era now indicated as a vital need for humanity's survival? Can we plan for a good global scenario that is workable? Or is humanity bound for inevitable disaster and perhaps extinction? As one expert explained to me recently; all will be well in 150 years, but we (humanity) might not be here. Nature, though, will find a new balance.

The new future must be sustainable. Humanity must learn to live, and is learning to live in materially sustainable ways within the limits of the planet. If we make ourselves intolerable to the Earth there will be nasty surprises, some of which are already occurring. Already economists are seeing the end of the oil-based global economy and one nation, Iceland, will shortly have an almost carbon-free economy. There are physical limits to economic growth and there are social limits to what humanity and creation can tolerate. For example, the coming fresh water shortage, the number of vehicles on the roads, or the intolerance of racism, religion and culture caused by overpopulation stresses, the social costs of 'development' and the environmental costs of Earth exploitation which are not accounted for in the profit balance sheet of the global economy. James Robertson suggests, that we must move from a Hyper Expansionist economy (HE) to a new vision of a Sane Humane and Ecological (SHE) future where sustainability will be fundamental to our survival. We need to become more caring and more feminine in our outlook.

If humanity did take a path of partnership with the planet as against its present path of competition, alternatives that Hartmut Bossel suggests, then the good future of our Earth, as far as we can determine it, could be assured for the next one thousand years. That is the minimum timescale we should be planning for.

That partnership will restrict economic growth but would allow two areas of human development.

- The first is the continued development of art, knowledge and exploration, the increased understanding of the world and the universe. A development that must be part of the sustainable lifestyle to be adopted. Science and technology must be a servant of sustainability not its rejection. There are risks in this, but there are risks in all progress. This is the culture, learning and research, that is fundamental to the direction of the good.
- Secondly there are the ethical and spiritual dimensions. These can extend into the transcendent, that ultimate spiritual reality which some of us find in love, beauty and goodness. This is the religion or spirituality of the planet, a bond of goodness between those of good faith and of no faith at all. A bond between different faiths that are concerned with the creation by which God, whose nature must be ecocentric, supports a responsible compassionate humanity, a humanity holding life in the palms of their hands. The alternative is an irresponsible humanity lacking in compassion, threatening the creation of which we are part. Spirituality is a personal development that is public in its outcomes.

There are three progressive choices which humanity can make.

Part 2 in the next issue, *Green Christian* 63 will investigate these three progressive choices

- The first is the choice of conservation.
- The second is feeding the world human population in a sustainable way.
- Thirdly there is a need to radically re-think the way we live.

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John Smith is a member of the Cumbria Churches Together Environmental Group

THE ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL DECISION MAKING

Getting Involved with our Local Authorities

Ashley Ralston

Contrary to belief, our local authorities, i.e. County Councils, boroughs, districts and parish councils, are acutely aware of environmental impacts on our communities. It was the advent of Local Agenda 21, started in Norway in 1987 and developed further at the Rio Summit of 1992 under the term 'Local Agenda 21' and taken up by our Government, that prompted this awareness.

What is Local Agenda 21? Local agenda 21 recognised the need for local agendas and plans, that is, strategies for sustainable living into the 21st Century, to be set up by local communities rather than by central or local government, so that, society at large can claim ownership.

How are local people and groups drawn into this process? Under Local Agenda 21, people and groups are invited to take part, usually by invitation (personal or written) and advertising in local newspapers. It was by the former that I became involved (about 10 years ago) in two local government bodies, a Community Involvement Group (CIG) to determine the Waste Strategy for the 21st Century, and a Sustainability Forum advising local strategic partnerships and local community groups.

In this article I will focus on my involvement in the Community Involvement Group (CIG).

As a Christian, being involved means living my faith, so it was with some degree of trepidation and excitement that I took my place at the first meeting of the Community Involvement Group, looking at Waste Strategy in the 21st Century for my county of West Sussex. The attendees came from many differing groups, such as Friends of the Earth, Oxfam, an anti incinerator group, Women's Institute, local parish council, local businesses, local societies and associations. One stipulation about the group was that no 'local district, borough or county councillor or council officer' could be an active attendee of the meeting, although they were able to send 'observers' and act as advisers. The meeting was facilitated by consultants, and relevant data provided by local council officials.

What were the issues and how was the process managed? In this case, the issue was "How would West Sussex manage its waste into the 21st Century".

Before each meeting relevant information was given to the attendees from the council officials; this was followed by questions to 'experts/advisers', afterwards we broke into facilitated groups to discuss the issues further. Each group came up with recommendations, which were reported at a plenary session, to be acted upon by local county officials, in preparation for the next meeting. At the end of each session, the 'observers', i.e. interested councillors were asked for their views and how the changes suggested might impact on their civic duties.

During the process the views of each attendee was actively sought and recorded. The skills of the consultants enabled concensus to be achieved and that accurate recording of the consultations were taken and reported.

After each session, a newsletter, minutes and reports were sent to all attendees, councillors and council officers, to be used for consultation with their own constituent groups, so that, a larger number of views could be sought, prior to the next meeting.

As part of this exercise, we were taken to various waste landfills, composting and incineration sites, so that we could get a good working knowledge of the problems and possible solutions, as well as being informed on Government strategy by appropriate advisers and experts, and taking part in appropriate seminars.

This Community Involvement Group process is still continuing to this day, and during the last 10 years we have come with a number of recommendations which have been approved by the Local Authority.

These are some of the recommendations* that have evolved from this process, improving recycling targets, recognising alternative means of disposal, in addition to land fill and incineration, advising the planning process, looking at the effects on our environs such as health, community, biodiversity, drainage, water, air pollution, but most of all underpinning the strategy by use of the 'proximity principle' , that is, having lots of sites close to neighbourhoods but in much smaller sizes.

I feel it has been a privilege to have been involved in this process, that one's views and opinions are valued and I would encourage local activists to get involved. The mechanics of the process meant that you would be working alongside people with varying views, yet, it is this diversity which gives credibility to the process and agreement on the way forward. It is only after some of the major milestones in the process have been achieved that you realise that it is the local community being consulted and having their say.

As the parable in Matthew 25 puts it *'What so ever you do for the least of my brothers/sisters that you do unto me'*, in this case locally for your community and neighbour, but more importantly globally, in acting responsibly with our own goods, we are easing the burden on those less fortunate in the world and building hope for our own future generations.

Ashley Ralston is a CEL Trustee, Steering Committee member and Church Link Distributor; J & P Commission member for the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton.

* *It must be pointed out that these recommendations are unique for West Sussex and the area surrounded by its borders, West Sussex being both rural and industrial, as well as being in a possible new National Park and having a substantial coastline, and two major rivers and wetland areas, plus being the most wooded county in the country.*

e.g.

ecoteams
a Global Action Plan initiative

global action plan

Our partnership with EcoTeams is up and running

We are glad to announce that with the publishing of the new EcoTeams Handbook by Global Action Plan our partnership is up and running. Even before this, one group has been running (CEL001!). Others are now starting. Now is the opportunity to get your selves moving.



New loose-leaf Handbook



Althea Shevill (left) and Joan Lee (right) Part of an EcoTeam formed by Churches Together in Settle and District



Weighing your waste!

"We are getting a lot out of the group, more than we expected. Yes we have started to measure our waste, our electricity usage etc, but the meetings and listening to each others ideas have given us inspiration and much more confidence to talk about such issues to others."

EXETER ECOTEAM CEL001 – JULY/OCTOBER 2006

Our Exeter EcoTeam started on 5th July with an ecumenical group representing 6 households. Our meetings used material from Global Action Plan as well as theologically based notes from CEL. Combining the two sources of information proved quite tricky within the time limits of 1.5 hours per meeting but we did not wish to extend the meeting times since EcoTeam members also had practical things to do over the duration of the programme.

As a team we managed to set up a group visit to Exeter City Recycling Depot, during which we toured the reclamation facilities and asked lots of questions!

EcoTeam members were asked to measure (over a 12 week period) their consumption of water, gas and electricity, and also to record each week the weight of their composting, recycling and rubbish. There were also actions to be addressed as each topic was presented (water, energy, transport etc) and then at the following meeting we would review how we had dealt with our lifestyle changes.

Setting up the group was the most difficult and challenging part of the project. It took 4 months to find participants who were able and willing, and even then there were absentees. However, it was good to meet new faces and we will be able to continue the contact between the church members (who came from Methodist, URC, Quaker and Anglican backgrounds). There was no shortage of practical ideas and we shared possible solutions that we might take.

We thought that the biggest impression we can all make is to keep talking about the actions and issues with others inside and outside our churches. Our conversations were a great inspiration in keeping us carrying on through July to October.

Our group came away with the overall conviction that, in order to motivate lifestyle changes amongst many folk and make a large impact in tackling the issues around climate change, there needs to be ecotaxation on the "carrot and stick" principle.

Delia Law

The organisation for EcoTeams is now complete. If you would like to run an EcoTeam here's what to do:

- Send for a Facilitator's Pack (from the Editor)
- Gather your team together – group of people representing up to 10 or 12 households.
- Send the names and addresses to the CEL EcoTeams Co-ordinator (currently Chris Walton), GreenEditor@aol.com (01502 713020) who will send you the right number of Handbooks
- You will then be contacted by the GAP EcoTeams Co-ordinator and away you go!

All the new handbooks will contain the additional CEL material

- Facilitator's Packs cost £12.50 each (includes Handbook)
- Handbooks cost £7.50 per participants
- Scales cost £3.50 each (for weighing recycling and rubbish)

All money is paid to CEL and sent to CEL's EcoTeams's Co-ordinator. (CEL has already bought the materials from GAP)

EcoTeam Co-ordinator Needed!

Please get in touch if you feel you could help CEL by encouraging and co-ordinating CEL's EcoTeams. All offers to Chris Walton, Editor of *Green Christian*.

LOCAL GROUPS

John Vivian, Local Groups Co-ordinator, writes with good news:

The year has been quite outstanding as new groups start to pop up all over the place. All the groups have so much energy. Here is a taster with plenty of ideas and activities for your own group. If you don't have a local group then start one!

Ludlow

Our last meeting on October 4th celebrated our 5th anniversary and also was the church calendar day for St Francis the Patron Saint of the Environment. Our previous chairman Martin Hazell who helped us to start our local group came up from Watford to talk and show slides of his solo walk of 963 miles from Le Puy to Santiago de Compostela. Over 30 people came to the meeting so we were very pleased.

When we started the group we wanted to make the churches around Ludlow more aware of the environment. This has now happened so we wondered if we need to continue but it seems that people who attend want us to carry on.

Our November meeting is being led by the Revd Paul Cawthorne who is helping us to discuss "Contemplation v Action – Opposites or Bedfellows". Should Christians be more active or should we leave it to the politicians and the specialists?

Our meeting in December will be mulled wine and mince pies and a showing of a Friends of the Earth DVD about energy and the CEL Operation Noah DVD too. As you can see we try to keep a varied programme and find different people attend depending on the topic.

Andover

Since the first local groups and activists' regional conference "Growing Green" took place last year at Andover, Hampshire, Christians from various churches have been meeting and as a result a new local group was formed.

We had an inaugural meeting in February and as a result four local churches are exploring the possibility of becoming EcoCongregation. Mary Grey spoke to us about helping to get congregations and leaders to see the connection between ecology and faith – a theological issue. We are planning events during creation season and harvest festivals.

Hereford

During the year we had a talk on Complementary Health Care and how this relates to care of the earth, by Jenny Tucker, Administrator of the Hereford Centre for Natural Health.

We planted three English oak trees at The Weir Garden, a National Trust property at Swainshill; we have enjoyed a presentation on 'Our Energy Future: What do we want it to be?' The following evening one of our members gave the address and publicised CEL at a service at Tyberton Church – one of a Lenten series on the theme of Genesis 1:28. We had a table at a Millichap Peace Fund talk at the Three Counties Hotel, Hereford and visited to Highgrove Garden and we made a donation of £80 to the Prince of Wales's Charitable Foundation. Then in May we had a stall promoting the LOAF principles at a diocesan conference, 'The Beauty of the Earth', at Leominster Priory Church.

In June I recorded a short item about the group with Jonathan Blease, Faith Producer, BBC TV Hereford and Worcester then some of us visited Witney Wood, a sensitively managed 25-acre mixed woodland in the Dulas valley.

During the last six months we have had a talk on 'Green Burials' by Diane Thomas, who runs the Humber Woodland of Remembrance near Leominster: a joint meeting with the Eco-Mission Action Group at Hereford Baptist Church so that we could show two videos – 'Between Heaven and Earth: the Plight of the Chesapeake Watermen' and CEL's 'Operation Noah'. We have been to Our Lady's Church Hall for an inter-faith seminar on 'Saving the Planet', hosted by the Marches Branch of the Council of Christians and Jews. Five religions were represented (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and the Baha'i faith) and there was an excellent discussion. Our group had suggested the subject of ecology for such a forum, and we displayed our leaflets.

Then in October we helped with a stall promoting CEL at a performance of 'Pipe Dreams' by the Riding Lights Theatre Company at the Christian Life Centre, Hereford.

Our final event of the year will be a talk on 'Natural Gardening' by Richard Fishbourne, from Wiggly Wigglers, followed by a light supper with LOAF ingredients, at St John's Methodist Church.

Harrogate

Activities have included joining the congregation of Wesley Chapel, Oxford St., Harrogate for Evening Worship with an environmental theme, followed by refreshments and discussion (led by Rev. Shaun Swithenbank and David Bunting, both members of our local group) and enjoying a talk by Howard Wass, a North Yorkshire organic farmer. We also a great chance to stock up on organic produce fresh from Howard's farm!

Fareham

Our recycling of aluminium foil has been taken up by other local churches, monies from this goes to the Christian ecumenical café 'The Well' while the plastic milk tops that we collect is proving to be very popular. These all go toward the children's hospice in Winchester. Sadly the plastic top collection was discontinued by Naomi House as they said the transport costs were too much. Just as they started to despair the MS Society appeared and took over the top collection. We have just started collecting old mobile phones for the charity.

The work with FairTrade continues as we sell goods once a month in our different churches, and belong to the Fareham FairTrade Borough working group that comprises Christians of all denominations. Stories about our work written by Ellen Teague appeared in *Catholic Life* and the national Catholic women's newspaper *Catholic Omnibus*. The main event for the year was an Ecology Day on Saturday October 7th at St Jude's Catholic Primary School. Reggie Norton, Ellen Teague, Catholic writer, and Mary Grey from Wells for India took part in a day mainly aimed at Catholics but any non – Catholics interested in Ecology were made welcome.

We had a number of different speakers. The local Green Party came to talk about Car Clubs and a gentleman from WRAP came to talk about composting while the last meeting before Christmas is a Greener Living Advent party. Our main activity this summer was the turning of the children's art contest winning poster 'Save God's World' into a Post Card that we were selling in aid of the Adopt Sri Lanka appeal. Several were available for purchase at the Annual Members meeting.

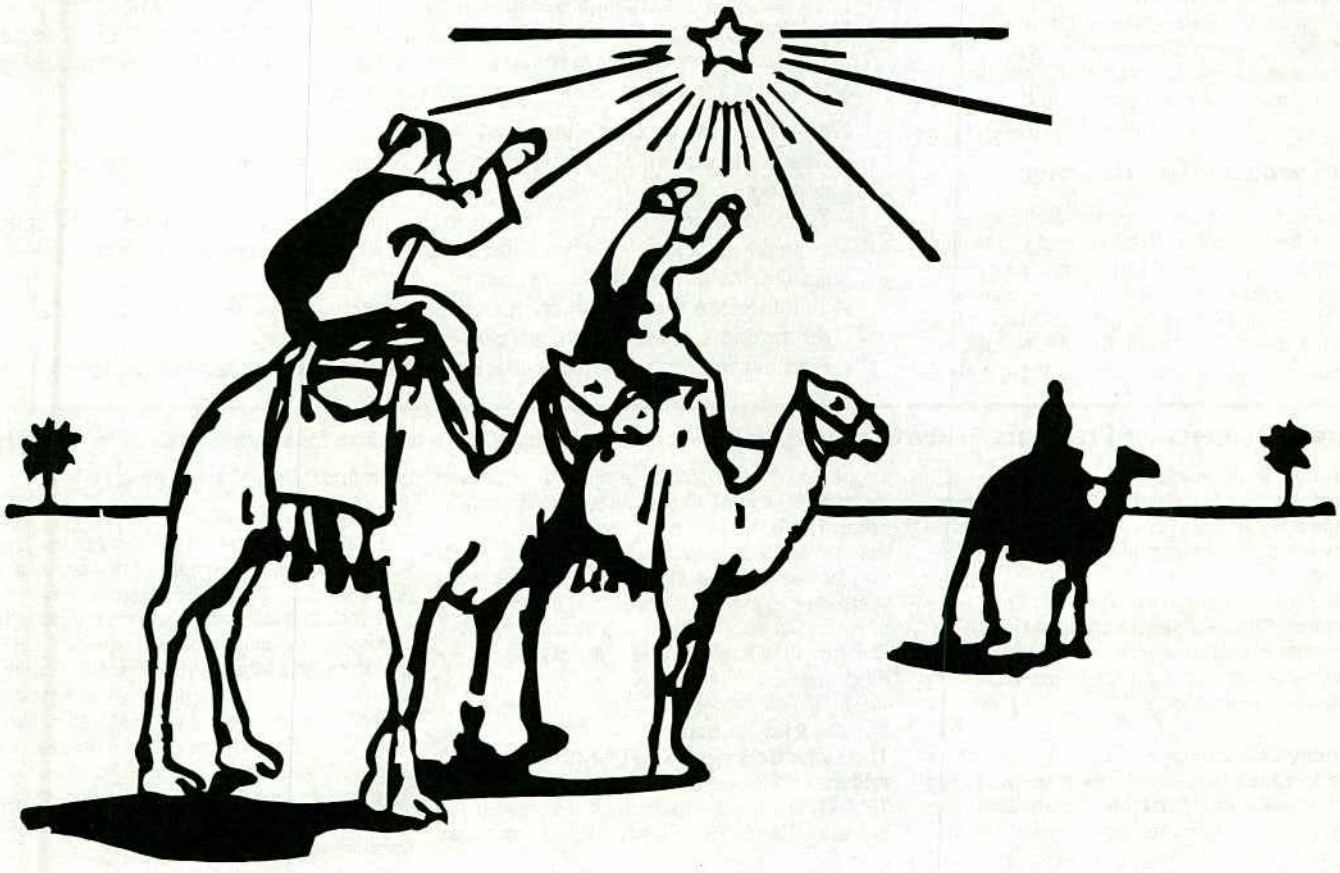
Holy Trinity Skipton

Holy Trinity, Skipton are working with local Oxfam and Craven FE College on a Fair Trade Initiative. We hope to put on a Fair Trade Fashion Show at the College

Continued on page 17 →

Christian Ecology Link **ChurchLink** 2007 No 1

Following a star today?



Can you see the stars in the night sky where you live?

ChurchLink is CEL's FREE Newsletter for churches. It contains:

- Poster (this side) for display in your church.
- Overleaf: magazine article on light pollution, the prayer used on the day of the climate change rallies and march in London in November, Green Pointers for Preachers in the season of Epiphany, and news of the new EcoTeams handbook.

Christian Ecology Link is a registered charity no. 328744. 3 Bond Street, Lancaster LA1 3ER. Tel. 01524 33858.
Email: info@christian-ecology.org.uk CEL website: **www.christian-ecology.org.uk**

Prayer used on the day of the climate change rallies.

Oceans warming
Ice caps melting
Calming, caring God
Help us act to still the storm
For now, for ever

Storms destroying
Chaos reigning
Calming, caring God
Help us act to still the storm
For now, for ever

Planet shaping
Hope rising
Calming, caring God
Help us act to still the storm
For now, for ever

Visit CEL's website and click 'Prayer Diary' for an on-line version of CEL's monthly prayer guide. Also click on 'CEL Community of Prayer'.
Click on 'Lectionary: Green Sermon Notes' for Revd Keith Innes' green pointers for preachers on Bible readings used each Sunday by many churches.

EcoTeams for Church Groups

The EcoTeams hand book with biblically – based theological material integrated into it, plus resource material for leaders, is now ready. To order, or to find out more, please contact Chris Walton, Ringsfield Christian Eco-Study Centre, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 8JR. GreenEditor@aol.com or 01502 713020.

Following a star?

If the Wise Men tried to follow a star in 21st century Britain they would have a problem. Excessive and mis-directed lighting cause skyglow and glare which blot out the stars. The CPRE has maps comparing the increase in light pollution between 1993 and 2000 on their website. Looking up at the night sky from urban areas we see a few stars with large expanses of black sky in between. Children grow up cut off not only from the rest of nature, but also from the Milky Way.

And then there is the impact on climate change with emissions of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide. One 100 watt bulb, burning all night for a year, creates a quarter of a tonne of carbon dioxide at a fossil fuelled power station.

Fear of crime fuels the market for security lights. The majority are made in the Far East and many have no instructions on how to use and cannot be mounted to shine only where the light is needed. Where no lighting exists our eyes are designed to become accustomed to the dark and you can see using the starlight and moonlight.

The British Astronomical Association's 'Campaign for Dark Skies' is trying to reverse this trend to light pollution. Campaigners are not calling for a return to darkened streets, but for necessary street lamps to be designed so that light Is directed downwards to the pavement.

They are also questioning whether floodlighting churches is really necessary. A flood lit church can be seen as a symbol that Christian faith still exists in a secular world. But is that sufficient reason to hide the stars and add more greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere? What do you think?

What then should Christians do?

- Use the minimum of light where and when necessary and direct it where needed.
- Turn the floodlights on the church to default off and only turn them on for special occasions. Money saved on electricity could go to purchasing energy efficient lighting inside the church instead.
- Join the Operation Noah campaign and switch your church and home to a renewable electricity supplier. www.operationnoah.org
- Find out more on www.dark-skies.org, www.darksky.org and www.cpre.org.uk

Green Pointers for Preachers for the four Sundays after Epiphany. Visit CEL's website for other Sundays in the year.

Sunday 7th January
Isaiah 43:1-7: The Creator and the Redeemer are one. Psalm 29: The God of the thunder and lightning gives strength and prosperity to his people.
Acts 8:14-17, Luke 3:15-17, 21-22: The sacramental use of parts of creation, such as the water of baptism, demonstrates that the physical and the spiritual are linked and mutually illuminating.

Sunday 14th January
The fortunes of the land cannot be separated from those of its inhabitants (Isaiah 62:4). The natural creation provides imagery for thinking about God (Psalm 36:5-9) and his saving power extends to animals as well as people (Psalm 36:6). The 'nature miracles' such as the transformation of water into wine (John 2:1-11) may be seen as intensifications of Christ's work in creation to meet our needs and those of his other creatures. They are also symbolic of Christ's gift of new life, and signs of his Kingdom.

Sunday 21st January
The same God reveals his glory through his written word (Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19:7-11; Luke 4:16-20), through his created universe (Psalm 19:1-6), and through prophetic utterance (I Cor. 12:28, Luke 4:14-15, 21).

Sunday 28th January
Ezekiel was shown that the glory of the Lord would again fill his Temple as in days past (Ezekiel 43:27 44.4). The purpose of his presence in this House was that his glory might be known throughout the earth (Psalm 48:10). But when he came to the Temple, he came in the form of a babe in arms, through whom the light of God would be available to all nations (Luke 2:31 32) and a new love released in the world (I Corinthians 13). If his glory has been thus revealed on earth, the earth is hallowed, henceforth to be treated with great reverence because of his presence.

Christian Ecology Link (CEL)

CEL is an ecumenical Christian organisation.

Founded in 1981, our aims are to:
1) offer ecological insights among Christian peoples and churches,
2) offer Christian insights into the Green movement.

We seek to stimulate awareness, interest and discussion on environmental issues from a Christian perspective, and promote practical action.

Christian Ecology Link works through individuals and local congregations, providing them with resources to spread the Christian ecological message and promote practical action.

Resources include:

- a Magazine and news Bulletin, a monthly Prayer Guide for the Care of Creation and this twice yearly *ChurchLink* newsletter.
- topic leaflets, ecological audits and worship material.
- web site: **www.christian-ecology.org.uk**
- occasional meetings and conferences.
- information and advice.

Information & Enquiries: 3 Bond Street, Lancaster LA1 3ER.
01524 33858 email: info@christian-ecology.org.uk

ChurchLink is free. All we ask is that you:-

- Display *ChurchLink* in Church. Copy it freely. Publicise any events.
- Use articles for your own Church magazine.
- Bring ChurchLink to the attention of anyone who may have a special interest in the environment.

To register with the **FREE** ChurchLink scheme please send the name of your church, its denomination and a name and address for correspondence to the FREEPOST address below. If you are already a member of CEL you will receive *ChurchLink* newsletters automatically.

CEL MEMBERSHIP. If your church, or individuals within your church, would like to become **members of CEL** the standard annual subscription is:- Individuals—£18 (low income £10); Joint/Family—£28; Local Church—please send a donation (recommended amount £25).

INDIVIDUAL/CHURCH MEMBERSHIP (Delete one)
I/We enclose cheque for £..... payable to Christian Ecology Link.
Please enrol me/us.

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Please send to:- CEL ChurchLink & Membership, FREEPOST SE 8672, 9 Nuthatch Drive, Earley, Reading, Berks RG6 5ZZ.

What next?

The aim of the leaflet produced by Eleanor Todd is to help you live out your calling to lead God's creation in praise in every aspect of your faith and life. We hope it will inspire you to find out more and get others involved. We have selected six ways you can begin to do this:

1. Christian Ecology Link

CEL provides you with news, prayers, reviews, contacts and campaigns.
www.christian-ecology.org; 01524 33858.

2. Eco-Congregation

Eco-Congregation is a free ecumenical programme to integrate care for creation into every aspect of your church life.
www.ecocongregation.org; 0131 240 2250.

3. Stop Climate Chaos

A massive coalition of groups including Christian Aid and RSPB campaigning for political action on climate change.
www.stopclimatechaos.org; 020 7324 4750

4. The Good Shopping Guide

How to use your consumer power to encourage a responsible corporate attitude. Available from bookshops
www.thegoodshoppingguide.co.uk

5. New Scientist Magazine

New Scientist will give you accurate, up to date and accessible environmental information. Available from newsagents
www.newscientist.com/channel/earth

6. Green tip of the day

Imaginitive and practical lifestyle tips, Monday to Friday, by email.
www.foe.co.uk/living/tips

We are delighted to reproduce parts of the leaflet produced by Eleanor Todd for St. John's Church, Edinburgh in August 2005. Please note that the poster on the centre pages should not be reproduced without permission from Eleanor (p.11). However if you can use the leaflets as well as displaying the poster they are available from St John's.

St John's Church Terrace, Princes Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4BJ. Phone 0131 229 3776 or edinburgh@cornerstonebooks.org.uk

The Christian Response to Climate Change: Theology and Action

Monday 14th May 2007,
Sarum College, Salisbury,
9.30am-4.30pm.
Dr Edward P. Echlin
(Visiting Scholar, Sarum) and **Ruth Jarman MA** (Oxon) (Operation Noah)
Cost: £40 (Lunch & refreshments included) B&B is possible for anyone travelling a distance.
A few bursaries are available.
Contact: Fiona Hulbert,
Co-ordinator (CeFAS), Sarum College, 19 The Close, Salisbury SP1 2EE.
01722 424838 fh@sarum.ac.uk

Please display the poster in your church. You can photocopy the reverse of the poster to display alongside it or to use as hand outs.



I blame the Psalms. It's all very well listening to the Bible, or even studying it, but for really getting it into your head, you have to sing it. Morning and evening, week by week, year after year, singing the Psalms in the Choir of St John's, Edinburgh, has given me words to praise God, describe God, understand God.

We sing to a God who knits us together in the womb, whose help is found in the hills, who hides us under his wings. A God whose mighty voice shakes the cedars, who makes the clouds his chariot, who walks on the wings of the wind. A God who makes the grass to grow for the flocks and sends rain for the thirsty land. A God at whose coming the heavens rejoice, the earth is glad, the sea resounds, the fields and the trees and all the creatures in them shout for joy.

I have no difficulty in reconciling this God with the God who takes flesh and blood and walks on the earth he created, calming the storm, healing the sick, seeking his Father in lonely mountains, transforming the material world in his resurrected body. Jesus is the God of the Psalms, hence the tiny prayers for the hours of the day which are printed in the leaflet I produced for the congregation of St Johns, "Earth be Glad: caring for creation in your faith and life".

The leaflet itself has much more prosaic origins. I am Co-ordinator of Eco-Congregation Scotland, the ecumenical programme which engages churches in environmental issues through twelve modules covering all areas of church life: worship, learning, maintaining the building, community outreach, global justice.

While the 90 churches involved in the programme are very good at organising projects as a church – recycling, insulating the church, special services, beach clean-ups – there are not many that could demonstrate lifestyle change amongst their members. So when St John's registered on Eco-Congregation, I wanted to develop a way of encouraging lifestyle change which I could recommend to others.

St John's celebrated Creationtide, a European initiative to refocus our calendar towards the God whom we encounter in the Psalms and the Gospels. Creationtide begins with the Orthodox Creation Day on 1 September, incorporates the Feast of St Francis on 4 October, and finishes with Harvest Festival. As part of their Harvest offering, we asked members of St John's to write commitments to environmental action on paper leaves and hang them on a "tree" in the sanctuary. The preceding weeks of Creationtide would be used to prepare people through a conference, information, sermons and liturgy.

To give the congregation ideas for what to write, I began making a list: "switch items off standby", "walk or cycle for short journeys", "buy local food" – but it seemed so didactic and dull, and bore so little relation to the God of the Psalms and the Gospels, that I abandoned the attempt. We needed something which would inspire and not lecture people; which connected the little mundane habits of our life and the future of this thin, precious skin of life on which we live; which would show how when you start thinking about ecological issues and the God of the Psalms, your whole life can become a prayer.

The result was "Earth be Glad: Caring for Creation in your faith and life", with its image of a Lowry-esque city with people living their lives with regard to the earth and its Lord. And The Harvest Tree was a tremendous success, with numerous commitments to cycle for local journeys, use both sides of paper, build compost heaps, pray for the earth, campaign for political action, and much more. Since then, people have told me that the one action they wrote on the leaf has been less important than the overall change in their ways of thinking and acting.

In the centre of the city in the poster on the next pages you might see St John's choir making their way from the hall to the church door to sing matins. A picture can inspire, but to get the word of God into your head you have to sing it: anglican chant, metrical, responsorial or plainsong. Maybe next Creationtide your church might learn to sing some psalms, and create a tree.

If you would like to find out more please get in touch with me at eleanor.todd@srtp.org.uk or 0131 220 2250 or visit www.ecocongregation.org/scotland or www.stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk/green. Packs of "Earth be Glad: caring for creation in your faith and life" can be purchased from the Cornerstone Bookshop, St John's Church, Princes Street, Edinburgh EH2 4BJ Scotland. Tel 0131 229 3776. e-mail: edinburgh@cornerstonebooks.org.uk

Earth be Glad: caring for creation in your faith and life

Green Christian

If you love wild places, find out what threats they suffer from climate change, pollution, or resource exploitation like mining. Find out who's protecting them, and what you need to do to help.

Aviation generates nearly as much CO_2 as all human activities in Africa.

A return flight to New York produces as much CO_2 as driving your car for a whole year

Over half of UK mature oak trees are damaged by acid rain from fossil fuel combustion in power stations and cars.

Capercaillie

Red squirrel

Cornerake

Sundew

Narrow headed ant

Scotland's peat bogs and Caledonian pine forest are unique habitats of international importance.

Between 1940 and 1980, 44% of lowland peatlands, 23% of heather moorland, and 25-50% of highland woodlands were lost.

Scottish crossbill

Species for which Scotland is especially important include:

Scottish primrose

Chequered skipper butterfly

Most of us can buy our way out of environmental degradation, but our profligacy causes others to suffer. Find out about fuel poverty, rising sea levels, desertification, eco-debt, and environmental justice.

Osprey

Grey seal

The creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. *Romans 8.19*

Praise the LORD from the earth
you great sea creatures and all ocean depths,
you mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars,
wild animals and all cattle,
small creatures and flying birds,
young men and maidens,
old men and children,
let them praise the name of the LORD.
Psalm 148. 7-13

A poor man's field produces abundant food, but injustice sweeps it away. *Proverbs 13.23*

If you faithfully obey the commands – to love the LORD your God and to serve God with all your heart and with all your soul – then I will send rain on your land in its season, so that you may gather in your grain, new wine and oil, and you will eat and be satisfied. *Deuteronomy 11. 13-15*

Learn to drive in a fuel-efficient manner, and make fuel consumption your top priority when choosing a new car.

You can get information on how to get from A to B by all forms of public transport from Traveline Scotland: www.travelinescotland.com or 0870 608 2 608.

Do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Leave them for the poor and alien. I am the LORD your God. *Leviticus 19. 9-10*

Over half the world's forest and grassland ecosystems have been converted to agriculture, mostly since 1945.

Three quarters of energy consumed in transport is on the road

70% of workers travel by car.

Going by train from Edinburgh to London produces a third as much CO_2 as flying.

Encourage cyclists at work with incentives like equal mileage allowance to cars, secure bike storage, a cycling notice board, free cycle helmets, and cyclists' showers and lockers.

What are the links between the rhythms of your daily life, your prayer life, and nature?

Two of the best forms of recycling are charity and antique shops.

Spending every day in an environment of artificial lighting, poor ventilation, chemicals from carpets, ozone and noise from electronic equipment, and poor colour schemes can make you ill: it's called Sick Building Syndrome. How could you improve your own environment?

Organise a car-share to work or church.

A quarter of all car journeys are under two miles.

God was pleased through Christ to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. *Colossians 1. 19-20*

Some environmental policies are controversial. Most of us have a gut feeling about wind farms on hills or trams in urban wildlife corridors but the issues are complex. Get informed, think carefully, and get involved in the debate.

Cycling for 15 minutes a day halves your risk of a heart attack.

Arrange your office to make best use of natural light.

Leave your computer switched off in the morning until you need to use it.

Switch off your monitor when you go for lunch.

15 million disposable biros are sold annually across the world.

Record and publicise the use of resources like paper and energy so people can see their efforts make a difference.

Create a green office notice board and suggestion box.

Keep half-used paper for printing drafts, and smaller bits for telephone messages.

One in three Scots may be suffering ill health because of air pollution and 1000 die each year.

Cut the amount of junk mail you receive by 95% by registering with the Mailing Preference Service: 0845 703 4599 or www.mpsonline.org.uk

30 gallons of oil is saved for each tonne of glass recycled.

Recycling aluminium uses 25% of the energy it takes to make it new.

It's unnecessary to wrap water in plastic and deliver it by road: drink water from the tap.

Use timer controls to leave heating off at weekends and to reduce heating as spring approaches.

Reuse envelopes using labels with a 'green' motto

Printers, photocopiers and computers can safely be switched off at the wall overnight: otherwise they will be using energy.

A photocopier on standby can be using 200 watts.

Use draft or ink-saving modes on printers and photocopiers.

Reduce margin and font sizes.

Photocopy and print on both sides of the paper.

Work at home one day a week to cut your contribution to the rush hour by a fifth.

Use thermostats: empty meeting rooms can be left cold; corridors can be cooler than offices; offices do not need to be warmer than 21°C.

Switzerland, Holland and Germany recycle half their waste. Scotland recycles less than 10%.

Kitchen / garden 25%

paper 25%

plastic 11%

metal 9%

glass 9%

energy

Put up nest boxes

Feed birds

Silver birch attracts over 300 kinds of insect, which feed birds and bats

Provide a bird bath

hawthorn

holly

Dog rose will attract greenfinches.

juniper

yew

pine

honeysuckle

Provide your own mower power.

Adjust your mower to leave grass half an inch longer and small plants and insects will live in the lawn.

Cornflower, forget-me-not, dandelion, sunflower bear seeds to feed birds.

Know where your new patio stones or gravel come from.

Just a small pond will attract birds, dragonflies, frogs, toads and newts.

bird cherry

Bonfires cause pollution: piles of sticks are habitats for wrens and hedgehogs

Build a compost heap instead of using chemical fertilizer.

Grow your own food: the ultimate local produce. If you have a big garden you could even keep bees or chickens.

What good will it be for a person if she gains the whole world, yet forfeits her soul? *Matthew 16.26*

Ask questions about everything you buy: how, where and by whom was it produced? What is its real human and environmental cost? Publications like "The Good Shopping Guide" will help you answer them.

Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice. *Proverbs 16.8*

5% of energy generated in the UK is used to manufacture packaging.

LINKING ENVIRONMENT AND FARMING

LEAF

FARMING STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Reduce the amount of land which provides your food by eating one more vegetarian meal per week.

Rediscover the seasons by eating local food.

FSC

When you shop use your LOAF:
Local
Organic
Animal friendly
Fair trade

Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure for ever. *Proverbs 27.23-24*

Products displaying the labels shown in this section have met independently assessed environmental criterea.

Scottish children only eat an average of two portions of fruit and vegetables a day – but over 200 children a day are exposed to dangerous levels of pesticides in fruit.

SOIL ASSOCIATION ORGANIC STANDARD

ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Take your own bags.

FAIRTRADE

Invest in good quality clothes and furniture that can be repaired and will last.

The ingredients of a traditional Sunday lunch from a supermarket could have travelled 24,000 miles to reach your plate. The same ingredients from a farmer's market travel around 380 miles.

Supermarkets' fierce competition results in a poor deal for farmers, the environment, and eventually customers. Use local shops instead.

It's expensive to keep a car just to shop. Get your food delivered, use a taxi or join a car club.

COLUMBA 1400

DELICATESSEN

GREENGROCER

Insulate your loft, walls and windows.

Keep a record of your energy bills and see how they reduce.

Join the National Phenology Network to monitor signs of seasons and species.

Draw or photograph nature.

Volunteer for community projects like river or beach clean-ups.

Keep a nature diary.

Just keep your eyes open to appreciate the natural world.

Since 1970, domestic energy consumption has risen 32%, industrial energy consumption has fallen 44%, and transport energy consumption has risen 95%

No longer will they build houses and others live in them, or plant and others eat. For as the days of a tree, so will be the days of my people. *Isaiah 65. 22*

Energy consumption for lighting rose 68% between 1970 and 2000.

Switch to a renewable energy supplier.

Let clothes dry naturally instead of using the tumble dryer.

Keep lids on pans and use the oven for several dishes at once.

Make full use of the timer and thermostats on your central heating system.

6% of UK domestic energy consumption is by goods left on standby: the output of one nuclear power station.

Replace light bulbs with energy efficient ones.

Store food in reuseable containers.

Wash clothes at the lowest temperature which gets them clean.

Share your magazines and pass them on to doctors' waiting rooms.

See if you can spend the money you save by being energy efficient in a way which benefits the environment: an extra foreign holiday will spoil all your good intentions!

Clean windows to maximize natural light.

Insulate hot and cold pipes so the water quickly reaches the right temperature at the tap.

Use mains electricity – or if you must use batteries make sure they are rechargeable.

A bath or power shower uses three times as much hot water as a shower: check this by putting the plug in during a shower.

The average Scot uses 143 litres of water a day. Although it rains a lot, getting clean water to your tap takes a lot of energy.

Average indoor temperatures rose from 13°C in 1970 to 18°C in 2000.

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When using the image, please acknowledge it as follows: Earth be Glad was produced by Eleanor Todd for St John's Church, Edinburgh, Scotland. August 2005.

e.g.

New Nuclear Power? No thanks! What's behind the debate?

The following is taken from an e-mail from the then new New Nuclear Power? No thanks! Network encouraging people to engage in the government's consultation process before decisions are made about nuclear energy.

Zina Zelter writes "The government is currently reviewing its energy policy in relation to climate change. It seems that Tony Blair wants to build 10 new nuclear power stations around the UK. Apparently he thinks this is a solution to Britain's need to cut carbon emissions by 20% by 2020 and 60% by 2050.

In reality, even if we doubled nuclear power in the UK, it would only cut carbon emissions by about 8%. It would also double the amount of radioactive spent fuel in the UK (which we still have no safe way of storing or disposing of); increase the number of terrorist targets in the UK; require billions of pounds of public subsidy and deeply undermine the renewable energy sector and energy efficiency measures. And as we all know, the link between nuclear power and nuclear weapons proliferation is ever present. The same enrichment facilities can be used used to make 3% enriched uranium for power station fuel or 90% enriched uranium for nuclear warheads – hence the worry around Iran at the moment. Britain going ahead with a new generation of nuclear power will send a strong signal to the rest of the world that it's OK – and we really don't need proliferation either and be an even bigger problem than it already is.

If Britain genuinely wants to make the necessary cuts in carbon emissions it must support renewable energy production and energy efficiency, setting targets that it actually meets and putting a long term strategy into place. There is only so much money that the government and private investors have available to put into developing electricity generation systems. If it goes to nuclear it won't go to renewables and efficiency. The UK has enough wind power alone to meet our energy needs nine times over. As tidal, wave and solar technologies develop, and micro-generation at home becomes more available, a diverse and economically competitive renewables industry will emerge. Combined with the 30% reductions in energy demand through efficiency (including reducing air travel and car usage) identified as possible by the government in the 2003 Energy Review, there is no need for nuclear."

For further information contact Zina on 0116 210 2294, or e-mail: zinazelter@yahoo.co.uk.

CEL produced its Faith and Power Report as a result of much debate and struggle within our organisation. Why did the report say what it did? It is an example of pioneering practical discipleship. What follows is a behind-the-scenes e-mail.

Jonathan Essex of CEL writes "I am scared by the tendency to focus on whether or not to promote nuclear – because it narrows the debate and our public cash to securing 4% of our energy supply which means not investing and focusing on the energy solutions that we will need in a post-oil and post-nuclear economy. The longer we delay painting a clear picture of a low energy, decentralized, solar, low/no carbon future the longer the poor of the world will look to us and see the wrong vision for our collective future sustainability.

To empower the poor, to put the last first, we need to put the first world (ourselves) last, and adopt a "servant king" approach to energy. So, we should look at our energy demands instead of worrying about where our next energy fix is coming from. Unless we do this we will sacrifice Our Global Common Future through our reliance on our government, not ourselves, to address our addiction to high energy consumption lifestyles. I don't believe nuclear will get us out of our techno-fix, but instead risks fanning the flames of our energy addiction, as does every solution that deals with our supply rather than challenges our demand for energy – and as we are a rich Western nation then cascades that view around the world. We need to address this global "Tragedy of the Commons". We need to admit our sin. We need to change our lifestyles.

I think the report as written rises above this technical debate as framed by the UK government to state that we as people of faith want to see a future that is not just about tweaking the present but requires a shift in world view. It challenges us to match the change in definition of Civil Engineering – 'from using the Powers of Nature for the use of Benefit of mankind' to work within sustainable limits. We need to shift from big solutions from man to a world view where we work within, rather than try and technically manipulate, God's limits. It shouldn't be one rule of what solution (technological ones at the moment) we have and then a set of different rules for the majority world overseas: we should, on grounds of social and environmental justice, choose solutions that are fit for all.

So, as a practicing Christian and civil engineer, I feel that the real issue is not for or against nuclear per se but whether we, as Christians, see this issue as one that can be resolved by human driven, largely technical solutions or not. The nuclear debate raises this issue which this report addresses. I believe that climate change needs change in faith and lifestyle and government should spend and support this change, not narrow the debate to re-reviewing which technology is best. What we really need is to look beyond faith in technology to get us out of this mess, but recognize the log in our own eyes and perhaps looking to the beatitudes not the power stations to rebuild our society based a truly different kind of power.

I am also against nuclear power on global ethical grounds - having worked in Bangladesh, a country we are not willing to invest a vision that they are empowered to follow. The BBC and Independent recently leaked DFID's response to the Stern review (so it is now in the public domain under the Freedom of Information Act) and basically states that the rich choices are already killing the poor through climate change. So, as the report is based primarily on the ethical positions on nuclear power, not on our faith in the technology as a whole per se, I think we should stand firm with the report as it stands.

I believe this report clearly presents how the issues are bigger than nuclear, and therefore cannot be solved by nuclear. Albert Einstein said that "you cannot solve a problem at the same level it was created. You have to rise above it to a new level." I think the report is good, as it dares to focus on the bigger issues, where global poverty and climate change trumps national security of supply, and highlights the need to look beyond our borders for inspiration and potential models for a sustainable future.

To conclude, I believe sustainability needs a shared, ethically-grounded vision – where we are able to stand back from our individual technical favourites and look at other perspectives and points of view, not to tolerate them but respect and dignify them, before considering these issues at a higher level. I believe that this report enables us to do this. While I acknowledge it is very difficult to think truly globally on this (particularly with the media and other pressures that continually re-inforce our dominant world view) and put ourselves as Jesus in the shoes (or at least feet) of the globally disadvantaged and marginalized, as well as act here and now on these issues. I would be upset if CEL members decided to resign rather than to move the debate up to the next level."

Jonathan Essex is a CEL Member and on the Mission Team.

CEL Bulletin

CEL's 25th anniversary event

Storm of Hope
Saturday 7th July, 2007.
All Hallows by the Tower Church,
London EC3

A day to inspire, and be inspired by, with reflection and creativity on our emerging fourfold mission:

- Letting loose hope
- Pioneering practical discipleship
- Equipping prophetic witness
- Empowering agents of change.

Can you lead a group of CEL members in a creative or prayerful activity on these themes which will inspire them for the way ahead? We are inviting offers or suggestions of workshops from people with these skills. We can't promise we can fit every offer in, but please get in touch if you can help, or know someone who can.

More details and booking forms on the CEL website and email newsletter in the new year. For posted details contact CEL's Information Officer on 01524 33858.

25 years of CEL
In 2007 we are celebrating CEL's first 25 years and looking to the future. The Storm of Hope event in London on July 7th will include an exhibition of CEL's history. If you have photos of past CEL events or campaigns which you can lend to us, please contact secretary@christian-ecology.org.uk We hope our members will also arrange events around the country – perhaps a LOAF meal, or a showing of the Operation Noah video with ideas for action to cut the carbon in home and church.

CEL's Aims
All our members were recently sent a draft of our new Vision Statement. The Steering Committee would like to thank those members who sent comments in. These, and a constructive discussion at the Annual Members' Meeting on 11th November, gave us valuable feedback. The vision is now being revised, together with our official aims, which are printed on page two of this magazine under the logo. We will keep you informed as the Vision Statement takes shape.

What's happening overseas?
Judith Allinson is our International Secretary. She gets enquiries from all over the world asking for information on how the church is involved with environmental issues. Please send Judith any information from overseas on Christian environmental activities so she can respond more informatively to enquirers. Email webeditor@christian-ecology.org.uk

Local CEL Groups
There are now eleven local CEL groups. John Vivian, Local Groups Co-ordinator, has just collated a Local Groups Newsletter with news of what's happening around the country. If you want a copy of this newsletter please contact John. If you are thinking of starting a local CEL group John will be pleased to talk with you and even visit you to help set one up. Contact John at j.vivian1@ntlworld.com or phone 023 9242 2129.

CEL Annual Members Meeting 2006.
Our AMM this year followed hard on the heels of the large CEL presence at the climate change rallies the previous Saturday. It was a more low-key affair than usual, but gave an opportunity for those present to get to know each other better and to discuss our draft mission statement.

Displays at Local Events
We are able to loan out large print laminated posters and large banners, suitable for use on CEL stalls and displays. To book email posters@christian-ecology.org.uk or phone the information officer.

Help Needed
Young Peoples Forum Co-ordinator: Miriam Pepper has done a tremendous job of co-ordinating our Young Peoples Forum and representing them on Steering Committee. Miriam is returning to her native Australia in spring, so we need a replacement for her. Interested? Contact Miriam at m_d_pepper@yahoo.com.au

An EcoTeams Co-ordinator is needed to hold the stock of handbooks and team leader's resources, to send the stock out, to be a bridge between CEL and Global Action Plan, to deal with the money and to talk to people hoping to lead an EcoTeam. If you think this is a job for you please contact the *Green Christian* Editor, Chris Walton on 01502 713020.

Riding Lights 'Pipe Dreams' Tour
The Christian theatre company, Riding Lights, has been touring the country this autumn with a play on Water called 'Pipe Dreams'. They offered to carry CEL material with them for a stall at each event. Our thanks go to the CEL members who staffed our stall at 45 of the 59 performances around the country.

West Sussex Eco-Faith pack
In Shropshire and West Sussex some local authorities have realised the importance of co-operating with the churches in their efforts to promote sustainability. West Sussex District Councils have incorporated pages on what the church is doing on the environment into their EcoFaith pack. This happened because a CEL member is a regular participant in the West Sussex Environment Forum.

Church Environmental Success
Selly Oak Methodist Church was awarded one of only ten awards for community groups taking action on climate change in the Birmingham area. The award was sponsored by Birmingham Sustainable Energy Partnership and Birmingham Community Empowerment Network.

Airport Watch 'rethink!' campaign
Visit www.rethink.airportwatch.org.uk and sign a letter to the Transport Minister, Douglas Alexander, asking for a proper rethink of the Aviation White Paper.

Events for Your Diary

26 Feb – 11 March, Fairtrade Fortnight. Lent 2007, 'What on earth are we doing?' Devon Churches Green Action ecumenical lent course. Details: joanie@exeter.anglican.org

24 March, Why Should Christians Care for the Planet? Martin Hodson, Margot Hodson and Michael Morecroft.
14th May, The Christian Response to Climate Change: Theology and Action, Edward Echlin and Ruth Jarman.
Sarum College, Salisbury. Details: Fiona Hulbert, Sarum, 01722 424838.

1-3 June, Methodist World Mission Conference, Swanwick. 'The Earth is the Lord's so what are we doing about it?' Focus on climate change. Details: Meg Bailey 0151 432 3854.

7 July, Storm of Hope, CEL national event, All Hallows by the Tower, London.

CEL Bulletin

New Members
David Coaker (Cheshire)
N.J. Eadie (Cheshire)
Andrea Franks (Merseyside)
Tamsin Graves (Cardiff)
Dietmar Hank (Avon)
Chris Howson (West Yorks)
Jayne Keitch (Somerset)
Philip MacDougall (West Sussex)
Anne Martin (Berks)
Lindsay Norton (Essex)
Debbie Ralph (Essex)
Russell Sparkes (London)
Nicki Smith (West Yorks)
Margaret Turner (Bucks)
Dominic Wallis (Devon)

Corporate and Church Members
All Saints, Kings Heath (West Midlands)
All Saints, Wokingham (Berks)
Minsteracres Retreat Centre (Co. Durham)
Our Lady of Mt Carmel, Faversham (Kent)
Penn Club (London)
St Mark's, Broomhill (South Yorks)

CEL is a member of the **Local Works Campaign** which has recently issued the following Press release

NUMBER 1 MP AGREES TO TAKE UP THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES BILL

Excellent news for the Sustainable Communities Bill Campaign

Today Nick Hurd, MP for Ruislip-Northwood, was the first MP drawn in the Private Members Ballot and he has agreed to adopt the Sustainable Communities Bill and take it through Parliament.

This is the result of three years hard work campaigning by Local Works in collaboration with your organisation. There is now a very strong possibility we can **WIN** this campaign and see the Sustainable Communities Bill being made law by next year.

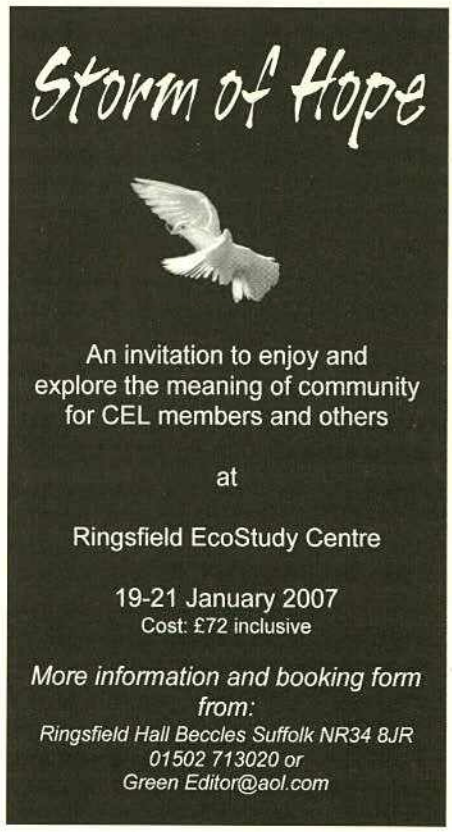
The team at Local Works would like to say a **BIG THANK YOU** to all our supporters whose help and actions have made this possible.

National Park empowering the agents of change

I have been a member of the Peak District National Park Authority since Oct 1996. I was a humanities teacher in my former life but gave it up to fight for my environment which was fast disappearing under bulldozers etc and now that has been further exacerbated due to the over intensification of quarrying – Derbyshire being the most quarried county in Britain and this National Park has in the region of 70 active quarries. Did you know that the stone for the £250,000,000, 1998 government building, Port Cullis House, came from the western end of Stanton Moor, a Scheduled Ancient Monument reputed to be the finest and largest Bronze Age Settlement in Britain? This is just a few metres above my hillside house.

Over the years it has pained me that as I approached the National Park offices in Bakewell, there is a display of many types of building materials eg stone and roof tiles. To me this emphasises how we as a National Park are happy to destroy our landscape but offer no redress in the form of a display of *sustainable* materials. By not having on display such things as Photovoltaic tiles or solar panels (and indeed I am led to believe that we refuse in the region of 50% of solar panel applications) or pictures/data on small wind turbines. This reflects badly so that the public see no long term concern by the PDNPA in these days of global warming for the future of our planet and the fact that our national parks could disappear as a result of global warming in the not too distant future. This is so short sighted. I rather think the Aborigine philosophy typifies what I am trying to say, that we have unfortunately to destroy our landscape to live, but the above goes beyond this and the rape and pillage of our treasured landscape, which is fast disappearing. We are not looking to the future (I believe, worldwide, we have in the region of 45 years of raw materials and resources left). Unless we accept that we work towards reducing global warming all our other worthwhile projects in the NP will be futile because we won't have a landscape (in our case 555 sq. miles) to protect.

(The author wishes to remain anonymous, if you have any queries or comments please get in touch with the Editor who will pass them on.)



LOCAL GROUPS

continued from page 10

and there is lots of planning ahead as well as funds to raise.

Our church has finally fulfilled all the criteria for Fair Trade Church status and application for this now in hand. Please see the Fair Trade website for further info about this achievable project. Isabel Warren co-ordinates the group.

Petersfield
The Anglican Church held a conference at Churchers College, Petersfield, Hampshire, with all their churches in the deanery. John Vivian organised an environmental display and led two ecology workshops.

Led by Gerald Druce of St Peter's Church they held an ecology day in October and are now going towards all the other denominations. It looks very promising.

John Vivian can be contacted at
6 Garden Court, Newtown,
Portchester, Fareham.
Hampshire PO16 8BD.
Or email at j.vivian1@ntlworld.com
Telephone: 023 9242 2129.

PEACE COLUMN

Stewart Hemsley writes:

In view of the debate with regard to Trident and whether or not we should continue to possess such weaponry and the effort and time being spent on campaigning against it. I offer the following comments in an attempt to place it in context.

During the recent war in Lebanon we heard a lot of comment about proportionality. This concern arises from what is left of the so-called 'Just War' doctrine – a doctrine which is, de facto, outmoded.
For example who 'declares war' anymore? We simply do it. As an example we see the implementation of a 'shock and awe' attack as on Iraq at a time of the aggressor's choosing – we're told that the element of surprise is essential and, as with other nefarious deeds, they tend to be done at night.
Who bothers with 'weapons being aimed accurately at legitimate military targets' any more? The aim of 'shock and awe' was to destroy, amongst other things in Iraq, the civilian administrative systems which made the country governable. It was a runaway success – it's been ungovernable ever since!
Then there's the famous 'last resort' – how many times have we heard PM Blair say 'we have no alternative' before we have even begun to examine alternatives?
These are some examples – others could be given, which show that the 'Just War' position is a dead duck in the water.
Total War – that is what we now believe in and practise.

Here I will quote from a paper by Professor Ronald Santoni, a contributor to a collection of papers published by Robert Hinde, past Master of Jesus College Cambridge, entitled 'The Institution of War.'
Santoni says '... certainly, the Christian religion has represented a dominant influence in Western civilisation, and the lived interaction between Christian theory and practice has been a prevailing dialectic in the consensual tradition of Western culture.' He goes on: 'The doctrine of the 'Just War' has contributed significantly to the institutionalisation and perpetuation of war in our culture.' So we can see that that doctrine has provided an accommodation with, and a rationale for, justifying war on grounds that at one time might have been seen as circumscribed, but have, as is the nature of things, expanded to the satisfaction of whoever is making war.
So 'The Church' – and I use that term in a universal context – has on this basis been responsible for the perpetuation of war as a means of settling disputes since it has placed firmly in men's (mainly) minds the acceptability of war as a means of settling disputes provided that a link could be made with this doctrine. It is to the Church's shame (with honourable exceptions) that this situation has existed for so long. It is the Constantinian heresy.

The Rev. Emmanuel Charles McCarthy, a co-founder of PX in the USA has said: 'The maintenance of the Just War theory can only be undertaken by those who philosophise about the teachings of our Lord rather than, in turn, teaching them. The Church has no commission from Jesus to teach philosophy – the place of reason in the Christian life is to figure out how to implement the teachings of Jesus, not to figure out how to modify – ignore – dismiss – undermine or abandon them.'

The question is – did the notion of 'Just War' ever hold? War is waged to win! You don't go to war to produce a draw! It also produces revenge eg the fire bombing of German cities in WW2 and notably Dresden. Military commanders (and the politicians who send them to war) want to win battles quickly, decisively and with the minimum loss of military personnel and weapons.
So – you toucha my car – I smasha your face! You lobba a bomb at me – I lobba a bigger one at you! And off we go! You do 'whatever it takes' – to win!

Now – Trident. A deterrent? One that we will not use? If we will not use it, where is the deterrent value?
It's a sheer nonsense!
If it's known that we have such weaponry and are ready to use it what is the response? Why – the other side must have a bigger and better nuclear weapon. Ah, you say, hasn't this notion kept the peace – a kind of nuclear stalemate eg MAD? Well there may be a certain perverse logic to that but it doesn't take account of the frailty and, at times, 'madness' of human nature.

Even now we're developing tactical nuclear weapons – bunker busting bombs, bombs with a limited capacity that will destroy discrete targets.
Well, you say, isn't that an advance? Isn't it better than having big bombs?
Don't forget the madness and frailty of human nature.
In the heat of war the use of weapons isn't decided by the philosophical debating society in the university common room with subtly nuanced arguments going back and forth – but – by increasingly irrational acts from men (mostly) determined at all costs to win, and if not, to take down as many of the enemy as possible with them.
One tactical nuclear weapon will lead to another, and larger, and so on.

And whilst speaking of rationality, proportionality and the frailty of human nature – we have witnessed in our country political parties, including the present party of Government – amply demonstrate the lack of the first two and the truth of the third, which negates having any kind of confidence that they would take sane decisions on issues such as pressing the nuclear button or the use of Trident. To use a current phrase they would 'prove unfit for purpose!'
Every now and again the politicians show their vanity and desperate hunger for power, not a very reassuring scenario especially when we think of nuclear weapons.

Tina Beattie, a theologian and senior fellow at Roehampton University, points out that 'war unleashes chaos and is always unpredictable. it would take only one error in judgement, one faulty navigation system, to produce disaster. Love of enemy would preclude, she said, ever wanting to repay that evil with a similar evil, nobody can do evil that good may result (politicians take note).

So – Trident – a resounding NO!

But – we cannot leave it there. We must renounce the very notion of going to war – with any kind of weaponry – if we don't – WE'LL ONLY COME FULL CIRCLE TO ANOTHER TRIDENT.

Stewart Hemsley is a CEL member and the Chairman of Pax Christi.

Prayer of Commitment

For the Earth's sake, for our
children's sake, for God's sake

Oceans warming
Coral dying
Sea rising
Land disappearing
Ice caps melting
Polar bears dying
Waters overwhelming

Storms destroying
Chaos reigning
Cities flooding
People moving
Disease spreading
Homes disappearing
Crops failing
Hope fading

Planet shaping
World creating
Life forming
Spirit breathing
Law guiding
Cradle birthing
Cross bearing
Hope rising

Calming, caring God
Help us act to still the storm
for now, for ever.

Calming, caring God
Help us act to still the storm
for now, for ever.

Calming, caring God
Help us act to still the storm
for now, for ever.

This prayer was written by David Pickering for the November 4th Rally.
He is Minister at Roundhay URC Church Leeds and Moderator of the Operation Noah Executive Committee

empowering agents of change

e.g.

CEL member, Ellen Teague attended the Rally in London ahead of the Nairobi climate change talks

Stop Climate Chaos
The Rally



Climate Change isn't only shooting up political and economic agendas. It is steadily rising up church agendas too.

Christian banners were visible in every direction. 'Operation Noah says cut the carbon', 'Christian Ecology Link'. The location was a park in front of the US embassy in London and a rally was forming to urge world leaders to act immediately on the issue of climate change. The US was targeted in particular because it produces one quarter of the world's greenhouse gas emissions and these gases are causing human-induced global warming.

It was 4 November 2006 and peaceful rallies were taking place in many cities around the world on the eve of UN climate change talks in Nairobi, which examined what progress had been made by the Kyoto Protocol that requires industrial nations to cut their emissions. Many of the London crowd had seen 10,000 campaigners marching through Sydney, Australia, on their morning news bulletins. The crowd in the park made a colourful picture as they set off towards Trafalgar Square where 25,000 people came together for speeches and songs in the Saturday afternoon sunshine. Cyclists carried notices reading 'One Car Less', some young people wore hats carrying 3-dimensional images of endangered species, and a succession of samba and brass bands accompanied the walkers. It was unusually warm for November – many people were in tee-shirts and most leaves were still on the trees, despite it being officially a Winter month.

Stern warning

Just a week earlier, the Stern report, compiled by Sir Nicholas Stern for the UK government delivered a staggering recommendation – that the world has to act now on climate change or face devastating economic consequences. The former chief economist of the World Bank said that the time is now to move on from arguing about statistics to taking drastic action at an international level. It presented a convincing argument for human society to change its energy-guzzling behaviour.

According to Stern, a rise in temperatures of between 5C and 6C, which is "a real possibility for the next century" could trigger a global loss of economic wealth (GDP) of 10% with poorer countries, which have contributed least to the problem, suffering most of the damage. A "worst case" scenario could cut GDP by 20% with global floods displacing 100m people and drought creating hundreds of millions of "climate refugees". He emphasised the seriousness of the figures by reminding people that the world is only 5°C warmer now than in the last ice age.

The unambiguous message from Stern is that politicians have no alternative: action must be taken on a world scale. Yet, is the capacity there to do it? The world's politicians will be required to think beyond the confines of the next four or five years, and to consider a statesmanlike span of 50 years or more, because what is at stake is not the electability of a political party but the survival of the planet. Also, global institutions such as the World Trade Organisation have shown little



evidence of capacity to acknowledge the environmental destruction caused by the prevailing 'development' model.

Rising global awareness

Global awareness of climate change is certainly rising. This includes India and China, which have plans to reduce energy usage, despite their drive for economic growth to tackle poverty, and the US where individual states are taking measures despite the inertia of President George W. Bush. Prominent public figures from both sides of the political divide in the US have been taking a stand on serious measures to tackle global warming. A film by former Democratic Party Vice-President, Al Gore, warned of the need for the US to address global warming. 'An Inconvenient Truth' was widely acclaimed and the Republican Governor of California, Arnold Schwarzenegger, has introduced initiatives that will put a cap on carbon-dioxide emissions from the manufacturing plants and set targets for greener cars.

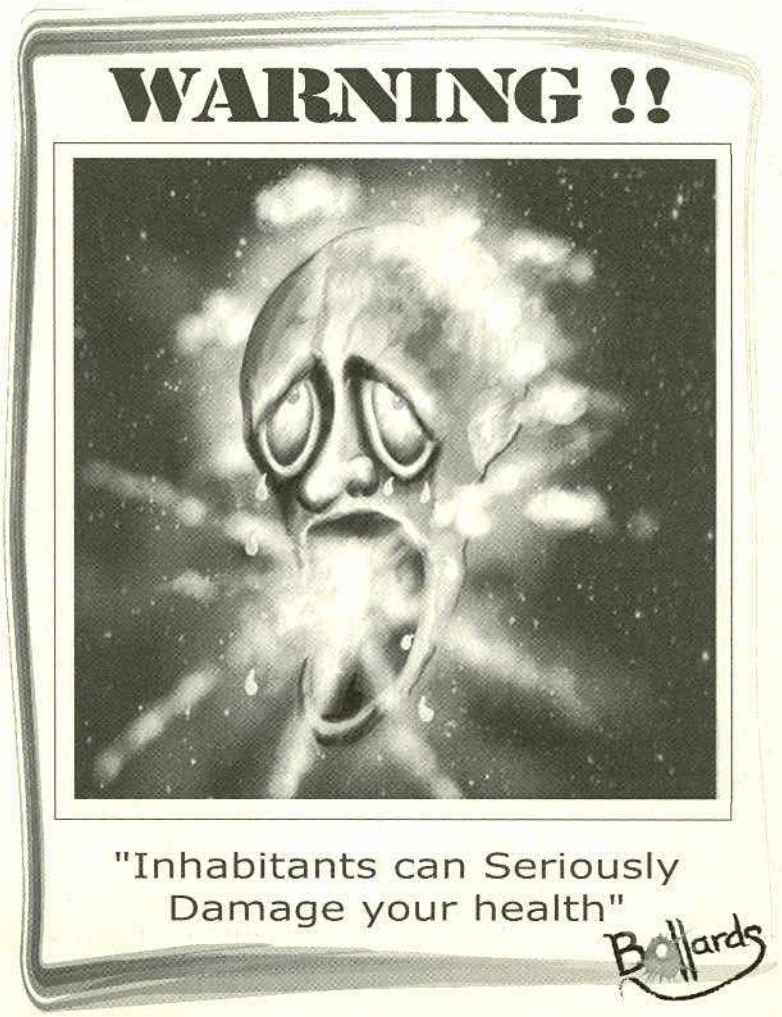
Many countries are already experiencing problems related to longer drought periods and extreme weather causing flooding and destruction of infrastructure. Millions of Bangladeshis in low-lying regions are already flooded out for several months of the year and Zimbabweans face a shorter rainy season which damages food production. Speaking last November, Archbishop Pius Ncube of Bulawayo reported that, on top of the economic meltdown in the country, "the expected rains have not come and more hunger will follow". He said that "if this is down to climate change then world leaders must take this issue very seriously". The impacts are not only affecting poor countries. Australia has been grappling with its worst drought in 100 years and the scientific projection that Australia will be permanently hotter and drier has converted Prime Minister John Howard to the view that global warming is real.

The British government has been challenged to back its strong statements on the need to tackle climate change with hard cash and policies by James Jones, Anglican Bishop of Liverpool. Speaking to 25,000 climate campaigners at the 'Stop Climate Chaos' rally in Trafalgar Square on 4 November, he said it was "fantastic" that government ministers had this week "lent their weight" to the Stern report on climate change, which warned that global warming could shrink the global economy by 20 per cent. Yet, he felt the government still had to "put its money where its mouth is". As an example, he urged that the £45 billion the government will spend on new school buildings over the next 15 years should be spent on buildings, "built to the highest specification of sustainability and to the lowest possible emissions of carbon".

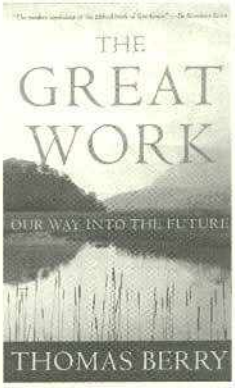
Standing alongside actors and pop stars, such as Miranda Richardson and KT Tunstall, the Bishop led the audience in a cheer for the Jubilee 2000 debt campaign and suggested that the campaign to tackle global warming would be a similar "great movement".

He said he was thrilled to see so many Christians joining the London rally, one of many taking place in many cities around the world on the eve of UN climate change talks in Nairobi. "I've been to Africa and India with Tearfund and seen the ruined harvests and the rice fields where children drowned in the floods" he said. He felt that undermining the well-being of future generations was "not just a crime against humanity," but also "an offence to God".

Earlier in the day, Richard Chartres, Anglican Bishop of London, spoke at a service in Mayfair's Grosvenor Chapel organized by Christian Ecology Link and Operation Noah, the churches' climate change campaign. He announced to a packed congregation of several hundred that the Church Commissioners have made their first £5 million investment in Impax, a fund which invests internationally in alternative energy and energy efficiency and resource management. He congratulated St Aldhelm's Anglican parish in Edmonton for putting solar panels on the church roof earlier this year. Fr. Joe Ryan, Chair of the roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster, Justice and Peace Commission and Revd. Dudley Coates, Vice-President of the Methodist Conference also took part in the service.



Books



The Great Work: Our Way into the Future
Thomas Berry, Bell Tower, New York, 1999

I was interested to read the article in *Green Christian* Summer/Autumn 2006 "Sharing God's Planet: A Theological Reflection". One of the references for the article was this book. Thomas Berry is a 92 year old "cosmologist" and "geologian" (student of Earth). After entering a monastery of the Passionist order aged twenty, he was ordained a Roman Catholic priest in 1942. He has studied how different religions and cultures relate to the natural world throughout history. This book critiques Western civilisation which Berry describes as dominant, particularly the model developed by North America. It also suggests a new, more viable way forward. It is not primarily a theological book but I think it has echoes of theological study.

Whereas in times past, the "Great Work" was seen to be conquest and progress at any cost, now it is for humans to live in harmony with the earth. To recognise the interdependence of all living things and the need for give as well as take. Berry emphasises repeatedly that the universe is "primary" and human beings "secondary". The human community is of lesser importance than the total earth community. The ways the universe works are patterns for our own ways of working. Everything we have is derived from the universe. Its mystery feeds our imagination.

Awareness of our interdependence with all life was lost in Western civilisation when the Great Plague in Europe of 1347-1349 made people see nature as an enemy. Also Rene Descartes' idea in the 17th century that mind and matter were separate, "desouled" and therefore devalued the earth. It was then seen as good merely for human exploitation. Science and religion were free to go their separate ways. Christianity became more concerned with transcending the earth than living in it. Scientists saw evolution as evidence that earth processes had no "unifying principle". Natural selection was popularized simply as "survival of the fittest".

Despite the polarized positions of religion and science, Berry believes that the scientific imperative in Western civilisation developed within the religious tradition, it seems mainly through the work of St Thomas Aquinas. For Aquinas "the order of the universe is the ultimate and noblest perfection in things." (Aquinas SCG, bk2, chap. 46, quoted by Berry in *The Great Work*).
Through his work he tried to show that no truth arrived at through human reason could be opposed to revealed truth. The apocalyptic literature in the Bible promising a pain-free existence when Satan is chained up for a thousand years (Revelation 20:2) fuelled the myth of progress which drove science. However, with the scientific discoveries of the Renaissance onwards, observational science was seen to be opposed to the deductive science accepted by the religious establishment.

Indigenous and classical civilisations appreciated the sacred quality of the universe seeing it as imbued with spirit presences. In the medieval Christian world humans were seen as part of the earth community in Genesis and connected to the whole of creation through Christ who held all things together (Colossians 1:17). Berry's central point is that now, more than in any other way, the sacred quality of the universe and the unity of all things is communicated to us through new discoveries in science. All aspects of the universe were born from the same initial energy. It is now accepted by scientists that the smallest units of existence cannot be understood in isolation from the wholes they combine to form. Put the other way, humans cannot be understood without reference to how they have evolved within the universe. The story of evolution shows how we are all related and interconnected. It is a story of increasing complexity and consciousness which "is neither random nor determined but creative".

In Berry's view, the earth and humans have a special place in the universe. In humans, the earth reflects on itself in conscious self-awarenss.

"We are ourselves a mystical quality of the Earth, a unifying principle, an integration of the various polarities of the material and the spiritual, the physical and the psychic, the natural and the artistic, the intuitive and the scientific...In this way the human acts as a pervading logos."

Here Berry seems to be attributing a Christ-like quality to humans. This is balanced by repeated insistance that we must regard the universe with awe and appreciate its sacred dimension so the earth can be renewed and we can become a "viable presence". He seems to be saying that we have a significant role to play in establishing "the intelligible order of the universe". Our actions will determine the future of the planet. There is a hint here that humans are made in the image of God. However, there is also a sense that God is reflected in the whole universe. In the medieval period it was seen as "a manifestation of the divine", for example Berry quotes St Thomas Aquinas, "The whole universe together participates in the divine goodness and represents it better than any single being whatsoever (Aquinas, ST, Q. 47, Art. I)."
In Berrys view, all aspects of the universe have a spirit dimension. "At all levels in the universe there is a capacity for self-organisation, intimate relationships and modes of consciousness." We only have consciousness on a complex level because consciousness was there when the universe began and has evolved. Berry believes this is demonstrated by science. The potential of the universe was there from the start. It is like the grain of mustard seed referred to by Jesus (Matthew 13:31-32).

Berry does not mention "God" as the source of the universe. The nearest he gets is saying that the universe seems as though it has been "dreamed into existence". He prefers to call the intelligence behind the universe "that numinous mystery whence all things come into being".

However, in his view, it is essential to recognise the universe as the "primary revalatory experience" of this presence in order to regain "our sense of wonder and...the sacred." In the reciprocal nature of the universe, the small is reflected in the large and vice versa. All parts are designed to function in a complementary way. As we respond creatively like the earth process, we become a part of it and find ourselves in the "Great Self" of the universe. This happens in worship although Berry does not use this word, "The fulfillment of the Earth community is to be caught up in the grandeur of existence itself and in admiration of those mysterious powers whence all this has emerged."

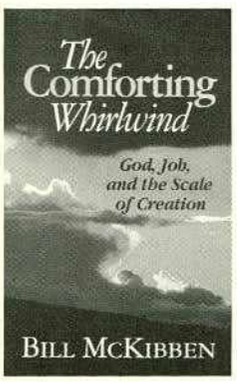
In order for the planet to have a viable future we need what Berry calls "fourfold wisdom". This draws together our different traditions: indigenous wisdom, the wisdom of classical traditions including religion, the wisdom of women and the wisdom of science. We can learn how to relate to the earth and universe around us from the example of indigenous peoples. We can also draw guidance from five symbols common to all religions and cultural traditions, "the Heroic Journey, Death-Rebirth, the Sacred Center, the Great Mother, the Tree of Life.." Women are good at combining different modes of human functioning which is necessary to respond to the earth effectively. The wisdom of science has three aspects: "differentiation, subjectivity and communion." Diversity needs to be encouraged since we are all inter-connected and the loss of one species affects all.

Education in the story of the universe is vital if we are to feel part of it and understand our role in it. For example, to understand and respond to the energy crisis, we need to consider why large quantities of carbon have been stored in coal, petroleum and forests by nature.

Books

Education is an important task for the ecologist who has "a greater sense of the human as a nurturing presence". We also need a more thorough knowledge of the different regions of the earth and how they fuction within themselves and as a whole. All institutions need to change in response to the new understanding which is now unfolding. We need to respond creatively to the discipline of limits and the spontaneity of wildness within the universe. To help us become aware of the universe and our place in it, we need to celebrate its transforming moments as "moments of grace". This is the way to align ourselves with its source which Berry believes is willing us on to future transformations.

Rachel Chilton



The Comforting Whirlwind: God, Job and the Scale of Creation
Bill McKibben
Cowley Publications, 2005

This is a beautifully written, inspiring book, based in the Old Testament, especially the book of Job. McKibben is a writer and a Methodist Sunday School teacher. He quotes extensively from Stephen Mitchell's lyrical translation, *The Book of Job* (HarperCollins, 1979)

Christian environmentalists will revel in McKibben's affirmation of God's love for all his creatures which makes even the wilderness blossom. The book is also an ideal gift for not-yet-convinced Christian friends as McKibben writes partly in response to the contradiction of how one can believe deeply in God 'and yet be so cavalier about God's creation'. In exploring the proper relationship between people, the Earth and God he sees two imperatives from the voice in the whirlwind: the call to humility and the call to joy. Job struggles with the traditional thinking that God punishes the wicked. McKibben links this challenge to orthodoxy with our current 'received wisdom' of unending growth. These 'orthodoxies' are similar in that they fly in the face of facts: Job's innocence and environmental degradation. We need the humility to realise we humans are part of, but not the centre, of creation. The voice out of the whirlwind also calls us to joy – to immersion in the fullness and beauty and drama around us, 'while the morning stars burst out singing and the angels shout for joy.'

A disturbing final section of the book shows how we are now changing the world described in Job. We are now the 'weather-makers' to use a phrase from another splendid book (Tim Flannery, *The Weather-Makers*, Penguin, 2005) We are changing the climate and thus deciding when the rains fall and even the boundaries of the oceans as sea levels rise. With our agribusiness and GM technology we are changing the plants and animals into commodities solely for our use and thus diminishing the joy of God's creatures. As McKibben says, 'peacocks don't come from planners, nor armadillos from accountants.'

The problem of sheer human numbers is a quiet truth. McKibben bravely reminds us that population increase is as important as the levels of efficiency and consumption in impacting on the Earth. He suggests, with irony, the church needs a festive celebration of the one commandment we have managed to fulfil.

For a Christian readership it would have been good to have some reference to the New Testament. But this is indeed a powerful statement of the majesty of God's creation and humanity's humble, but responsible place in it.

Barbara Echlin

In the last Issue (Green Christian 62 p.8) we previewed the next book by Tony Hodgson, a CEL member. The title of our article was USE YOUR LOAF, the book is now published under the title Good Food Stories. It's reviewed in the next column and you can obtained the book from Tony Hodgson, Ferrar House, Little Gidding, Huntingdon PE28 5RJ. info@ferrarhouse.co.uk



Good Food Stories Our Choices make the World of Difference
Tony Hodgson
Shepheard-Walwyn Publishers Ltd 2006

Tony Hodgson has known small scale food growing since childhood in Hampshire. As an Anglican priest he has ministered in Norfolk, Staffordshire and the Borders, and helped to found a land based community at Little Gidding, where he now ministers to people and the whole soil community. Hodgson's lifelong passion has been for local, small scale, organic, sustainable, animal and soil respectful food growing. His long experience and knowledge is now a valuable asset to overdeveloped and overcrowded and soil-degraded Britain.

In *Good Food Stories*, Hodgson describes gently and lucidly nineteen stories or ways in which a few people are making a difference to the soil community, and the way humans can live within it as responsible loving members and not exploiters. These include veggie box co-operatives, urban land regeneration and food growing, wholefood shops, the Land Heritage charity in Devon, Farmers' Markets, community supported agriculture, small scale organic farming and growing, the movement for slow food, woodland farming, some examples from France and further afield, and a final few pages of suggestions of how we all can make a difference to the local (and therefore global) soil, food culture, wildlife, domestic animals, children, and our own health. There is an appendix with some relevant organisations and journals, curiously including CEL but not its *Green Christian* flagship! An oversight for sure. This little book is a wise light read that in itself, like the stories it describes, will make a difference as an inspiring influence for living sustainably locally.

Edward Echlin

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If you wish to become a member of Christian Ecology Link or subscribe to *Green Christian*, please fill in this form and send with remittance to:
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CEL's 25th Anniversary Event



Storm of Hope

Saturday 7th July 2007
10am - 5pm
All Hallows by the Tower Church
London EC3

A day of reflection and creativity on our emerging fourfold mission:

- Letting loose hope
- Pioneering practical discipleship
- Equipping prophetic witness
- Empowering agents of change

More information and booking forms on the CEL website and email newsletter in the new year.
For posted details contact CEL's Information Officer on 01524 33858.

J

JUBILEE PRAYER ...2000

God of all Ages,
Maker of Time,
Mark of the Alpha and
Point to Omega,
Creator, Sustainer of everything living
Touching us all who hold a hope
With a vision that breaks through boundaries
To grasp the blurred horizon.

You gave Your promise
A blessing of Joy
To those who've not lost their faith in You.

Now time is poised with renewed expectation
Of EMMANUELLE, God with us.

To know our time
Of proclaimed favour
We make again the pledge you ask,

'Share justly, the good things I give you'
'Reconcile with Peace the rule of abuse'
'Give courage to those who voice the words
Of lives that have been silenced'

Send us to carry Your 'Good News'
To those burdened with debt.
Transform their chains into clasps of love,
Of Prayer, Concern and then Action.

Aware of Your Spirit always among us
We sustain Your purpose with passion
Increase our endeavour to do what you ask
Of 'Where there are wrongs, they be righted'.

NOW is the time.
It will be achieved
In acting justly,
In loving tenderly
And in walking closely with You, our God.
[sources...Matt.11,2-5; Luke 4,17-19; Micah 6,v8.]

Lala Winkley

C W O

prayer

moved by a compulsion of the Holy Spirit,
we cannot remain ignorant of this injustice in our midst.

we long for all humanity to be acknowledged as equal,
particularly among your community of the Church
and we grieve for the lost gifts of so many women.

we ask you, 'God of all Peoples'
to bring insight and humility to all those in positions of dominance,
and an understanding that the ascended Lord called us
to act, doing Christ's work here and now.

we ask this of you -
God our Creator
Jesus our Redeemer
spirit our Sustainer

St Joan's Alliance
agmlit97/w33

P

Penitential Litany on harmony and balance

Reader O loving Creator, forgive us for not allowing ourselves time to be, nor the time to stand and stare, wondering at the glories of your creation

All Send us your spirit to guide us

Reader O Source of Love, forgive us for not loving ourselves enough, so that we neglect our own needs, to the detriment of others

All Send us your wisdom to infuse us

Reader O Caring God, forgive us for not seeking hard enough to listen to others, but yet not be swamped by their needs

All Send us your Spirit of discernment

Reader O Compassionate Creator, forgive us for our tendency to pass by on the other side, fearing the involvement of compassion.

All Help us to reflect in our lives the loving mutuality of the Trinity

Reader O loving Empowerer, forgive us for not sufficiently engaging ourselves in the struggle against patriarchy and the abuse of authority, whether in church or secular life

All Send us the courage to be your prophetic witness

Reader O Mother God, help us to see that there is more to mothering than physically giving birth: Enable us to understand the nurturing role of all in fostering wholeness in the life of the spirit

All Enrich our sensitivity in our search for meaning

Reader O God of justice and mercy, forgive us for putting our own interests, individually or nationally, above those of our sisters and brothers in the underdeveloped world

All Give us new understanding of the inter-connectedness of all humanity

All O living God, who intends us to live in harmony with you, with ourselves and with others, give us new heart to strive for a balance in our lives and in our relations with our neighbours, both far and wide.

1P part

B

Suggested bidding prayers from Ianthe Pratt and Myra Poole

Response: Compassionate Spirit enlighten us to act wisely and with courage.

1. Poverty can never be made history unless the scandal of the feminisation of poverty is tackled in all cultures.

Response:

2. Let us ask the Spirit of Truth to touch the hearts of all traffickers that they may be led to an understanding of the great evils they are perpetuating.

Response:

3.May the people's of the world learn to respect women's bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit and not as sex objects that can be raped, trafficked and abused at will.

Response:

3. Let us pray for all who were first in the field to become aware of the growing numbers of .trafficked women. A slavery daily inching towards the numbers of those transported for slavery in days gone by.

Response:

4. May we who are Catholics commit ourselves to educating ourselves and our parishes to this growing evil and join with all denominations towards finding ways to eradicate this evil.

Response:

5. Let us pray for the Medaille community, in Britain, and other Religious Communities throughout the world, who are doing such great work, to provide safe houses for those who escape from the traffickers.

Response:

6. Christ told us 'to weep for ourselves and for our children, we weep with all who, at this moment in time, are either being trafficked from their own country, or in a country of transition being made ready to be sent to their

country of destination.

Response:

7. Jesus, we pray that you may fill these women with your love and sustain them in the hope that many are working for their release as soon as possible.

Response:

8. Lord with you all things are possible and so we pray that we may never lose heart, no matter how difficult and hopeless things may seem, to work tirelessly for the helping of all victims and the eradication of the causes and continuation of trafficking of human persons.

Response:

I

I WILL PRAISE GOD, MY BELOVED

I will praise God, my Beloved,
for she is altogether lovely.

Her presence satisfies my soul;
she fills my senses to overflowing
so that I cannot speak.

Her touch brings me to life;
the warmth of her hands makes me wholly alive.

Her embrace nourishes me, body and spirit;
every part of my being responds to her touch.

The beauty of her face is more than I can bear;
in her gaze I drown.

When she looks upon me
I can withold nothing;

when she asks for my love
all my defences crumble;
my pride and my control are utterly dissolved.

O God I fear your terrible mercy;
I am afraid to surrender my self.

If I let go into the whirlpool of your love,
shall I survive the embrace?

The Bidding Prayers Lola & Aurora 40th Wanniv

We are celebrating today the commitment of marriage and its call to dedicated partnership, to love and care for each other through joys and difficulties. A long and happy marriage, children and grandchildren is such a blessing for those fortunate to experience it.

May our relationship and all globally flourish and grow in the companionship of old age

God in your love and understanding
All: hear our prayer

We are minded today to pray for those, a number of whom are here present, who are bereaved of their spouses and are called to live on without them. This is clearly not a calling that they committed themselves to when they married.

For those widows and widowers we pray: may they find solace and comfort from their family and friends and all of us.

God in our bereavement and loss
All: hear our prayer.

We pray also for those who have experienced partnerships, in marriage or not, where the partnership has not been fulfilling: for those who have suffered the evil of domestic violence or psychological damage or forced separation from their children: for those who have to suffer burdens alone we pray and for those who have endured the pain of divorce.

May they overcome bitterness and feelings of deception, and God willing, be blessed with new and loving partnership.

God in our frailty and hurt to families
All: hear our prayer.

KEEPER AND Companion of us all, forgive us.

You call us, like Eve, to co-create new worlds;
But we turn away and backslide into the comfortable or the certain.

You call us, like Miriam, to dance for freedom;
But we turn away and glory in how far we have come, forgetting how far we have to go.

You call us, like Deborah, to judge our world, to make decisions and offer counsel;
But we turn away and apologise for our anger and compromise our positions.

You call us, like Naomi and Ruth, to love one another;
But we turn away and compete, taking vengeance on those most like ourselves.

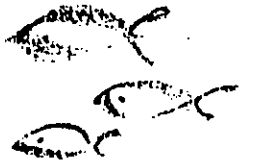
You call us, like Mary, to be faithful bearers of your word;
But we turn away and strive to become perfectionists.

You call us, like Thecla and Phoebe, to begin a new church;
But we turn away and accept a place in the system, rationalizing things the way they are.

Merciful Healer, we do not claim our gifts. We do not face up to your call. We do not appreciate your partnership in creating a new community and a new world. Today we repent. We turn from our old ways and commit ourselves to new partnerships for holding on and to new visions for a different heaven and earth.

THOSE WHO work for change suffer resistance.
So make us strong.
Those who do new things sometimes feel afraid.
So make us brave.
Those who challenge the world as it is arouse anger.
So grant us inner peace.
Those who live joyfully are envied.
So make us generous.
Those who try to love encounter hate.
So make us steadfast in you.

Blessing



MAY THE God who dances in creation,
who embraces us with human love,
who shakes our lives like thunder,
bless us and drive us out with power
to fill the world with her justice. Amen.

21

Brother, let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace
to let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey,
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ-light for you
in the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you.
I will share your joy and sorrow
till we've seen this journey through.

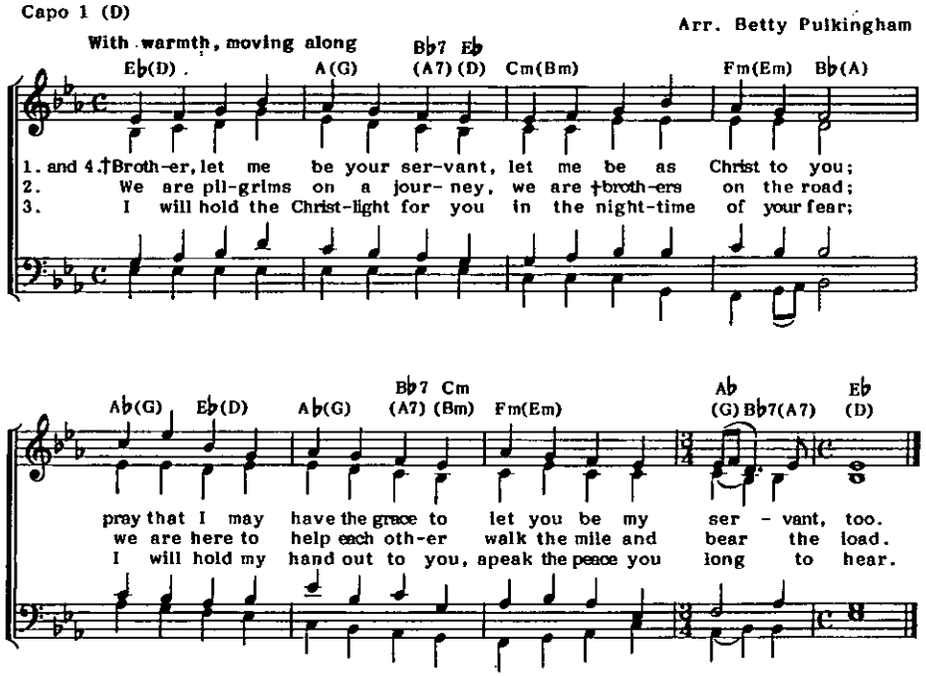
When we sing to God in heaven
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

Sister, let me be your servant,
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace
to let you be my servant too.

Richard Gillard
Scripture in Song (Mission, KS, 1977).

JOHN 13.1–14 ROMANS 12.15 GALATIANS 6.2

The servant song



Guitar chords and vocal harmonies are not designed to be used together. † Or 'Sister', Sisters'.

CALLED TO SAY YES

We are called to say yes
That the Kingdom might break through
To renew and to transform
Our dark and groping world.

We stutter and we stammer
To the lone God who calls
And pleads a New Jerusalem
In the bloodied Sinai Straits.

We are called to say yes
That honeysuckle may twine
And twist its smelling leaves
Over the graves of nuclear arms.

We are called to say yes
That children might play
On the soil of Vietnam where the tanks
Belched blood and death.

We are called to say yes
That black may sing with white
And pledge peace and healing
For the hatred of the past.

We are called to say yes
So that nations might gather
And dance one great movement
For the joy of humankind.

We are called to say yes
So that rich and poor embrace
And become equal in their poverty
Through the silent tears that fall.

We are called to say yes
That the whisper of our God
Might be heard through our sirens
And the screams of our bombs.

We are called to say yes
To a God who still holds fast
To the vision of the Kingdom
For a trembling world of pain.

We are called to say yes
To this God who reaches out
And asks us to share
His crazy dream of love.

Edwina Gately

We pray for all who are blessed with children - that we may always have a concern to deeply understand and be consistently patient in the art of good parenting. May the weariness of early motherhood be brief enough for them to soon forget it: and may mothers and fathers be strengthened in their love for each other, manifest in their off-spring.

God, in our heavy responsibilities of nurturing and caring
All: hear our prayer

We pray for those damaged or diseased in the gift of conceiving and bearing children, especially our friends ..... and ..... We pray also for the medical profession who are so caring and diligent in their endeavours to help couples who need assistance to conceive, bear and birth their children. We pray for all women who are pregnant at this time and their spouses - especially for our daughter Antonia and Michael, for whom our parish have been praying (Fr Bruno used to mention them weekly in his bidding prayers). Her much wanted baby is due in 3 weeks time.

God in our lack of understanding in your arbitrariness in conception
All: Hear our pray

We pray for those who have, as yet, not met the person they would like to partner their life. May you be blessed with wondrous happenstance yet choose wisely.

We pray for blessing on those who live "the single life" so often dedicating their lives, their energies, their whole endeavours to the good and care of others. Our Church is so enriched by them and many are present here (naming the priest, parishioners and friends) We give thanks for these who are so precious in our communities.

God, in the many gifts and resourcefulness of women, yet grieving for the lack of recognition and respect given them by our Church.
All: Hear our prayer

We pray for those who have engaged in civil partnerships, who have been blessed by God with a loving partner, may their relationships flourish in commitment, companionship and love.

God, in your infinite understanding and acceptance of the diversities of our love
All: Hear our prayer

All violence is anathema to life, love and all faiths. We pray for the innocent civilians, the women and children caught in the evil of war. We pray intensely that tribal and sectarian hatreds, wherever they many be, may be turned to tolerance, love and understanding. As requested by Christ we pray for those so misguided to believe it is the will of God, of Allah, to kill.

May we pray at this moment also for the Christians of Iraq. The Chaldean, Assyrians, into which my family siblings were baptised - these Christians are being threatened, attacked, murdered and martyred because they are Christian.

God, in our need for justice for all, but achieved always by non-violence
All: Hear our prayer

Let us now pray for any others of our family, friends or parishes
May our prayers be the oil of healing needed by all of us.
Name these so that all pour gathered community may pray for them.

(names offered up)

Let us now pray for a moment in the quiet stillness of our hearts.

We concluded by calling on Mary, whose icon "mother of the city" along with her husband Joseph we are privileged to have painted for us here in our church. Hail Mary.....

Intercessory (Bidding) Prayers written and led by Lala Winkley at the 40th wedding anniversary thanksgiving Eucharist for her and her husband Austin. July 07

The context of these was the usual Sunday mass of a small city parish with many of their long standing friends joining the usual diverse congregation. This is a church with good contemporary music and a high level of participation.

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HAIL, FULL OF GRACE!
A Meditation for Lady Day

0 radiance, radiance of morning's new dawn,
0 speak not a word, lest you miss what is born
From the womb of the Godhead creating with pain,
The nourishing gifts of the earth's fruit and grain.

'Is there one who is hearing ?' God's heart-beat is pleading.
She is listening, listening, the bread she is kneading,
The silence enfolds her, deep-hidden its power,
0 daughter, beloved, lcnow this is the Hour!

0 deep is the yearning, for healing she longs
for a people's deliv'rance from oppression and wrongs.
While moulding the loaf - wheaten flour which earth yields,
She connects with her sisters still toiling in fields.

0 daughter, beloved, I heard Rachel's cries,
for the vulnerable children, who forever will die
through the violence of culture, my compassion will stream,
In your waiting, responding, lies my hope and my dream.

0 strong is the spirit, insistent and wild,
Evoking response - "I am Wisdom's child!
Let my body, my life, as love's gift remain
for God and my people, for all children in pain".

The silence is broken, there is rushing of wings,
The cry of the wild goose, exultant it sings -
"0 Rise up, daughter, love's power will unfold, Revealing the healing of stories untold".
She is rushing throught hillside, her sister she seeks, In the mutual joy of encounter she speaks:
"God is listening, hearing, all history's sorrow,
God is with me, creating, and birthing tomorrow..."

Mary Grey

PSALM 51 A WOMAN'S MISERERE

Have mercy on me, O Life-giver, through your goodness
In your great tenderness sooth away my faults
Cleanse me of my guilt
do not hold my failures against me

For I have come to see that I fail you,
when I have not acknowledged with my whole being
that I am made truly in your image
in not walking in your ways
I have sinned against you

You are love and truth itself
and seek sincerity of heart
teach me the secrets of wisdom
Cleanse me from all that prevents me
from listening to your word

Let me cry out with joy and gladness
Leave behind me feelings of inferiority
Do not hold it against me
that I have fallen in with men's distortions.

Creator, call forth a willing response from me
infuse in me a new spirit of confidence
Let me be aware of your presence
and draw strength from your Spirit

Giver of life, source of salvation
Let me rejoice in serving you.
Keep my spirit responsive to you
and I shall show forth to the sexist
the true way to you

Save me from everlasting death, O God my Saviour,
and I shall acclaim your goodness.
Creator, give me the courage
to speak forth your truth,
and use all my being, body mind and soul, to give you praise

You call for a contrite heart
The placatory sacrifices on the altars did not please you
Our sacrifice is to do your will
to work unceasingly for the coming of your realm

Show forth your love to the women you have created
guide us in building true community
Let the evils of dualism and domination be vanquished
and a new age come where all live out your love.

IP 1986

Prayer (from Iona)

Be still my children
My voice is not always
heard in the thunder and earthquakes
of your experience.
I do not only speak when you are
physically and mentally involved in living.
Be still - and in the stillness I will speak
when you are quiet
when you are resting
when you are aware of me pulsating within
you and around you
when you are waiting and listening
I will break through
and enrich your silence
releasing my peace and glory
and transforming your experience
until in the stillness
you find yourself longing
to shout for joy.

short Silence

Silence

A. We are called to become
A perfect creation.
No one is called to become
who we individually are called to be.
It does not matter
How short or tall
Or thick-set or slow
We may be.

B. It does not matter
whether we sparkle with life
Or are silent as a still pool,
Whether we singf your song aloud
Or weep alone in darkness.

A. For we are called to become
A perfect creation
No one's shadow
Should cloud our becoming,
No one's light
Should dispel our spark.

B. For the Lord delights in us
Jealously looks upon us
And encourages with gentle joy
Every movement of the Spirit
Within us.

A. Unique and loved we stand
Beautiful or stunted in our growth
But never without hope and life.

All: For we are called to become
A perfect creation.
This becoming may be
Gentle or harsh,
Subtle or violent,
But it never ceases,
Never pauses or hesitates,
Only is -
Creative force -
Calling us
Calling us to become
A perfect creation

Edwina Gately

L

Let every word
be the fruit
of action and reflection.
Reflection alone
without action
or tending towards it
is mere theory,
adding its weight

when we are
overloaded
with it already ...
Action alone
without reflection
is being busy
pointlessly.
Honour the Word eternal
and speak
to make
a new world possible.

Helder Camara, Brazil
The Desert is Fertile (Sheed & Ward 1974).

ISAIAH 55.8–11

God, you invite us to dance in delight,
shaping and forming in figures of grace.
We move to the pulse of creation's music
and rejoice to be part of the making of earth.

Praise in the making, the sharing, the moving;
praise to the God who dances with us.

In the steps of Jesus we reach to our partners,
touching and holding and finding our strengths.
Together we move into patterns of freedom,
and rejoice to be part of the sharing of hope.

Praise in the making, the sharing, the moving;
praise to the God who dances with us.

We whirl and spin in the Spirit's rhythm,
embracing the world with our circles of joy.
Together we dance for salvation and justice,
and rejoice to be part of the moving of love.

Praise in the making, the sharing, the moving;
praise to the God who dances with us.

Jan Berry

Amen

MOVEMENT FOR MARRIED CLERGY
AGM Lecture Saturday 26 May 07 at 3 pm at the Chaplaincy, 111 Gower St WC1
(the lecture and discussion will be followed by the AGM at 4.30pm)

MARRIAGE - A BAR TO PRIESTHOOD?

Speaker: Rev.Dr Thomas O'Loughlin, Dean of Humanities, Lampeter University. He has the reputation of being an outstanding speaker with much theological understanding of the subject.

This is an important issue in face of the current shortage of priests and rethinking of the ordained ministry for today. It is hoped that those concerned with renewal in the church will come and add their insights to the discussion.

(this flyer is being distributed by Ianthe Pratt, an active member of CWO, WWS, St Joan's Alliance and the Association for Inclusive Language.)

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M Mystery

M



Thoughts from Cardinal Hume
MYSTERY

The meaning of things, and their purpose,
is in part now hidden
but shall in the end become clear.
The choice is between
the Mystery and the absurd.
To embrace the Mystery
is to discover the real.
It is to walk towards the light,
to glimpse the morning star, to catch sight
from time to time
of what is truly real
it is no more than a flicker of light
through the cloud of unknowing,
a fitful ray of light
that is a messenger from the sun
which is hidden from your gaze.
You see the light but not the sun.
When you set yourself to look more closely
you will begin to see some sense
in the darkness that surrounds you.
Your eyes will begin to pick out
the shape of things and persons around you.
You will begin to see in them
the presence of the One
who gives them meaning and purpose,
and that it is He
who is the explanation of them all.

Cardinal Basil Hume, OSB©

READINGS ON A THEME OF JOURNEY

God has created me
God is my Lord, having dominion over me…
Through God I have living spirit
Through God I have life and movement
Through God I learn, I find my path.

If I call in truth, This God and Lord directs my steps;
Setting my feet to the rhythm of his precepts.
I run like a deer that seeks its spring.

(Hildegard of Bingen)

"You have to be a pioneer, journeying to places which the rest of the world ignores, humbly and courageously opening yourself to what others do not wish to see, both good and evil…

Prayer at night- cairns for the journey JimCotter

The Church, in continuing dying and rising again, follows its crucified and risen Lord on pilgrimage through history towards the heavenly Jerusalem. We are not alone in our pilgrimage of Faith. We discern fellow-Christians of other Churches moving in the same direction as ourselves and in the same Spirit as ourselves"

The Easter People – (Bishops' response to Nat. Pastoral Congress 1980)

"The invitation to follow Jesus is an invitation to lifelong exploration in search of the ultimate truth with the person of Jesus as our guide….it is an invitation to discover the truth, to find the most fulfilling way to live in the complex world of the 21st century"

At the Heart of the World Cormac Murphy O'Connor

God loves us where we are, as we are, in order to help move on ….We are called into a deeper knowledge and love of God, to a truer knowledge of ourselves, and to a more perfect service of those around us. "we would much rather not hear any of these calls. Each is full of danger, of the unknown, of the frightening. We long to stay settled where we are ---physically, spiritually, emotionally – for fear of what may befall us if we move.

If we find ourselves resistant to these calls, two things may be happening. It may be that there is something still unresolved in our inner life: a past grief or hurt unhealed, an injury unforgiven. That unresolved trauma makes it impossible for us to hear clearly ….or it may be that despite periods of prayer and reflection Bible study and public worship, our lives are too cluttered, too busy, too full of "white noise" to allow us to hear anything – our deepest selves, our families, or God".

Towards wholeness – a journey Charles & Hilary Elliot

DISCUSSION POINTERS

1. What is your reaction to the readings?
2. Why do we need to go on a journey?
3. The institutional Church is also called to journey if it is to be a truly pilgrim people. What needs to be done to make it an effective sign?
4. What place has hope and prophecy in the journey?

T.

Holy Weaver (each person takes a line)
Holy Weaver, Life giving Spirit
We draw near to each other in your presence.
You breathe, and we see afresh;
You startle, and we hear anew;
You cajole, and we act again with vigour.
Weave a pattern of peace between strangers,
Weave a pattern of love between friends,
Weave a pattern of hope among the hopeless,
Weave a pattern of joy among the sorrowful,
Weave a pattern of passion between lovers -
(**All**) For you, holy weaver, Creator, Son and Spirit
are the true lover of us all.
Bind us in your love, now and forever.
(Ruth Harvey)

All

Bread of Tomorrow

But now you have called me out and away from home
and I do not know where you are leading.
I am empty, unsure, uncomfortable.
I have only a beckoning star to follow.

Journeying God,
pitch your tent with mine
so that I may not become deterred
by hardship, strangeness, doubt.
Show me the movement I must make
toward a wealth not dependent on possessions
toward a wisdom not based on books
toward a strength not bolstered by might
toward a God not confined to heaven
but scandalously earthed, poor, unrecognized ...

Help me to find myself
as I walk in others' shoes.
(Kate Compston)

Pause

Flowing Free (All)

The love of God
Flowing free
The love of God
Flow out through me

The peace of God
Flowing free
The peace of God
Flow out through me

The life of God
Flowing free
The life of God
Flow out through me.

Celtic Prayer

I All

Be still
And let God's peace wash over you
Like waves lapping over pebbles
Smoothing rough edges of insurmountable worries
To tiny insignificant grains of sand
Taking away the jaggedness of sin
To leave smooth shining love.
And let the peace of God,
The Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Be with us all today and every day.

Leslie Steel

God our reconciler, who, in the person of the Spirit, beckons us into community,
Guides us into the paths of peace
And inspires our longing to become more Christ-like:
Let your hand nudge us into the adventure
Of painting new visions, writing new words,
Building new structures, and carving new landmarks

To meet the challenges of our time
As you embrace us, may our hands embrace the world
to find that all our sisters and brothers – all living things share the same pulse of God-given life.

Kate Compston

Intercessions

III

R. God of the weary
All **Receive my tiredness**
R. God of the hungry
All etc **Know my emptiness**
God of those in danger
Hold my fear
God of the silenced
Hear my despair
God of the heavyladen
Give me rest
God of the hopeful
Fill me again with longing.

O God, life-giving Spirit,
Spirit of healing and comfort,
Of integrity and truth,
We believe and trust in you.
Warm-winged Spirit, brooding over creation,
Rushing wind and Pentecostal fire,
We commit ourselves to work with you
And renew our world.

Final Prayer – All

God be our comfort, our strength
God be our hope and support
God be our light and our way
and may God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer
Bless us and remain with us now and for ever

Adapted from N.Z. Prayer

God ... a marvellous bond exists among the three, so that each is found in all, and all in each, and when one wavers they all diminish. God's loving arrangement is that we should need one another. Those who abide in friendship abide in God, and God in *them.*

John 15 13-15 Greater love...

II

Celebration of Hope (from the Corrymeela community)
(All)

2
A Celebration of Hope

In the midst of hunger and war
We celebrate the promise of plenty and peace
In the midst of oppression and tyranny
We celebrate the promise of service and freedom
In the midst of doubt and despair
We celebrate the promise of faith and hope
In the midst of fear and betrayal
We celebrate the promise of joy and loyalty
In the midst of hatred and death
We celebrate the promise of love and life
In the midst of sin and decay
We celebrate the promise of salvation and renewal
In the midst of the dying Lord
We celebrate the promise of the living Christ.

Intercessions

III

Version of the Beatitudes (Lala) Said antiphonally

A Blessed are you who touch the grass roots, the powerless, yet are filled with a passion to grow and make good. You understand God's purpose.

B Blessed are you who have found such depth of expression in your grief. You will find comfort in what you have caused to change.

& so on A Blessed are you who understand that justice must be made present now. You shall see it happen.

Hands

I see, Lord, in my tightly clenched fists
a symbol of my self.
I grasp my life,
hiding all I don't want others to see.

I hold my pride:
my desire to appear right,
my desire to appear strong.

I hold my anxieties:
my fear that I won't be accepted as I am,
my inability to be who I am.

I hold my anger:
my violence that protects me
against anyone
who comes too close to my secrets.

I ache with this tension,
with the immense energy required
to hide myself –
from you, lest you change me,
from them, lest they hurt me.

With these fists, I want to strike out –
against you,
against them,
against all that threatens me.

(pause)

But I see,
in these whitened knuckles
and straining forearms,
what this is doing to me:
I am enslaved,
imprisoned within myself.
I am destroying myself and others.

(pause)

But I sense your presence, Lord,
your open hands
reaching out to me.

I slowly open my hands,
and release myself to you.
I offer all I have been grasping so tightly:
the fear of being known,
the anxiety of being alone,
the anger, the guilt, the pain.

Lord!
My arms no longer ache!
My hands can move again!
They can stretch and wiggle.
They are open and able to receive –
Fill them with your love!
Show them how to touch,
how to serve.

Freed from my own grasp,
I am suddenly aware of others.
I reach out to my sisters and brothers.
Let my hands be your hands
as I take their needs and cares
and lift them to you.
Give us your sustaining grace,
touch us with your healing love.
Take us and shape us together
into the body of your Son.

Let our hands be your hands
to reach out to the world you love.

original author unknown
adaptation by Martha Keys Barker
and Patricia Beall

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Unique and loved ~~you~~ we stand,
Beautiful or stunted in your growth
But never without hope and life.
For ~~you~~ we are called to become
A perfect creation.
This becoming may be
Gentle or harsh,
Subtle or violent,
But it never ceases,
Never pauses or hesitates,
Only *is*–
Creative force–
Calling ~~you~~ us
Calling ~~you~~ us to become
A perfect creation.

M (mixed)

(Edwina Gately)

Finding and looking find a leaf, twig, a stone - whatever of nature is available to you - then try to draw it. This is not an exercise of art but of looking, it does not matter what you come up with, it is the doing that counts. If you are looking at bark you might like to try a rubbing.

Celtic God Prayer (the two sides of the group alternately)



I am the wind that breathes upon the sea,
All: I am the wave on the ocean,
I am the murmur of the leaves rustling,
All: I am the rays of the sun,
I am the beam of the moon and the stars,
All: I am the power of the trees growing,
I am the bud breaking into blossom,
All: I am the movement of the salmon swimming,
I am the courage of the wild boar fighting,
All: I am the speed of the stag running,
I am the strength of the ox pulling the plough,
All: I am the size of the mighty oak tree,
And I am the thoughts of all my people
All: Who praise my beauty and my grace.

Offertory and intercessions

Place your drawings in the bowl/basket, then place a flower or leaves in the vase, with a spoken or unspoken prayer

All God of Power Miriam Therese Winter

God of power.
God of people.
You are the life of all
that lives.
energy
that fills the earth,
vitality
that brings to birth
the impetus
toward making whole
whatever is bruised
or broken.
In You we grow
to know the truth
that sets all creation free.
You are the song
the whole earth sings.
the promise
liberation brings.
now and forever.

Opportunity

Silently they came
Breaking the moon-filled night
With their quiet steps.
He, all solicitude for her,
She, womb-filled,
Feeling her way into motherhood,
Touched the night with a smile.
They found the cave, as directed.
She gave birth to a boy
And laid him down
In the manger straw;
And, on the ground
By the side of the crib,
She fell asleep.
O you who wonder
Who God is,
Will you recognize
Your opportunity?

The Maji

It was the sheer inaptness
of their gifts
which got her;
she giggled
and tried,
out of politeness,
to suppress it:
failed
and burst into laughter,
the sheer incongruity,
of gold, frankincense,
and, would you believe it, myrrh
and what she wanted was nappies.
But in her laughter,
they knew
that this was the place
and worshipped him,
while he wet her dress.

The Gift

It was a day for the eagle.
Her eyes scanned the heavens
As the child slept
on her back
And the line shuffled forward;
Cries of infants, ,
Filled the sweet morning air.
Faces of girls, anxious and proud,
Navigated their way, shoulder to shoulder,
Into the awesome hold of their God.
Give back! Hand back! Surrender what you have received!
The young priest was gracious,
Performed the ritual, smiled at the pigeons
And they turned on their heels
Into the Aged-One blocking their path.
He took the child into his hands
And joy gathered around his heart.
The promise! The promise!
His eyes were looking at the world's salivation.
Here was the light! Here the glory!
Insight trembled on his lips.
A sign to be opposed,
A heart would break,
A soul be pierced,
Israel would stumble as it had in the past,
While the inner thoughts of many
Would be revealed.

And you!
What are your thoughts?

Paddy Tunnell-



Card by Deepthi

A LITURGY OF HOPE

INTRODUCTION *To restore to memory and hope the broken and unremembered victims of tyranny and sin.*

PRAYER

Leader Let us in silence hold before God all whom we have met today: those who need to be brought to memory before God and before those who govern this land.
SILENCE

All O God of tenderness and compassion
who does not forget a single sparrow that falls to the ground,
be courage and hope for those who are forgotten and despised
and deepen in us the thirst for a true Justice
in the Spirit of Jesus Christ. AMEN

READING *Is 42 v 1-4*

Reader 1 Here is my servant whom I uphold,
my chosen one in whom my soul delights
I have endowed him with my spirit
that he may bring true justice to the nations.

He does not cry or shout aloud
or make his voice heard in the streets
He does not break the crushed reed
nor quench the wavering flame.

Faithfully he brings true justice:
he will neither waver nor be crushed
until true justice is established on earth
for the islands are awaiting his law.

RESPONSE *To the tune of Greensleaves*

All He does not cry or shout aloud
His voice, it is not raiséd
The smouldering wick he does not quench
nor break the bruiséd reed.
Justice his only care,
life is renewed and hearts made strong,
Hope, then awake in us,
O Christ, the source of Justice.

READING *From the **Humility of God** by John Macquarrie*

Reader 2 Hope contains no guarantees. It does not make things easy, but gives strength to undertake the difficult. It is very important indeed to notice that there is a great difference between hope and optimism. Hope is humble, trustful, vulnerable. Optimism is arrogant, brash, complacent. Hope has known the pang of suffering and has perhaps even felt the chill of despair. The word hope should not be lightly spoken by people who have never had any cause for despair. Only one who has cried *de*

profundis can really appreciate the meaning of hope. By contrast, optimism has not faced the enormity of evil or the results of the fall and the disfiguring sin that affects all human life, both personal and social. What drives some people to atheism is not a genuinely biblical hope, but the spectacle of an insensitive optimism masquerading as hope.

Hope is not optimism. It is nothing so superficial as the easy belief that all is going to turn out well in the end. Hope is rather the faith that when we fall and even when the worst evils happen in this ambiguous world, we never find ourselves at the end of the road. The creator God is ahead of us, waiting to open a new possibility.

LITANY OF HOPE *Please pause before the response*

Leader Hope is humble, trustful and vulnerable
All Hope does not disappoint us
Leader Hope has known the pang of suffering and felt the chill of despair.
All Hope does not disappoint us
Leader Hope is ready for the new road that lies open before us.
All Hope does not disappoint us
because God's love is poured into our hearts
by the Holy Spirit whom God has given us.

GOSPEL *Mtt 5 v 6*

Reader 3 A reading from the Gospel according to St Matthew

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice for they will be filled.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.
All Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

HOMILY

ACT OF HOPE

All He does not cry or shout aloud
His voice, it is not raiséd
The smouldering wick he does not quench
nor break the bruiséd reed.
Justice his only care,
life is renewed and hearts made strong.
Hope, then awake in us,
O Christ, the source of Justice.

People come up to the table to light their candles from the "smouldering wick" and take a seed of hope from the "bruised reed". Anyone who wishes to do so may share a prayer or short

reflection as she does this.
When all have done this, we all sing the above refrain again.

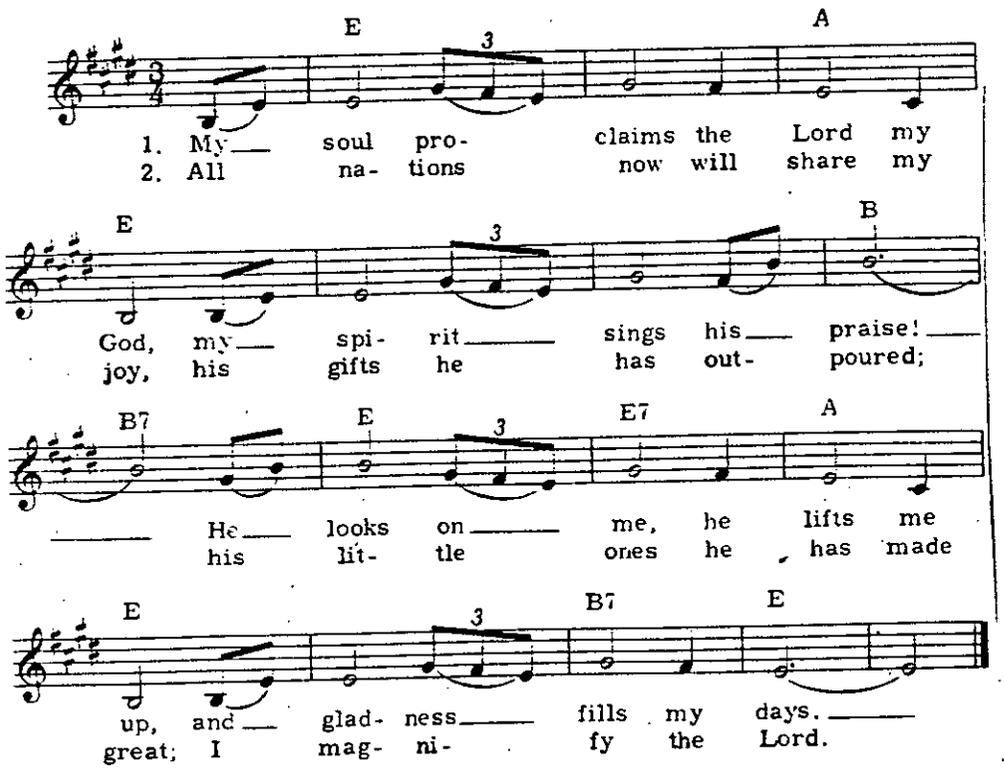
LITANY OF HOPE (Repeated)

Leader Hope is humble, trustful and vulnerable
All Hope does not disappoint us
Leader Hope has known the pang of suffering and felt the chill of despair.
All Hope does not disappoint us
Leader Hope is ready for the new road that lies open before us.
All Hope does not disappoint us
because God's love is poured into our hearts
by the Holy Spirit whom God has given us.

FINAL BLESSING

Leader May the God of all hope
who raised Jesus from the dead
strengthen us and encourage us
to hunger and thirst after justice.
All AMEN

All And may God, who is all compassionate bless us
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. AMEN



3. For those who love his holy name,
his mercy will not die.
His strong right arm puts down the proud
and lifts the lowly high.

4. He fills the hungry with good things,
the rich he sends away.
The promise made to Abraham
is filled to endless day.

5. Magnificat, magnificat,
magnificat, praise God!
Praise God, praise God, praise God,
magnificat, praise God!

Words: Anne Carter R.S.C.J., based on the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55)
Music: American Folk Melody

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ST JOAN'S INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE.

LITURGY OF MARY OF THE MAGNIFICAT

Song Where are you bound, Mary

Reading: The Visitation Lk.1 36-45

Reading from "Mary and Women" Catherina Halkes, Concilium "Mary in the Churches" (p70, para 2)

Short silence

Magnificat of Now (from Miriam of Nazareth, Johnson)

Prayers based on "Introducing Liberation Theology",Boff

Reader A.

Mary is the prophetic and liberating Woman of the people. "All the theological greatness of Mary is based on the lowliness of her historical tradition. She is Mary of Nazareth, a woman of the people, who observed the usual customs of her day, visited her relatives, took part in wedding celebrations and worried about her son, following him even to the foot of the cross, as any mother would do. "Because of this ordinarinesa and not in spite of it" God did "great things" for her.

Leader O loving and sustaining God, help us to challenge the powerful and work to empower all so that they may use their gifts in building up your realm.

All Sung response

Reader B

Mary is the perfect example of faith responding to God. She did not understand the full extent of the mystery to be brought about through her but she trusted in God and concerned herself with others - her cousin Elizabeth, her son lost on pilgrimage, the guests with no wine "Persons can be liberators only if they free themselves from their own preoccupations and place their lives at the service of others".

Leader Help us O loving and sustaining Creator to be as responsive to your word as Mary was, and to identify ourselves with the needs of others, particularly women who have suffered so much by the distortion of your word.

All Sung response

Reader C Thirdly, she is the prophetess of the Magnificat "anticipating the liberating proclamation of her son she shows herself attentive to the fate of the humiliated and deabsed, and invokes divine revolution in the relationship between oppressors and oppressed"

Leader O loving and Sustaining Redeemer, help us to live out the Magnificat in our attitudes and actions.

All Sung response

Reader D Finally in Latin-American popular religion Mary is seen as the champion of the poor. The masses bring their troubles to the centrese of Marian pilgrimage where they are filled with renewed strength and hope to carry on struggling and surviving.

Leader O loving and sustaining Spirit, inspire us to free the image of Mary, Mother of God, from the pious distortions of the ages, and find in her a model of challenge and hope.

All Sung response

Responsorial song

Poem "a Blessed Embarrassment" from "Beginning with Mary" by T Carlyle, the American protestant scripture scholar

Photolanguage reflections (a selection of photographs of women, men & children in various situations found the world were available. Each participant chose one & spoke about what idea it evoked)

Poem "Did the woman say" (Frances Croake Frank, in Celebrating women)

Did the woman say,
When she held him for the first time in the
dark dank of a stable,
After the pain and the bleeding and the crying,
"This is my body; this is my blood"?

Did the woman say,
When she held him for the last time in the dark
rain on a hilltop,
After the pain and the bleeding and the dying,
"This is my body; this is my blood"?

Well that she said it to him then.
For dry old men,
Brocaded robes belying barrenness,
Ordain that she not say it for him now.

Silence

Song: The Bakerwoman

Concluding prayer

(all move round table, link hands and sing responsorial blessing)

Prayers connected with Healing and Wholeness

From Seeing Christ in others (Anthology by Geoffrey Duncan)

Through human lips
Christ is speaking
Through human hands
Christ is healing
Through our hearts
Christ is loving
Through us all
Christ is working
So behold the truth
God is living, loving
speaking and healing
through Christ our Saviour.

Richard Becher

Holy Weaver, life-giving Spirit
We draw near to each other in your presence.
You breathe, and we see afresh;
You startle, and we hear anew;
You cajole, and we act again with vigour.
Weave a pattern of peace between strangers,
Weave a pattern of love between friends,
Weave a pattern of hope among the hopeless,
Weave a pattern of joy among the sorrowful
Weave a pattern of passion between lovers-
For you, holy weaver, creator, son, spirit
Are the true lover of us all.
Bind us in your love, now and forever.

Ruth Harvey

Final blessings from the above anthology

Be still
And let God's peace wash over you
Like waves lapping over pebbles
Smoothing rough edges of insurmountable worries
To tiny insignificant grains of sand
Taking away the jaggedness of sin
To leave smooth shining love.
And let the peace of God,
The Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Be with us all today and every day.

Leslie Steel

God our reconciler, who, in the person of the Spirit, beckons us into community,
Guides us into the paths of peace
And inspires our longing to become more Christ-like;
Let your hand nudge us into the adventure
Of painting new visions, writing new words,
Building new structures, and carving new landmarks
To meet the challenges of our time
As you embrace us, may our hands embrace the world
to find that all our sisters and brothers – all living things share the same pulse of God-given life.

Kate Compston

From All Desires Known Janet Morley

Tender God
You have seen my affliction,
And unbound my eyes;
You have bereaved me of the burden
To which I used to cling;
You have woven my pain
Into patterns of integrity;
The wounds I cherished
You have turned into honours,
And the scars I kept hidden
Into marks of truth.
You have touched me gently:
I have seen you face, and live

God of the weary
Receive my tiredness
God of the hungry
Know my emptiness
God of those in danger
Hold my fear
God of the silenced
Hear my despair
God of the heavyladen
Give me rest
God of the hopeful
Fill me again with longing.

O God, life-giving Spirit,
Spirit of healing and comfort,
Of integrity and truth,
We believe and trust in you.
Warm-winged Spirit, brooding over creation,
Rushing wind and Pentecostal fire,
We commit ourselves to work with you
And renew our world.

From Human Rites

God be your comfort, your strength;
God be your hope and support;
God be your light and your way;
And may God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,
Bless you and remain with you
Now and for ever. Amen.

Joyce Yarrow adapted from NZ prayerbook

Final Blessing

As we prepare to leave
and embrace the challenges
of our lives and our world,
let us ask for God's blessing.

May God bless us with strength
to seek justice. **Amen.**

May God bless us with wisdom
to care for our earth. **Amen.**

May God bless us with love
to bring forth new life. **Amen.**

In the name of God, the maker of the whole world,
of Jesus, our new covenant,
and of the Holy Spirit, who opens eyes and hearts. **Amen.**

Go in peace and be witnesses to hope.
Thanks be to God.

From *Building a New World*, Share Lent Project 1991
(Canadian Catholic Organisation for Development and Peace).

Final Song: Now the Green Blade Riseth (on separate sheet)

A Prayer for Abundant Life

Oh God
Where hearts are fearful and confined:
Grant freedom and daring.
Where anxiety is infectious and widening:
Grant peace and reassurance.
Where impossibilities close every door and window:
Grant imagination and resistance.
Where distrust shapes every understanding:
Grant healing and transformation.
Where spirits are daunted and dimmed:
Grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams.

THE GLOBAL OUR FATHER

Our God who is in heaven
holy is your name in peoples across the world,
of different race, colour and religion,
in families and religious communities,
in places of work, centres of study,
hospitals and places of refuge.

Your reign come more and more
in the hearts of those who work in your name,
of those who know you least and those who have no hope.

Your will be done on earth,
in the hearts of saints and sinners
and those who have abundance from which to give the hungry,
the sick, the untaught, the homeless and unemployed.

Give us this day our daily bread
to the poor at home and the poor across the world,
the bread of truth to this disturbed generation.

And forgive us our sins, our coldness,
our constant failure to reach out
to those who are in need,
as we forgive those who sin against us.

And lead us not into temptation;
Give us the grace to resist temptation to judge,
the temptation to count the cost, the temptation to fear failure,
the temptation to selfishness, to a closed mind.

But deliver us from the evil of injustice,
of war and of violence,
the evil of failing in affection, respect and support for those
who live and work with us,
deliver us from the evil of turning away from you.

Missionary Resources

Prayer (Helder Camara)

Let every word
be the fruit
of action and reflection.
Reflection alone
without action
or tending towards it
is mere theory,
adding its weight

when we are
overloaded
with it already ...
Action alone
without reflection
is being busy
pointlessly.
Honour the Word eternal
and speak
to make
a new world possible.

Parting Prayer

Order of Service for Anointing

Be at peace!
God be *your* comfort, *your* strength;
God be *your* hope and support;
God be *your* light and *your* way;
and the blessing of God,

Creator, Redeemer and Giver of life,
remain with *you* now and for ever.

Graham Long
England

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FROM THE HOLY CITY Peter Macdonald p1

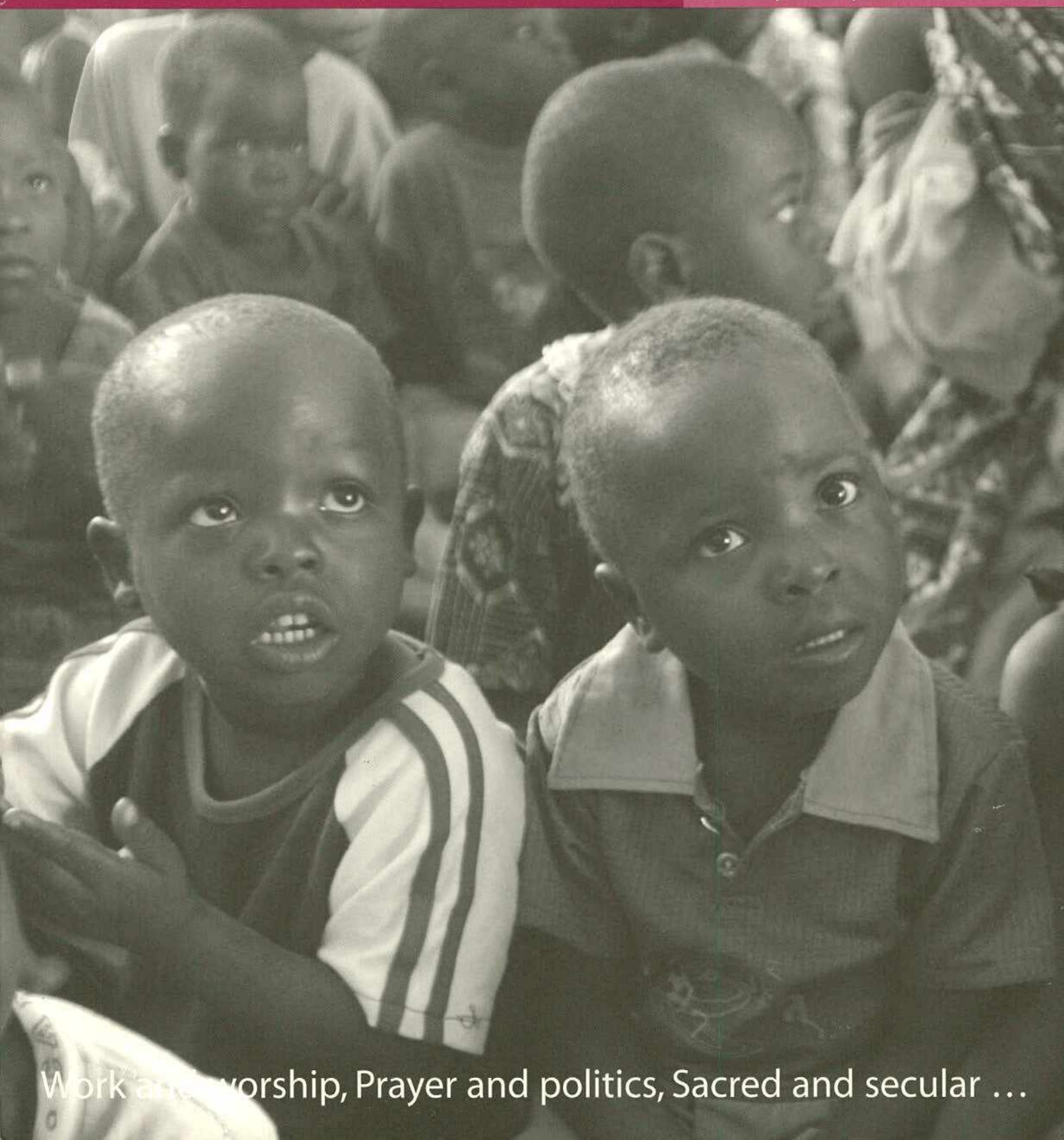
IS THERE ANYBODY THERE? Graeme Brown p5

'ORPHANS ARE OUR CHILDREN': LUSUBILO COMMUNITY, MALAWI Linda and Ian Fraser and Anna Macdonald p7

RECONNECTING WITH THE ROOTS – A FUTURE FOR CELTIC SPIRITUALITY? Rosemary Power p10

the magazine of the iona community

coracle



Work and worship, Prayer and politics, Sacred and secular …

The Iona Community is:

- An ecumenical community of men and women from different walks of life and different traditions in the Christian church
- Committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to following where that leads, even into the unknown
- Engaged together, and with people of goodwill across the world, in acting, reflecting and praying for justice, peace and the integrity of creation
- Convinced that the inclusive community we seek must be embodied in the community we practise

So we share a common discipline of:

- Daily prayer and bible study
- Mutual accountability for our use of time and money
- Spending time together
- Action for justice and peace

And are, together with our staff, responsible for:

- Our islands residential centres of Iona Abbey, the MacLeod Centre on Iona, and Camas Adventure Centre on the Ross of Mull. And in Glasgow
- The administration of the Community
- Our work with young people
- Our publishing house, Wild Goose Publications
- Our association in the revitalising of worship with the Wild Goose Resource Group

The Iona Community was founded in Glasgow in 1938 by George MacLeod, minister, visionary and prophetic witness for peace, in the context of the poverty and despair of the Depression. Its original task of rebuilding the monastic ruins of Iona Abbey became a sign of hopeful rebuilding of community in Scotland and beyond. Today, we are almost 250 Members, mostly in Britain, and 1500 Associate Members, with 1400 Friends worldwide. Together and apart, 'we follow the light we have, and pray for more light.'

Coracle is the quarterly magazine of the Iona Community. Views expressed in it are not necessarily the policy of the Iona Community, but the Community seeks the exchange of thoughts and ideas as a basis for finding common ground.

Letters are welcome, but may be edited because of space restrictions. For **advertising** or **photography** specifications, please contact the editor. **Unsolicited material** is welcome (by email or on disk) but cannot always be included.

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THE MOVEMENT IS A WORK OF FAITH.
It will continue just so long as God requires it.

Peter Macdonald

From the holy city: marking the boundary

Where did you get to this summer? In July I was on Iona for Community Week and for my hallowing as Leader. The next week was spent on Tiree recovering from the nervous tension of the week before. I also spent time in Victorian England, Sweden and Afghanistan, transported by the power of the written word and human imagination.

Summer holidays allow us time and space to lose ourselves in a good book or three. I greatly enjoyed the time spent with Inspector Whicher, Lisbeth Salander and the Taliban. Perhaps it was the encounter with the latter that got me thinking about liberty of expression and belief, and the lengths some people will go to deny that freedom.

One of the joys of reading is that the text unlocks our imagination and our act of reading enhances the meaning of the text. Alberto Manguel in *A History of Reading* explains:

Faced with a text, the reader can transform the words into a message that deciphers for him or her a question historically unrelated to the text itself or to its author. This transmigration of meaning can enlarge or impoverish the text itself; invariably it imbues the text with the circumstances of the reader. Through ignorance, through faith, through intelligence, through trickery and cunning, through illumination, the reader rewrites the text with the same words of the original but under another heading, re-creating it, as it were, in the very act of bringing it into being. (p. 211)

What holds true for prose and poetry certainly applies to the reading of scripture, the interpretation of which has inspired faith, acts of compassion and works of art, but has also justified persecution, violence and schism.

The interpretation of Christian scripture divides the Church today across a spectrum of opinion from those who insist upon one, fixed, true for all time meaning to those for whom the Word of God comes alive when life experience, acquired knowledge and creative imagination build layers of meaning and even subvert the text.

Within many denominations this divide is most apparent in differing attitudes to biblical sources on human sexuality and male homosexuality in particular. In the Church of Scotland this has resulted in a group of 'confessing' churches declaring:

… it is time to publicly mark the boundary between orthodox Christianity and spurious forms which claim the same … and (which) publicly sanctify what the Bible calls sin.

But why mark the boundary here? I am with Giles Fraser, Canon Chancellor of St Paul's Cathedral, who writes:

Despite the churches' pathetic obsession with what people do with their willies, we ought to be a lot more concerned with what people do with their wallets. (*The Guardian*, 17/7/09)

The Rule of the Iona Community states that for us the commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation is 'a point of departure'. If there is a boundary to be marked then surely this is where it lies.

We are called as Christians to mark the boundary

- between the moneymen who continue to grow fat on obscene bonuses and the poor vilified for their poverty;
- between the warmongers in nation states and terrorist groups and those who are terrorised by death and destruction;
- between global big business and the world's poorest communities whose human rights are denied and whose environment is damaged

and to declare with whom we stand, so bearing witness to our faith and to the Gospel.

If this were the boundary, if this was the mark of being a Christian, we would all stand together. But no, premarital or gay sex seems to be a greater offence against God than all the world's suffering. And all those biblical passages about wealth and power, poverty and injustice are clearly not to be taken too literally.

This autumn leaders of the G20, the world's wealthiest nations, have agreed neither to overhaul the financial system nor to cap the bonuses paid to financiers and they have done so against a background of steeply rising unemployment and the prospect of severe cuts in public spending. The poorest and most vulnerable will pay the price for the follies of the rich and powerful. It was ever thus.

During previous recessions the Iona Community as an organisation and as a movement responded compassionately and imaginatively to address in small ways the hardships endured particularly by those living in the inner city. Will we rise to the challenge again? What changes are required of us personally and as an organisation? How do we engage with wealth and power? How do we challenge our churches' obsession with sex and engage with biblical teaching on the morality of wealth?

Perhaps it is time publicly to mark that boundary. More wallets, fewer willies indeed. Or is that 'spurious' Christianity?

Note

Peter's summer reading included:

The Suspicions of Mr Whicher, Kate Summerscale

The Girl Who Played with Fire, Stieg Larsson

The Wasted Vigil, Nadeem Aslam

This autumn Peter will be reading *The Wee Yellow Butterfly* by Cathy McCormack; *Poverty, Inequality and Human Rights* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, www.jrf.org.uk); and Luke 6:20–26.

Peter Macdonald is the new Leader of the Iona Community.

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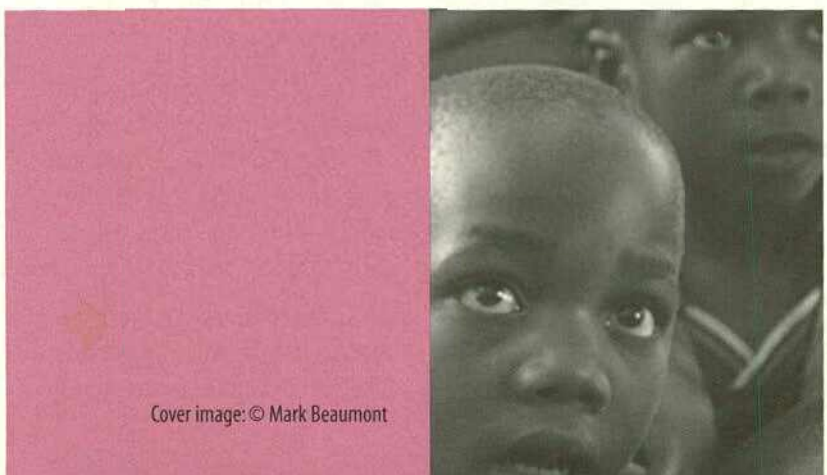
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SCOTLAND'S FIRST POVERTY TRUTH COMMISSION

Scotland's first Poverty Truth Commission took place on 21 March, 2009 at Glasgow City Chambers. A major aim of the Commission, which was inspired by South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, was to give people struggling against poverty an opportunity to have their voices heard. Associate Rev Martin Johnstone from the Church of Scotland Ministries Council, one of the organisers of the event, said: 'The question is how do you overcome poverty? The answer is to ask those who experience it, rather than those who only know it in their heads. Poverty can be overcome ... but only if we are prepared to take seriously the wisdom of those who really know about it.'

The Commission began with a number of testimonies. Listening to these stories was an audience of 400 people, including leaders from politics, the media, academia and several faith traditions. Paul Chapman, the Coordinator of the Poverty Truth Commission, reported on the day's events in a blog. Following is an extract:

'Three people from Ruchazie presented the first of nine testimonies, beginning with a graceful modern dance by 16-year-old Jamie-Lee Smart, demonstrating that life in Ruchazie is not just about struggle, but includes the creativity and joyful expression of life lived to the fullest. No one mentioned that shortly before her compelling performance a young man from Ruchazie had held a knife to her throat because she was walking in 'his territory'. The issue of territorialism was spelled out later in a conversation between Darren McGarvey and William Barrowcliffe, who said, 'There is a kid I know who wants to go to university and is smart enough, but it's too dangerous in Ruchazie for him to walk from his house to Smithycroft Secondary to get the preparation he needs. So he stays at home wasting his life because the neighbourhood is so dangerous.' He further said that it was a trip to Malawi, sponsored by 'Together for a Change', that opened his eyes. He could freely walk anywhere and wherever he went people greeted him warmly and with head held high, despite their destitution. So different from Ruchazie where people often don't dare look each other in the eye, and where certain areas are off-limits.

This was followed by Donna Barrowcliffe from Ruchazie, in conversation with Jamie Lee, talking about the immense stress afflicting people in her neighbourhood, often leading to depression and a lack of self-confidence. She strongly objected to people being judged by the postcode they came from rather than by their character and ability. Supporting each other in the struggle gives strength and hope ...'

At the end of the Commission, participants issued this very powerful statement:

Our central request is a simple one:

We want to be part of the solution, not constantly identified as part of the problem. We call on people to respect us as people and to learn from our wisdom and experience.

In addition:

We know that our neighbourhoods are good places to live and that media portrayals of them are unjust and damaging. We call for the media to share the good news as well as the bad.

In our experience, it is small, local community groups that make the biggest difference. We call for a greater recognition of their contribution as well as long-term funding.

We ask for greater assistance with childcare costs, and for this not to be a short-term measure.

Gang violence is destroying lives and communities. We seek greater resources to support young people. We know this investment will help young people to fulfil their potential, encourage community and develop leaders.

In our opinion the current Welfare Reform legislation will not work. People really want to work and we call on our governments to work with the unemployed to make it happen.

Parents and carers are doing a job. We call on people in power to work with us as we try to make life as good as possible for the people we look after and love.

We know that it is wrong that where you live determines how much support you get. We call for the introduction of a uniform policy of distributing money across local authorities.

We know that children are best cared for by their own families. We call upon the UK Government to provide *kinship carers* with the same support and resources as they currently offer to foster carers.

We know that people often choose to live with abuse because they are too afraid to do anything

else. We plead for adequate support services so that when people are brave enough to speak out they know they'll be safe and supported.

We congratulate our governments for their commitment to end child poverty. We call on them to put as much energy into this task as they have into the current banking crisis.

Powerful people sit around tables and make policies about us. We ask for the right to be around those tables and to help to make the best possible decisions.

We know the crippling impact debt has on people's lives. We call on all who can to take tougher action to outlaw predatory lending to low-income consumers.

We congratulate Glasgow City Council on its decision to commit to paying all employees a *Living Wage* of at least £7 per hour and call on other employers to follow suit.

To read Paul Chapman's blog:

http://povertytruthcommission.blogspot.com/2009/05/put-yourself-in-my-shoes.html

LIVING ON NOTHING

Living on nothing
is trying not to see
the wretchedness and the despair.
Living on nothing
is trying not to feel
the loss of hope.

Living on nothing
is trying not to taste
the anger and disappointment.
Living on nothing
is trying not to smell the fear.

Living on nothing
is trying not to hear
the intellectual arguments
and lofty ideals
about living on nothing
put forward by those who
are not living on nothing.

Living on nothing is dying.

ATD Fourth World Family member, from *Out of the Shadows: A Collection of Poems from the Fourth World*, ATD Fourth World

PRESS RELEASE 'Climate change is great news!' says Anna Falees ...

Warnings of climate change, bringing increased global warming and widespread flooding, have been welcomed by one of the world's most powerful pressure groups.

After recent attacks on their traditional way of life, a spokesperson for the mosquito community expressed hopes that climate change would produce a big rise in housing and job opportunities for their members around the world.

Many mosquitoes will now begin to take their vacations in Mediterranean resorts and across northern Europe. Mosquito population levels are expected to triple in the next few years as the increasing number of humans on the planet and an expanding mosquito tourist industry signal a surge in the already buoyant food supply.

There are also likely to be further benefits across Africa and the Indian subcontinent where climate change is already causing significant increases in human poverty and hunger.

Ms Anna Falees, of the International Mosquito, Tsetse Fly and Other Nasty Bugs Federation, said: 'Climate Change is great news for my members. Despite the efforts of environmental groups and aid agencies, temperatures are set to rise worldwide. And the fortunes of our 35 trillion members are going to rise with them. This is when the bugs bite back. It's the Malaria Millennium.

'Our advice to humans is: keep the carbon coming. You think you are a higher life form? Well, heating up the planet seems a strange way of guaranteeing your own survival. But go ahead. Lots of us are looking forward to coming to live in a puddle, ditch and flood plain near you.'

Meanwhile, there seems little likelihood of the international human community meeting their declared carbon emission targets, which scientists are already warning are too low.

** Financial news: Shares in mosquito netting rose sharply on the Stock Exchange yesterday – as did trading in companies offering funeral services.*

(by David Rhodes)

TAKE ACTION!

From December 7–18, 2009, the most important climate change talks in history take place in Copenhagen. Decisions made here will impact all of our lives – but especially those of the world's poorest.

WRITE GORDON BROWN: Christian Aid is urging the PM to push for at least 40% cuts by EU governments in domestic carbon emissions by 2020. To email Gordon Brown, go to **www.christianaid.org.uk**

TAKE TO THE STREETS: On Saturday, 5 December 2009 tens of thousands of people from all walks of life will flow through the streets of London and Glasgow to demonstrate their support for a safe climate future for all. 'The Wave' is organised by Stop Climate Chaos: **www.stopclimatechaos.org**

Is there anybody there?

Graeme Brown

There are few things more disconcerting than engaging in conversation with a friend, only to be met with silence – the turning of a back – a calculated closure of communication – the stopper of a solid wall.

This is what it sometimes seems like when we engage with God in prayer. He has turned his back. Is that it? Is there anybody there at all?

I have assumed for years that, since I am a human being, at the pinnacle of creation of course, I deserve nothing less than that God should be available to me on all occasions to converse with me, speaking and listening at my beck and call, as is appropriate for me, a human being. That, anyway, had been how it was when, as I firmly believe, God had come close to us in Jesus Christ, conversing with us human beings as with friends.

What I had never asked myself was how God might converse with others of his creation in a way appropriate to them. Just because they did not claim to be made in the image of their creator, as we human beings have done, in my arrogance I had rather assumed that we human beings were the only creatures with whom God might wish to relate and converse – a very anthropocentric view of God's ways with the universe.

A Greek philosopher, Xenophanes, had something interesting to say about this: *If cattle, horses and lions had hands, and were able to write with their hands, and portray things, just as human beings do, horses, for their part, would portray their gods in the form of horses, with the body of a horse, cattle theirs in the form of cattle. They would suppose such things and each would have such a body.*

Xenophanes was, of course, offering an ironic comment on the belief of the people of the ancient world that their gods were to be known in human form – anthropomorphic – the same as themselves, but I have often wondered whether Xenophanes might not after all be on to something. Was there no way in which God might relate with each and every part of creation, which he has brought into being out of love, in a way which was appropriate to it? Was it not possible that each and every part of creation might, each in their own way and within their own capacities, converse with God, and He with them?

Hilary McDowell has raised this same question in her book *Around the World on Eighty Prayers*. Reflecting on the migration of birds, she asks, *Where was he going, that duck? … I so wanted to converse with him … Would he be too busy to delight me with tales of the journey from the Arctic? … Did he know how beautiful were his feathers then, illuminated in the light, unaware of the envy of eagles as he flew? Maybe he did understand. Who are we, pompous humanity, to assume that only intelligence arranged in human mode can comprehend the whisperings of scenic grandeur, the invisible miracle of divine guidance, the depth-charge nature of unconditional love?*

Perhaps indeed, then, all of creation, each part in its own way, has some sense of the presence of God and perhaps the cosmos is so ordered that it can reveal to all the love of God, the loving kindness at its heart. The sun does, after all, at different times, in different ways, rejoice the hearts of every living creature and draw out the best in plants as well as living beings.

And so may God, who chooses to relate with all creation. God may not relate with human beings all the time in the way that we desire, our way. But when we sense that he is relating with the cosmos, with our smaller world in ways appropriate to these, we can withdraw from the competition for attention and take delight in the glimpse that we do have of him in Jesus Christ. Perhaps we may discern within the silence of the universe not the stopper of a solid wall but yet another means of conversation of our God with all that is, and not just with ourselves.

Graeme Brown is a minister of the Church of Scotland and a Member of the Iona Community living in Orkney.

Quotation from Xenophanes, translated by Graeme Brown. Extract from 'Around the World on Eighty Prayers', from the Preface, page ix and x, SPCK Triangle, 1997.



Learning from the poor

Peter Millar

Lord, you are the God of all Europeans, all Americans, all Asians …
you are also my God – me, an African – me, a Beninois.

Lord, I want to sing, dance and look radiant with happiness.
But alas the wars on my continent,
AIDS, poverty and malaria
are destroying my brothers and my sisters.
Instead of joy, there is sadness, fear, sorrow and anxiety.

Lord, I am confused but not downtrodden
because for me, an African, a Beninois,
you are my God and Jesus your Son,
who died and rose for me,
is my Saviour.
He is my eternal hope.

Pastor Raphael Houessou

For me this is both the miracle and mystery of the Christian faith: Raphael comes from Benin, one of the poorest countries within a desperately poor continent; daily, in his pastoral work, he witnesses the ravages of disease and mind-blowing poverty. Would not such a situation destroy a person's faith in God?

Cynics might say that Raphael was a 'simple man with a simple faith'. I don't believe that for a moment, and believe it even less having myself lived alongside communities burdened with poverty. In Raphael, and many others around the world, we see clear evidence of a confidence in God which has largely been lost within the bland dimensions of Christianity in affluent societies. For Raphael, faith in Christ is not an additional extra within the pluralities of life. It is life. Or perhaps more accurately, it is both life and death.

Raphael has much to teach us about what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Yet we are reluctant students! We, who belong to the rich and powerful global club, have little time, even in our churches, to listen to the oppressed of the earth. We forget that, in terms of understanding the miracle and mystery of Christianity, they may be much more knowledgeable. A truth expressed beautifully in this letter by Neil Paynter, from the time he was living in Cotonou, Benin:

… It's amazing the way people here dress in such beautiful, bright colours! Market women in kerchiefs and colourful pagnés (long wrap-around skirts) selling piles of ripe mangos, oranges, bananas, red onions, tomatoes …

Beautiful, ebony women swathed in such deep, rich, infinite colour – indigo, turquoise, ultramarine, French blue, ruby, wine, crimson, copper, coral, terra cotta, rust, lemon, canary, amber, ochre, saffron …

A woman in a vibrant-green pagné: Green as the pyramid of unripe oranges she balances on a tray on her head; green as the sound of a family of parrots sharing a rattan-wicker cage; green as piles of corn husks on the red-brown earth; green as the puddles of truck effluent the woman steps around, head held high.

Men sometimes wear a 'costume' called a 'grand boubou', which is a robe-like garment with pants and a shirt underneath – some patterns geometric; others kaleidoscopic; some all flowery or leafy; others covered in whorls and spirals; others swimming all over with stylised fish, coral, wavy sea plants …

Some grand boubous intricately and richly embroidered with gold thread around the neck and big sleeves.

Some simply one, solid colour – it depends on the occasion. A man in a solid blue grand boubou. Like the ocean on a motorbike.

Amazing! All of this colour and design against the background of a grim, ugly city – rotting piles of garbage, malarial mud, rusty tin shacks, hoardings for undertakers, thick black clouds of carbon monoxide choking everyone, dulling everything.

The infinite colours and patterns: the reflection of a rich culture, a fertile imagination, a deeply rooted connection to the land and sea; a land that, by the minute, is being cleared of trees (palms, acacias, baobabs) to supply people with some charcoal to cook over; a spot of warmth against the (surprisingly) cold night. You can smell the bush fires when the wind is blowing a certain way – like the acrid, smoky breath of an apocalyptic beast who brings desert, lumbering closer and closer.

The infinite colours and design: the reflection of the spirit of a people who cannot be crushed – not by slavery, not by colonialism, not by the brutal structural 'adjustment' programmes of the World Bank and IMF … There is an incredible resilience to people here. An irrepressible sense of fun and humour in the ways the children and gossiping market women tease me. An aristocratic dignity, and fierce proudness, in the high-boned faces of burdened women stepping elegantly around raw sewage and truck effluent.

I am a white man – white as enriched, imported French flour; I am respected for my money, knowledge, experience … I am not rich. I am not wise. I am not developed: secure in my first-world privilege, locked in my Landrover, protected by my mefloquine, bottled water, credit card, open ticket …

What experience do I possess of living with death every day, of creative survival, of incredible good-humoured patience, of real hope, of dazzling resurrection? I feel like a child here. What do I have to teach these people? *I have the world to learn from them!*

From Our Hearts Still Sing: Daily Readings, Peter Millar, Wild Goose Publications **www.ionabooks.com**

Linda and Ian Fraser and Anna Macdonald

'Orphans are our children' Lusubilo Community, Malawi

Associates Linda and Ian Fraser tell the truly inspirational story of the Lusubilo Orphan Project in Karonga, Malawi, which helps thousands of children orphaned by AIDS. Sister Beatrice and Brother Peter Daino, who started the project, visited Glasgow and Iona in the summer to meet with the Resident group and with Members of the Glasgow and Iona Family Groups, who have been helping to support their work ...

In June the Glasgow Central Family Group and Iona Family Group, with the support of the Xavarian Brothers from St Alphonsus, Calton and St Columba Gaelic Church, hosted a visit from Malawi by Sister Beatrice Chipeta and Brother Peter Daino. People who had supported the Lusubilo Orphan Project had waited a long time to hear first-hand about its work. It turned out to be a wonderful visit and gave our visitors the opportunity to describe the project to many in the Central Belt and on Iona.

Sister Beatrice explained that, by 1995, the HIV/AIDS problem in Malawi was becoming enormous and thousands of children were being orphaned. She observed that many of the children who had been born in the cities of Blantyre and Lilonge but whose parents had died were being sent back to their grandparents' villages. The sudden change from city to village life impacted badly on the children and, knowing they were becoming a burden on the household, many ran away and ended up as street children in Mzuzu and Karonga. Sister Beatrice witnessed children who were starving, grabbing rice, stealing money, being rude and disrespectful to elders.

No one appeared to be helping the children, and the government was making no effort to deal with the ever-increasing problem. There had been no rain in Karonga for two years and food was only available to those who had money. The village headmen were helpless in the face of such enormous problems, and so in 1995 Sister Beatrice made the decision to retire from teaching, and to devote her life to helping the children. However, at this time she struggled with what she could do: 'My hands are empty ... what can I give?'

As she had no money, she mobilised the community using her leadership of conscience, and played a prophetic role by giving them courage to deal with the challenges they faced. She specifically asked the adults to set aside time in the week to spend with the children in recreational activities, teaching them basic skills and giving lessons on their various cultures. Results could be seen after only a month when the children started calling the adults 'mother' and 'father'.

During 1997, Anna Macdonald, a retired teacher and part of the Glasgow Central Family Group, was living in Karonga. Hearing of Sister Beatrice's work, Anna decided to seek her out, and so began visiting the villages and meeting the children. Many were living in orphan-headed households or were being cared for by very old grandmothers. Anna wrote to John Harvey, then chair of the Glasgow Central Family Group, to describe how difficult life was in Karonga, and during Christmas of that year she received £1,300 from the Iona Community to be used for the project. Since then the group and St Columba Gaelic Church have continued to fundraise to support Sister Beatrice.

Sister Beatrice believed it was important that orphans should remain in their own villages, where possible with their extended family. She came up with the phrase 'Orphans are our children' ('*Wana walanda mba wana withu*'), and by using this phrase was able to make the adults understand that they had to unite and work together. As a result Sister Beatrice worked with the local people in sixteen villages to set up Community Feeding Centres. Each centre was given a small amount of money and encouraged to develop income-generating activities, and meantime she began contacting many potential funders until the current substantial donations started to arrive.

Since then she and Brother Peter have set up 52 Village Orphan Care Committees, Community-Based Child Centres, Village Nutrition Centres and two training schools.

Brother Peter described the sense of community solidarity which underpins the whole community response as being like a herd of wildebeest he once saw: One hundred wildebeest were being stalked by a lion; each time the lion approached from any direction the whole herd kept together – shoulder to shoulder, 200 eyeballs staring down the lion. The lion was unable to pick off any young or elderly wildebeest and eventually gave up the hunt and went to look elsewhere.

Lusubilo now feeds nine thousand orphans and vulnerable children in the Karonga district by supplying maize, *lukuni pala* and infant formula to the villages fortnightly, distributed by trusted volunteers. Amazingly, out of 9000 orphans, there are only about 65 children who have absolutely no relatives and have to live at the Children's Village in Karonga.

Sister Beatrice became an orphan when she was very young and was encouraged to continue studying by two Scottish women who took a great interest in her, one of whom was the mother of Dr Irene Wilkie of Edinburgh, and while in Scotland Sister Beatrice had the great pleasure of meeting with Irene. Brother Peter, an American who spent many years working in Kenya before being called as a lay brother to the Marianist Community in Karonga, came to Malawi on the advice of his dying mother, who said that miracles would happen there. Together, with the local village communities, they have made a future for so many children; and with the money raised during their visit to Scotland they are now building a dormitory and classroom for the older boys.

There is still much to do as the AIDS pandemic in Central Africa continues – but the story of the Lusubilo Orphan Project is truly inspirational.

Malawi is one of Africa's most beautiful countries and her people are renowned for their welcoming friendliness. Unfortunately, Malawi is also one of the world's poorest countries: annual income per head is $160, life expectancy is 36 years old. The country has suffered droughts in recent years, leading to poor harvests and widespread famine. HIV/AIDS prevalence is one of the highest in the world. In a country with a population of around 13.6 million, an estimated 840,000 people (nearly 60% of them female) live with HIV/AIDS. Around 90,000 children are believed to be infected, and there were 68,000 AIDS-related deaths in 2007. Malawian children are being orphaned at a rate far beyond the capacity of extended families and other traditional networks of care to cope.

Anyone wishing to support the Lusubilo Orphan Project, should contact Anna Macdonald: anna@annamac.fsnet.co.uk

Jesu, Jesu,
fill us with your love,
show us how to serve
the neighbours we have from You.

From the hymn 'Fill Us with Your Love', in Free to Serve: Hymns from Africa, collected by Tom Colvin (a Member of the Iona Community who died in 2000).



Photo © Mark Beaumont

Prayer and Action: HIV/AIDS

'So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.' James 2:17

I have always found the following prayer/psalm, from Peter Millar's Gugulethu Journal, *incredibly powerful and moving: a prayer of hope that rises out of an experience of crucifixion. When I read this prayer, I am always reminded that I am a rich, white Western man of such spiritual poverty. (Ed.)*

From 'A Gugulethu Journal':

… Last week at one of the HIV/AIDS support group meetings, a local woman called Noma-lady, who is facing many hurdles rooted in poverty and weakness of body, wrote this prayer in her own language, Xhosa. Spiwo Xapile, the minister here, has translated it for me. I invite you to read Noma-lady's words slowly, and to walk with her and many others as a sister or brother. We belong together …

Prayer by Noma-lady

God is love to me, and God is amazing even though I am not strong physically in terms of my health. Even though things are difficult I continue to go down on my knees and pray, and from time to time I see God responding to my prayer. I don't know how I could praise God's name in a way that is befitting God's greatness. I do not have the instruments appropriate enough to make the music that would truly express how I feel about God. There are times when I have sleepless nights and watch TV till morning, but I always feel comfort when I go on my knees and pray. I am sometimes up at 3am trying to sleep on that side or the other. There are times when the pain is so heavy; my hand with cramps: my fingers twisting. Had I not been connected with God I would be accusing people of causing this pain, but earlier in my life I chose a close relationship with God, though I am poor. God is with me in the morning when I wake up: God is around during sleep, and is with me as I try to walk around. I just cry knowing that God has heard my prayer. I live with great hope. Amen

Push the Pool: The Stop AIDS Campaign

Over 33 million people in the world are living with HIV and only one in three has access to the drug treatment they need to stay alive. This is often because the cost of treatment is unaffordable for poor people and the governments of developing countries. 6000 people die of HIV-related illnesses every day. In sub-Saharan Africa, a staggering 12 million children have lost one or both parents to AIDS. This is stark proof that governments are falling seriously short of their commitment to provide universal access to treatment for HIV and AIDS by 2010 (Millennium Development Goal 6).

The Stop AIDS campaign believe that barriers to providing universal access to HIV and AIDS treatment can be broken down if pharmaceutical companies bring their patents on medicines into a 'patent pool'. This would facilitate research into improved treatments, whilst also helping companies to produce cheaper, more accessible medication for millions of children and adults living with HIV. This will help people around the world access the medicines they need to stay alive.

To take action and to find out more: www.unicef.org.uk/campaigns/stop_aids/petition.asp

December 1st is World Aids Day.





Images of Gugulethu, South Africa

Reconnecting with the roots – a future for Celtic spirituality?

Rosemary Power

Many view the 'Celtic' movement as increasingly tired and derivative. Has it fulfilled its purpose as a movement? Rosemary Power asks ... Or are there aspects that can speak to us in new ways? If we root and ground the movement, perhaps at some cost to our expectations.

Rosemary Power works in pioneer ministry in County Clare, Ireland, and also writes academically on Gaelic-Scandinavian studies.

'Celtic spirituality' has been so popular for the last twenty-five years that it is widely accepted as a branch of Christian expression which developed in ancient times in these islands and lingered in remote places. It is often regarded both as factually true and as having a great deal to say to us about contemporary spiritual concerns, including the need to reintegrate faith with the rest of life, and to respond holistically to the environmental crisis.

'Celtic spirituality' was developed largely by evangelical Christians in England as a tool for mission in the 1980s but is also claimed by Catholics and by those who feel they are falling off the edge of church life. It has been effectual in helping people develop their spiritual life, and in some cases has led to the growth of dispersed communities, supporting members to undertake valued work. The current Celtic movement is not the first, and, like the previous movements, it seems to be a means by which people can address contemporary concerns in a prayerful and powerful way.

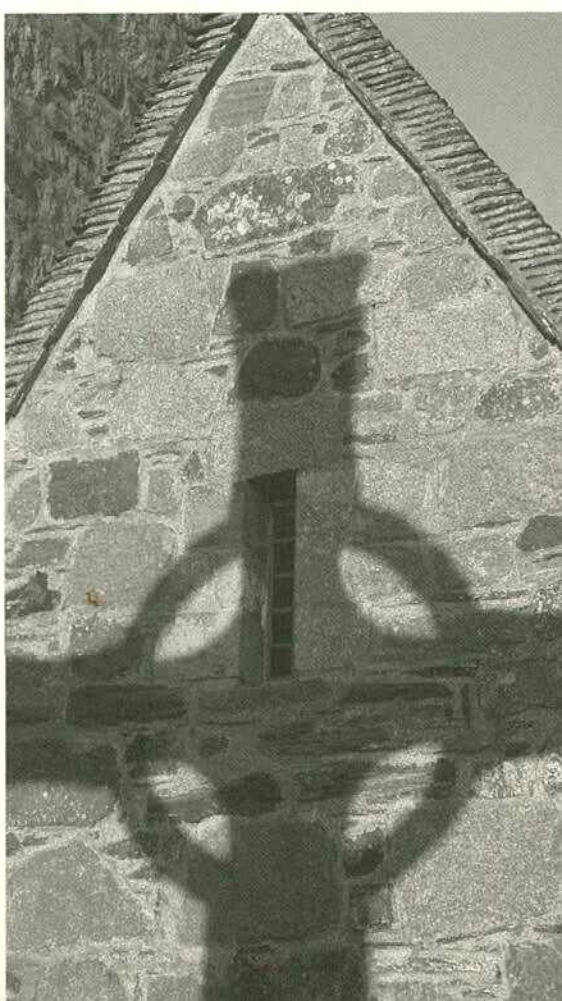
Yet, in spite of music and liturgy 'in the Celtic tradition' which are now part of the mainstream of church life, the movement is increasingly tired, less dependent on the rediscovery of ancient prayers that gave it its original sparkle, and more dependent on the derivative material, in translation and often at third-hand; or on poetry and prayers from all periods in Western culture that suit the selected themes and concerns of individual authors. Has it fulfilled its purpose as a movement, or are there aspects that could speak to us in new ways as the 'Celtic' spoke to people like George MacLeod in the 1930s and, a generation before him, to writers and artists of the Celtic Revival?

Modern Celtic Christianity has little in common with what is normally taught in a university department of Celtic Studies, but, at its best, while it may be historically wrong it can in some sense be theologically right, a path to deepening life with God, a response to modern concerns that finds its expression in ancient prayers and practices. While its attraction is limited, mainly to white educated Christians, it has helped churches to recapture a sense of freshness, creativity and delight in Christian worship and personal prayer.

Since many of the books of the movement include prayers from all periods and cultures, it can be hard to define what Celtic Christianity is. However, in spite of its all-encompassing tendencies, there are certain key elements, and while these are found in many other spiritualities, when combined with the use of ancient poems or folk prayers from the Celtic-speaking countries, they provide a common core.

One element is a sense that God is present in all aspects of life. Celtic spirituality is seen as holistic, all-encompassing and capable of unifying apparently disparate aspects of daily life and work. There is an emphasis on the Trinity in the prayers used, whether folk prayers from the Hebrides or modern poetry that seeks to emulate them.

Another element is a belief in the spontaneity of the ancient Celts, who are viewed as having only the simplest church organisation. There is plentiful poetic evidence for another element: delight in the natural world and acute observation of it. Modern writers attribute to the Celtic peoples a sense of the divine as immanent as well as transcendent, and as living in harmony with the natural world, and, more controversially,



with each other.

Storytelling is a vital part of the movement. Anecdotes about early saints are recounted, taken not only from writings from the Celtic countries, but from Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Many of the anecdotes selected are about women saints and reflect a desire to believe in the equality of women in the early 'Celtic' Church. The saints are presented as models for us today, and their stories means by which deep truths can be expressed, a form of narrative theology.

A sense of place is another element, and there is an emphasis on ancient holy places which are seen as spiritually and in our view geographically on the edge, which provide meeting ground for Christians who feel on the edge, spiritually and organisationally. Through pilgrimage to these places they can meet with like-minded people, ideally to form community.

There is much here that most Christians would value and would want to incorporate into their own prayer and public worship. But some of the assumptions contain interpretations that have diverged so far from fact that they are of little help in developing a robust spirituality. Sometimes too, the term Celtic is used when another spirituality is in question, and most of the founder books on modern Celtic spirituality place England in the Celtic world, though very little use is made of English tradition. Because the 'Celtic' is known at several removes, it can become what J.R.R. Tolkien once described as a ragbag from which anything can be pulled. It also means that much that did belong to the Celtic-speaking countries hardly gets touched on at all, including most of ancient poetry; religious and secular writings; the artistry and theology of the great Gospel books and church metalwork; the physical remains of churches, wells and monastic settlements; and the folk tradition.

Celtic spirituality developed in Ireland rather later than in England and always used folk prayers. The most popular books were written by the poet and hermit John O'Donohue (1954–2008), who combined philosophical reflections with commentary on the native traditions and practices of the west of Ireland. At a time of rapid social and religious change his books gave a sense of connectiveness to Irish spiritual tradition. The extent to which his writings

We try to move away from congratulating ourselves for being on the margins, to focus on the people we have put on margins, the stranger, the economic migrant, the people who have remained poor through the time of wealth ...

can be considered 'Celtic' may be disputed, but they touched people across the English-speaking world, while also appealing to those familiar with the vernacular religion with its visits to holy wells, the annual pilgrimage to Croagh Patrick, the penitential journeys to Lough Derg, and other practices which use formal church rituals but are not dependent on them.

O'Donohue's approach may indicate one way in which what is good in Celtic spirituality can be drawn upon, by dropping the blander accretions, and seeking to root it in its origins. The same is true of the writings of Irish academics who have studied the ancient sources and tried to connect them to what concerns us today, in particular Thomas O'Loughlin and John Carey. There will be much that we cannot accept, but by exploring what is there and what has supported people down the centuries, we may discover something of how we can be stretched in our own spiritual journey with unlikely fellow pilgrims.

To do this, we need to give time to study the original sources and their languages, or at the least to learn more from those who do, using their knowledge as we use the knowledge of biblical scholars to more fully understand the scriptures. This may draw us closer to the writers who left us prayers of power and beauty, but who provided this spontaneity by living to strict monastic rules that gave time to prayer and study. Through study we can understand more fully what gave them their vision, in all its complexity, how it related to the ways in which they lived, and what we can take from it today, leaving markers concerning what we cannot digest, in case future cultures might find richness in the parts we discard.

We may also find much is not, and need not be called 'Celtic'. The Northumbrian missionaries of the 1980s modelled themselves on the missionaries of the sixth century, Irish or English. They took what was beautiful, publicised it and adapted it for the needs of mission as they saw it. This form of Celtic spirituality, largely book-based, might grow through rediscovering the great Anglo-Saxon religious tradition, the joyful freedom of medieval English spirituality, and the remaining vernacular religious practices.

As well as study of the past, we may need to ground the movement by looking more at what people actually do and express in the places in which we are called to work and worship, or have done until recently. We might find we can develop the 'sense of place' by asking people about their remaining traditions and practices, about what has bound them together down the generations, about the prayers they have learnt, and in doing so learn from their wisdom as well as that of the past.

Where else do we take this interest in the Celtic? If the derivative aspects outbalance use

of the sources, its attractiveness will pall and limit its chances of enabling people to move towards the centre of Christian spirituality, the relationship with Christ which our ancestors saw as the purpose of their writing, copying, building and developing community.

Those who have worked with the Celtic have explored ways in which we might find resonances for contemporary lives. Among many other possibilities, we have chosen to explore in this part of the west of Ireland how we can combine using the prayers of the past in conjunction with the physical remains and the traditions of the inhabitants down the Christian centuries. We are seeking to relate more deeply to the place in which we find ourselves, and are developing a pattern of prayer walks, following old routes over old boundaries, between high crosses, round towers and ruined churches where local people still bury their dead, and exploring also the beauty of the land which has been farmed for millennia. This involves our returning to sources and relearning from scholarship, and also seeking ways in which to break open the fruit of this study to serve our world. Walking involves meeting, and talking to, people who walk with us and those we meet on the way. It also provides for everyone to offer their skills and knowledge, and their music. As we grow in this practice, we tell the stories that inspired us in our faith, and we learn new stories, of how others have lived out their lives in faith, in their time. We pause at places made holy in ancient times, which have retained their holiness through the visits of praying people down the centuries, and we seek to respond to God with us today. We stop at places honoured by local people, to pause, and, if our tradition accepts, pray. We seek to connect through the stories and through the scriptures which were known to those who prayed in these places before us.

In a time of modern turbulence we try to connect also to the needs of our own time. We pray as the recession bites, revisiting some of the parables of Jesus that remind us that human relationships are the true focus when we handle money. We pray for the survivors of institutions where children were beaten and broken, for the priests and the lawyers who at best passed by, for the occasional Samaritan who protested to find that for these children of God there was no room at the inn. We pray for those who sit in the sun until the eleventh hour because there is no work, and that those in work may be generous in supporting those who do not. We pray that the roads that unite us will not be the source of death. We pray for farmers harvesting late after another wet summer, and, in a land whose national catastrophe was the Great Famine, for the places in the world where the harvest has failed. In a landscape full of the ruins not only of monasteries but of castles we pray for peace in a world racked by war. As we relish the plants, butterflies, birds and the poetry that delight in the world God gives us, we pray that we will learn again to tread the earth lightly and work against catastrophic climate change. We try to move away from congratulating ourselves for being on the margins, to focus on the people we have put on margins, the stranger, the economic migrant, the people who have remained poor through the time of wealth, and the people who centred their lives on work, homes and holidays, and have lost them.

Whether this approach is 'Celtic' or not, it is only one way to seek to honour the heritage in stone and writings, in farming and faith, in storytelling and silent prayer, in travelling to holy places, and to use what we have received for our common journey. There are many other ways, and each country and each culture will have its own variety. But it seems to me that the best heritage of the 'Celtic' is to reconnect us to the place and culture in which God has designed we find ourselves, to honour the past by discovering it again, perhaps at some cost to our expectations, and to honour the present by using it to break open the Christian story in ways to enrich our relationships to each other and to the wider world today. It is not particular to any culture or time, though the prayers we use may be, and in doing this we rediscover the core of faith in all its wonder and delight.

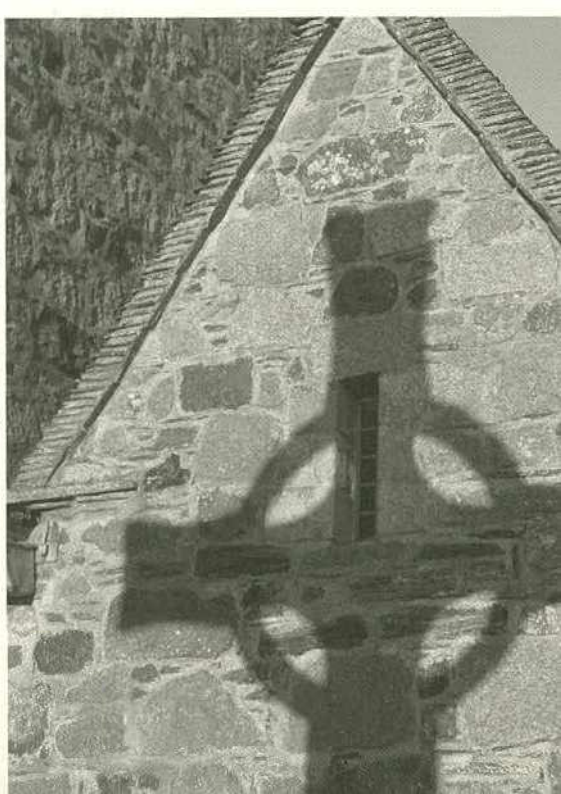
AN PHAIDIR GHEAL – THE BRIGHT PRAYER

The blessing of God on you, Bright Prayer.
The blessing of God and Mary.
Where were you last night?
At the feet of Jesus.
Where are you tonight?
At the feet of the poor.
Where are you tomorrow?
At the feet of Saint Patrick …

Bridget with her cloak,
Michael with his shield,
the two shining hands of the Son of God
protect this house
and bring us safe to morning.

From an Aran islands' folk prayer printed in Béaloideas vii, 189 and Diarmuid ÓLaoghaire, Ár bPaidreacha Dúchais, Dublin, 1982, 220, translated by Rosemary Power.

Rosemary Power is presently completing a book on modern Celtic Christianity. She is a Member of the Iona Community.



'Shadow of St John's Cross' © David Coleman

A TRIBUTE TO MEMBER LINDESAY HENRY ROBERTSON, by Stanley Hood

Lindesay Robertson, who died in Lynn of Lorne Nursing Home in Benderloch on 23rd June, was born in New Zealand, where his father was working as an engineer. He was the second of three sons, one of whom died tragically early by drowning. The family came home in 1930 when Lindesay's father inherited Bragleenmore, Kilninver, in Argyll.

Lindesay was educated at Charterhouse School, and, after joining the regular army in 1945, at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge and Sandhurst. Following in his father's footsteps he served in the Royal Engineers. A keen sportsman at school and university, he won a running Blue at Cambridge, as well as graduating in engineering. He had a passion for mountaineering. However, in 1952, a serious climbing accident, in which an ankle was shattered, put an end to both his mountaineering and his career in the army. Fortunately, after recuperation, he was able to resume hill-walking, a pastime which he enjoyed until near the end of his life.

The accident was providential in directing both his private and public life. The young invalid, who was on crutches for three years, met and married his doctor, Kate Cameron, and the army's loss proved to be a great gain for Malawi. Lindesay and Kate were married in 1954. They had two daughters, Fiona and Catherine. Lindesay felt called to the ministry, and studied at Trinity College, Glasgow.

Lindesay first met Rev. George MacLeod when the latter visited Charterhouse. He joined the Iona Community in 1956 and was a Member for the rest of his life. He was assistant to Rev. Uist Macdonald, a founding Member of the Iona Community, who was guide and mentor to many young ministers in Wallacetown, Dundee. Unlike today, at that time the Community was completely male and overwhelmingly ministerial in membership and many of its members served in Church Extension and City Centre Parishes at home and in Partner Churches abroad. Lindesay followed the latter course.

In 1959 he and Kate went to Nyasaland (now Malawi). Lindesay was based at Mulanje Mission where he served as a minister of the Synod of Blantyre of the Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian (CCAP). The Protectorate of Nyasaland was at that time in the throes of great upheaval because of African opposition to Nyasaland's enforced participation in the white dominated Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The Federation's white politicians proclaimed their belief in inter-racial partnership, but one of their leaders defined that partnership as being like that of a rider and horse!

Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda had returned to Nyasaland in 1958. The Governor had declared a State of Emergency in the Protectorate in 1959. The Church of Scotland was to play a notable role in supporting the right of Nyasas to secede from the Federation and form an independent state. Expatriate opinion in Nyasaland mainly supported the Federation. The Robertsons were living in Mulanje Mission, where Kate was working as a doctor, and Lindesay was visiting villages on his cycle and conducting services in Chinyanja. The Robertsons' support of African political aspirations resulted in disagreement with the majority of expatriates, nearly all of whom were working on local tea estates. Happily, after Nyasaland became the independent state of Malawi in 1964, these wounds were healed not least because Lindesay and Kate always believed that it was important to have friendly contact with people of different religious beliefs and political opinions.

As a District Missionary, Lindesay often gave advice to Malawians on agricultural methods, and, as an engineer, he had an eye for possibilities in rural development. He helped to establish village cooperatives and improved water supply. A difference of opinion about whether or not a minister should be so deeply involved in community development issues, such as provision of rural water supplies, led to a parting of the ways between the Synod of Blantyre and Lindesay. After eight years he left the Synod's service to work with the Government of Malawi in rural development.

Many Malawian women and children were accustomed to walking long distances in order to obtain water, and if water is essential for life, clean water is crucial for health. Lindesay saw that the force of gravity could bring water from the mountains to make it accessible to many villages. Shrewdly he started his first project not in Mulanje but in Zomba, then the capital of Malawi, directing water from Zomba Plateau to villages. So political leaders, civil servants and aid agency representatives were able to see the possibilities and became supportive.

Then Lindesay began to work on a water project on Mulanje Mountain. Lindesay was a fine example of self-discipline, hard work, punctuality and inspiration. He was a great enabler. Community involvement was the key aspect of his work. He realised the importance of involving local people in the process. They were encouraged to ask questions and discuss problems. Villagers themselves voluntarily dug trenches in which pipes were laid and so owned the projects instead of just receiving their benefits.

As the work expanded, Lindesay directed the projects from headquarters in Lilongwe but still

regularly visited the villages. After 18 years of work, piped water had been made accessible to about two million Malawians. Lindesay always had an eye to the future and, although he was assisted and succeeded by qualified expatriates, he also ensured that Malawians were trained to continue the work. Two of the ablest were sent for training in India. One of these continues to work on water projects to this day.

In 1986 the Robertsons decided to return to the family home at Bragleenmore, Kilninver. A striking tribute to Lindesay and Kate's contributions to Malawi was made by a senior chief in Dedza District, who, on hearing that Lindesay and Kate were planning to leave Malawi, offered them land for their use, saying, 'Your home is Malawi. We want you to stay.' However, on being assured by Lindesay that he had land in Scotland, the chief reluctantly agreed that he must depart, saying, 'You must go where your land is.'

Back in Scotland, Lindesay was deeply involved in his local kirk and community, played an active part in what is now the Argyll Family Group, worked on the local farm, walked in the hills, played golf and sailed occasionally with friends. He was involved in the Argyll Highland Games, acting as Senior Steward in 1994. He was an elder and, for a time, Session Clerk and occasional preacher, at Kilmelford and Kilninver congregation.

Lindesay's achievements in Malawi and his knowledge of community development influenced the policies of governments and development agencies such as the UK's Overseas Development Agency, USAID, Denmark's DANIDA, UNICEF and the World Bank, and provided examples for development projects in many developing countries. His experience was put to good use in an advisory capacity.

In 1987 he was invited to become a voluntary adviser to Water Aid, which deals with supply of water and health education in Africa and Asia. This led to a fruitful association with Ghana. Lindesay worked from home, attended monthly meetings in London and visited projects in Ghana three times per year. The visits decreased as he trained Ghanaian staff to take over. He made two return visits to Malawi and advised on repair and maintenance of projects. He retired from Water Aid in 2002. His work was recognised in the awards of the MBE in 1971 and the President's Award for Outstanding Voluntary Contribution to Water Aid in 2002, the President being the Prince of Wales.

In the last eight years Lindesay's health had been increasingly impaired with developing blindness in his right eye, deafness and dementia. He died peacefully on 23rd June, 2009 and is survived by Kate and by their daughters, Fiona and Catherine. Lindesay was a kind, compassionate, generous and humorous man, who, beneath an unassuming exterior, had a steely determination to do good in this world. Millions of people in many countries who never knew his name have benefited from his work. Many have special cause to bless his name and cherish his memory in Malawi, the land he served so faithfully and loved so well.

Stanley Hood



Lindesay Henry Robertson (family photo)

Water: some resources

OPENING RESPONSES

Creator Spirit, wellspring of our lives,
as the refreshing rain falls on the just and unjust alike
REFRESH US WITH YOUR MERCY,
WHO KNOW OUR OWN INJUSTICE.

As a stream flows steadily on,
defying all the odds of stone and water
FLOW OVER EVERY BOUNDARY AND BORDER
THAT SEPARATES US FROM EACH OTHER.

As the waters of our baptism washed us and welcomed us
RENEW US NOW IN NEWNESS OF LIFE
AND UNITY OF LOVE.

As we were once held
in the waters of our mother's womb
HOLD US IN THE POWER AND PEACE
OF YOUR ABIDING PRESENCE.

Kathy Galloway, from The Pattern of Our Days *(Wild Goose)*

PRAYER

When will the rains come?
Lord, I am so comfortable,
the water is running out of our tap,
and so near us, just a short bus journey away,
there are thousands of families
who don't even have a single drop.

When will the rains come?

Lord, try to open my eyes
to these basic needs of my brothers and sisters.
Keep me from being complacent:
let me not just turn on our tap
and forget their desperate need.

When will the rains come?

Lord, you do not see us as rich and poor,
but as one family,
involved with one another,
bearing each other's burdens,
going the extra mile,
being concerned.

When will the rains come?

I don't know when they will come,
nor do the villagers,
but I do know that I could care more,
and maybe that by caring more
my brothers and sisters
will find new strength
even when the wells are dry.

Peter and Dorothy Millar, from Letters from Madras

REFLECTION

Water, water everywhere! The opposite to my home country.

The pilgrimage leader asked me at Loch Stonaig on Iona if I would say something to the gathering about the water situation in the country which I came from and was returning to, Uganda.

As we stood on a small island near a clean-water loch which had supplied Iona for years with fresh water, I was pleased to share something of the contrasts between home and Iona:

Uganda is a landlocked country. Mains-piped water is only available in the major urban areas. 80% of the population of Uganda live in rural areas which lack adequate water supplies for domestic, animal and plant use. People have to collect water from wells, springs, boreholes or rivers. Some of these sources have been used by both animals and humans, creating a hygiene problem. In the end, this causes waterborne diseases like diarrhoea, bilharzia, typhoid and cholera.

Long distances are often walked to access the water sources. Water collection is mainly done by small children and women using containers. A lot of time is spent at water points due to large numbers of people waiting their turn. There are no big water storage tanks in rural areas, hence water has to be used sparingly, which is a huge problem in the dry season.

Shortage of water has created the existence of a nomadic group of cattle-keepers commonly known as *Balaalo*. The nomads move with large herds of cattle in search of water and pasture, disrupting the traffic on roads, destroying people's gardens. Land conflict between cattle-keepers and farmers has become rampant due to water shortage. Crops die or wither away during the dry season. We rarely have irrigation facilities. Crops can be grown during rainy season only. There is a big problem with global warming: the dry season has become longer, hence creating famine.

Water is life, no matter which angle one views it from and the memories of that day at Loch Stonaig remain with me as I continue my life in Uganda, longing to return one day to Iona, if it is God's will.

Patrick Obiga, Masindi, Uganda
Former volunteer with the Iona Community

SOME BIBLE READINGS

Genesis 21:14–19; Exodus 15: 22–27, 17:1–6; 1Kings 17:10; Psalm 107:4–9, 33, 35; Matthew 10:42; John 4:7–9

PRAYER

O God, pour out on us the water of life that we may quench our thirst and draw our strength from you. Help us to stand alongside those who struggle daily for clean water so that all may be refreshed and renewed by your love.

Christian Aid

AFFIRMATION

God who created heaven and earth,
AND FOUNDED THE LAND ON DEEP WATERS.
God who flooded the earth
AND GAVE US A PROMISE.
God who divided the water
AND SET THE PEOPLE FREE.
God who leads us beside still waters
AND GIVES US NEW STRENGTH:
WE AFFIRM OUR FAITH IN YOU.

Jesus who walked on water
AND CALMED THE RAGING SEA.
Jesus who turned water into wine
AND BAPTISES US WITH WATER, SPIRIT, LOVE.
Jesus who washed his disciples' feet
AND WASHES OUR SOULS CLEAN:
WE AFFIRM OUR FAITH IN YOU.

Holy Spirit who is poured out
AND COMES TO US AS WATER AND FIRE.
Holy Spirit who is strength and power
AND FILLS US WITH YOUR LIVING WATER.
Holy Spirit who is gentleness and love
AND IS GOD'S GIFT TO EACH OF US:
WE AFFIRM OUR FAITH IN YOU.

Author unknown, from Holy Ground *(Wild Goose)*

BLESSING

May clean, clear water bless us,
wellspring or waterfall,
life in abundance
flowing, cleansing, refreshing.

May we use wisely
God's gift of water
and cherish each drop;
bring life to earth's deserts.

Jesus, pour your water,
greening and satisfying,
on the dry dustiness
of the deserts within us.

Holy Spirit, flow through us;
revive our faithfulness,
cleanse our sinfulness,
fill us with prayerfulness.

Chris Polhill, from Eggs & Ashes *(Wild Goose)*

CLOSING RESPONSES

A blessing on you who are poor
YOURS IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD

A blessing on you who mourn
YOU SHALL BE COMFORTED

A blessing on you who thirst for justice
YOU SHALL BE SATISFIED

A blessing on you who make peace
YOU SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD

TO TAKE ACTION

www.wateraid.org/uk/
www.wellsforindia.org
www.christianaid.org.uk



Wells for India photo © Nicholas Grey

Long live the Rule

Ronald Speirs

I have been looking up the Rule of the Iona Community, Section 4, about justice and peace. It's strong stuff: *'We believe that work for justice, peace and an equitable society is a matter of extreme urgency … We believe that creation can provide for the needs of all, but not for the greed which leads to injustice and inequality … Everyone should have the quality and dignity of a full life … without the oppression of poverty … Social and political action … is a vital work of the Church at all levels.'*

It makes me feel daunted, and yet, perhaps strangely, it is that part of the Rule which most appeals to me and which I try most to fulfil.

I was ordained in 1954 as assistant minister in Paisley Abbey after 7 years of conventional academic preparation. Working in the Paisley/Glasgow area was lonely and I had not been prepared for the poverty and gross inequality around me. In theological training I had been critical of George MacLeod and the Iona enthusiasts. Then suddenly I saw that they were right. Political commitment suddenly became important and Iona was screaming it from the rooftops. I was enormously impressed by folk like Geoff Shaw (see *Geoff*, Ron Ferguson's biography of him) who worked in the Gorbals House-church Project and took his political witness so seriously that he became Leader of the Labour Party on the Strathclyde Council and wore himself out to an untimely death. So when I became chaplain at St Andrews University in 1958 I took parties of students on reading parties to Iona and in the peace and remoteness of the island exposed them to the painful political questions of the time. One of these was the unscrambling of the racist Central African Federation. I joined the Labour Party in Fife and agitated for Malawi to be freed from the domination of Southern Rhodesia. And I believed that students at university should be made fully aware of political issues of equality and encouraged to engage with them when they graduated.

We moved to Cambridge in 1961 when I became minister of St Columba's and chaplain to Presbyterian students. I continued to believe that the Christian faith required application to political questions. Jim Wallace, later MP for Orkney, was one of our students and he testifies to the impact of the Church then on his future career.

I joined the Cambridge Labour Party and remain a member until today. As a minister I was careful not to 'preach politics' but that did not stop me drawing attention to deprivation and oppression and how they could be relieved. In particular I worked for better conditions for the many mentally ill people who had been shut up in horrible institutions for years and who were now being discharged into the community. In 1981 I left the ministry for employment by Cambridgeshire County Council in developing day centres, sheltered work and sheltered housing for those who had been segregated, and I discovered just how influential political people of all levels can be in financing improved facilities. There is plenty of need for single-issue pressure groups like Mind, but no substitute for having the ear of those who hold the purse strings. I shall never know how much as a minister I influenced towards political witness members of my congregation (I suspect it was not great), but I can see in specific projects what I achieved from inside the county council system.

As a county council employee I could not be too outspoken about my socialism, but when I retired I could become a blatant member of the Cambridge City Labour Party. I put great hope in the new Labour Government's policy forums whereby the voice of the Party is supposed to be heard. I read many of the policy documents and with local comrades we conscientiously sent in comments and amendments. Our ward meetings were and are intelligent and informed, and we have been regular in sending resolutions to the constituency general executive, which like our ward tends to be radical and left-wing. The agony now is how little we achieved; and yet I see no alternative to going on making our voice heard. At the beginning of the Blair Government we had hope and optimism; for the last 5 or 6 years it has been a dutiful slog against a slovenly, timorous Government. I am often helped by recalling the Rule of the Community – I can see no other way forward except by patient diligent political involvement.

There are two issues which matter greatly to me, and both are in the Iona Rule; one is the green agenda to prevent 'the endangering of life on earth'; the other is the pursuit of an equitable society. To work for them I ask myself often if I should stay in the Labour Party when so many devoted comrades have had enough of Blair and Brown's city capitalism and vague moderation. The Green Party has an exciting programme of conservation and redistribution, but it has little chance of forming a Government. I know well one of Brown's key green advisors and he has persuaded me that the Labour Party has a strong programme of making legally enforceable targets for CO2 emissions and I have hopes of strong Government initiatives at Copenhagen. So I wait in hope for a dramatic Green lead when we so much need new technology, low emission, social housing and so on …

The increasing inequality in our society I find agonisingly disappointing after 12 years of Labour, but I see no refuge in any other major party. It is hard to get a balanced view of what has been achieved and what has not – Sure Start is excellent but redistributive taxation has come much too late. I

recommend *Towards a More Equal Society* by Hills, Sefton and Stewart for an overview. They say: *The problem is that the scale of action since 1997 was often small in relation to the underlying inequalities, and the momentum gained by the middle of the period had often been lost by the end of it*; and they give warnings about the greater difficulties in contesting inequality in the present period of recession. Quite a lot has been done for child poverty through family credits, etc, but I am ashamed that we are still among the worst of European countries in the poor condition of our children. So I remain wearily inside the Labour Party to draw every attention I can to the terrible inequalities around us. Where are the passion and simplicity of living of the early socialists?

If I lived in Scotland, would I join the Nationalists as those more likely to achieve a more equal society? I am given pause by a survey in *Towards a More Equal Society*. It concludes: *There is no evidence that the rhetorics of social justice and inclusion that have accompanied devolution and the rise of nationalists parties in Scotland and Wales have been translated into a significant shift of resources to the worst off or even towards the categories of public spending like health and education that tend to be pro-poor.* But of course Iona Members and Associates in Scotland can work for greater power for Edinburgh over how taxes are levied and spent. My basic point is that, whether we are members of the SNP, the Liberal Democrats or the Labour Party, there is a dauntingly vast amount to do. Yet one hopeful sign these days is that surveys of voters show huge impatience with the growing gap between rich and poor and increasing anxiety about the polluted world we are leaving to our children. Long live the Rule, especially Section 4 with its emphasis on social and political action.

We are all sparks of Light ...

At a couple of recent Iona Community plenaries, Members got together in small groups to share thoughts on the Rule and on peace and peacemaking. Here are some of the things they spoke about, and some voices:

The bully is made in God's image too.

Look into their eyes.

Peace with justice will provide Shalom (life in all its abundance), but peace without justice will only deliver *eirene ypene* (absence of war).

Loving the hell out of your enemy will bring real peace.

Everyday 'quiet' peace witness beside campaigning in public

Peace has been taken over by the military!

Need to hear from the military

Prayer changes everything.

Naming violence (Faslane, Aldermaston ...)
and imaging/showing alternatives

Action coming out of a place of well-being,
rather than from a place of guilt or fear

You can't make peace while you are being unpeaceful.

How to translate your anger into passion for action?

Sometimes I feel overwhelmed. There is so much to do! ... But then I remember what St Paul said in Corinthians: We all have gifts. Some folk are good on the barricades, others are good at writing letters ... We can't do everything: We are all pieces of the jigsaw ... We are all sparks of Light ...



Child lighting a candle © David Coleman

Part of something Good

George D. Wilkie

Interviewed on the BBC Today programme a while back, was the leader of the American pop/rock group the Eagles, who topped the charts regularly a generation ago. He explained why, after many years apart, the group had come together again to produce a new album, *A Long Road Out of Eden*. He was asked about its contents, and described one or two of the tracks. But again and again he emphasised that the most important words on the whole album were

'Be part of something good, leave something good behind …'

Two thoughts occurred to me about this statement.

The first was the contrast between the sentiment and the encouragement to self-assertion in much of the pop music of the '60s and '70s.

Is this album of the Eagles signalling the end of that era? Could it be that these older and wiser men want to encourage the younger generation of today to give up the cult of individualism, 'to be part of something good' and 'leave something good behind'?

The second thought was that while an encouragement to 'be part of something good' is all right as far as it goes, it seems a long way short of the Gospel of redemption and salvation through Jesus Christ! And on the face of it, it may seem to fall foul of Paul's dictum that we are justified by faith and not by works. Maybe one has to ask if it would be strong enough motivation to challenge the entrenched evil in the real world which anyone seeking the 'good' is bound to encounter? Or does it rather smack of the hopeful idealism of 'do-gooders' everywhere?

Well … Yes … But … in the Acts of the Apostles, Luke does not hesitate to report that 'Jesus went about doing good'. And how often in the parables it was the good deed that Jesus commended, rather than the correct belief. And in the great judgement parable of the sheep and the goats, the reward of the sheep was the result of good deeds towards the poor, the sick and the needy. So encouraging young people (and all of us) to be part of something good is not to lead them away from the Christian God. It may be the way they discover the God of Jesus – in spite of all the doctrinal hurdles.

John Baillie, a leading Scottish theologian of the 20th century, says, 'We look for God nowhere else than in Goodness.' And I'm sure he wasn't just referring to good personal behaviour or polite little acts of kindness, however important these are. The goodness he was pointing to was a strong force actively engaged in the eternal struggle between Good and Evil. 'That's where God is to be found,' he says. And those who take 'part in something good' will find themselves working alongside God whether they know it or not.

Indeed Jesus's whole life can be seen as a part, a central part, of the eternal struggle between Good and Evil, and he knew in his own person the full force of evil in its power and venom. He knew also that the only force to resist evil and to banish it from the lives of men and women was the power of sacrificial Love.

So, who is on the Lord's side? Surely all those who, whatever their stated belief, are 'part of something good'.

Postscripts

1. Simone Weil, no orthodox Christian, said: 'There is something mysterious in the universe which is complicit with those who love nothing but the Good.'

2. The 'be part of something good' is not the same as 'being good'. The latter has its focus on good behaviour, and therefore it is subject to pride and self-congratulation – all the dangers Jesus saw in the Pharisees.

3. Everyone understands Goodness. If a man jumps into a raging torrent and rescues a child, that is good in any part of the world. If someone has a loaf of bread and meets a starving fellow human being, and gives that person half of it, that is good everywhere. If a man has a reputation for honesty, his word is his bond, that is good in any society. Is this not therefore a simple unifying point for Christians, Muslims and Jews – for people of all religions and none? …

The words of the song are from 'It's Your World Now', track 9 on the second disc of *A Long Road Out of Eden*. They seem to be the words of an older man who recognises his time in this world is nearly over and who is speaking to the next generation:

It's your world now.
Use well your time.
Be part of something good.
Leave something good behind.
The curtain falls, I take my bow.
That's how it's meant to be.
It's your world now …

George Wilkie is a former Member of the Iona Community. He joined the Community in 1945.

www.iona.org.uk/growing_hope.php

The Growing Hope Appeal home stretch:

Do you have any unwanted or broken jewellery to donate?

Maybe an odd cuff link or earring, a broken watch, a damaged necklace or a ring that doesn't fit – any gold, silver or costume jewellery you haven't worn for years? Please donate these items to the Growing Hope Appeal.

With nearly £1M in funds raised, the Iona Community has now completed the first two stages of its Growing Hope Appeal. Following the 2007 redevelopment of its Camas Centre on Mull, 2009 saw the transformation of the shop-building opposite the Abbey into a Welcome and Interpretation Centre for guests and visitors to the island. Now, on the home stretch of the appeal, we want to underpin this investment by developing and improving accommodation for our staff members, providing new living space for 5 people within Dunsmeorach. This landmark house of the Community's Founder, the late George MacLeod, is situated on the roadside leading to the Abbey.

Welcome and hospitality are central to the ministry of the Iona Community. Key to this are our staff members who together share a common life and each week form a living community with guests from all over the world, bringing together work and worship, prayer and politics, the sacred and the secular.

To donate, please contact the Iona Community's Glasgow office: **0141–332–6343, admin@iona.org.uk**



Jewellery by Neil Paynter

CHANGES IN THE 2010 MEMBERSHIP BOOKS

Significant changes will be noticed by Members and Associates in next year's books, which are currently in preparation. Members will already know of the decision taken by Council last December to include only the Member's name and that of any spouse or partner. Fuller biographical, family and professional details, along with a note of personal interests and concerns, are to be included in a 100-word submission to feature in the 'Rogues Gallery' and on the Members' section of the Community's website.

The most significant change to the Members' and Associates' books, however, is that there will no longer be separate books for each category of membership. Current books will be replaced by:

The Iona Community Act of Prayer Book – for use in worship and personal devotions. Contents will include the Rule (for Members and Associates), the concerns of the Community, and the names of Members, Associates and Youth Associates to be remembered in prayer. These will be listed according to Family Group and in geographical regions.

The Iona Community Year Book – will contain information about the Rule and the concerns of the Community, contact details for Members, Associates, Youth Associates and key members of staff, dates of Council meetings, plenaries and Community Weeks, and information about the current theme, committees and working groups.

All of these changes are the result of the growth and geographical expansion of the Community and the inclusion of additional contact information such as email addresses. The format of the Act of Prayer Book will, it is hoped, emphasise the 'unity' in our Community and the format of the Year Book make the addresses easier to read. Oh, and we are also sourcing better staples!

Peter Macdonald

reviews

Down to Earth, by Neil Paynter, illustrations by Iain Campbell, Wild Goose Publications, 2009 www.ionabooks.com

It's interesting that in his teaching, Jesus of Nazareth never really preached long sermons. He preferred to tell stories. Even the Sermon on the Mount is regarded by biblical scholars as a compendium of teaching given at a variety of times in a variety of situations.

Christ's stories stay in the mind. Who could possibly forget the Prodigal Son, or the Good Samaritan? They are subversive visual events, told with economy of words. Yet these two parables alone encapsulate the core of the gospel message.

We need good storytellers, and Neil Paynter is one such person. His tales are vivid and compelling, thankfully without the anxious need to tack on moralistic endings.

The stories come from Neil's experience of life, as well as from reflection on scripture. The author has been a farm labourer, a fruit-picker, a teacher, a security guard, a bookseller, a hospital cleaner, a stand-up comedian, a musician and an editor.

Apart from that, he's lived a fairly boring life.

The stories in this book come out of Neil's experience of working in homeless shelters in North America and Britain, as a nurse's aide with the elderly and as a mental health worker.

'I don't want to romanticise people, but so many of the folk I met in my work, so many of the discarded people, were to me the most prophetic and Christ-like. It was a privilege to know them.

'I wanted to live in a world where heart matters, not money. Where richness is measured in stories. Where people are valued for their life experience. That was naive, I guess. Still, we move further and further away from that human world, don't we?'

Neil explains that he didn't think of himself as a Christian when he started this work. That's the reason, he says, why some of the stories are more 'religious' than others. 'Some of the stories … don't seem 'Christian' at all. But I don't believe Jesus lives in a church, or is very dogmatic about the language he wants us to use – I think of him as very down to earth, open and understanding. I think he cares that we use language well though – he was a poet. I think he wants us to tell good stories.'

There are plenty of good stories in this powerful book. Some of them are sagas, others are dialogues, and others again are fragments. Take this short piece called Hairpins:

'What 'cha doin', Katherine?' She sits in the living room with a box of hairpins on her lap. She keeps sticking hairpins in her hair.

'I'm putting hairpins in my hair,' she answers, irritated, like I'm stupid. 'If I keep on doing this … it will be all right,' she says.

'Oh,' I answer … and I stand and watch her trying to keep herself together. Trying to keep time from unravelling and her life from falling apart.

Like Jean Vanier, Neil finds his Christ in the poor, the dispossessed and the vulnerable. He concludes by asking: 'Why do we spend £53 billion a year on armaments and death (UK statistic) and segregate elderly people in boring, sterile, impersonal surroundings? Why not instead use the money to help create and support communities where the elderly and children and young people and others can all live together and share a life and journey?'

This rich book, with its prayers and meditations as well as stories, could be used in public worship or private devotion. It is a resource for a living church, in which the teachers are vulnerable and sometimes bewildered people – and also Neil himself, whose craftsmanship is never obtrusive. And Iain Campbell's illustrations are very powerful.

Ron Ferguson

Passion and Power: Conflict and Change in Seventh-Century Britain, Warren R. Bardsley, Church in the Market Place Publications, 2009. To order: wbardsley39@btinternet.com

An aggressive, short-sighted ruler, intent on making pre-emptive strikes against foreign powers to maintain his own position, is replaced, at last, by a wise, scholarly and thoughtful successor, to the immense relief of all and sundry.

Sounds familiar?

Warren Bardsley's latest little book is about what happened in the Saxon Kingdom of Northumbria in the 7th century, when the disastrous reign of Ecgfrith (one of the infamous 'Egg-Kings' of *1066 And All That*!) was replaced, after his death in battle, by the reign of his half-brother, Aldfrith.

Aldfrith was an Iona-educated scholar, a pupil of St Aidan's. He ruled wisely and well for nearly twenty years (685–704). He was a contemporary of the saintly Cuthbert of Lindisfarne, and the more controversial Bishop Wilfrid, of Synod of Whitby fame. In his account of Aldfrith's life and times, Warren finds 'a number of resonances with the life of the Church today'. He mentions the tension between conflicting theological traditions, often cutting across denominational boundaries, and the often difficult relationship between church and state.

Warren serves up this lively story with his own passion and power. He writes it as a fast-moving contemporary account of events, in the present tense, and with much imagined, but scholarly-based, dialogue. Reading it, I kept thinking

not so much of the issues troubling the church today, as of the deeper issues troubling many reflective souls in our aggressively secular society. How to live as a person of faith in a world more interested in status and power. How to 'speak truth to power', as the martyred Latin American Bishop Oscar Romero, of the last century, told us to do. How to be 'as wise as serpents and as gentle as doves', as the Gospel commands us. And how to hold on to the practice of the presence of God in daily life, in the midst of the immense pressures, and compromises, of the world around us.

Not easy. And Warren is not offering easy answers. But we all need role models, and in this book, a successor to his earlier book about Adomnán, Warren offers us yet another – this time a poet, a scholar, a politician, and someone who was willing to struggle to live a life of faith in tumultuous and demanding times. Plus ça change!

John Harvey

You Are Mine: Reflections on Who We Are, **Alison Webster**, SPCK, 2009

www.spck.org.uk

You Are Mine is as beautiful and mysterious as the unique human beings it's about and its appearance amid the celebrations of 200 years of Darwin's 'Big Idea' is interesting, to say the least. Like most people, the book looks fairly ordinary, its beauty is quiet: so many connections – none left unexplored; many hidden questions – no attempt to answer them but every attempt to show how we live with them. We are encouraged to learn to live without destructive longings for certainty. Doctrine is probably the only alternative to uncertainty and, Alison pointedly reminds us, is always somebody's doctrine. It disregards the miracle of human uniqueness. How good it is to read her plea for more agnosticism about where Truth lies and her developing uneasy sense that ideology was getting in the way of humanity. She opens the chapter 'Faith' with the words: 'The house of God is cold', and ends with the story of the flesh-and-blood person who shows us who God is. I'll leave you to think about that!

Alison seeks to stimulate our wonder at our own uniqueness and how this matters. The book is a perceptive exploration of identity: my identity, your identity and, perhaps above all, the essential nature of the interaction between us: how do I, as one unique and irreplaceable human being, step beyond myself and into an encounter with another unique and irreplaceable human being – you? That's one of the book's big questions. It's about what makes community.

Courage, emotional imagination and humility are at the heart of *You Are Mine* along with becoming and relating, compassion and connection. It's decidedly not a book to encourage navel-gazing! There are the stories we live by, micro stories, our own experiences as we tell them, and there are macro stories, some shared, many invisible, that may dominate or shape who we are. Personal and political identities are not separate. Alison's concern is always relationship and connection – how we live together: our demanding common task and that for which we're more than likely to be remembered. She explores interdependence as the essence of our humanity, that there are those without whom I could not be who I am, and there are those who could not be who they are without me. This, Alison tells us without compromise, matters.

We are led away from the promotion of the individual, the temptation to equate our identity with our achievements which 'are, at best, transient and relative' or imagining that we are born with, or at any point in our lives acquire, a fixed identity. The gift, the work of art that is a human life grows, changes and develops within relationship. Essential to this book is the search for a sense of ourselves that is strong and deep enough to enable us to change, but not so strong that it becomes rigid, restricting the directions in which we can grow, and an understanding of the landscape that lurks between the personal and the political, the individual and the corporate. In understanding identity, these two must be held together in our minds at all times.

There's an especially poignant and revealing little story on page 4:

A friend told me recently of her experience of sitting through an unsatisfactory theological conference session. The theme was 'otherness/alterity'. After an hour or so of abstract theological reasoning about the nature of 'the other' one of the participants – a Latin American woman from a liberation theology tradition – could bear it no longer. 'We don't call them "others",' she said. 'We call people "neighbours".'

'What makes me feel alive?' is the big identity question. A human being fully alive is always in the process of becoming … with others … so *You Are Mine* becomes in itself a book about life as flowing, changing process. I like the way Alison explores fluidity and movement and uses the uniting image of breathing – we breathe, we grow, we flourish – as energy integral to this process of becoming: Insofar as it can ever be fixed, our identity is located in that pause between inhaling and exhaling – between receiving giftedness from God, the world and others, and passing it on: exhaling, bestowing, creating.

So I encourage you to read *You Are Mine*. You probably won't discover the reason for your being but you may realise your becoming … in communion and community.

Joy Mead

THE IONA COMMUNITY'S 2010 ISLANDS PROGRAMME

You will have found a 2010 programme enclosed in this edition of Coracle. Should you need the outer colour brochure, please contact the Glasgow office: admin@iona.org.uk, 0141-332-6343. Thank you.

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THE WILD GOOSE RESOURCE GROUP

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Iona Community, 4th Floor, Savoy House,
140 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow G2 3DH
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Friend membership: £31.00pa,
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For details, contact
Lynn Harper-Baldwin,
Membership Secretary:
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WILD GOOSE PUBLICATIONS

NEW TITLES

Light of the World: Daily Readings for Advent, Peter Millar & Neil Paynter, £9.99 (plus post and packing)

Readings from Iona Community Members, Associates and friends – Peter Millar, Ruth Burgess, Kathy Galloway, John Harvey, Jan Sutch Pickard, David Rhodes and others. Advent is a special time in the Christian year. In our troubled world, which is also a world of extraordinary possibility and creativity, we need such times more than ever. Times to renew our soul so that our lives may express a deeper compassion and a more joy-filled awareness. Traditionally in the days of Advent there has been an emphasis on the coming of Light – that Light which illumines all our journeys and brings healing to the nations. May these readings enlarge your hope, and bring you to Christmas morning with Christ's light steadily illumining your path.

Iona: God's Energy: The Vision and Spirituality of the Iona Community, Norman Shanks, £10.99 (plus post and packing)

This new edition of Norman Shanks' book (previously published by Hodder & Stoughton) is an outstanding introduction and guide to the spirituality, concerns and activities of the Iona Community, by a former Leader of the Community. A new chapter has been added to bring the book up to date.

50 Great Prayers from the Iona Community, Neil Paynter (Ed.), £8.99 (plus post and packing)

Fifty of the best-loved prayers of the Iona Community in a portable edition. Prayers by Kathy Galloway, Ruth Burgess, the Wild Goose Resource Group, George MacLeod, Kate McIlhagga, Jan Sutch Pickard, Peter Millar, Joy Mead, Ali Newell, Chris Polhill ...

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A touching place: news and letters

Coracle welcomes letters relating to contents of the magazine. Contact details on p.1

KNIFE CRIME

I have to admit, I am easily confused. The Government is trying to clamp down on knife crime. Politicians are united in their condemnation of young men who get a buzz out of carrying lethal weapons.

News bulletins carry extensive coverage of knife deaths. Partly because such deaths are important, but also because there is something fascinating about the idea of one human being stabbing another human being to death.

Young people carry weapons to demand respect from others on the streets. A knife is a symbol of status and power. It says 'I am dangerous: do not mess with me.'

Perhaps for some young men, pumped up with testosterone, there is a temptation to attack for the thrill of it – or, maybe because of the fear that they could be in danger from another person with a knife.

Naturally, politicians condemn such behaviour as anti-social. 'We will not tolerate it,' they say. 'We will come down hard on these hooligans who are a danger to others.'

But, reading Brian Quail's excellent article on Trident in the last issue of *Coracle* ('Time up for Trident – and for the Union?'), it struck me that you could substitute the words 'nuclear weapons' for 'knives'.

And that's where I get confused. If it is wrong to carry a deadly weapon on Britain's streets to ensure the respect of others and to be a deterrent against attack from some other knife-wielding hoodlum, how can it be right for nations to swagger around with a pocket full of nuclear weapons?

Unless it is to earn respect from other world leaders: to be seen to be a 'hard' man. To be seen as virile and to be feared. Or maybe to compensate for being on the wrong side of the male menopause?

If we abandoned our nuclear weapons, we might be in a stronger position to lecture young people about knife crime.

David Rhodes, Associate

NEWS OF THE RECENT SWEDISH IONA-INSPIRED GATHERING IN KUVARP

From July 3–11, the Swedish Iona-inspired Network gathered at Kuvarp in southern Sweden. The first weekend was a smaller gathering for members, where we, with Peter Millar as enabler, worked at an expression of the core values and commitments of our network, which is still in its initial stages. We were then joined by a crowd of some 30 members and non-members, aged 2–80. The week included 'lectures' on peace, healing, reconciliation and interfaith dialogue, a pilgrimage, workshops on everything from ventriloquism to smithwork, and services in the beautiful chapel.

Helene Egnell

VISIT MALAWI AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE GROWING HOPE APPEAL!

June Walker, an Associate member living and working in Malawi, is willing to offer hospitality, on a self-catering basis, at her cottage on the shores of Lake Malawi, in exchange for a donation to Growing Hope. If you are interested, June's contact details are in the Associates' Book. In Malawi June is considered 'the Mother of permaculture'.

NEWS FROM EURIG SCANDRETT ABOUT THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BHOPAL DISASTER

I have just returned from the UK headquarters of Dow in Staines with Sathyu Sarangi from Bhopal, the Yes Men* and a crowd of activists from the International Campaign for Justice in Bhopal. A stunt had been devised by the Yes Men, to offer to Dow executives a taste of a 'new product' bottled water by the name of 'B'EAU PAL'. Water had been brought from a hand pump close to the site of the old Union Carbide factory. The water from this pump is used by Bhopalis for their daily needs and has been found to contain dichloromethane, carbon tetrachloride and chloroform considerably above levels considered to be safe. Our 'B'EAU PAL' water was bottled and appropriately designer-labelled, naming these three ingredients. The label said:

The unique qualities of our water come from 25 years of slow-leaching toxins at the site of the world's largest industrial accident. To this day, Dow Chemical (who bought Union Carbide) and the Indian government have refused to clean up and whole new generations are being poisoned.

In fact, the stunt never took place. Dow, presumably tipped off by the press release, closed its office early and only security staff were present for the cameras. Still, we closed down Dow for a few hours at least.

This year is the 25th anniversary of the gas leak in Bhopal, which killed 8,000 people within days. The injustice of the gas poisoning on those killed, maimed and their children with congenital defects is compounded by the ongoing injustice of the water contamination. Union Carbide consistently fought and appealed against attempts at legal justice and settled with the Government of India for $470 million, a small fraction of the amount required for medical care and rehabilitation, let alone compensation. Despite absorbing Union Carbide in 2001, Dow denies that it has any liability. Sathyu Sarangi has worked with survivors, providing health care, and was in the UK to receive an honorary doctorate for his work.

India, with its steeply rising growth rate, is at the forefront of neo-liberal expansion even whilst the collapse of the banks has exposed the fallacy of neo-liberalism. India's economic miracle is reaching only a tiny percentage of the people. The poor who are being displaced and poisoned, however, are rising up, and people's movements are taking on the corporations and state collusion. Due to the actions of protest groups, Dow has been unable to expand its investments in India.

For the past three years, I have been part of a research project documenting the experiences of the Bhopal survivors, who have been campaigning for justice over the 25 years. This remarkable movement, made up of a number of different campaign groups, is overwhelmingly made up of poor women with little formal education who have taken on the powerful American multinational and their government which supports them. There are equal numbers of Hindus and Muslims in the affected part of Bhopal and many of the women in the movement have talked about their relationship with their religion. Many unhelpful religious practices have been abandoned by survivor-activists: Hindus and Muslims regularly eat together, Hindus have challenged many caste discriminations and some Muslims have stopped wearing burqa. But they are not becoming secular. Despite the lack of support from religious leaders, the women express strong religious devotion, but are redefining religion from within the practice of a struggle for justice.

Eurig Scandrett, Member

** The Yes Men are a group of activists who practise 'identity correction' by impersonating big-time criminals in order to publicly humiliate them. Targets are leaders and big corporations who put profits ahead of everything else.*

LESSILE NEWBIGIN CENTENARY: CELEBRATIONS IN EDINBURGH

Bishop James Edward Lesslie Newbigin was born on 8th December 1909 and died on 30th January 1998. He was an outstanding figure in the twentieth-century ecumenical movement. As a Church of Scotland missionary, evangelist and preacher, mission strategist, social visionary and person of prayer he played pioneering roles in the United Church of South India and in the World Council of Churches. After forty years in India his last twenty-five were devoted to addressing the spiritual malaise of the secularised West. Lesslie Newbigin was a great friend of George MacLeod, and features in the film *A Sermon in Stone.*

Service of Thanksgiving: Sunday, 6th December, 2009, 6:30pm, St George's West, Church of Scotland, 58 Shandwick Place. Preacher: The Revd Canon Dr Andrew Wingate

Public Seminar: Saturday, 12th December, 2009, 10am – 4pm, St John's Scottish Episcopal Church Hall, Princes Street, Lecturer: Professor Veli-Matti Karkkainen

For more information, contact Rev Murdoch Mackenzie: mackenziema@ymail.com

Murdoch is a Member of the Iona Community.

IONA COMMUNITY E-BULLETIN

The Iona Community e-bulletin, companion to *Coracle*, is full of news, features, campaign information, worship resources, reflections on the Word, poetry, reviews – and more …

See past editions online at **www.iona.org.uk/coracle.php**

If you are a Member, Associate or Friend, make sure the Glasgow office has your current email address so that you can receive the e-bulletin and keep up to date on all that's happening in the Community.

THE STORY OF THE BIRD BATH IN THE PEACE GARDEN OF IONA ABBEY AND A REQUEST

This bird bath *(below)*, carved out of a piece of Yorkshire stone, was bought by the Yorkshire Family Group in memory of my husband, Eric Welburn, and dedicated by John Harvey at Community Week 1994. Eric was the groundsman at Iona Abbey from 1979 to 1982 and went to nearly every Work Week from the late '70s up to his death in December 1993. He looked after the doves and always made sure they had plenty of water. The stone is appropriately placed in the Peace Garden outside the Abbey and has been enjoyed by many birds, but as time passes, its origins are forgotten. Recently, a friend hosting at the Abbey found it dirty and overgrown. She was joined by many of the guests at the Abbey in clearing the weeds and making the bird bath accessible to birds once again. I fear that one day workmen, looking for a piece of stone to fill a gap, might break it up, not knowing why it is there. So I would be grateful if, when you visit Iona, you would look out for the bird bath in the Peace Garden, and make sure it is accessible to the birds and full of water.

Pat Welburn, Member



Photo of the bird bath in the Peace Garden by Catherine Harkin

Neil Squires

I will seek peace

I will seek peace at heart
Try to overcome my fears, my anxieties and troubled, anxious mind
I will look for solace
Search for comfort
I will seek peace at heart

I will seek peace at home
Reach out to those who are victims of abuse through age or gender or sexuality
I will challenge those who are perpetrators
Speak up for those who have no voice
I will seek peace at home

I will seek peace in the virtual world
Encourage young and old to dream the right dreams
live creatively, have real adventures –
which are free from violence or aggression
I will seek peace in the virtual world

I will seek peace with the earth
I'll campaign for the forests
Buy fairtrade products, recycle, keep a compost
and wonder at the beauty of nature
I will seek peace with the earth

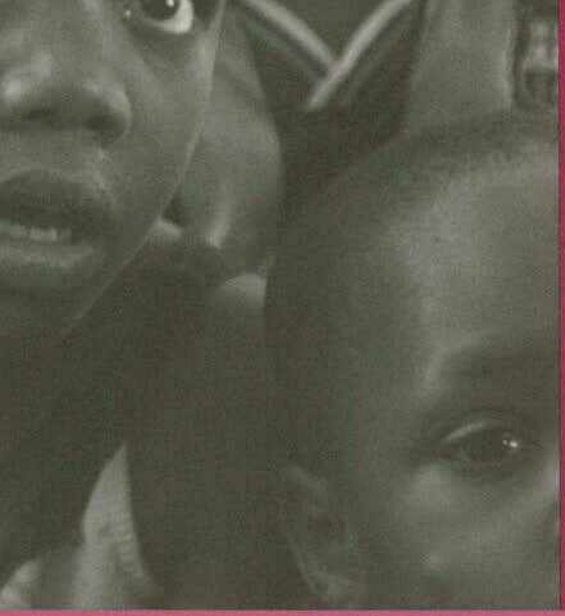
I will seek peace in the marketplace
Live humbly and responsibly
Share my wealth and my home
Stand up for the rights of the poor and exploited
I will seek peace in the marketplace

I will seek peace not war
Study non-violence, resolve conflict,
campaign against arms, lobby governments
and challenge apathy
I will seek peace not war

And in my seeking
I will live with hope
Strive for change
Act with humility … courage … and faith
And choose love not hate …

Written for worship at an Iona Community plenary; reflecting on themes from the World Council of Churches' 'Decade to End Violence'

Neil Squires is a Member of the Iona Community.



**Let us pray for the continent of Africa,
where nations still struggle to be free
from poverty and malnutrition
and from the debt or corruption
on which poverty thrives.**

**Let us pray with the people of Zimbabwe
for justice in their nation,
with the people of Darfur
for an end to genocide,
with the people of Malawi
for prosperity for all.**

**Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer …**

© Wild Goose Resource Group, 2009
From *Harvesting the World*

coracle
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We welcome the light that rises in the new days sun.
We welcome the light that glows through the growing earth.
We welcome the light that gleams in all creation.
We welcome the light that dwells on each person here, imaging our God.

2. How do we find we are able to express our connectedness and reflect our closeness with the Creative Infinite, in our everyday lives?
SILENCE General discussion

Gift bearing. [Show the gold, incense and myrrh in the sand]
As with the Magi, what gift do we bring for the world and for ourselves during this New year?
[as each person says their gift they are given a 'date' to sustain them in their journey of making their gift a reality]

Final prayer say together.....

Gold is purified in fire.
May we be so enabled to do your work of transforming drabness into
a world with vibrant joy .

The rising incense speaks of your Presence
May we not lose sight of your risen presence
transforming our shallowness with Wisdom.

Myrrh spreads the fragrance of perfume
May our deeds spread your fragrance
Transforming suffering with deepening trust

May the Star of justice shine on us all, giving us the inspiration, courage and energy to bring that shining justice to those many places where injustice holds sway.

Sing;
O star of wonder, star of light
star of radiant beauty right
onward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect sight.

Kiss of Peace

Supper.

Women's Liturgy January 2006
Visual images of desert[sand on mirror tray, stars darkness]
Theme; Journeying through the Desert

Epiphany Poem;
We wait in the darkness expectantly, searching in our depth.
Darkness is a friend.
In the darkness of the womb we have all been nurtured and protected.
In the darkness of the womb the Christ-Child was made ready for the journey into light.

Only in the darkness may we see the splendour of the Universe and the glowing stars.
It was in the darkness that the wise three saw the star that led them to the Christ-child.

In the darkness desert peoples find relief from the searing heat of the sun.
In the blessed desert darkness Joseph and Mary sought refuge for Jesus in Egypt.

In the darkness of sleep dreams rise up.
In the darkness God gave dreams to Joseph and the wise three.
Give to us dreams as and when you will.

In the aloneness of the darkness our fears can rise to the surface,
We come to face ourselves
and the road that lies ahead.

Question to discuss in two's;
1. What does the desert mean for us, physically, psychologically, spiritually and metaphorically?

No more shall we languish in darkness or dread
Who or what and where is our source of light in our desert places?

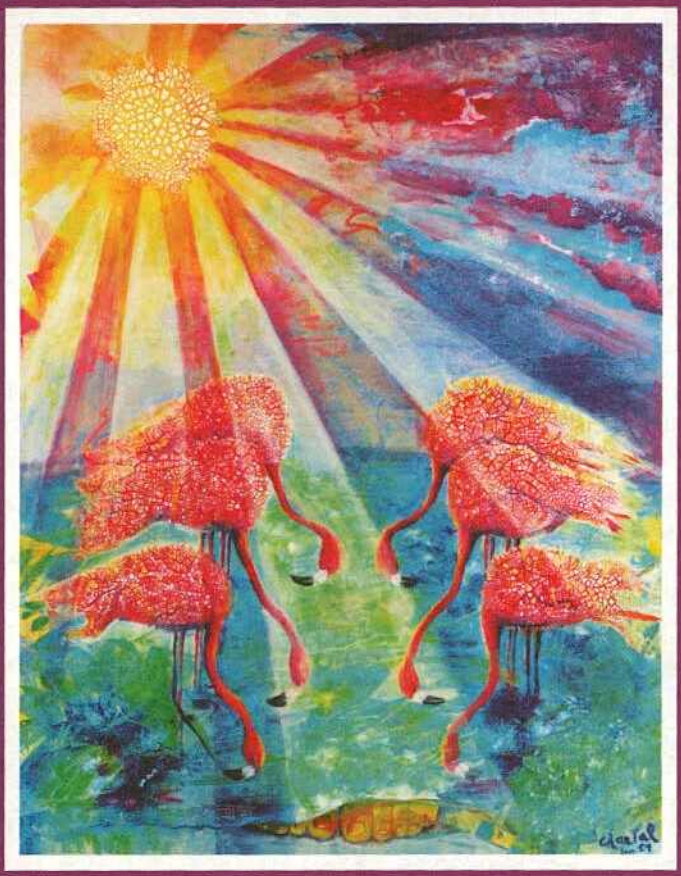
Sing;
O star of wonder, star of night
star of radiant beauty bright
onward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect sight

[Each place a lit candle in the sand naming our source]
After each, sing verse again.

Now in the light all say;

WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

(interdenominational)



JESUS SAID TO THEM: DO YOU KNOW WHAT I HAVE DONE TO YOU?

6th March 2015

Prepared by Christian women of The Bahamas

THE BAHAMAS
West Indies

Population
353,000

Capital
Nassau

Area
Over 700 islands covering 100 square miles of water

Currency
Bahamian dollar

Religion
Predominantly Christian

Language
English, linked with Bahamian dialect commonly known as 'Smokey Joe'

Climate
Tropical
Warm most of the year. Hottest months: June to October – when subject to hurricanes



The earliest recorded mention of The Bahamas is 1492 when Christopher Columbus arrived at what is now San Salvador, taking slaves and killing native Indians. He left to continue his search for gold elsewhere.

1647 was the date of the earliest European settlement.

1666 saw English settlers establishing a colony in New Providence.

In 1713 pirates outnumbered families by 1,000 to 200.

The British government brought an end to the slave trade in 1802 but it was the 1830s before this became a reality.

The airfield used during World War II became Nassau's international airport. Today, it is vital for tourism which provides half the jobs in The Bahamas.

Self government was achieved in 1964 and full independence within the commonwealth, in 1973.

Bimini, the northernmost island, lies 52 miles off the Florida coast: Inagua, the island furthest south, is near Cuba and Haiti. The islands are mainly flat although Mount Alvernia, on Cat Island, is 206 feet high. The Andros Barrier Reef is the third longest in the world.

Today's Bahamian lifestyle and culture have been greatly influenced by the West Africans, who arrived as slaves, and the British, who colonised the islands. This gave The Bahamas their culinary variety and rich heritage of music, dance and the arts. Although The Bahamas is one of the most prosperous countries in the West Indies, there are also areas of deprivation.

In the islands which are more sparsely populated, women tend to have poorly paid domestic jobs in hotels and restaurants. Single parent families are common and mothers often struggle to support their families. There are also problems due to drug and alcohol dependency, HIV and Aids which can lead to neglect and child abuse.

Although tertiary education is possible in The Bahamas, many young people obtain scholarships to study elsewhere and do not return to the islands.

(Notes to help in the preparation of this service will be found on p18 of this booklet. If you are a UK tax payer you may wish to use the Gift Aid envelope provided.)

JESUS SAID TO THEM: "DO YOU KNOW WHAT I HAVE DONE TO YOU?"

PREPARATION

A table, covered with a blue cloth, reminiscent of the Bahamian turquoise seas, is positioned at the front of the worship area. On the table place a bunch of brightly coloured flowers and a Bible, open at John 13.

Lively Caribbean music is played as the readers, dressed in brightly coloured fabrics (especially pink, yellow, turquoise and green) process to the front of the worship area, where they each lay a handful of seashells and/or flower petals, straw work or tropical fruit on the decorated table.

WELCOME

Leader The islands of The Bahamas welcome you. We, the women of the World Day of Prayer Committee of The Bahamas, invite you to this celebration.
Our early beginnings, 65 years ago, were linked to the Presbyterian Church of Scotland in the capital city of Nassau. Today, World Day of Prayer is celebrated by more than ten Christian denominations in most of our inhabited islands.
Listen to the words of ninety-five year old Gertrude Burnside who was part of the service in 1950:

Gertrude We were all dressed in white as we walked to the Presbyterian Church on that Friday afternoon. Most of the women were the wives of the ministers, and I was invited by my minister's wife to attend.

Leader Today, dressed in the tropical colours of our sand, sea and sun, from Nassau to the Family Islands, the people of The Bahamas greet you and invite you to join us as we sing a hymn of praise.

HYMN

Ode to Joy 87 87 D

Sing to God new songs of worship
all His deeds are marvellous;
He has brought salvation to us
with His hand and holy arm:
He has shown to all the nations
righteousness and saving power;
He re-called His truth and mercy
to His people Israel.

Sing to God new songs of worship
earth has seen His victory;
Let the lands of earth be joyful
praising Him with thankfulness:
Sound upon the harp His praises,
play to Him with melody;
Let the trumpets sound his triumph,
show your joy to God the King!

Sing to God new songs of worship
let the sea now make a noise;
All on earth and in the waters
sound your praises to the Lord:
Let the hills be joyful together,
let the rivers clap their hands,
For with righteousness and justice
He will come to judge the earth.

Words: © Michael Baughen / The Jubilate Group. www.jubilate.co.uk
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CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader Let us join together with the islands in our call to worship.

Voice 1 Creator God, from **Andros** Island and from every country, you have called us into this place to come and be washed in God's ever-flowing ocean of grace; to bask in the iridescent light of Christ's love and to be embraced by your Holy Spirit with the cooling trade-winds of transformation.

All **A place of beauty and refreshment where we gather in community and love.**

Voice 2 From **Eleuthera** and throughout the world, we are called into the kingdom of God. Let us worship together in unity!

All **A kingdom of radical love, joy and peace – here and now.**

Voice 3 From the island of **Exuma**, we are called into Christ's presence here on earth, diverse in substance yet one in Spirit.

All **We come as we are, O Lord. Purify our minds to worship you; cleanse our hands and feet so that we may serve you, and prepare our hearts that we may perfectly love you as we sing your praises.**

Voice 4 On the island of **Inagua** may we listen for your quiet call to personal discipleship and service.

Leader Let us pause for a moment of silence in the presence of the Lord.

Pause

PSALM OF PRAISE

Leader Let us join together in a psalm of praise with the islands of **Bimini, Albaco, Acklins, Grand Bahama, Long Island** and **Cat Island.**

Voice 1 Great creator of the heavens and the earth, who has breathed into us the breath of life, we are grateful for this precious gift. We stand in awe of your beauty, splendour and majesty, seen in the brightness of the sun, the beauty of our waters, the face of a baby, the laughter of a child and the smiling eyes of an elderly woman.

All **Our God, we give you praise.**

Voice 2 God of wonder, we look with pleasure at the spectrum of colour and intricate design in each flower, rainbow and glistening raindrop. Lord, your radical love is as consistent as the sun, your mercy is as boundless as the sands, and your grace surrounds us like the waters of the sea.

All **Our God, we give you praise.**

Voice 3 God of grace, we praise you for the healing medicine in the leaves of our plants. We exalt your name for every opportunity given to us to minister to the poor and to wash the feet of the weary.

All **Our God, we give you praise.**

Voice 4 God our saviour, you are our God and we exalt and praise your name for all the many ways you have journeyed with us and our ancestors over the centuries.

All **We praise you for the many ways you have cared for us.**

Voice 1 God our redeemer and liberator, you have broken the chains of tyranny, oppression and enslavement over hearts, minds and spirits.

All **Thank you for making us free!**

Voice 2 Jesus our brother, you are the lover of outcasts and friend of the poor, yet one with God. Crucified and risen, you are our prophet, priest and king.

All **Lord, we are amazed by you. How you love us! How deep and radical is your love. Therefore, let all the earth bow in awe and praise the name of the Lord!**

DOXOLOGY *(sung)*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him all creatures here below
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Thomas Ken (1637-1711)

John 13: 1-17

Narrator Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself.
Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.
He came to Simon Peter:

Peter Lord, are you going to wash my feet?

Jesus You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.

Peter You will never wash my feet.

Jesus Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.

Peter Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!

Jesus One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.

Narrator For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said:

Jesus Not all of you are clean.

Narrator After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them,

Jesus Do you know what I have done to you?
You call me Teacher and Lord – and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.
For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them.
If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

Narrator This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

Leader Let us all join together in singing our salutation:



SONG *(Lively - sung twice)*
Halle, halle, halle - lujah!
Halle, halle, halle - lujah!
Halle, halle, halle - lujah!
Hallelijah, hallelujah!

The WGRG is glad to grant permission for the use of the arrangement on this occasion.
Arrangement © WGRG, Iona Community, Glasgow G2 3DH, Scotland
www.wgrg.co.uk

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader Let us join with the islands in a prayer of confession.

Voice 3 From **Crooked Island**, Lord, we confess that we do not understand the depths, lengths and heights of your love. In our ignorance we try to direct it away from those we do not like, cannot love, or will not love.

All **Forgive us, Lord.**

Voice 4 Creative and creating God, your hands have sculpted these **Berry Islands** and you have fed us with the abundance of our fish and the richness of the land. Forgive us when we let our human need destroy the environment that we all, together with our visitors, should be responsible for preserving.

All **Keep us from destroying your wonderful creation.**

Voice 1 We, on **Ragged Island**, confess that at times we intentionally refuse to wash another's feet because they are different from our own. Open our eyes to those who are in need of a gentle touch, a listening ear, a word of comfort and a healing presence.

All **Lord, we are amazed by you. How you love us! How deep and radical is your love. Teach us how to be more like you and to model your all-embracing love and gracious hospitality to all your children. Amen.**

HYMN *(seated)*

Such love, pure as the whitest snow;
such love, weeps for the shame I know;
such love, paying the debt I owe;
O Jesus, such love.

Such love, stilling my restlessness;
such love, filling my emptiness;
such love, showing me holiness;
O Jesus, such love.

Such love, springs from eternity;
such love, streaming through history;
such love, fountain of life to me;
O Jesus, such love.

Graham Kendrick © 1988 Make Way Music.
www.grahamkendrick.co.uk

As this hymn is sung a woman carrying a bowl and towel walks slowly to the front and places them on the table. She then returns to her place.

Leader Jesus said: "Do you know what I have done to you? Do as I have done to you".
In the washing of the feet Jesus sets an example of radical love. That means love without borders, love that crosses over borders. And he demands the same from us.
Let us take a few moments to think of ways in which we might express this radical love.

Pause to give time for reflection *(2 or 3 minutes)*

Leader Now let us share our ideas with those sitting near us.

Pause *(Allow 2 or 3 minutes for sharing)*

Leader As we close this time of sharing let us bring our thoughts together by writing a word or phrase on our footsteps. What can **I** do to express such radical love?

Pause *(The music from George Mulrain's song 'What I have done' may be played while people write on their paper footsteps. Allow 2 or 3 minutes for this)*

Note: The 'footsteps' will be collected later at the same time as the offering

SONG

From the supper table Jesus rose.
Gently he removed his outer clothes.
Round his waist a towel tied,
took a basin and applied
water to each one of his disciples' feet.

Do you know what I have done to you?
Do you know what I have done to you?
As your teacher and your Lord
I your weary feet have washed.
Do to others just as I have done to you.

Simon Peter, with protesting word:
"Not my feet – wash my whole body, Lord!"
Jesus helped them to admit
that unclean and dirt-soiled feet
not cared for will corrupt the entire self.

Chorus

Jesus came to serve, not to be served.
Follow him means to obey his word.
So as long as we shall live,
humble service we must give
and encourage others to do just the same.

Chorus

Words and Music by Rev. Dr. George Mulrain
(Written specifically for World Day of Prayer 2015 © WDP International Committee)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION
(see notes on p18 for suggestions re 'action')

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, we come before you in prayer, bringing the needs of all women before you. We especially remember those of this country and those of The Bahamas, praying that your blessings and the power of the Holy Spirit may be poured upon them.

All **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader We pray for projects in The Bahamas caring for the needs of vulnerable people.

Over-the-Hill
We remember those who, living in situations of poverty, struggle each day to support and care for themselves and their families. We pray for the women living 'Over-the-Hill' in the poorest part of Nassau. Lord, fill them with hope in the knowledge that you will provide according to their needs.
(Action: change 'poverty')

All **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Crisis Centre

We bring before you victims of domestic violence, abandonment and rape, who blame themselves for their mistreatment and are afraid to seek help. We intercede on behalf of our children who have been physically, sexually, verbally and emotionally abused. We especially remember those in our crisis centres. Calm their fears, Lord; provide assistance for them and bring healing and radical transformation to both victim and offender.
(Action: change 'domestic violence')

All **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Detention Centre

We pray for all refugees, migrant workers and illegal immigrants, who live with uncertainty and fear in the Detention Centre in New Providence Island. Disperse their fears, Lord, with your grace and grant them your assurance of peace, justice and fulfillment in their lives.
(Action: change 'migrant')

All **Lord, hear our prayer.**

PACE We pray for all mothers and single parents, and especially remember the struggles of our teenage mothers at PACE, in Grand Bahama and New Providence. May they find the support they need to continue their high school education and to fulfill their dreams for their children. Help us to help them, Lord.
(Action: change 'teenage mothers')

All **Lord, hear our prayer.**

All Saints Camp

Lord, we bring before you those living with HIV and Aids in All Saints Camp in New Providence, those in hospital and those at home. We pray for prevention and timely intervention and that we may be a loving support to them.
(Action: change 'HIV and Aids')

All **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Cancer Care Centre

We remember those in our midst who are diagnosed with breast cancer in the Cancer Care Centre. We pray for continuing education, early detection and for cures to be found. We honour the lives of our much loved women and ask for strength for all cancer survivors.
(Action: change 'breast cancer')

All **Lord, hear our prayer.**

If wished, a local need/project may be inserted here with a similar 'action' taking place.

Leader Lord Jesus, help us to remember that we are all your children and are loved by you with a radical love. Let us follow in your footsteps and model your radical love.

SHARING THE PEACE

Leader Let us share the peace of Christ with our neighbours on either side.

OFFERING

Leader The offering will now be taken for the work of Women's World Day of Prayer and for projects run by Christian charities worldwide.
We also offer ourselves to God in the form of our radical love 'footsteps' which will be received at the same time.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Leader Gracious and ever-loving God, accept and bless all that we offer and help us to walk in the footsteps of your son, our saviour Jesus Christ, following his example of loving service to others.

HYMN *Tune: Londonderry Air Metre 11 10 11 10 11 10 and refrain*

Let love be real, in giving and receiving,
without the need to manage and to own;
a haven free from posing and pretending,
where every weakness may be safely known.
Give me your hand, along the desert pathway,
give me your love wherever we may go.

As God loves us, so let us love each other;
with no demands, just open hands and space to grow.

Let love be real, not grasping or confining,
that strange embrace that holds yet sets us free;
that helps us face the risk of truly living,
and makes us brave to be what we might be.
Give me your strength when all my words are weakness;
give me your love in spite of all you know.

As God loves us, so let us love each other;
with no demands, just open hands and space to grow.

Let love be real, with no manipulation,
no secret wish to harness or control;
let us accept each other's incompleteness,
and share the joy of learning to be whole.
Give me your hope through dreams and disappointments;
give me your trust when all my failings show.

As God loves us, so let us love each other;
with no demands, just open hands and space to grow.

Michael Forster (1946 -)
© Copyright 1995 Kevin Mayhew Ltd.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Leader Let us join together with more of the islands in our prayer of thanksgiving.

Voice 2 As we hear the call to walk in Jesus' footsteps and to be a presence of radical love in **San Salvador** and in the world, we give thanks for all that you have given to us.

All **Lord, we are amazed by you. How you love us!**

Voice 3 Lord God, in **Mayaguana** we thank you for courageous and hard-working women and mothers. They taught us how to pray and how to worship you in good and bad times in our islands and in the world.

All **How deep, how wide and radical is your love.**

Voice 4 Lord God, our island of **New Providence** and the archipelago have become widely known to the many visitors who travel to our land and enjoy the turquoise waters and our friendly people. Let us live this blessing with responsible stewardship for your creation.

All **We give you thanks, O Lord.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader Let us pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us.

All

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory
for ever and ever.
Amen.

HYMN

Let there be love shared among us,
let there be love in our eyes;
may now your love sweep this nation,
cause us, O Lord, to arise:
give us a fresh understanding,
of brotherly love that is real;
let there be love shared among us,
let there be love.

Dave Bilbrough
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BENEDICTION, SENDING AND BLESSING

Voice 1 From **Harbour Island**, Lord, we thank you for those who cover us with prayer on this World Day of Prayer. We ask a blessing on all our sisters around the world and upon our beloved Bahamas Islands.
May we live to your honour and glory, in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

All **Let us go out from this place to do as you have done – to serve with radical love.**

HYMN *Tune: St Clement Metre 98 98*

The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended,
the darkness falls at Thy behest:
to Thee our morning hymns ascended,
Thy praise shall sanctify our rest.

We thank Thee that Thy Church unsleeping,
while earth rolls onward into light,
through all the world her watch is keeping,
and rests not now by day or night.

As o'er each continent and island
the dawn leads on another day,
the voice of prayer is never silent,
nor dies the strain of praise away.

The sun, that bids us rest, is waking
our friends beneath the western sky,
and hour by hour fresh lips are making
Thy wondrous doings heard on high.

So be it, Lord; Thy throne shall never,
like earth's proud empires, pass away;
Thy kingdom stands, and grows for ever,
till all Thy creatures own Thy sway.

John Ellerton (1826-1893)

(Music is played as the Leader and participants process out of the room waving their hands, simulating the waves of the sea)

NOTES TO HELP IN THE PREPARATION OF THE SERVICE

Preparing the worship area
Try to create a Bahamian atmosphere and a warm welcome as people enter the worship area – eg with bright, colourful displays using pictures, the Bahamian flag, artefacts suggesting island culture and flower arrangements.

Names of the islands mentioned in the service may be displayed around the room and cut-out 'footsteps' placed on the floor from the door to the front of the worship area. A small, foot-shaped piece of paper or card, should be given to each person as they enter.

Prayers of Intercession
Prepare a display board or similar, or have easily accessible posters/placards around the church, with the following words:

BLESSED, BLAMELESSS, ACCEPTED, NEVER ALONE, INCLUDED, CURED.

Using blu tack or something similar, cover these words with strips of paper on which is written:

POVERTY (to cover BLESSED), **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** (to cover BLAMELESS), **MIGRANT** (to cover ACCEPTED), **TEENAGE MOTHERS** (to cover NEVER ALONE), **HIV AND AIDS** (to cover INCLUDED), **BREAST CANCER** (to cover CURED) If you wish to add a local project to this section, prepare a sign/poster and covering strip in a similar way.

Each speaker for The Bahamas projects says her part, then walks to the appropriate word and removes it, to reveal the word underneath, ie **Over-the-Hill** removes POVERTY to reveal BLESSED. She then returns to her place in the congregation.

The address
The Bahamas national committee did not include a formal address in their order of service and we felt that it would interrupt the flow of the service to add one. Instead we have followed their suggestion of quiet reflection and sharing – and of writing on 'footsteps' our responses to Jesus' radical love, as this is an integral part of the theme. You will need enough paper 'footsteps' for the congregation to be given one each and also a supply

of pens/pencils. These could be available for people to take, if needed, as they enter the building.

Dramatized reading
Be as creative as you like with the reading! It can simply be read using different voices or dramatized more fully, using bowl, towel etc as props.

Music
Music with a Bahamian feel is included on the music CD which is available from the WWDP office. The CD also includes hymns from the service, both sung by a choir and with accompaniment only.

Before and after the service
If you have PowerPoint, pictures from The Bahamas could be on a rolling slide show as people arrive (available on the Background CD-ROM from the office) – or Bahamian music could be playing.

Many places serve refreshments before or after the service. This is a lovely way to enjoy fellowship with people from different churches. Together in Prayer usually has several recipes from the writing country – why not try some of these out for people to enjoy with their tea or coffee?

Hymn Tune Sources

Sing to God new songs of worship
(tune – Ode to Joy 87 87 D)
Mission Praise 600
Church Hymnary 173
Songs of Fellowship 1002
Hymns Old and New 447

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Mission Praise 557
Songs of Fellowship 462

Such Love
Mission Praise 619
Hymns Old and New 461
The Source 465
Songs of Fellowship 514

Let love be real, in giving and receiving
(tune – Londonderry Air)
Singing the Faith 615

Let there be love shared among us
Mission Praise 411
Rejoice and Sing 477
Songs of Fellowship 329

What I have done
Sheet music available from WWDP office

The Day Thou Gavest
Found in most hymn books

Note:
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FUTURE THEMES

2016	Cuba	**Receive Children, Receive Me**
2017	Philippines	**Am I Being Unfair to You?**
2018	Suriname	**All God's Creation is Very Good!**
2019	Slovenia	**Come – Everything is Ready**
2020	Zimbabwe	**Rise! Take Your Mat and Walk**
2021	Vanuatu	**Build on a Strong Foundation**

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giftaid it

(envelope provided in this Order of Service)

The extra monies raised from your kind donations will help the work of Women's World Day of Prayer in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and projects run by Christian charities around the world.

Grants Allocated

	2013
Core Grants	£
Bible Reading Fellowship	3,000
CAFOD	5,000
Feed the Minds	12,500
Lifewords	7,500
MAF UK	5,000
Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen for care of families of fishermen	3,000
Scripture Union	4,000
Tear Fund	10,000
Torch Trust for the Blind	1,500
Wycliffe UK Ltd	10,000
Project Grants	
France Mission Trust – France	5,000
The Bible Society Northern Ireland – France	3,000
The Bible Society – France	10,000
International Teams UK – Kenya	5,800
St Peter's Life-Line – Kenya	11,000
CMF – Malawi	2,000
Home of Hope – Uganda	10,000
SEAN UK – Uganda	1,000
Jesuit refugee Centre – UK	3,000
SPCK – UK	10,000
Toxteth Women's Centre – UK	5,000
Church Housing Action Team – UK	2,000
Open The Book – UK	3,000
Off The Fence – UK	5,000
Anglican Diocese of Cyprus & Gulf – Cyprus	4,500
Toybox – El Salvador	8,500
Living Word Benefit Foundation – Brazil	10,000
VIVA – worldwide	1,000
International donations	
World Day of Prayer European Committee	2,000
World Day of Prayer International Committee	23,165
WDP National Committee of France	10,000
WDP Workshop, Albania	3,250
Other Donations	
Royal National Institute for the Blind	4,000
Christian Aid for Syrian refugees	20,000
The Trussell Trust for foodbank network	20,000
Grants Allocated by the Committee for Welsh Speaking Churches	
Bible Society (Wales)	300
Cafod	300
Christian Aid (Wales)	300
Christians Against Torture (Wales)	400
Churches Together in Wales	300
Fellowship of Reconciliation	500
Society for the Blind in Wales	400
Wales Sunday Schools Council	800
Cyhoeddiadau'r Gair (Publishing)	800
Wales Council on Alcohol and Drugs	500
Cristion (Welsh language publication)	300
Y Goleuad (Church weekly newspaper)	300
Seren Cymru (Church weekly newspaper)	300
Y Tyst (Church weekly newspaper)	300
Y Gwyliedydd (bi monthly Welsh newspaper)	300

Membership of the National Committee for England, Wales and Northern Ireland 2014-2015

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Vice-President:	Kathleen Skinner	Vice-Chairperson:	Margie Savage
		Vice-Chairperson:	Anthea Allan

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Christian Brethren	Anthea Allan
Church of England	Canon Stella Vernon
Congregational Federation	Nola McCormick
English-Speaking Churches in Wales	Christine Miles
Lutheran Church	Johanna Sternberg
Methodist Church	Dr Elizabeth Burroughs
Moravian Church	Wendy Hopcroft
Northern Ireland	Margie Savage
Religious Society of Friends	Nicola Hoskin-Stone
Roman Catholic Church	Joan Cheetham
The Church of God of Prophecy	Janice Reid
The Salvation Army	Major Val Mylechreest
United Reformed Church	Reverend Rosemary Shirley
Wesleyan Reform Union of Churches	Muriel Stonehewer
Welsh-Speaking Churches	Saundra Storch

Regional Conference Co-ordinators:

Northern Region:	Canon Stella Vernon
South Eastern Region:	Nola McCormick
Western Region:	Dr Elizabeth Burroughs

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God the motherer,

The all-nurturing

Source of all loving relationship

Empowering

Growth evoking

Supportive yet releasing

Creation sharing

Shelter in the dark

Impelling towards the light

Strengthener and comforter

Mirrored in the love that enriches in the times of shadow

SUSTAIN US WHEN THE JOURNEY BECOMES HARD

Ianthe Pratt

(written shortly after the death of my beloved husband)

A Litany to Honor Women

We walk in the company of the women who have gone before, mothers of the faith both named and unnamed,
testifying with ferocity and faith to the Spirit of wisdom and healing.
They are the judges, the prophets, the martyrs, the warriors, poets, lovers, and saints
who are near to us in the shadow of awareness, in the crevices of memory, in the landscape of our dreams.

We walk in the company of Deborah,
who judged the Israelites with authority and strength.

We walk in the company of Esther,
who used her position as queen to ensure the welfare of her people.

We walk in the company of you whose names have been lost and silenced,
who kept and cradled the wisdom of the ages.

We walk in the company of the woman with the flow of blood,
who audaciously sought her healing and release.

We walk in the company of Mary Magdalene,
who wept at the empty tomb until the risen Christ appeared.

We walk in the company of Phoebe,
who led an early church in the empire of Rome.

We walk in the company of Perpetua of Carthage,
whose witness in the third century led to her martyrdom.

We walk in the company of St. Christina the Astonishing,
who resisted death with persistence and wonder.

We walk in the company of Julian of Norwich,
who wed imagination and theology, proclaiming, "All shall be well".

We walk in the company of Sojourner Truth,
who stood against oppression, righteously declaring in 1852, "Ain't I a woman!"

We walk in the company of the Argentine mothers of the Plaza de Mayo,
who turned their grief to strength, standing together to remember "the disappeared" children of war with a holy indignation.

We walk in the company of Alice Walker
who named the lavender hue of womanish strength.

We walk in the company of you mothers of the faith,
who teach us to resist evil with boldness, to lead with wisdom, and to heal.

Amen.

From *Common Prayer: A liturgy for Ordinary Radicals* by Shane Claiborne, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove & Enuma Okoro, 2010

Collect:

Gracious God,
in whose image we are made, male and female.
We thank you for the consecration of Bishop Libby.
May her ministry and that of the whole church,
bear witness to the reconciling love of your kingdom,
through which divisions are healed,
and in which women and men are one in Christ,
in whose name we pray. Amen.

Rev Dr Emma Percy
http://womenandthechurch.org/news/collect-for-sunday-by-emma-percy/
posted 22nd Jan 2015

L: As we break this bread we thank you, Creator God,
for the life and knowledge of yourself
which you gave us through Jesus Christ;
to you be glory for ever,

The bread is broken and passed round.

All: As this broken bread was scattered on the mountains
and brought together to be one,
so let your children, Lord, be gathered together
from the ends of the earth into your reign;
for yours is the glory and the power;
through Jesus Christ for ever.

All eat the bread.

BLESSINGS

May the divine Wisdom hold you in the palm of her hand
and breathe into you, gently,
her own life-giving Spirit;
may she befriend you, cherish you and challenge you,
and draw you to herself in freedom;

may Jesus go with you,
and may you be with him
always and everywhere;

and may you too embody in this world
the redeeming love of God.

Jennifer Wild in "Human Rites"

Eternal God, as you created humankind in your image, women and men, male and female, renew us in that image;
God, the Holy Spirit, by your strength and love comfort us as those whom a mother comforts;
Lord Jesus Christ, by your death and resurrection, give us the joy of those for whom pain and suffering become, in hope, the fruitful agony of travail;
God, the Holy Trinity, grant that we may together enter into a new life, your promised rest of achievement and fulfilment - world without end,
Amen.

World Council of Churches Community of Women and Men, Sheffield 1981

Tender God, touch us.
Be touched by us;
make us lovers of humanity,
compassionate friends of all creation.
Gracious God, hear us into speech;
speak us into acting;
and through us, recreate the world.
Amen.

Carter Heyward

VERSIONS OF THE PRAYER JESUS TAUGHT US

Jesus taught us to pray:-

God, lover of us all
Most Holy One,
Help us to respond to you
To create what you want for us here on earth.
Give us today enough for our needs,
Forgive our weak and deliberate offences
Just as we must forgive others
When they hurt us.
Help us to resist weaknesses and
to do what is good.
For we are yours
endowed with your power
to make our world whole.

Lala Winkley, in "Celebrating Women"

May the God who shakes heaven and earth,
whom death could not contain,
who lives to disturb and heal us,
bless you with power to go forth
and proclaim the gospel,
Amen.

Janet Morley in "All Desires Known"

2.
Eternal Spirit, Life-giver, Pain-bearer, Love maker
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven!

The hallowing of your Name echo through the universe!
the way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your communwealth of Peace and Freedom sustain our hope and come on earth!

With the bread that we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever, Amen.

Jim Cotter in "Prayer at Night"

CWO NATCOG OCT 04

Opening Prayer (First 2 prayers from 'Prayer Like a Woman',

1 *Open our lips* (Antiphonally, groups A & B,)

A We have heard the sounds of women's silence.
We have listened to our sisters' voices.
We have been stirred by their passion,
encouraged by their strength,
instructed by their wisdom.

B *We, like them, wish to speak out.*
We, like them, desire to speak truly.
We, like them, have a story to proclaim.
We long to midwife a new and living word for our time.

A But often we are afraid.
We fear the sound of our own voices.
We would not know our own strength,
we would not claim our power.

B We have no eloquence, no fine-sounding words or polished phrases.
Our speech is halting, we stumble and stutter over the words of life.
Our lips are sealed, like the tombs of the unliving.
Our tongues are heavy as stones within our mouths.

A *Come to us and speak to us in our weakness.*
Set the fire of your speech in our throats,
and the burning coal of your passion on our tongues.
Loosen our lips to proclaim your praise.

B O You, whose voice rolls over the waters
and thunders over the oceans,
whose word splits even the cedar trees
and breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon,

A whose voice makes the oaks shake and shudder,
and strips the forest bare,
whose word whirls the sands of the desert
and resounds through the mountains:

All *Open our lips and our mouth shall declare your praise.*

2. *Letter to the Church* (Read round the circle)

1 Dear brother Church:
I name you 'brother' not 'mother',
for your leaders are mostly men
and your ways are still too patriarchal.

2 I want to live passionately.
I will not hide my anger or my energy.
Will you face your own?

3 I want to act effectively.
I will not deny nor dissemble my power.
Will you admit your own and be willing to share it?

4 I want to think dangerously.
I will not set limits on what it is possible to ask or say or explore.
Will you open the gates of learning you have been guarding and let others in?

5 I want to pray deeply.
I will not withhold any part of my life from the divine gaze.
Will you plunge with me into the depths?

6 I will work with you,
but I will not work for you.

7 I will walk with you,
but I will not lead you nor will I follow in your path.

8 I will weep with you and laugh with you,
but I will not feel for you;
you must claim your own passion and pleasure and tears.

9 I will offer you the fullness of my being,
but I will not sacrifice myself on the altar of your impossible demands.

All Dear Brother church
We are standing here as women (and men)
struggling to be who we are.
We are speaking:
Are you listening?

3 Prayer (All)

Be with us this day, O Creative Spirit, guide us in our reaching to new ways of being Church. Help us to act like yeast within our faith community, showing forth a way of being whole, where power is used to enable growth, and all are equally valued.

(I.P)

Local CWN inaugural day – Leamington Spa.

Dale St. Methodist Church
Saturday 3rd June 1995

Spirit of energy and change
in whose power Jesus was anointed
to be the hope of nations;
be poured out also upon us
without reserve or ditsinction
that we may have confidence and strength
to plant your justice on the earth,
through Jesus Christ, Amen

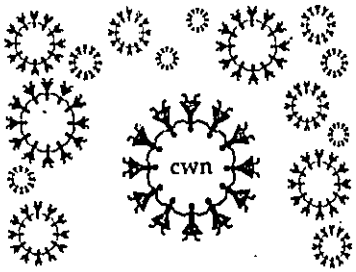
strengths and gifts

God of wholeness,
you have created us bodily,
that our work and faith may be one.
May we offer our worship
from lives of integrity;
and maintain the fabric of this world
with hearts that are set on you,
through Jesus Christ, Amen.

needs

Creator God, you know what we need
without our words.
Hear our prayers - and hear our silence.
Give us strength.
Grant us those things we cannot or dare not voice.
We make our prayer through our brother Jesus,
Amen.

From: Ken Davies
known: J. Morley



litany of remembrance

All: Spirit of Life, we remember today the women, named and unnamed, who throughout time have used the power and gifts you gave them to change the world. We call upon these foremothers to help us discover within ourselves your power—and the ways to use it to bring about the Kingdom of Justice and Peace.

We remember SARAH who with Abraham answered God's call to forsake her homeland and put their faith in a covenant with the Lord.

We pray for her power of faith.

We remember ESTHER and DEBORAH, who by acts of individual courage saved their nation.

We pray for their power of courage to act for the greater good.

We remember MARY MAGDALENE, and the other women who followed Jesus who were not believed when they announced the resurrection.

We pray for their power of belief in the face of skepticism.

We remember PHOEBE, PRISCILLA, and the other women leaders of the early church.

We pray for their power to spread the Gospel and inspire congregations.

We remember the Abbesses of the Middle Ages who kept faith and knowledge alive.

We pray for their power of leadership.

We remember TERESA of Avila and CATHERINE of Siena who challenged the corruption of the church during the Renaissance.

We pray for their powers of intelligence and outspokenness. (At this point you may wish to remember contemporary women, and their contributions, from your culture).

All: We remember our own mothers and grandmothers whose lives shaped ours.

We pray for the special power they attempted to pass on to us.

We pray for the women who are victims of violence in their homes.

May they be granted the power to overcome fear and seek solutions.

We pray for those women who face a life of poverty and malnutrition. May they be granted the power of hopefulness to work together for a better life.

We pray for the women today who are "firsts" in their fields.

May they be granted the power to persevere and open up new possibilities for all women.

All: We pray for our daughters and granddaughters. May they be granted the power to seek that life which is uniquely theirs.

(HERE, add any women you would like to remember or for whom you wish to pray)

All: We have celebrated the power of many women past and present. It is time now to celebrate ourselves. Within each of us is that same life and light and love. Within each of us lie the seeds of power and glory. Our bodies can touch with love; our hearts can heal; our minds can seek out faith and truth and justice. Spirit of Life, be with us in our quest. Amen.

(This litany is from Ann M. Heidkamp, *No Longer Strangers. A Resource for Women and Worship,* edited by Iben Gjerding and Katherine Kinnamon, Geneva, WCC Publications, 1983, pp. 24–25).

lord's prayer

God, lover of all, most holy one,
help us to respond to you
to create what you want
for us here on earth.

Give us today enough for our needs;
forgive our weak and deliberate offences,
just as we must forgive others
when they hurt us.

Help us to resist evil and to do what is good;
for we are yours, endowed with your power
to make our world whole.

(Lala Winkley)

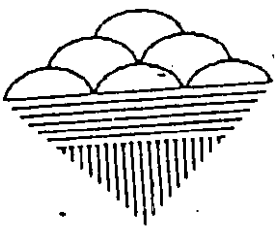
song

We shall go out with hope of resurrection.
We shall go out, from strength to strength go on.
We shall go out and tell our stories boldly,
Tales of a love that will not let us go.
We'll sing our songs of wrongs that can be righted.
We'll dream our dreams of hurts that can be healed.
We'll weave a cloth of all the world united
Within the vision of a Christ who sets us free.

We'll give a voice to those who have not spoken.
We'll find the words for those whose lips are sealed.
We'll make the tunes for those who sing no longer,
Vibrating love alive in every heart.
We'll share our joy with those who are still weeping.
Chant hymns of strength for hearts that break in grief.
We'll leap and dance the resurrection story
Including all within the circles of our love.

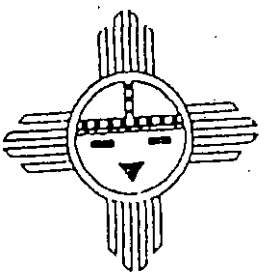
Tune: Derry Air
Words: June Boyce-Tillman

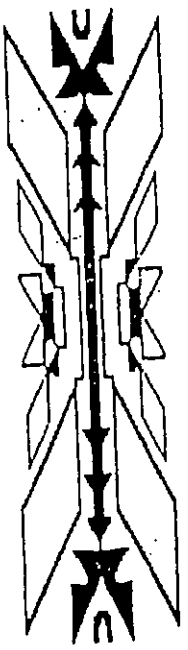
NAVAJO PRAYERS (These came from a Navajo catholic Church in the States- get into 4 groups)



Direction of the North

We greet you, O Spirit of the North. You are the cold wind that blows across our land, stripping the earth of all that is dead and decayed. AYou rob us of the false securities, so easily blown away. Teach us to plant our feet securely on the earth and to see things as they really are, that the coming of your Spirit may find us standing firm in integrity. Make us strong in our desire to be peacemakers.



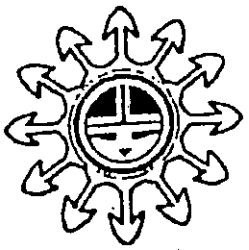


Direction of the West

We greet you, O Spirit of the West. It is you who usher in the setting sun. It is by your power that the sun hangs suspended for endless moments before you catch it with your breath and carry it off into the night. Guide our steps at end of day. Fill us with your peace as you enfold us with your great mystery of night that we might rest securely in your arms until morning calls us forth again.

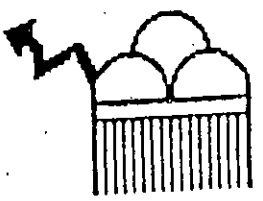
Direction of the East

We greet you, O Spirit of the East. You usher in the dawn of the breeze; you stretch forth your fingers and paint our skies. Awaken in us with each new day, new hopes, new dreams of colors, loves and joys, new desires for justice never before imagined. Fill our bodies with your breath; invigorate us. Carry us to the farthest mountains and beyond. Inspirit us that we might reach out to you boldly to grasp the miracles that are given birth with each new dawn.



Direction of the South

We greet you, O Spirit of the South. You bring the winds of summer and breathe on us the warmth of the sun to soothe and heal our bodies and spirits. You thaw and soften the coldness of our world; you nudge the seedlings to break through the soil to the light. Make our hearts loving, so that we might feel the oppression and pain of all peoples, especially the poor and marginated. Heal our selfishness that we might become a more generous and sharing people.



From: Prayer Service opening Provincial Play Day

Collects

1 Thessalonians 5.1-11 (Mark 13. 8-end) (Romans 8. 18-25)	**God our deliverer,** whose approaching birth still shakes the foundations of our world, may we so wait for your coming with eagerness and hope that we embrace without terror the labour pangs of the new age, through Jesus Christ, Amen.	**Advent Sunday**

From All Desires Known

PRAYERS FOR AN INCLUSIVE CHURCH

Epiphany 8/Second Sunday before Lent
(RCL: Luke 6.39–49)

Wise and gentle God,
you see into our hearts
the truth of what we are:
give us clear insight,
honesty and integrity
that we might be rooted in love's solid earth
and act without hypocrisy;
through Jesus Christ, the Ground of our Being.
Amen.

Parts of versions of our Father -

Jim Cotter (Prayer at Night)

Eternal Spirit, Life-giver, Pain-bearer, Love maker
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven!

The Hallowing of your Name echo through the universe!
the way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of Peace and Freedom sustain our hope and come on earth!

Neil Douglas Klotz (Prayers of the Cosmos)

Grant what we need each day in bread and insight

Loose the cords of mistakes binding us,
as we release the strands we hold
of others' guilt.

Don't let surface things delude us,

But free us from what holds us back.

CREATION AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

READINGS FOR DISCUSSION GARDEN EUCHARIST JULY 06

"The earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord" ps 33.5

"For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God.. in the hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of . We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now" Rom 8.19, 21-22

We need to reinterpret the phrase ""have dominion" to mean not humanity above nature - exercising mastery over it, but **with** nature, serving and keeping it, which is the kind of dominion Jesus showed. We are there to show, in our care for the cosmos, the maker's care. "We are called to be stewards of God's creation...we connect with the earth and its creatures through our serving and preserving them. We connect with God's creation when we recognize the interrelatedness of all creatures and their interdependence" (from Like a Garden: a biblical spirituality of growth- Sara Juengst)

The context in which we experience consumer abundance in the Western world "is one of a widening gap between the well-off and the poor of the world, as well as an increasing deterioration of the "resources" (the natural world) that fund our abundance"...few christian churches have suggested alternative visions of a new way of living and understanding "abundant living" which is a major task of Christian discernment. The whole world is God's *oikos* (household - this is also the root of ecology, economics and ecumenism - the right management of the oikos) which calls for sustaining the integrity of nature and equitable sharing of resources.

"We were created in God's image, in the image of love, and our goal is to grow more fully into that image by loving each other and the world in concrete, practical daily ways: in other words, in just and sustainable ways. (from "Life abundant: rethinking theology and economy for a planet in peril. Sallie McFague).

Sean McDonough, the ecological theologian in his *"The Death of Life"* draws attention to tbe John Paul II document on "Peace with God the Creator, Peace with all Creation", 1990, which speaks of duty towards nature and the creator as an **essential** part of the faith. Sean in his book points out that species extinction and other destructive activities could sterilise the planet "if this generation does not act, no future generation will be able to undo the damage that this generation has caused to the planet" and this endangers even the sustainability of human life.

(Overleaf is an information sheet which is for future use, but you might want to refer to it in your discussion today).

Discussion pointers for groups on Creation and our responsibility

1. Are the churches engrossed with unimportant internal matters and ignoring what is happening to our planet?

2.What is our relationship and responsibility for planet earth? Should we be giving priority to seeking changes in the consumer society both in our own lives and through pressure on both secular and religious life?

3. what is the role of prayer in the current ecological situation?

ECOLOGY CRISIS INFORMATION SHEET

Meteorological research shows that climate change today much more extreme than cyclic shifts could produce

Higher sea temperatures in the Atlantic producing increasingly severe hurricanes cf Katrina/New Orleans 05. Ice caps and glaciers retreating fast. Weather becoming increasingly volatile.

Increased sea levels in the Indian ocean will soon make low lying islands uninhabitable. Corals and fish are dying off around S E Asia and Australia. London and other coastal cities could be under water by the end of the century if nothing drastic is done.
Drought in S. American tropical forests leading to many larger trees dying.
Many plant species becoming extinct, yet plants have much potential for new medicines.
Deafforestation releases CO2 into the air.
Beginning of 20thc 70% of Philippines covered by forest - now only 2.5% - leading to mud avalanches destroying towns etc.

rapid desertification in North China etc etc etc

Coping with the crisis

Building sustainable homes - China is doing this with building a sustainable Olympic city for the next games. GLA official buildings in London now have to be sustainable.

individual action eg turning down thermostats, minimisimg car transport, offsetting flying emissions by funding sustainable energy and reafforestation projects (see www.climatecare.org): converting homes to lessen emissions/produce energy eg by solar panels or efficient boilers. (if you are not on the internet you probably have a friend who is)

Spreading information on the gravity of the ecological situation - . Bombarding MPs and government ministers on aspects of the subject. Involving your parish not just in Fair Trade but in facing climate change. Joining Christian Ecology link www.christian-ecology.org.uk - they have useful leaflets and their campaign Operation Noah www.operationnoah.org is a good way of getting change started. Christian Aid has just produced the Report "The Climate of Poverty - facts, fears and hope" which is a good quarry for material to get discussion started: it can be downloaded from their site. Green Peace and Friends of the Earth also have useful material**public policy** - alternative energy sources - wind and solar farms, harnessing tides etc. A cheaper and safer alternative to new nuclear power stations is local generation - loses much less energy and costs less. Been successfully put into operation in Woking (more info on the internet through Google - Woking + trigeneration)

There is a Norwegian prototype of a rig successfully pumping CO2 into substratum under the sea.

Higher taxation of gas guzzling cars. Compulsory water meters. Better public transport etc etc..

Information on this sheet has been taken from the TV documentary of David Attenborough "Can we Save Planet Earth", Sean McDonough's "The death of Life: The Horror of Extinction" and input from panel on climate change at a recent GLA meeting on the future of London and its needs.

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individual action eg turning down thermostats, minimisimg car transport, offsetting flying emissions by funding sustainable energy and reafforestation projects (see www.climatecare.org): converting homes to lessen emissions/produce energy eg by solar panels or efficient boilers. (if you are not on the internet to access such information you probably have a friend who is)

Spreading information on the gravity of the ecological situation - . Bombarding MPs and government ministers on aspects of the subject. Involving your parish not just in Fair Trade but in facing climate change. Joining Christian Ecology link www.christian-ecology.org.uk - they have useful leaflets and their campaign Operation Noah www.operationnoah.org is a good way of getting change started. They have just produced a new report "Faith and Power: the case for a low consumption, non-nuclear, energy strategy". Also new is Christian Aid's Report "The Climate of Poverty - facts, fears and hope" which is a good quarry for material to get discussion started: it can be downloaded from their site. Green Peace and Friends of the Earth also have useful material

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Higher taxation of gas guzzling cars. Compulsory water meters. Better public transport etc etc..

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ECOLOGY CRISIS INFORMATION SHEET

Meteorological research shows that climate change today much more extreme than cyclic shifts could produce

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Increased sea levels in the Indian ocean will soon make low lying islands uninhabitable. Corals and fish are dying off around S E Asia and Australia. London and other coastal cities could be under water by the end of the century if nothing drastic is done.

Drought in S. American tropical forests leading to many larger trees dying.
Many plant species becoming extinct, yet plants have much potential for new medicines.
Deafforestation releases CO_2 into the air.
Beginning of 20thc 70% of Philippines covered by forest - now only 2.5% - leading to mud avalanches destroying towns etc.
rapid desertification in North China etc etc etc

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MORNING PRAYER - IMAGING THE DIVINE

Centring Music Hildegard of Bingen

Reading from Julian of Norwich - in Showings.

"And so in our making , God almighty is our loving father, and God all wisdom is our loving Mother, with the love and goodness of the Holy Spirit, which is all one God, one Lord..

for he is our Mother, brother and saviour; and in our good Lord the Holy Spirit we have our reward and our gift for our living and our labour, endlessly surpassing all that we desire in his marvelous courtesy, out of his great plentiful grace. For all our life consists of three. In the first we have our being, and in the second we have our increasing, and in the third we have our fulfillment.....

In our Father, God almighty we have our beginning, and in our Mother of mercy we have our reforming and restoring, in whom our parts are united and all made perfect humanity, and though the rewards and the gifts of grace of the Holy Spirit we are fulfilled.

Tape of Brian Wren's Song **Bring many names**

1. Bring many names, beautiful and good,
celebrate, in parable and story,
holiness in glory,
living, loving God.
Hail and Hosanna!
bring many names!

2. Strong mother God, working night and day,
planning all the wonders of creation,
setting each equation,
gen-i-us at play:
Hail and Hosanna,
strong mother God!

3. Warm father God, hugging every child,
feeling all the strains of human living,
caring and forgiving
till we're reconciled:
Hail and Hosanna,
warm father God!

4. Old, aching God, grey with endless care,
calmly piercing evil's new disguises,
glad of good surprises,
wiser than despair:
Hail and Hosanna,
old, aching God!

5. Young, growing God, eager, on the move,
seeing all, and fretting at our blindness,
crying out for justice,
giving all you have:
Hail and Hosanna,
young, growing God!

6. Great, living God, never fully known,
joyful darkness far beyond our seeing,
closer yet than breathing,
everlasting home:
Hail and Hosanna,
great, living God!

Brian Wren



Final Prayer

GOD, WHO cares for us,
The wonder of whose presence fills us with awe.
Let kindness, justice and love shine in our world.
Let your secrets be known here as they are in heaven.
Give us the food and the hope we need for today.
Forgive us our wrongdoing
as we forgive the wrongs done to us.
Protect us from pride and from despair
and from the fear and hate which can swallow us up.
In you is truth, meaning, glory and power,
while worlds come and go. Amen.

EUCHARISTIC PICNIC 87 ON A THEME OF LIGHT

Opening Hymn Open your ears, O Christian People (On yellow sheet)

Peruvian Gloria (follow cantor)

In place of the HOMILY there will be group discussion or other activities. For those in discussion groups the following guidelines may be of help.

In the OT God is seen as both the source of light and life(ps 36.9), and being light itself ps 27 1. To walk in the light refers to the direction in which one walks. Light was also used as a metaphor for the law and for wisdom. In the NT there is a wide variety of metaphorical use of darkness and light. The revelation of salvation is a great light, Jesus is the light of God, Lk 2 32,the good tidings of salvation shine forth in our hearts like light on the morning of creation (2 Cor 4 4-6) Those who answer the call of Christ become the child of light, so Christ's followers are also the light of the world "Your light must shine in the sight of all, so that seeing your good works they may give praise to your Father in heaven.(mt 15-16). The Johannine writings emphasise the dualism of light and the darkness. Christ is the light of the world (jn 8 12) and those who follow him in faith do not walk in darkness but will have the lght of life. In the letters there is much stress on loving others as a necessity if one is to walk in the light (1 Jn 2 9-11).

Discussion pointers

1 Our main use of light (eg a torch at night) is to see more clearly. What does this mean in the NT understanding of "light"?

2. In today's situation how do we act as a light to the world?

3. How does light tie up with conscience?

4 how do we deal with a. the shadow side of ourselves
b. the dark side of institutionalised Christianity?

5 Is our failure as a community to be loving effecting our ability to act a a light? How are we obscuring the message of Christ?

Offertory Hymn All that I am

All that I am, all that I do
All that I'll ever have, I offer now to you
chorus: take and sanctify these gifts,
for your honour Lord.
Knowing that I love and serve you
is enough reward.
All that I am, all that I do,
all that I'll ever have I offer now to you

All that I dream, all that I pray
all that I'll ever make I give to you today
chorus Take and sanctify these gifts....

Our Father

Eternal Spirit, Life-giver, Pair-bearer, Love maker,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:

The Hallowing of your Name echo through the universe!
The way of your Justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your Heavenly Will be done by all created beings!
Your Commonwealth of Peace and Freedom sustain our hope and come on earth!

With the bread that we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever. Amen

The Peace (all hold hands)

Shalom my friends, shalom my friends, shalom, shalom
The peace of Christ we share today, shalom, shalom (x3)

Communion Song My God loves me (yellow sheet)

Final Song Walk in the Light.

chorus: Walk with me, oh my Lord,
through the darkest night and brightest day.
Be at my side, oh Lord,
hold my hand
and guide me on my way

1. Sometimes the road seems long,
my energy is spent
Then, Lord, I think of you
and I am given strength

2 Stones often bar my path
and there are times I fall,
but you are always there
to help me when I call

3 Just as you calmed the wind
and walked upon the sea,
conquer, my living Lord,
the storms that threaten me

4 Help me to pierce the mists
that cloud my heart and mind
so that I shall not fear
the steepest mountain-side

5 As once you healed the lame
and gave sight to the blind
help me when I'm downcast
to hold my head up high.

F & F G.

Prayers for the Future

1

Westminster Diocese Jubilee 2000 Prayer & praise

'I am making all things new'
The words are yours, our God,
and we come before you
to offer all that we are and have
for your new creation.
Purify us as gold is made pure,
renew us as the rain renews the dry land.
Teach us not to cling on to what we have
but to share what you have entrusted to us.
In the face of friend and stranger,
we see your Son,
our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Deliver us from walking past
his outstretched hand,
his hungry frame,

his nakedness.
Teach us your royal command
in the cry of the needy,
the groans of the oppressed.
And as we leave this place
to join our friends, teach us,
who dare so much for those we love,
to love those for whom we dare so little.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

2 & 3 from Worship 2000

Or:

3

God, our God, you are the same yesterday, today and for ever.
We thank you for the certainty of your love,
strength, forgiveness and hope,
year in and year out.
We pray for our generation as it begins a new millennium.
May we treasure the good things of the past,
and not turn our backs on them because they are 'old'.
May we forgive the hurts of one another, and turn from hatred
to loving respect for those who differ from us.
May we discern what is just and true,
and promote the welfare of everyone
in our community and our world.
Above all, may we witness to the joy of your Gospel,
and serve you in our care of one another.
So we will honour you, our God,
and praise your name for ever and ever.
Amen.

2

God of new beginnings,
we thank you for the birth of Jesus, your Son,
by which we mark the start of a new era in human history.
Help us by your Spirit to celebrate the fact
that you shared our human experience
and understand us from the inside.
In this year 2000 give us thankfulness for the past,
strength for the present, and vision for the future.
Make us more aware of the needs of ourselves
and those who share our world,
then give us the mind and heart to find ways to meet those needs.
Let your Spirit energize our prayers and our actions,

so that this 'Amen' is the pledge of our full commitment,
for the love of Jesus our Saviour.
Amen.

The International Council of SJIA is meeting this summer in Belgium fr... July at Heverlee on the outskirts of Louvain, which is a beautiful old u... town. All members are welcome to this, and we do need more people from Brita... go. Several theologians from the Women in Theology Centre at Louvain are hoping to take part. F Board 1.300 F Belges per day.

Write to A M Pelzer, Quai Churchill 19/061 B 4020 Liege, Belgium.

****

The National Board of Catholic Women, of which SJIA (British Section) is a member is holding a conference open to all women the weekend after Easter. This is entitled "Women Bearing Witness" and we need to be there to add in our voices. Several members of the Executive will be going but it would be good to see a number of you there as well. The Application form is printed on the back page. At the time of writing (end of March) there are still a few places left, both by day and residential.

****

The cover picture is a composite work of two members of the Executive: Jackie Clackson being the artist and the prayer coming from Sr. Kira Solhdoost. The whole prayer is given below.

(Response after each invocation is "Come")

Come, Holy Spirit, come:
Let us rejoice in glorifying HER who is Spirit of Fire, Spirit of Light

Fire and Light beaming from the face of Christ
Fire whose silence is Light
Fire fusing our hearts into one alloy with the heart of Christ
Fire transforming our spirit into your very own,
We glorify you, we call to you
Spirit, inborn and inherent in the Word
Spirit of Wisdom and Awareness
Spirit of Counsel and of Courage
Spirit of Discernment and Solicitude
We glorify you, we call to you
Fire and Light probing the very depth of God
Fire and Light brightening the eyes of our hearts
Fire and Light converging into oneness with our spirit
We glorify you, we call to you
Fire and Light empowering us to reflect the beauty of the Word
Come Holy Spirit...COME.

3. Women's Creed

All: **We believe** in the goodness and value of women;
our strength and sanity, our willingness to weep;
our capacity to support each other instead of being rivals;
our ability to cope with children's demands
and the burdens of life;
our willingness and ability to get on with the job;
our spirituality, our earthiness flowing with life, birth and death.

We affirm the story of women as the story
of humankind: foodgatherers and farmers,
Childrearers and teachers,
pioneers and policy-makers,
needleworkers and textile makers,
home-makers and factory workers,
parents, religious, scientists, doctors, housekeepers and economists,
givers of life and creators of art and thought,
unpaid hidden workers at home and paid members of the workforce outside.

We rejoice in our adversity and versatility,
our intuition and logic.

We confess our failures, frailties and imperfections,
including our past acceptance of violence and injustice in relationships between women and men.

We look forward to the future in faith and hope, working for the day when we and all our sisters no longer have to fit a sterotype, but are free to use all our gifts and to share in all the benefits of human life and work.

We look forward to the age of peace when violence is banished, both women and men are able to love and to be loved, and the work and wealth of our world is justly shared.

Love is patient and kind

Love is patient and kind
But also demanding, dangerous, difficult,
involving nothing less than everything.

Love has something to do with feelings
but far more to do with
commitment
when life is difficult and seems impossible;
challenge
to endure the circumstances we live in;
darkness
when you are in despair and I can't help;
letting go
when I want my own way,
when I want to control.
Loving has to do with all of who I am, not just a part.
Loving has to do with seeing the wounded parts of you
and being there for you.
Listening and not interrupting.
Opening my eyes and ears not just to what you say
but to what you cannot say.
Lord, teach me to love.

From The Trampled Vinyard

The Lord's Prayer (One Possible New Translation from the Aramaic)

O Birther! Father-Mother of the Cosmos,

Focus your light within us – make it useful:

Create your reign of unity now –

Your one desire then acts with ours,
as in all light, so in all forms.

Grant what we need each day in bread and insight

Loose the cords of mistakes binding us,
as we release the strands we hold
of others' guilt.

Don't let surface things delude us,

But free us from what holds us back.

From you is born all ruling will,
the power and the life to do,
the song that beautifies all,
from age to age it renews.

Truly – power to these statements –
may they be the ground from which all
my actions grow: Amen.

II

Make Us Aware

Merciful God, forgive
that we fall asleep
when you call us to watch and pray.
We fail to see the signs of your coming.

Christ our Saviour, forgive
that we are not watchful
we do not choose hope
or plant the seeds of hopefulness.
We fail to see the signs of your coming.

Forgiving Spirit, forgive
that in the rush of the Christmas season
we forget to stop and listen for the sound of angel voices
we forget to stop and look for a star
to guide us to Christ.
We fail to see the signs of God's presence.

God over all
Christ within us
Spirit around us
hear our prayer
and send your messenger
of peace to us and to your sleeping world.

Kate McIlhagga

Intercessions

III

Alternate 2 groups

Wachet Auf

After hearing Chorale Prelude by Bach

Advent
Season when
Dual citizenship
Holds us in
Awkward tension.

The world, intent on
Spending Christmas,
Eats and drinks its way to
Oblivion after dinner.

The Kingdom sounds
Insistent warnings:
Repent, be ready,
Keep awake
He comes.

Like some great fugue
The themes entwine:
The Christmas carols
Demanding our attention
In shops and pubs,
Bore their insistent way
Through noise of traffic;
Underneath, almost unheard,
The steady solemn theme of
Advent.

With growing complexity,
Clashing, bending,
Rivals for our attention,
Themes mingle and separate,
Pulling us with increasing
Urgency,
Until in final resolution,
The end attained,
Harmony rests in aweful
Stillness, and
The child is born.

He comes,
Both Child and Judge.

And will he find us
Watching?

Ann Lewin

Poems & Prayers - Mary Magdalene

SHORT PRAYERS

Blessed be God for the faithfulness of Mary,
who returned to the garden on the first Easter morning
to seek her beloved in the tomb,
who heard her name uttered by the risen Christ,
and found her life, her joy, her self, restored.

In her naming we hear our own names called.
In her healing we know our own wounds healed.
In her rejoicing we enter into the freedom and joy of the redeemed.

Make us faithful like Mary,
when faith is called forth
on the dawn of Easter morning,
Until we come at last
to share in the full glory
of Resurrection day.

N. Slee

Blessed be God for the faithfulness of Mary,
who went out from the garden
to do her beloved's bidding,
who joyfully proclaimed his resurrection
to those to whom he sent her,
and risked her self in bold believing.

In her proclamation we find courage to speak out.
In her acclamation we gain strength to share our stories.
In her vindication we know the recognition of our redeemed and vindicated lives.

Make us faithful like Mary,
when faith is sent out
into the noon of Easter morning,
Until we come at last
to share in the full glory
of Resurrection Day.

Nicola Slee[45]

Taken from 'An Easter Garden' N. Slee & 'Who are you looking for?' Churches in St Ives Bay with Women

God of the open garden,
we have found you
and long to hold you fast.
But you refuse our clinging need,
eluding the love
that would bind and possess you,
sending us out
beyond the bounds of our feeble knowing.

Rapt in our joy and desire,
we cannot interpret you:
you have gone from us again,
moving into morning,
moving into light.

In your great love,
wait for us
where you have sent us,
go ahead of us,
be there to meet us,
risen, released in your world.

Nicola Slee

O God, the power of the powerless,
you have chosen as your witnesses

those whose voice is not heard.
Grant that, as women first announced the resurrection
though they were not believed,
we too may have courage
to persist in proclaiming your word,
in the power of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Janet Morley[44]

It suddenly strikes me
with overwhelming force:

It was women
who were the first to spread the message of

Easter –
the unheard of!

It was women
who rushed to the disciples,
who, breathless and bewildered,
passed on the greatest message of all:

He is alive!

Think if women had kept silence
in the churches!

Marta Wilhelmsson

yo3/Marymag2

Reclaiming Mary Magdalen
READINGS

Leader:
There are a confusing number of women called Mary in the New Testament and some of these have got mixed up, not only with each other but with other women briefly mentioned in Gospels.

Mary Magdalene has been caught up in the confusion over the number of accounts of women who anointed, and in particular with the unnamed woman "who had a bad name in the town", in Luke 7.36. Modern scholarship holds that there is no justification for identifying the sinful women with Mary Magdalene (who appears in the next chapter (8.2) where she is shown as having been healed from possession by seven devils (most likely to have been mental illness) and was accompanying Jesus along with other women and the Twelve men.

The confusion of the women does not appear until the 4th century but since then, reinforced by Gregory the Great's advocacy, it has been a powerful force.

But what do we know of the biblical Mary Magdalene? Apart from her healing and accompanying Jesus we find her given a place of preeminence among the women at the foot of the cross (Mt 27.56, Mk 15.40, JN 19.25), at the burial (Mt 27.61) and at the appearances on Easter day (Lk 24.10, Mt 28.1, Mk 16. 1-9, Jn 20 1-18)
Mary Magdalene is not portrayed as anointing the living Christ but going to the tomb to anoint the dead body of her Lord.

Let other voices tell us their insights.

A. From Elizabeth Moltmann Wendell "The women around Jesus"
Anyone who loves the biblical Mary Magdalene, and compares her with the (quotes) Christian (unquote)Mary Magdalene must get very angry. Even now for most people Mary Magdalene is the "great sinner". Literature and at in the Western tradition, stories and pictures of the repentant woman whose past beauty can still be seen have stamped our picture.... but the great sinner of Luke 7 and
Mary Magdalene, of whom all four Gospels report, have as little to do with each other as Peter and Judas"

She goes on to speak about Mary Magdalene's experience in the garden, being told not to touch her risen Lord "We cannot eliminate the shock which this remark necessarily causes. This is no longer the tender, friendly Jesus,. It is no longer possible to touch or anoint his body. He cannot be brought back and held fast. Mary Magdalene may no longer spontaneously throw her arms around him... (she) experienced physical salvation in a way which went beyond almost everyone else. She loved Jesus personally. Without him, her life did not seem worth living. She showed tenacity and staying power. She never doubted him. But now she begins to cling to him. It is not the dead Messiah which makes her doubt, but the lost body of Jesus. It is here that she experiences death: her existence falls apart"

Moltmann Wendell then writes that she would prefer "to translate

WE CALL ON THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM ...

Spirit of Wisdom,
Divine Spirit, Divine Mother,
you are the divine challenger
Who encourages us to take risks
you sharpen our hunger
for adventure and surprise,
you keep us from giving in to fear,
from bowing to security .
We call on your motherly Wisdom
to never let uncertainty
depress our free spirit,
never let us regress and start moving
towards the easy and sure thing.
Strengthen us to withstand
the panic of the unknown future,
the fear of powers that threaten
our desire to grow;
Mother Wisdom, Inner Source of courage,,
nudge us (and nudge us again)
towards new growth,
urge us away from established strongholds,
convince us of our potential:
to fan into a blaze the spark you have implanted
in our inmost beings. Amen.

Prayers connected with Healing and Wholeness

From Seeing Christ in others (Anthology by Geoffrey Duncan)

Through human lips
Christ is speaking
Through human hands
Christ is healing
Through our hearts
Christ is loving
Through us all
Christ is working
So behold the truth
God is living, loving
speaking and healing
through Christ our Saviour.

Richard Becher

Holy Weaver, life-giving Spirit
We draw near to each other in your presence.
You breathe, and we see afresh;
You startle, and we hear anew;
You cajole, and we act again with vigour.
Weave a pattern of peace between strangers,
Weave a pattern of love between friends,
Weave a pattern of hope among the hopeless,
Weave a pattern of joy among the sorrowful
Weave a pattern of passion between lovers-
For you, holy weaver, creator, son, spirit
Are the true lover of us all.
Bind us in your love, now and forever.

Ruth Harvey

Final blessings from the above anthology

Be still
And let God's peace wash over you
Like waves lapping over pebbles
Smoothing rough edges of insurmountable worries
To tiny insignificant grains of sand
Taking away the jaggedness of sin
To leave smooth shining love.
And let the peace of God,
The Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Be with us all today and every day.

Leslie Steel

God our reconciler, who, in the person of the Spirit, beckons us into community,
Guides us into the paths of peace
And inspires our longing to become more Christ-like;
Let your hand nudge us into the adventure
Of painting new visions, writing new words,
Building new structures, and carving new landmarks
To meet the challenges of our time
As you embrace us, may our hands embrace the world
to find that all our sisters and brothers – all living things share the same pulse of God-given life.

Kate Compston

From All Desires Known Janet Morley

Tender God
You have seen my affliction,
And unbound my eyes;
You have bereaved me of the burden
To which I used to cling;
You have woven my pain
Into patterns of integrity;
The wounds I cherished
You have turned into honours,
And the scars I kept hidden
Into marks of truth.
You have touched me gently:
I have seen you face, and live

God of the weary
Receive my tiredness
God of the hungry
Know my emptiness
God of those in danger
Hold my fear
God of the silenced
Hear my despair
God of the heavyladen
Give me rest
God of the hopeful
Fill me again with longing.

O God, life-giving Spirit,
Spirit of healing and comfort,
Of integrity and truth,
We believe and trust in you.
Warm-winged Spirit, brooding over creation,
Rushing wind and Pentecostal fire,
We commit ourselves to work with you
And renew our world.

From Human Rites

God be your comfort, your strength;
God be your hope and support;
God be your light and your way;
And may God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,
Bless you and remain with you
Now and for ever. Amen.

Joyce Yarrow adapted from NZ prayerbook

Communion song A touching Place

final words

Sending forth prayer (Oscar Romero)

If some day they take the radio station away from us,
if they close down our newspaper,
if they don't let us speak,
if they kill all the priests and the bishop too,
and you are left, a people without priests
each one of you must be God's microphone,
each one of you must be a messenger,
a prophet.
The church will always exist
as long as there is one baptized person.
And that one baptized person who is left in the world
is responsible before the world for holding aloft
the banner of the Lord's truth
and of his divine justice.

Final Song Love

Acknowledgement for Songs and prayers: Will you come and follow me and the Touching Place come from Iona. Peace flowing outward and Love is the work of June Boyce Tillman, the Eucharistic prayer of Hope comes from missionary sources, and the Our Father is an adapted version from Pax Christi (??? Communion SONg???

Pentecost is almost upon us so you might like to use one of Kira Solhdoost's prayers on the Spirit

Veni Creator Spiritus
Come Holy Ghost, Creator Come!

Come, be with us,for we are here to create.
to create, as Jesus witnessed women creating,
taking bushels of wheat, bushels of raw humanity
adding the yeast of their womanhood
working it in, kneading, kneading, labouring
to make it penetrate the substance of the raw wheat
to manufacture, to create the bread
that in turn will help to nourish, to sustain the life of the world.

We are here to create a new world:
a new world by our humble efforts,
in themselves as puny as those of the Jewish bakerwoman
whom we yet know as creatrix
in whom you have made visible your creative power

Give us, Creator Spirit, a vision of the world
as your love would make it.
Help us to create a world where women are esteemed
and all the weak and poor appreciated.
Help us to create a world where the benefits of culture
are shared equally between men and women,
between races and nations.
Help us to create a world where peace is laced
with justice, and justice intertwined with love.

And help us, Creator supreme, to create a church
where all who share human life will recognise
in themselves and in others the one image of yourself
in which they were conceived

Help us by the inspiration of your Spirit
to build this world - this church.

Amen

Kira Sohldoost



Jackie Clackson

Read Antiphonally + all say 'Begone' x3

A Powers of domination and oppression,

Be gone, be gone, be gone!

B Powers of fear and contempt for women,

Be gone, be gone, be gone!

A Powers of ideology, mind control and the silencing of voices,

Be gone, be gone, be gone!

B Powers of corruption, and propaganda, and lies,

Be gone, be gone, be gone!

A Powers of global economic exploitation,

Be gone, be gone, be gone!

B Powers of racism and fear of the stranger,

Be gone, be gone, be gone!

A Powers of homophobia and harassment,

Be gone, be gone, be gone!

B Powers of pollution and destruction of our earth,

Be gone, be gone, be gone!

A Powers of scarcity of water, food and medicine,

Be gone, be gone, be gone!

B Powers of domestic abuse, honour killings and genital mutilation,

Be gone, be gone, be gone!

A Powers of AIDS and preventable illness,

Be gone, be gone, be gone!

B Powers of slavery and exploited labour,

Be gone, be gone, be gone!

Flowing Free (All)

The love of God
Flowing free
The love of God
Flow out through me

The peace of God
Flowing free
The peace of God
Flow out through me

The life of God
Flowing free
The life of God
Flow out through me.

Celtic Prayer

Taizé
O Lord hear my prayer ...

THE SHARING

Ed

A We told our stories—
That's all.
We sat and listened to
Each other
And heard the journeys
Of each soul.
We sat in silence
Entering each one's pain an
Sharing each one's joy.
We heard love's longing
And the lonely reachings-ou
For love and affirmation.

B We heard of dreams
Shattered
And visions fled.
Of hopes and laughter
Turned stale and dark.
We felt the pain of
Isolation and
The bitterness
Of death.

A But in each brave and
Lonely story
God's gentle life
Broke through
And we heard music in
The darkness
And smelt flowers in
The void.

B We felt the budding
Of creation
In the searchings of
Each soul
And discerned the beauty
Of God's hand in
Each muddy, twisted path.

A And God's voice sang
In each story
His life sprang from
Each death.
Our sharing became
One story
Of a simple lonely search
For life and hope and
Oneness
In a world which sobs
For love.

B And we knew that in
Our sharing
God's voice with
Mighty breath
Was saying
Love each other and
Take each other's hand.

Edvina Gately

Song: **Bearers of Peace**

(join in once you pick up the tune)

People of Jesus, trusted to be
bearers of peace from God's living tree,
Peace that the world itself cannot know,
The peace that is given to plant and to grow.

Feel for the ones who have no more bread
Feel for the ones with children unfed.
Longing for food, they find in our hands
A mountain of weapons more sacred than land.

Feel for the ones whose homes are destroyed
Feel for the lives now shattered and void.
Waiting for loved ones nobody saw
the innocent people who suffer in war.

Stand with the ones who see a new way
People of faith who struggle and pray
Given the call to shape and rebuild
Our actions, our consciences, our broken world.

Pray for the day our children will see
War strange and distant as slavery
Work for a world where new ways abound
To meet and to dialogue till peace is found.

From "The Restless Heart" (Bernadette Farrell)

All

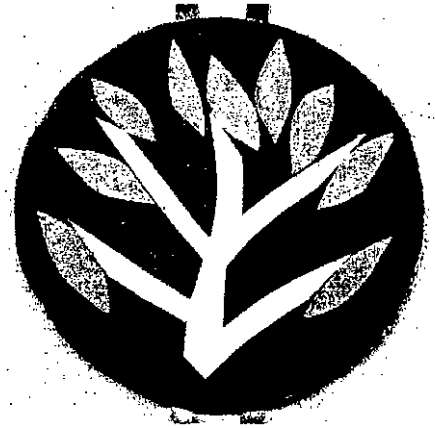
Living God, the source of all life,
prompt us into new beginnings.
Ever-present God, travelling alongside us
guide us to walk in your way.
Ever-loving God, surrounding us with care,
help us to detect your presence.

Jan Berry
England

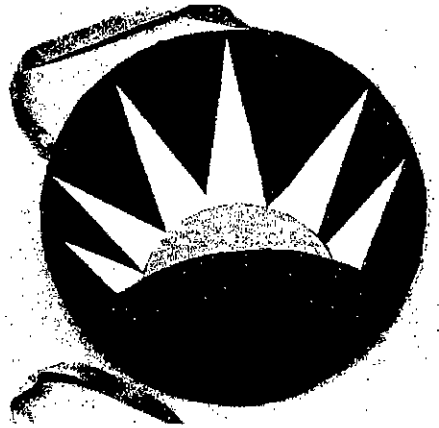
JESSE TREE SYMBOLS – GREAT ADVENT ANTIPHONS



O Sapientia
O Wisdom



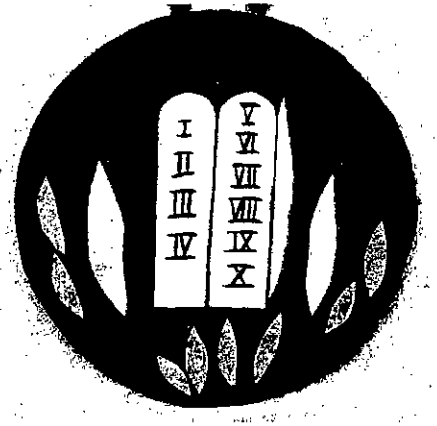
O Radix
O Root of Jesse



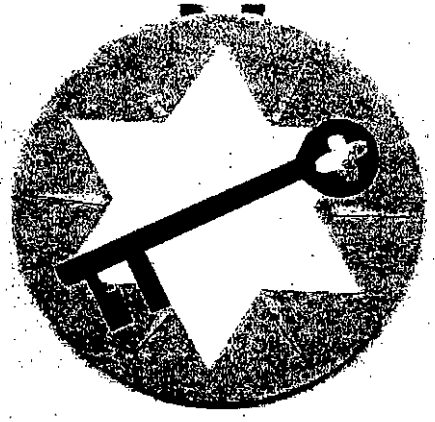
O Oriens
O Rising Sun



O Emmanuel
O Emmanuel



O Adonai
O Adonai



O Clavis
O Key of David



O Rex
O King

The design of these symbols is based on those seen at a Jesse Tree Service led by the Benedictine Sisters of Turvey Abbey.
Those illustrated here are made out of cardboard, coloured gummed paper and paint.
The ribbons have been added so that the symbols may be used as Christmas tree decorations.

PRAYERS ON A THEME OF WATER

Poem Envoi (verses spoken round the room)

A A stone is thrown
into a calm lake
and the stone makes waves
spreading, reaching to the far side.

B Let us throw stones into the deadly calm
of the lake that is our world, no matter how small
is the stone,
no matter how small is the wave.

A The stone brings awakening,
the stone is a movement
and the movement spreads
when all of us
standing on all sides
around the lake
keep throwing
our little stones.

All The wave will never cease
till the whole lake
starts bubbling with life.

Silence

(one line each)

My Lord is the source of Love: I the river's course
Let God's love flow through me. I will not obstruct it.
Irrigation ditches can water but a portion of the field.
the great Yangtze River can water a thousand acres.
Expand my heart O Lord, that I my love yet more people.
The waters of love can cover vast tracts,
nothing will be lost to me.
The greater the outward flow, the greater the returning tide.
If I am not linked to Love's source, I will dry up,
If I dam the waters of Love, they will stagnate.
Can I compare my heart with the boundless seas?
But abandon not the measure of my heart, O Lord.
Let the waves of your love still billow there!

translated from the Chinese

All

May the earth continue to live
May the heavens above continue to live
May the rains continue to dampen the land
May the wet forests continue to grow
Then the flowers shall bloom
And we people shall live again.

HAWAIIAN PRAYER

the peace - sung holding hands

Shalom my friends, shalom my friends, shalom shalom
The peace of Christ I give you today, shalom, shalom (x3)

Final words from the celebrant

All say the blessing

Ever-loving God,
may we, the people of the bread,
live for a world in which no one hungers;
may we, the people of the vine
live for a world in which no one is excluded;
and may all who have shared in
the body and blood of your Son
love our brothers and sisters
rejoicing to know that you loved us first.

Christian Aid)

final song We sing a love?

Prayer (from Iona)

Be still my children
My voice is not always
heard in the thunder and earthquakes
of your experience.
I do not only speak when you are
physically and mentally involved in living.
Be still - and in the stillness I will speak
when you are quiet
when you are resting
when you are aware of me pulsating within
you and around you
when you are waiting and listening
I will break through
and enrich your silence
releasing my peace and glory
and transforming your experience
until in the stillness
you find yourself longing
to shout for joy.

Put yourself in a position of relaxation and think of the aspects of God's presence in creation that particularly appeals to you. After a couple of minutes, share your thoughts with the person next to you (in turns).

Poem by Edwina Gately (adapted) Sides A and B

A. We are called to become
A perfect creation.
No one is called to become
who we individually are called to be.
It does not matter
How short or tall
Or thick-set or slow
We may be.

B. It does not matter
whether we sparkle with life
Or are silent as a still pool,
Whether we singf your song aloud
Or weep alone in darkness.

A. It does not matter
Whether we feel loved and admired
Or unloved and alone

For we are called to become
A perfect creation
No one's shadow
Should cloud our becoming,
No one's light
Should dispel our spark.

B. For the Lord delights in us
Jealously looks upon us
And encourages with gentle joy
Every movement of the Spirit
Within us.

A. Unique and loved we stand
Beautiful or stunted in our growth
But never without hope and life.

All: For we are called to become
A perfect creation.
This becoming may be
Gentle or harsh,
Subtle or violent,
But it never ceases,
Never pauses or hesitates,
Only is -
Creative force -
Calling us
Calling us to become
A perfect creation

("you" has been replaced by "we" through

The Lord's Prayer (One Possible New Translation from the Aramaic)

O Birther! Father-Mother of the Cosmos,

Focus your light within us - make it useful:

Create your reign of unity now -

Your one desire then acts with ours,
as in all light, so in all forms.

Grant what we need each day in bread and insig

Loose the cords of mistakes binding us,
as we release the strands we hold
of others' guilt.

Don't let surface things delude us,

But free us from what holds us back.

From you is born all ruling will,
the power and the life to do,
the song that beautifies all,
from age to age it renews.

Truly - power to these statements -
may they be the ground from which all
my actions grow: Amen.

(From Prayers of the Cosmos
M. Douglas Meeks

Evening Prayer based on Hildegard of Bingen

Centring music - Viriditas of Hildegard (tape "Feather on the ..)
Meditation from Hildegard of Bingen (Read round the circle)

I am the one whose praise echoes on high.
I adorn all the earth.

I am the breeze that nurtures all things green.
I encourage blossoms to flourish with ripening fruits.

I am the rain coming from the dew
that causes the grasses to laugh with the joy of life

I am the yearning for good.

Invisible life that sustains all
I awaken to life everything.

(short pause)

Truly the Holy Spirit is an unquenchable fire

Bestowing all excellence, sparking all worth, awaking all goodness, igniting speech, enflaming humankind.

Holy Spirit, all creation praises you
creation has life because of you

Song Feather on the Breath of God (Tune - Picardy - to tape)
(change the underlined words in consequent verses)

With the living Spirit we're going
Feather on the breath of God
With the living Spirit we're going
Feather on the breath of God
With the living Spirit, we would go
Feather on the Breath of God

(Read around the room)
Who are the prophets? They are a royal people
who penetrate mystery and see with the spirit's eyes.

In illuminating darkness they speak out

They are living, penetrating clarity.
They are a blossom blooming only on the shoot that is rooted in the flood of light.

(from Meditations with H of B, Uhlein.)

(taped meditation by June Boyce Tillman based on Hildegards words and piano, interspersed with all singing the above song.
v2. Gold within the flame of God

v3 Drop within the fountain of God
(sung without tape)
v4 Seed within the earth of God

CWO Annual Gathering 08

Opening prayer

Naming

Litany on collaborative authority (Take turns to read "voice")

Voice O Sustainer and giver of life, free your people from the temptations of power, from the urge to control rather than enable.

All Come, Spirit, liberate us from the forces of domination.

Voice O Loving Empowerer, help us to challenge abuse of authority wherever it is to be found, including in ourselves.

All Come, Spirit, give us strength not to walk by on the other side.

Voice O Still Small Voice, help the People of God to learn to listen to each other, and those in authority to understand the strength that comes from true consultation.

All Come, Spirit of Understanding, deepen our insights.

Voice O Loving Creator, help us to affirm ourselves and others, understanding that we are all uniquely created and have a voice that needs to be heard.

All Come, Creator of Diversity, and help us see the value of difference.

Voice O God who made both women and men in your image, help your church not to deface its image by treating women as inferior beings. Help us to recognize and challenge discrimination based on sex, race, sexual orientation, clericalism and other excuses for exclusion.

All Come, Spirit of Equality, and imbue us with the values of interconnectedness with all created nature, human and non-human.

O Loving God, lead us in your ways and breathe courage in your people so we may truly reflect in our lives the loving mutuality of the Trinity.

All: Holy God,
whose presence is known
in the structures we build
And also in their collapse;
establish in us a community of hope,
not to contain your mystery
but to be led beyond security
into your sacred space,
through Jesus Christ, Amen.

(see overleaf for Commissioning prayer)

Prayer (from Iona)

Be still my children
My voice is not always
heard in the thunder and earthquakes
of your experience.
I do not only speak when you are
physically and mentally involved in living.
Be still – and in the stillness I will speak
when you are quiet
when you are resting
when you are aware of me pulsating within
you and around you
when you are waiting and listening
I will break through
and enrich your silence
releasing my peace and glory
and transforming your experience
until in the stillness
you find yourself longing
to shout for joy.

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of others' guilt.

Don't let surface things delude us,

But free us from what holds us back.

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the power and the life to do,
the song that beautifies all,
from age to age it renews.

Truly – power to these statements –
may they be the ground from which all
my actions grow: Amen.

(From Prayers of the Cosmos
N. Douglas Kloetz

PRAYER

Moved by a compulsion of the Holy Spirit
we cannot remain ignorant
of this injustice in our midst.

We long for all humanity
to be acknowledged as equal, particularly
among your community of the church,
so we pray grieving for the lost gifts
of so many women.

We ask you, God of all peoples,
to bring insight and humility
to all those in positions of dominance,
and an understanding that
the ascended Lord called us all to act
doing Christ's work here and now.

We ask this of you,
God our Creator
Jesus our Redeemer
Spirit our Sustainer.



catholic **w**omen's **o**rdination

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catholic **w**omen's **o**rdination

CATHOLIC WOMENS ORDINATION

We are women and men who care deeply about the RC Church and who seek ways of building the church community that the Genesis insight that women equally as men are made in the image of God.

WHY NOT WOMEN DEACONS?

There is a growing and serious shortage of ordained priests in this country to serve the community. Is it not time that the gifts, insights and experience of women should be acknowledged and that they be ordained deacons, as they were in the early church?.

There is ample evidence for women as deacons at that time and that they were ordained in the same process as were the men.

THE AIMS OF CWO

To achieve a forum for
-examining
- challenging
- developing the present understanding of ordained priesthood
- to work towards the ordination of women as priests in the RC Church

Our work to raise understanding of these issues includes publications, conferences, liturgies, prayerful walks of witness and networking There are groups around the country.

Enquiries and membership tel 0790 796 1578 or e mail
patbrown19v@hotmail.com

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Natcog June 08 prayers

Opening prayer, said by all

God our Creator, you have given all peoples one common origin,
And your will is to gather us all
As one family in yourself.
Fill our hearts with the fire of you love and the desire to ensure justice
for all our sisters and brothers.
By sharing the good things you give us
may we secure justice and equality for every human being, an end to division,
and a human society built on love and peace.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the
Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

A prayer for our pilgrimage (in two groups)
You call us O God to travel into the risk and opportunity of your future.
We pray for the nations and peoples of the world as well as our friends
As together we seek new ways of shaping our lives.

Heal us of the hurts we have experienced on the road.
Forgive us the pain we have caused those who travel with us,
Bind up our old wounds, that out of reconcilation may burst
Forth endless possibilities and harmony.

Final Prayers

All Loving God,
together we seek the way,
helping, watching, learning, leading,
each step forging new links,
each dialogue opening further
the channels of peace and understanding.
We stand poised on the brink of greatness,
drawn by the Spirit into new realms of hope and trust.
The barriers of past centuries are slowly crumbling.
We pray that the skeletons of division and discord
will be laid to rest,
and that the people of God will be fully mobilized.
For these and all your mercies,
we thank and praise you O God.

Final Blessing
May Wisdom be in our minds , and in our thinking;
May Wisdom be in our hearts, and in our perceiving;
May Wisdom be in our mouths, and in our speaking;
May Wisdom be in our hands, and in our working;
May Wisdom be in our feet, and in our walking;
May Wisdom be in our bodies, and in our loving;
May Wisdom be with us all the days of our lives.

Poems from 'Cries of the Heart'

Beginners

Denise Levertov

Dedicated to the memory of Karen Silkwood and Eliot Gralla

'From too much love of living,
Hope and desire set free,
Even the weariest river
Winds somewhere to the sea—

But we have only begun
to love the earth.

We have only begun
to imagine the fulness of life.

How could we tire of hope?
—so much is in bud.

How can desire fail?
—we have only begun

to imagine justice and mercy,
only begun to envision

how it might be
to live as siblings with beast and flower,
not as oppressors.

Surely our river
cannot already be hastening
into the sea of nonbeing?

Surely it cannot
drag, in the silt,
all that is innocent?

Not yet, not yet—
there is too much broken
that must be mended,

too much hurt we have done to each other
that cannot yet be forgiven.

We have only begun to know
the power that is in us if we would join
our solitudes in the communion of struggle.

So much is unfolding that must
complete its gesture,

so much is in bud.

Eagle Poem

Joy Harjo

To pray you open your whole self
To sky, to earth, to sun, to moon
To one whole voice that is you.
And know there is more
That you can't see, can't hear
Can't know except in moments
Steadily growing, and in languages
That aren't always sound but other
Circles of motion.
Like eagle that Sunday morning
Over Salt River. Circled in blue sky
In wind, swept our hearts clean
With sacred wings.
We see you, see ourselves and know
That we must take the utmost care
And kindness in all things.
Breathe in, knowing we are made of
All this, and breathe, knowing
We are truly blessed because we

Were born, and die soon, within a
True circle of motion,
Like eagle rounding out the morning
Inside us.
We pray that it will be done
In beauty.
In beauty.

Prayer

Nicola Slee

God of all our growing,
take our roots down deep
in the long, dark winter season
of our grief.
Nurture the resurrection life in us,
in the secret places of the soil,
in the barren, frozen earth, underground,
where no eye can see.
Send your spirit where the cold season rages
and speak to us the promise of spring.

From *Easter Garden*, 1990

The first time . . .

. . . your name sprang forth
was before time,
amidst eternity –
when from everlasting
you knew yourself,
and your self-knowing
generated
your Divine Son.

And when from everlasting,
Father and Son
were face to face –
one yet twofold –
the Holy Spirit
in perfect unity
completed the Trinity.

In this eternal instant,
before, beyond time,
your name resounded:
Love!

P peace From Coracle

P



For peace

As the fever of day calms towards twilight
May all that is strained in us come to ease.

We pray for all who suffered violence today,
May an unexpected serenity surprise them.

For those who risk their lives each day for peace,
May their hearts glimpse providence at the heart of history.

That those who make riches from violence and war
Might hear in their dreams the cries of the lost.

That we might see through our fear of each other
A new vision to heal our fatal attraction to aggression.

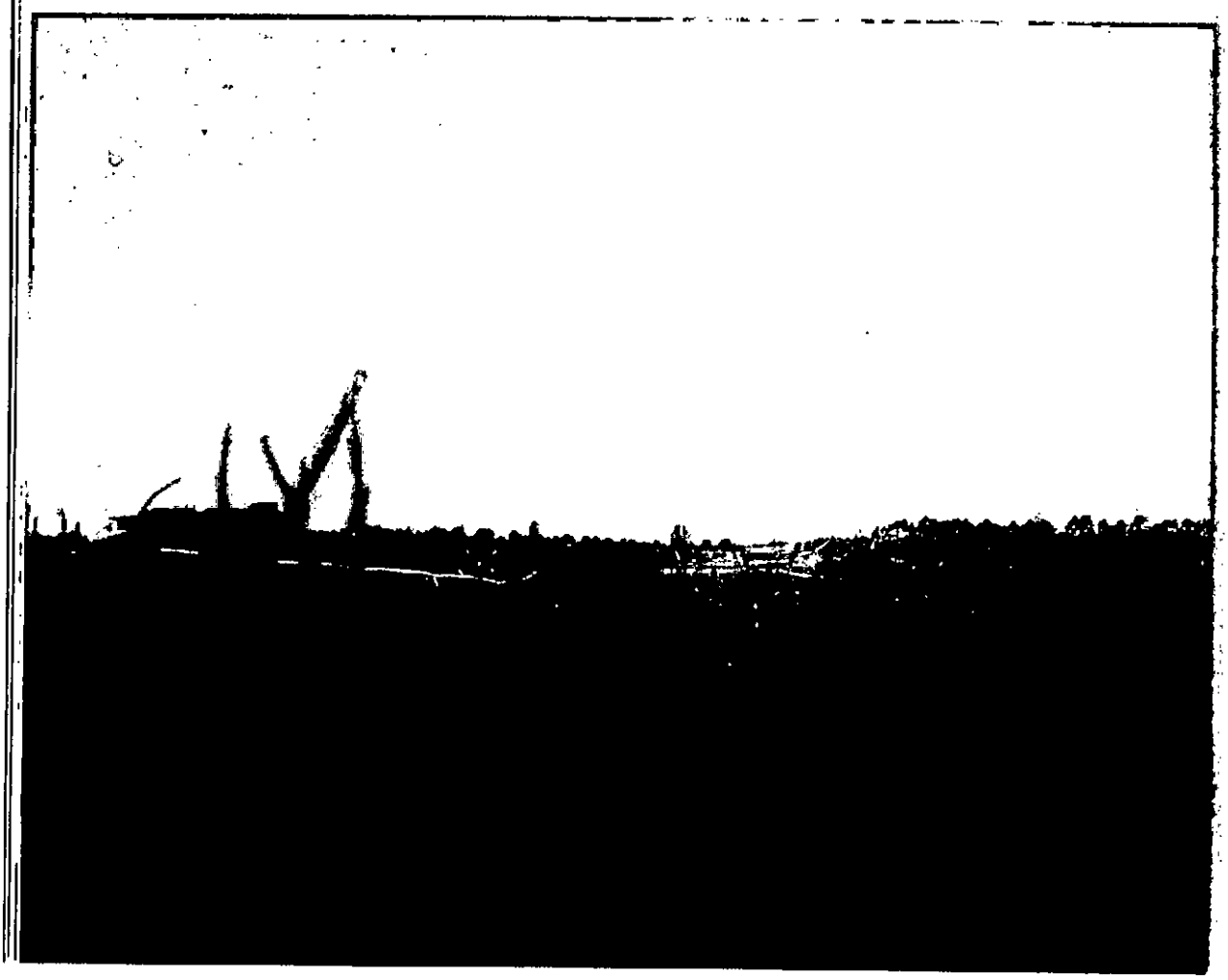
That those who enjoy the privilege of peace
Might not forget their tormented brothers and sisters.

That the wolf might lie down with the lamb,
That our swords be beaten into ploughshares

And no hurt or harm be done
Anywhere along the holy mountain.

John O'Donohue

JC



Prayers and meditations using enriching imagery

Eternal God, as you created humankind in your image,
women and men, male and female, renew us in that image:
God the Holy Spirit, by your strength and love comfort us,
as those whom a mother comforts.
Lord Jesus Christ, by your death and resurrection, give us
the joy of those for whom pain and suffering becomes,
in hope, the fruitful agony of travail:
God, the Holy Trinity, grant that we may together enter
into new life, your promised rest of achievement and fulfilment -
world without end. (1)

Glory to you, Source of All Being, Eternal Word and Holy Spirit (2)

The Father

Vulnerable God,
you challenge the powers that rule this world
through the needy, the compassionate,
and those who are filled with longing.
Make us hunger and thirst to see right prevail
and singleminded in seeking peace
that we may see your face.... (3)

God you are Love, and reveal yourself through
loving relationships,
You make women and men in your own image
and invite them to bear your likeness.
In motherly love you bring us to birth,
nourishing and sustaining us before we comprehend.
So you teach us the depth and strength of love
From the protection of fatherly love
You teach us to use the amazing gift of life
and we learn that power is for caring.... (4)

O God, the power of the powerless,
you have chosen as your witness
those whose voice is not heard.
Grant that, as women first announced
the resurrection though they were not believed
we too may have courage
to persist in proclaiming your word
in the Power of Jesus Amen (3)

The Son

Christ our true mother
you carried us within you,
laboured with us,
and brought us forth to bliss.
Enclose us in your care
that in stumbling we may not fall,
nor be overcome by evil,
but know that all shall be well (3)

Christ our true mother
you carried us within you,
laboured with us, and brought forth to bliss.
Enclose us in your care,
that in stumbling we may not fall
nor be overcome by evil,
but know that all shall be well.(3)

So when he made us God almighty was our kindly father, and God all-wise our kindly mother...
By the skill and wisdom of the Second Person we are sustained, restored and saved.. for he is our mother, brother and saviour (5)

(chorus of song the Touching Place)
To the lost Christ shows his face
to the unloved he gives his embrace
to those who cry in pain or disgrace
Christ makes, with his friends,
a touching place.(6)

When we visit the sick
really visit,
being there for the other
with the whole of ourselves,
we find that we are visiting Christ,
to look into gaunt and hollow eyes
full of pain and longing and courage
to look into the eyes of Christ.
Christ is the one who is ill,
the one whom we tend,
the one who is vulnerable to our blundering (7)

The Spirit

Spirit of the Body of Christ,
uniting us in the church
with your life giving grace and hope.
Forgive our fragmenting of your church
and our failure to carry
your love into the world
Spirit of God, forgive us
and lead us to life in you. (8)

Spirit of truth and judgment
who alone can exorcize
the powers that grip our world:
at the point of crisis
give us your discernment,
that we may accurately name
what is evil,
and know the way that leads to peace,
through Jesus Christ Amen. (3)

(1. WCC Community of Women & Men, Sheffield 1980 in "Celebrating Women"
2. New Companion to the Breviary, Carmelites, Indianapolis, 3. All Desires Known, Janet Morley:
4. Rosalind Wakely: 5 Revelations of Divine Love, Julian: 6. Iona Community in "Love from Below"
7. Healing More or Less, Jim Cotter: 8. McMahon in "In Spirit & in Truth", WCC)

HOW SHOULD WE TALK ABOUT GOD?

The way we talk about God in worship and prayer matters because it effects the way we relate to the divine and to each other.

SOME POINTS

A. All the major denominations are now considering the question of openly includingwomen in references to the community, and the Methodist report goes further "alongside the traditional language about the Trinity we see no objection to the use of complementary images .."Father" is not God's only appropriate "name". Thus God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit may also be spoken of as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer"

B. Janet Morley in the Preface to All Desires Known, her outstanding collection of inclusive prayers, writes of the difficulty of finding new words for existing prayers and hymns and believes the way forward is "to write new texts in vigorous language, which also respects and inhabits ancient worship forms, evocative biblical imagery and familiar cadences and rhythms". She cites the psalms and christian mysticism as a rich resource of imagery.

C. All language about God is metaphorical. It has been claimed that it is a form of idolatry when we mistake the image for the reality. "While we are immediately aware that the personal God is not really a rock or a mother eagle, it is easy enough to imagine God is "really a king or a father' (Schneiders, Women and the Word)

D. Rosemary Radford Ruether (Sexism and God Talk) points out that Jesus use of 'Abba' for his Father affirms a relationship based on love and trust that transforms the patriarchal concept of fatherhood into a more maternal and nurturing role. The early Jesus movement used the concept of God as Abba to liberate the community from dominant-subordinate relationships. Unfortunately this did not last and much of the language we now use reinforces patriarchal images.

DISCUSSION POINTERS

1. Which of these biblical images for God do you find most helpful?

King, water, shepherd, father, rock, creator, midwife, jealous God, wisdom, healer, mother, potter, judge, mother eagle. Are there others you find helpful?

2. In the light of Jesus use of Father/Abba are we justified in bringing in the mothering aspect of of God? cf.
Eternal Spirit, life-giver, Pain bearer, Love maker Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all
Loving God, in whom is heaven... (Jim Cotter, Prayer at Night)

3. What action can be taken in our local situation to bring in a wider variety of images of God and promote understanding of the issues of inclusive language?

(turn over for examples of inclusive prayers)

CWO NATCOG OCT 04

Opening Prayer (First 2 prayer from 'Praying Like a Woman'

1 *Open our lips* (Antiphonally, groups A + B.)

A We have heard the sounds of women's silence.
We have listened to our sisters' voices.
We have been stirred by their passion,
encouraged by their strength,
instructed by their wisdom.

B *We, like them, wish to speak out.*
We, like them, desire to speak truly.
We, like them, have a story to proclaim.
We long to midwife a new and living word for our time.

A But often we are afraid.
We fear the sound of our own voices.
We would not know our own strength,
we would not claim our power.

B We have no eloquence, no fine-sounding words or polished phrases.
Our speech is halting, we stumble and stutter over the words of life.
Our lips are sealed, like the tombs of the unliving.
Our tongues are heavy as stones within our mouths.

A *Come to us and speak to us in our weakness.*
Set the fire of your speech in our throats,
and the burning coal of your passion on our tongues.
Loosen our lips to proclaim your praise.

B O You, whose voice rolls over the waters
and thunders over the oceans,
whose word splits even the cedar trees
and breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon,

A whose voice makes the oaks shake and shudder,
and strips the forest bare,
whose word whirls the sands of the desert
and resounds through the mountains:

All *Open our lips and our mouth shall declare your praise.*

2. *Letter to the Church* (Read round the circle)

1 Dear brother Church:
I name you 'brother' not 'mother',
for your leaders are mostly men
and your ways are still too patriarchal.

2 I want to live passionately.
I will not hide my anger or my energy.
Will you face your own?

3 I want to act effectively.
I will not deny nor dissemble my power.
Will you admit your own and be willing to share it?

4 I want to think dangerously.
I will not set limits on what it is possible to ask or say or explore.
Will you open the gates of learning you have been guarding and let others in?

5 I want to pray deeply.
I will not withhold any part of my life from the divine gaze.
Will you plunge with me into the depths?

6 I will work with you,
but I will not work for you.

7 I will walk with you,
but I will not lead you nor will I follow in your path.

8 I will weep with you and laugh with you,
but I will not feel for you;
you must claim your own passion and pleasure and tears.

9 I will offer you the fullness of my being,
but I will not sacrifice myself on the altar of your impossible demands.

All Dear Brother church
We are standing here as women (and men)
struggling to be who we are.
We are speaking:
Are you listening?

3 Prayer (All)
Be with us this day, O Creative Spirit, as guide us in our reaching to new ways of being Church. Help us to act like yeast within our faith community, showing forth a way of being whole, where power is used to enable growth, and all are equally valued.

(I.P)

Psalm 8. Inclusive and Exclusive versions

A.

Ant. 3 How wonderful is your name in all creation.

Psalm 8

How great is your name, O God,
through all the earth!

Your majesty is praised above the heavens;
on the lips of children and of babes
you have found praise to foil your enemy,
to silence the foe and the rebel.

When I see the heavens, the work of your hands,
the moon and the stars which you arranged,
who are we that you should keep us in mind,
mortal flesh that you care for us?

C.

The Majesty of God and the Dignity of Humanity

1  God, our God,
how glorious is your name over all the earth!
Your glory is praised in the heavens.
2 Out of the mouths of children and babes
you have fashioned praise because of your foes,
to silence the enemy and the rebellious.
3 When I look at your heavens, the work of your hands,
the moon and the stars which you created—
4 who are we that you should be mindful of us,
that you should care for us?

B.

ps 8 (to be sung to the Gelineau tune)

How great, O God, is your name throughout the earth

In your hands is the power
from you flows goodness everlasting
Through you is evil confounded
your name is praised by all creation

How great, O God, is your name throughout the earth

We look up to the skies made by you
the moon and the stars given their place
what are humans that you spare a thought for us,
humanity that you cherish and love?

Refrain: Creator God, Source of all life,
How gloriously does your name resound,
echoing to the bounds of the universe!

E.

The morning stars sing for joy
and the youngest child creies your name.
So the weak in the world shame the strong,
and silence the proud and the rebellious.

When I look at the heavens
even the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars
majestic in their courses ...

who are we human beings
that you kept us in mind,
children, women and men,
that you care so much for us?

D.

8. Divine glory and human dignity

2 How great is your name, O Lord our God,
through all the earth!

3 Your majesty is praised above the heavens;
on the lips of children and of babes
you have found praise to foil your enemy,
to silence the foe and the rebel.

4 When I see the heavens, the work of your hands,
the moon and the stars which you arranged,
5 what are we that you should keep us in mind,
men and women that you care for us?

F.

8 O LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is thy name in all the earth!

Thou whose glory above the heavens is chanted
2 by the mouth of babes and infants,
thou hast founded a bulwark because of thy foes,
to still the enemy and the avenger.

3 When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers,
the moon and the stars which thou hast established;
4 what is man that thou art mindful of him,
and the son of man that thou dost care for him?

Discussion Pointers

1. Compare the above versions with a traditional version (F) What sort of changes have been made?

2. How effective are the free-form versions? How far do we have to keep to literal translation?

3. Are words like Lord, King, Majesty, fortress, judge etc overstressed in the psalms to the expense of God's loving-kindness? How afer are our ideas of the Creator patterned on earthly male power rather than on compassion, nurturing, sheltering etc?

Key. A. Companion to the Breviary B. Woman-created liturgies C. Psalms anew
D. Great psalms inclusive version E. Jim Cotter F. RSV

C.W.O. September '99 Piazza Vigil.

A stone is thrown
into a calm lake
and the stone makes waves
spreading, reaching to the far side.

Let us throw stones into the deadly calm
of the lake that is our world,
no matter how small
is the stone,
no matter how small is the wave.

The stone brings awakening,
the wave is a movement,
and the movement spreads
when all of us
standing together on all sides
around the lake
keep throwing
our little stones.
The wave will never cease
till the whole lake
starts bubbling with life.

Sun Ai Lee Park

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Bach cello concerto (tape) when faded out various readings on peace (people had been asked to bring these to the weekend)- the Bach is played between each reading This included words from Berrigan, Gandhi, Helder Camara, Constitution of UNESCO, 14thc monk etc. Ends with a passage from Micah 4:1-4

Silence

Intercessory prayer while lighting of small candles (tea lights) to Faure's In Paradisum music.

Silence

Prayer of Peace for Iraq (Pax Christi prayer for peace in Iraq and the Middle East) read by a participant

Prayer for Peace in Iraq and the Middle East

We come to you, God Creator.
You are the source of life and beauty and power.
Your son Jesus is the way of faith and hope and love.
Your Spirit is the fire of love, the fount of wisdom, the bond of unity.
You call us at all times to be people of the beatitudes,
Witnesses to the Gospel of peace and love and forgiveness.
You call us at this time, when war and rumours of war, weigh heavily on the peoples of Iraq and the Middle East.
Their lives are already broken by suffering and violence.

We renew our acceptance of your call.
We promise to work:

- *To bring the light of the Gospel to those living in darkness,*
- *To bring the hope of the Gospel to those living in despair,*
- *To bring the healing of the Gospel to the lonely, the disadvantaged, the marginalized,*
- *And to bring the peace of the Gospel to a divided world.*

Amen.

Sign of Peace. (the enfolding of other's joined hands so that it goes right the way round with some words such as peace be with you. As we were not sitting in a circle but two quarter sections opposite the altar, it was necessary to indicate to the last person on the left to go to the first person on the right, and at the end the person starting it went to receive the blessing from the last person).

All sing the Taize chant Send me Lord, send me Jesus.

(this took exactly one hour as intended)

Please read this before the Liturgy begins. The sponsoring organisations have agreed to guidelines for this action, for those taking part in the marking of the building and those taking part in the procession and liturgy. Those willing to risk arrest today are known to the sponsoring organisations, have prepared themselves through prayer and discussion, and have fully accepted the Guidelines. If you **have not been part** of this preparation, we ask you to respect the process for this witness and not involve yourself in any civil disobedient activity.

Nonviolent Guidelines for the Procession and Liturgy

We take this action in a spirit of openness and nonviolence. To create an atmosphere of confidence and security for *all* those involved - and to communicate a clear, strong message to the public and the police, we invite you to be nonviolent in word and deed throughout this action. This means

- Showing respect for all people we encounter.
- Taking care that you do not endanger yourself or others when crossing roads, and keeping pathways clear for those passing by.
- Engaging only in the scenarios set out in the Liturgy booklet

Our liturgy and witness today is undertaken in respectful opposition to the MoD's preparations for the deployment of weapons of mass destruction. We have never sought permission from the police to engage in the act of prayer and resistance which has taken place here every year since 1982.

Please note: The police are normally courteous, but under recent legislation may deem this an 'unauthorised protest'. If the police decide to disrupt our liturgy by threatening people with arrest, you will be given sufficient **warning to walk away and avoid arrest.** Members of CPA and Pax Christi will give guidance and further warnings if required.

Commitment - said in two parts

Side 1. In this world of hatred, indifference, fear and anxiety, we pledge to be instruments of your love

Side 2. In this world of selfishness, greed and materialism, we pledge to be instruments of your selfless service and generosity

Side 1. In this world of revenge and retaliation and resentment, we pledge to be instruments of your mercy and compassion and forgiveness

Side 2. In this world of doubt and despair, we pledge to be instruments of faith and hope

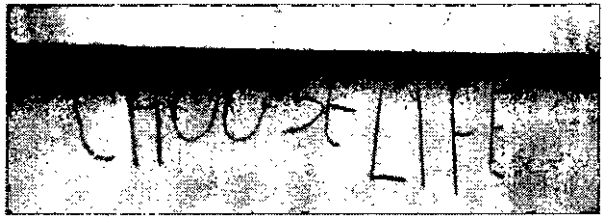
Side 1. In this world of lies and darkness, to we pledge be instruments of truth and light

Side 2. In this world of war and nuclear weapons and death, we pledge to be instruments of your peace and nonviolence and life.

Blessing

And so, may the God of peace, who loves each one of us infinitely, send us forth as an instrument of God's peace, love, and nonviolence, and may the God of peace bless us, the Creator, the Christ and Holy Spirit! Amen.

(Adapted from prayer offered by John Dear sj at the Los Alamos, New Mexico liturgy of sackcloth and ashes)



Final song/overleaf: Will you come and follow me (The Summons)

A: Once more he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said,
"Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand

(Mt 26:36-46)

A: We choose to prayer here today. To 'stay awake' to the threat of nuclear terrorism and reality of nuclear war. As Jesus faced his fear, we too face our fear of violence with our longing for peace. We choose to confront the power of this place through our prayer, our physical presence and our resistance.

Call us Lord Jesus to stay awake and follow you. We long to walk with you and learn the meaning of your way for our time.

Our cross is brought into the centre of our worship

Song:

Stay with me, remain here with me,
Watch and pray, watch and pray. (x 5)

B: Betrayal is a feature of war and nuclear war preparations. The poor at home and globally are betrayed when billions are spent on military rather than human security. The poor are betrayed when their crops, their homes, the places of work are damaged and destroyed. Victims of war are betrayed when they have to leave behind their homes, their livelihoods in search of peace and security. Among these we remember the peoples of Iraq, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Congo, Israel, Palestine. Indigenous people are betrayed when their lands are used as testing ground for nuclear weapons. Scientists are betrayed when their skills and talents are turned to creating systems of death and destruction. Nations are betrayed when their politicians place their security in weapons and threats and fear.

Nations are betrayed when their security is 'sold' or 'tied' to that of others, who offer a mantle of protection in the form of nuclear weapons and military might.

A: Britain has been nuclear armed since 1952, buying into the US nuclear weapons system Polaris from 1968 to 1996 and Trident from 1994. Each Trident submarine carries up to 48 nuclear warheads, each of which can be sent to a different target. Each warhead has an explosive power of up to 100 kilotons, the equivalent of 100,000 tons of conventional high explosive. This is 8 times the power of the atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima in 1945, killing an estimated 140,000 people.

C: The British political and defence establishment views nuclear weapons as an important component of Britain's armed forces that give it the confidence to engage in such 'liberal interventionist' activities even in circumstances in which the prospect of nuclear use is very distant. Nuclear weapons facilitate Britain's willingness to support America militarily and are thereby seen to play a crucial, if indirect role in allowing Britain to remain Washington's primary military ally. *(Trident: The Deal isn't Done, Dr Nick Ritchie)*

B: We now remember all those who have been betrayed by war, nuclear and conventional and invite you to come forward and tie a **ribbon to our cross** in memory of a person or place you wish to remember in our witness. While we do this we sing :

Christ's is the world in which we move,
Christ's are the folk we're summoned to love,
Christ's is the voice which calls us to care,
And Christ is the one who meets us here

To the lost Christ shows his face;
To the unloved he gives his embrace;
To those who cry in pain or disgrace,
Christ makes, with his friends, a touching place.

CWN Liturgy July 03 - Seeds of Hope and Justice

Centring music (from Celtic awakening)

Prayer Poem (said antiphonally, groups A and B)

A Listen to the water, air and earth:
creation's treasure store.
They're wounded for the want
of being listened to:
They cry
and too few hear:
they slowly die
and too few mourn.

B And yet
through those who give attention,
who stretch both hands
to touch, embrace and tend;
through those who marvel, reverence and kneel
and cup the water,
feel the breath of heaven,
and hear the humming earth,
a healing comes
and there are seeds of hope:
there is tomorrow
germinating in today.

A Listen to the stories, dreams and thoughts
of those who have no voice.
They're wounded for the want
of being listened to:
They cry
and too few hear:
they slowly die
and too few mourn.

B And yet
through these who give attention,
who stretch both hands
to touch, embrace, receive;
through these who labour, claim their dignity
and drink the cup of suffering,
breathe winds of change,
and earth their dreams in struggle,
healing comes
and there are seeds of hope:
there is tomorrow
germinating in today.

All Be still.
Be just –
sharing in their truth.
In finding them,
you find yourself.

Kate Compston,

Song (Dot)

Litany (read round the circle, all joining in the response)

R. May we plant good seed and nurture it with our concern
All Creator God, listen to our prayer

R May we sow generously and not be troubled about the reaping
All Imbue us with patience, O Sustaining Spirit

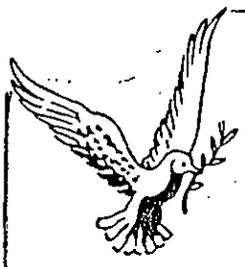
R We are "words" to each other, participating in the activity of Christ
All Loving Lord, help us to spread your word wisely

R May we fertilise the fruits of the spirit by our attitudes and actions

All O Inspiring Wisdom, strengthen us
R May we make the desert flower and safeguard the resources of the planet earth
All O Creator of the Cosmos, deepen our understanding of our connectedness with the whole of creation

Discussion (in twos and threes) Where do you see seeds of hope and justice and how can we foster their germination and growth- each person to write one sign of hope on a small flowershape, later to be used for the collage)

Prayer-poem (One line to be said by each around the circle)



WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO MAKE PEACE?

It will take people!

**prophet-people who dare to lay bare the fallacies*
that choke and blind us
even if we cannot hear their words nor dream their dreams;
**parent-people who look with love*
at the work of their creation
and refuse to leave their children
only a heritage of destruction;
**nurture-people who grow plants and feed birds*
and pick up dirt from the earth
and love what is green, fresh and growing;
**healing-people whose hands touch others*
into life and well-being
struggling always against the forces of death;
**poet-people who call us beyond where we are,*
point to the lastingness of life,
the folly of choosing death ever;
**fun-people who lift up and lighten*
and laugh others into fruitfulness
and courage for the long haul;
**women-people whose role through time has been to nurture,*
to empower others,
to make grow,
to make clean,
to make new again;
**soul-people whose eyes are clear and open,*
inviting trust and the kind of bonding
that draws us together;
**young-people who have nothing to gain*
by destruction and death but death itself;

*justice-people who cry out
against the oppressors of people,
the destroyers of the earth,
those who would bomb and burn and obliterate;
*little-people who don't know themselves as special
but who are in truth the 'salt of the earth',
feeding and clothing and housing the human family
from one end of day to the next.
We are the people who will prevent nuclear war
and we are on the march!

Jane Blewett
Center of Concern

Gathering of flowers, leaves etc for the intercessions. These are then placed the in the bowl of water, with a prayer, or if preferred, silently.

Prayer Said antiphonally, the bold line by groupB)

The desert will sing and rejoice
and the wilderness blossom with flowers;
all will see the Lord's splendour,
see the Lord's greatness and power.
Tell everyone who is anxious:
Be strong and don't be afraid.
The blind will be able to see;
the deaf will be able to hear;
the lame will leap and dance;
those who can't speak will shout.
They will hammer their swords into ploughs
and their spears into pruning-knives;
the nations will live in peace;
they will train for war no more.
This is the promise of God;
God's promise will be fulfilled.

Collage (either in the kitchen or on the terrace table) Theme making the desert flower – use flower shapes from the discussion and other items)

Peace Flowing outward (Tune: Lord of All hopefulness)

1. Peace flowing outward and peace flowing in,
   Draw peace from the centre in which we begin;
   Find peace in the ending, the close of the day;
   Let peace in the heart wipe the evil away.

2. Strength flowing outward and strength flowing in,
   Draw strength from the centre in which we begin;
   Find strength in the ending, the close of the day;
   Let strength in the heart wipe the evil away.

3. Hope flowing outward .....

4. Joy flowing outward....

5. Love flowing outward.....

Agape of summer fruits

L: We belong to one another and all creation and through this bond to Jesus, who, on the day on which he was handed over his freedom to those who would abuse him, had a meal with his friends, eating and drinking with them.
So we eat together as a symbol of sharing our common humanity.

All: We celebrate our freedom to choose, born of the breaking down of old ways
We proclaim the possibility of new life
We declare our intention to live in that hope.

L: Now we are joined together, women [illegible] of faith, with all who seeks God's freedom.
We live and together for a shared vision of cosmos in which all are free to enjoy God's generosity.
We keep alive the memory of the Crucifixion of Jesus together with his Resurrection
We root the possibility of our freedom in this experience

All: Strengthening God, take away all that prevents us achieving this;
Strengthening God, take away all that prevents us achieving this;
Strengthening God, give us true peace.

L: We pray that we will be made new to live our life in the peace born of true freedom.
We choose from these fruits symbols of God's generosity.

All: We share the fruit with the phrase
"Choose freely of the fruits of God's generosity"

Circle Dance (Lillalou)

(Acknowledgements: the Desert Will Sing is based on Is 35 and Micah 4 1-4, Kate Compston's prayer on p.1 is in Bread of Tomorrow, the litany is by Ianthe Pratt, the prayer poem "What Will It To Make Peace" is by June Blewett, Centre of Concern, the song "Peace flowing Outward" and the Agape of Summer Fruits is from June Boyce Tillman.)

You keep us waiting

You keep us waiting
You,
The God of all time
Want us to wait
For the right time in which
To discover who we are,
Where we must go,
Who will be with us,
And what we must do

All: *So, thank you for the waiting time.*

You keep us looking,
You,
The God of all space,
Want us to look
In the right and wrong places
For signs of hope,
For people who are hopeless,
For visions of a better world
Which will appear
Among the disappointments
Of the world we know.

All: *So, thank you for the looking time*

You keep us loving,
You,
The God whose name is love,
Want us to be like you
To love the loveless and the unlovely and the unlovable,
To love those near us without jealousy or design or threat,
And,
Most difficult of all,
To love ourselves.

All: *So, thank you for the loving time.*

And in all this
You keep us.
Through hard questions with no easy answers,
Through failing where we hoped to suceed
And making an impact when we felt we were usele
Through the patience and the dreams and the love
And through Jesus Christ and His Spirit,
You,
Keep us .....

All: *So, thank you for the keeping time*
and for now and for ever AMEN.

Pam Freeman

1. From a worn and weary nation –
   VENI IMMANUEL!
   Where and when will come salvation?
   VENI IMMANUEL!
   In the place you least expect,
   in the face of real neglect,
   one appointed, unanointed,
   God has chosen to perfect.
   VENI IMMANUEL! VENI IMMANUEL! VENI IMMANUEL!

2. To an unsuspecting mother –
   AVE MARIA!
   Why choose her and not some other?
   AVE MARIA!
   So that earth might be restored,
   flesh no longer be ignored,
   faith infected, love directed,
   God through woman be adored.
   AVE MARIA! AVE MARIA! AVE MARIA!

3. In the song of God's elected –
   MAGNIFICAT!
   Can the future be detected?
   MAGNIFICAT!
   God the proud will overthrow,
   worldly wealth will lose its glow;
   hunger halted, poor exalted,
   heaven appear through what we know.
   MAGNIFICAT! MAGNIFICAT! MAGNIFICAT!

From Iona "Innkeepers and Sleepers"

2. See overleaf for antiphonal prayer "You keep us waiting"

3 All say:

Immanuel, God with us,
Help us to stand firm in our faith
And to go on discovering what the Good News is for us, here and now.
Help us not to take refuge in words:
Other people's words, abstractions,
Bland formulations, churchy jargon.
Surprise us with your poetry,
Your pictures, which are beyond words,
Your living letters, which are people
Your signs, which are at once here-and-now
And belong to all places, all times, all people,
Your wisdom, which can only be understood by the child in us.
God of surprises, God with us.

Sung Amen

From Advent readings from Iona

Liturgy on Women and Hope

(This is a liturgy worked out by three women from the Catholic Women's Network who were also members of the the Catholic Peoples Weeks, who were asked to lead a morning on Women and hope, Hope being the theme of this particular week held in Dorset in 1985. Rather than having liturgy distinct from the rest of the input, the whole morning was conceived as being liturgy)

1. Leader A In the name of God the Creator, Jesus the Redeemer and God the Holy Spirit, welcome. (an explanation was given about how the morning had been conceived and how it was using methods which had been found effective in the Catholic Women's Network community days)

2. The Wheel (the women and men participating were asked to form two concentric rings, and to talk to the person opposite them, answering the questions put to them by Leader B. Each one in turn would give their reactions for about 4 minutes while the other erson listened, then the other person had her or his turn) At the end of the alloted time one of the rings was asked to move one person to the right, and the process was repeated)

Questions: A. Where in the institutional church do you feel most need for change?

B As a woman or as a man, at what times do you feel most undervalued in the Church?

C What is your vision of Church that truly reflects the resurrection

(25 minutes)

3. Song Magnificat (Taize)

4. Scriptural Study Leader C gave a brief introduction and read Mark 5 21-43 (The woman with the issue of blood)

People than gathered in small groups and were first asked to throw up key words that came out of the scripture reading - then to discuss "how does this passage illumine what you feel about faith, hopelessness, healing, suffering, touching ritual, spontaneity, resurrection etc. 5 minutes before the end the main points to be put with makrers on wall charts which were then put up for people to look at during Coffee.

(45 mins)

5. Coffee

6. Penitential Rite

Leader: God forgive us for losing our trust in you, and for being too easily discouraged

All (sung response) O God our Creator, give us new confidence in your power

Leader: God forgive us for the times when we have not treated others as persons to be valued

All sing Jesus our Redeemer, help us to build your Church here

Leader: God forgive us for the injustices we have participated in through our own silence

All sing: Spirit of God, breathe new life into the world today

(the people then offered their own spontaneous prayers of repentence)
All (bowing heads) May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.

Kiss of Peace

Leader: Let us all offer each other a sign of peace to show our forgiveness of each others (the peace is exchanged around the room each speaking to and/or embracing all the other participants)

Song: Shalom my friends, Shalom my friends shalom shalom
The peace of Christ I give you today, shalom, shalom (x3)

Homily Hope and the Christian women's movement (Leader B) (15 mins)
(script can be supplied separately, 3 pages)

(followed by a short sharing with the person sitting next one about what has been said)

Offertory An offering of words or objects which symbolise hope to the persons offering them(eg a small sapling, a cross, a child's picture, a computer print out, various readings)

(30 mins)

Sung Our Father Rimsky-korsakoff

Wilderness Meal of Milk and Honeybread (as used outside Southwark Cathedral during the men only Petertide ordinations)

Blessing May the God of hope bring you such joy and peace in your faith that the power of the Holy Spirit will remove all bounds to hope

Final Song Freely (Songs of the Spirit)

INCLUSIVE LITURGY for a pilgrim people Nov 26 1988

Opening Song Open your ears, O Christian People (inclusive language version)

Open your ears, O Christian people
open your ears and hear good news.
Open your hearts O royal priesthood
God has come to you.

chorus God has spoken to the people, Alleluia
and the words are words of wisdom, Alleluia.

Israel comes to greet the saviour
Judah is glad to see the day
From East and West the peoples travel
God's truth shows the way

God has spoken to the people, alleluia
and the words are words of wisdome "

They who have ears to hear the message
" " " " then let them hear
" " would learn the way of wisdom
Let them hear God's words.

God has spoken...

A Woman's Miserere (2 voices)

Collects for Advent

Group A: God our disturber
Whose speech is pregnant with power
and whose word will be fulfilled;
may we know ourselves unsatisfied
with all that distorts your truth,
and make our hearts attentive
to your liberating voice,
In Jesus Christ, Amen.

Group B: God our healer,
whose mercy is like a refining fire,
touch us with your tenderness;
that, being comforted by you,
we may reach out to a troubled world,
through Jesus Christ, Amen.

Penitential prayer

Group A Loving Creator,
who has breathed your own life into your people,
you have given us all creation to care for
- the tall trees of the forest and the crops of the fields,
- the fish that swim in the sea and the animals that roam the earth
All the good things that you made

Group B And we, what have we done with your gifts?
We have used the resources of the earth recklessly
plundered the riches of this planet with greed
refused to share with the poor and the hungry.

All Forgive us, O Source of all our Being, and bring us back into harmony with your universe.

Group A We are called to love one another in your name,
yet what have we done?
We talk about love with our lips

Group B But We pass on the other side when needs press in upon us,
rules matter more than compassion, the law than the spirit.

All Forgive us for our failure to listen to your call to show forth your love in our lives and that of the Church.

Group A We have been called to be sisters and brothers of Christ yet what have we done? We have allowed the dominations and oppressions of the world to enter into Christ's body.

Group B We have failed to listen to each other although we are all called to be a chosen race, a royal priesthood, and a consecrated nation.

All Send forth your spirit into our hearts so that we may truly share with one another the work of building up your realm here on earth.

Group A You created human beings in your own image "male and female God created them".

Group B Yet your people have treated women, made in the image of God, as inferior and defective.

All Help us to build up a true community of women and men in the church, where sexual and racial discrimination is overcome.

Group A God our liberator, through Christ's redeeming act we have been made free and brought out into the light.

Group B Yet we fear to act as prophets when we see that things need changing.

All Forgive us O loving Creator for our lack of courage. Send forth your spirit that we may become truly your new creation Help us all to work together in love and trust to build up the body of Christ.

<u>Blessing</u>
(this is done in pairs - take the hands of your neighbourand trace in their palm)the sign of the cross, Then all place their right hand on the shoulder of their neighbour and outstretching the signed hand all say "May the peace of Christ be with us all"

All join hands and sing Shalom
Shalom my friends, shalom my friends, shalom, shalom
the peace of Christ be with us today, shalom, shalom

Resurrection Poem

OUR FATHER

Side A Eternal Spirit, Life-giver, Pain-bearer, Love maker,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:

Side B The hallowing of your Name echo through the universe!
The Way of your Justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your Heavenly Will be done by all created beings!
Your Commonwealth of Peace and Freedom sustain our hope and come on earth!

Side A With the bread that we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us
From trials too great to endure, spare us
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

Side B For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever.

Responsorial Song "You are my mother, you are my father"

All say the Statement of Faith from the opening ceremony in this country of the Ecumenical Decade of the Churches in solidarity with Women

We believe in God
- Maker, Redeemer and Sustainer of Life,
- without beginning or end,
- whose life-giving love was let loose on the first Easter Sunday - and whose life-giving love we share and proclaim here today.

We believe in God
- who gave up the divine life and submitted to the darkness and terror of the grave
- and who enters with us into every darkness and terror we shall ever face.

We believe in God
- who raised Christ from the death of the grave to glorious new life
- and who raises our lives from sin and despair to newness and hope again.

We believe in God
- who met the grief-stricken Mary Magdalene in the garden and called her into hope by the uttering of her name
- and who meets us in our grief and gives us courage to hope again by tenderly calling our name.

We believe in God
- who sent Mary Magdalene out from the garden to be the witness and apostle of the resurrection
- and who commissions us like her to be bearers of hope and good news in our world.

We believe in God
- Maker, Redeemer and Sustainer of Life,
- without beginning or end
- whose life-giving love we share and proclaim today
- to all women and men, wherever and whoever they are,
- loved, blessed and called by God, without beginning or end.

Blessing of the food

All: We share this loaf today, as a sign that we are all one in the body of Christ. Just as many grains came together into the one loaf, so we are all one in Christ Jesus. Help us to reflect the life giving love of the Creator, Redeemer and Spirit in all our relationships and actions.

Sung response

Sources The first song is in many folk hymnals, and has had some changes made to make it inclusive. The two other songs came from Housetop, the communications centre, and are by Jacky Clackson. The Woman's Miserere and Lord's Prayer are reprinted in the A.I.L pack, the resurrection poem and the statement of faith is from "Who are you looking for" published for the ecumenical decade of churches in solidarity with women, the collects are from Janet Morley's collection All Desires Known. The litany of pentitence comes from a Liturgy of Listening, from St Joan's International Alliance. (available through A.I.L.) Details of these and other books are listed in the Resource section of the A.I.L. pack "Women Language and the Church" available (4.70 p and p inc) from AIL 36 Court Lane, London SE21 7DR.

ST JOANS INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE AGM DAY 1990

LITURGY OF JUSTICE AND FREEDOM

Opening Song Whatsoever You Do (606 Hymns Old and New (using "sisters" in place of "brothers"

The candle is lit

"I Believe" (adapted from a prayer for the Anniversary of the coup in Argentina)

I believe in God, our loving Creator, who has given us the earth for our possession.

I believe in Jesus Christ who became one of us so that we might become like him, who came to give us courage, to free us from the powerful, to announce God's peace to everyone.

I believe in the Spirit of God, source of strength that revivifies the world, and works in all people of good will.

I believe that God will break the power of sin in us and in each person.

I believe that we will share in the life of God forever

I do not believe that might gives right, or in the language of guns, or in the power of the wealthy.

I believe in the right of the oppressed and openness to peace.

I believe that all women and men are equal.

I do not believe that I can protest against oppression in far off countries if I tolerate injustice in my own country.

I believe that the dignity of human beings must be respected even when they have broken the laws of society.

I believe that right should exist everywhere and that I am not free while there exists one single enslaved person.

I will never believe that the struggles of the oppressed for liberation are useless.

I will never believe that our dreams of justice must remain dreams.

I believe, I dare to believe, that despite everything a new creation will come forth.

I dare to believe that the new heaven and earth will come, where there will be justice and equality, where God will be all in all.

LITURGY ON A THEME OF LISTENING
St Joan's International Alliance Feb 87

Opening Song Open your ears, O Christian People (inclusive language version)

From Psalm 40 (all say together)
I waited, I waited for you O God
and you stooped down to me;
you heard my cry.

You put a new song into my mouth
praise of you, my God.
Many shall see and fear
and shall place their trust in you.

How many, O God my Creator
are the wonders and designs
that you have worked for us;
you have no equal.
Should I proclaim and speak of them,
they are no more than I can tell!

You do not ask for sacrifice and offerings
but an open ear.
You do not ask for holocaust and victim
Instead, here am I.

In the scroll of the book it stands written
that I should do your will.
My God, I delight in your law
In the depth of my heart.

Leader As Christians we must be open to what God is calling us to do in our own particular circumstances, and in the face of the many problems of the world. But this openness is not just a vertical process, we cannot know the will of God nor carry out the command of love of our neighbour if we do not also listen to and respect the insights of others. Part of our particular situation is that we are part of a Church that is historically conditioned in many of its attitudes and structures. It is a sign of hope that our new understanding of the Church as the people of God leads to an appreciation of the value and co-responsibility of each and every one.

Reading from the Easter People:

The command of Christ to his disciples to love one another as he has loved us can find a variety of expessions in ordinary life - in caring for one another, in experiencing respect and affection, in being sensitive to other persons' needs and difficulties. Perhaps the most striking expression of Christian love which emerged from the National Pastoral Congress was that we trusted each other, and listened to one another, as each having something valuable to contribute, each with a unique witness to give. (para 16)

Baijan: Listen to your silent voice

Reading from One Step Enough p84 (Peter Cornwell)

Short silence

Free form version of psalm 17. (each verse said antiphonally)

Loving Creator, hear our prayer
and listen to our call made in the spirit of truth.

You know what we are,
and that we seek to be faithful to you:
We search your word to find our way.
Let us walk in your footsteps
so that our feet do not slip.

We call on you, O Creator of life
and you answer us.
Listen to our voice and show us
your loving kindness, O saviour of all who flee evil.

Those who oppose us cluster around, breathing hostility
entrenched in their prejudices, their mouths utter parodies of truth.
Those who cling to the misunderstandings of the past are closing in,
seeking to overthrow us.

Rise up, O Source of all goodness and power,
and rescue us from distorting your word.
Enlighten all who subvert the good news.

Strengthen us in the struggle to do your will.
Let our reward be to see you face to face,
and come into your loving presence.

Scripture Reading
Remember this, everyone should be quick to listen but slow to speak and slow to human anger ... You must do what the Word tells you and not just listen to it and deceive yourselves. Anyone who listens to the Word and takes no action is like people who look at their own features in a mirror and go off and immediately forget it... Anyone who is wise and understanding among you should from a good life give evidence of deeds done in the gentleness of wisdom .. the wisdom that comes down from above is essentially something pure; it is also peaceable, kindly and considerate; it is full of mercy and shows itself by doing good; nor is there any trace of partiality or hypocrisy in it. The peace sown by peacemakers brings a harvest of justice. (James 1:19, 22-25: 3:13, 17-18)

Song Universal Song

Reading (from In God's image p74, reflecting on the insights of the WCC Sheffield consultation "the Community of women and men in the Church")

Penitential prayer

Group A Loving Creator,
who has breathed your own life into your people,
you have given us all creation to care for
- the tall trees of the forest and the crops of the fields,
- the fish that swim in the sea and the animals that roam the earth
All the good things that you made

Group B And we, what have we done with your gifts?
We have used the resources of the earth recklessly
plundered the riches of this planet with greed
refused to share with the poor and the hungry.

All Forgive us, O Source of all our Being, and bring us back into harmony with your universe.

Group A We are called to love one another in your name,
yet what have we done?
We talk about love with our lips

Group B But We pass on the other side when needs press in upon us,
rules matter more than compassion, the law than the spirit.

All Forgive us for our failure to listen to your call to show forth your love in our lives and that of the Church.

Group A We have been called to be sisters and brothers of Christ yet what have we done? We have allowed the dominations and oppressions of the world to enter into Christ's body.

Group B We have failed to listen to each other although we are all called to be a chosen race, a royal priesthood, and a consecrated nation.

All Send forth your spirit into our hearts so that we may truly share with one another the work of building up your realm here on earth.

Group A You created human beings in your own image "male and female God created them".

Group B Yet your people have treated women, made in the image of God, as inferior and defective.

All Help us to build up a true community of women and men in the church, where sexual and racial discrimination is overcome.

Group A God our liberator, through Christ's redeeming act we have been made free and brought out into the light.

Group B Yet we fear to act as prophets when we see that things need changing

All Forgive us O loving Creator for our lack of courage. Send forth your spirit and make your new creation truly effective in us. Help all your people to work together in love and trust to build up the body of Christ.

Silence, then people add in their own bidding prayers

The Peace (all hold hands and sing)

Shalom my friends, shalom my friends shalom shalom
The peace of Christ we share today, shalom, shalom (x3)

Blessing of the food

All: We share this loaf today, as a sign that we are all one in the body of Christ. Just as many grains came together into the one loaf, so we are all one in Christ Jesus. Help us to reflect the life giving love of the Creator, Redeemer and Spirit in all our relationships and actions.

Final song The light of my day is the love in your eyes

ST JOAN'S INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE.

LITURGY OF MARY OF THE MAGNIFICAT

Song Where are you bound, Mary

Reading: The Visitation Lk.1 36-45

Reading from "Mary and Women" Catherina Halkes, Concilium "Mary in the Churches" (p70, para 2)

Short silence

Magnificat of Now (from Miriam of Nazareth, Johnson)

Prayers based on "Introducing Liberation Theology",Boff

Reader A.

Mary is the prophetic and liberating Woman of the people. "All the theological greatness of Mary is based on the lowliness of her historical tradition. She is Mary of Nazareth, a woman of the people, who observed the usual customs of her day, visited her relatives, took part in wedding celebrations and worried about her son, following him even to the foot of the cross, as any mother would do. "Because of this ordinarinesa and not in spite of it" God did "great things" for her.

Leader O loving and sustaining God, help us to challenge the powerful and work to empower all so that they may use their gifts in building up your realm.

All Sung response

Reader B

Mary is the perfect example of faith responding to God. She did not understand the full extent of the mystery to be brought about through her but she trusted in God and concerned herself with others - her cousin Elizabeth, her son lost on pilgrimage, the guests with no wine "Persons can be liberators only if they free themselves from their own preoccupations and place their lives at the service of others".

Leader Help us O loving and sustaining Creator to be as responsive to your word as Mary was, and to identify ourselves with the needs of others, particularly women who have suffered so much by the distortion of your word.

All Sung response

Reader C Thirdly, she is the prophetess of the Magnificat "anticipating the liberating proclamation of her son she shows herself attentive to the fate of the humiliated and deabsed, and invokes divine revolution in the relationship between oppressors and oppressed"

Leader O loving and Sustaining Redeemer, help us to live out the Magnificat in our attitudes and actions.

All Sung response

Reader D Finally in Latin-American popular religion Mary is seen as the champion of the poor. The masses bring their troubles to the centrese of Marian pilgrimage where they are filled with renewed strength and hope to carry on struggling and surviving.

Leader O loving and sustaining Spirit, inspire us to free the image of Mary, Mother of God, from the pious distortions of the ages, and find in her a model of challenge and hope.

All Sung response

Responsorial song

Poem "a Blessed Embarrassment" from "Beginning with Mary" by T Carlyle, the American protestant scripture scholar

Photolanguage reflections

Poem "Did the woman say" (Frances Croake Frank, in Celebrating women)

Did the woman say,
When she held him for the first time in the
dark dank of a stable,
After the pain and the bleeding and the crying,
"This is my body; this is my blood"?

Did the woman say,
When she held him for the last time in the dark
rain on a hilltop,
After the pain and the bleeding and the dying,
"This is my body; this is my blood"?

Well that she said it to him then.
For dry old men,
Brocaded robes belying barrenness,
Ordain that she not say it for him now.

Silence

Song: The Bakerwoman

Concluding prayer

(all move round table, link hands and sing responsorial blessing)

ADVENT CELEBRATION 1985 St Joan's International Alliance AGM

The candles are lit and all say

Thus says the Creator
Who made the heavens and spread them out
Who gave shape to the earth and what comes from it
Who gave breath to its people, and life to all that move on it.

I, your Creator have called you to serve the cause of right;
I have taken you by the hand and formed you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations
To open the eyes of the blind, to free captives from prison,
And those who live in darkness from the dungeon.

Reader A And Jesus said to the people
"I am the light of the world. They who follow me will not
be walking in the dark; They will have the light of life.

Reader B We who are the followers of Christ are gathered here today to celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ our Lord, and bring to mind that not only did he come as Saviour into the world when the time was ripe, but that the redeemer comes daily into our hearts, and we look forward to the saviour's promised return in glory.

Carol "Woman in the night" (tune: in the bleak midwinter)
(in Faith Looking Forward, Brian Wren)

Scripture reading Version of the Magnificat (Terry Cooley's Version - see page of Magnificats)

Litany of prophecy

Reader My servant will be a light to the nations and my salvation shall reach the ends of the earth

All Blessed is Christ who fulfills the promise (This response is made to each prophecy - each in turn acting as reader)

Readers The virgin is with child and will give birth to a son whom she will call Emmanuel

All Blessed ...

- A shoot shall spring forth from the stock of Jesse, a branch from its root

- For as the rain and snow came down from heaven and return not there but waters the earth, making it yield and give growth, to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so shall my world be that goes out of my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, without carrying out my will, doing that for which it was sent.

- This is the covenant I will make with Israel. Deep within them I will plant my law, writing it on their hearts. When those days arrive then I will be their God, and they shall be my people

- The law will go out from Zion, and the oracle of the Lord from Jerusalem. They will hammer their swords into ploughshares, their spears into sickles

- Nation will not lift sword against nation, for unto us is born a child, a son given to us, and the government shall be on his shoulders; and his name will be called "wonder counsellor, mighty God, everlasting father, prince of peace"

St. Joan's Alliance: A Possible Opening Prayer for the AGM '99.

Spirit of God, at your call
we are brought together
in expectation and faith
Faith - in the powerful promise of Jesus
ever ringing in our ears:
That when the Spirit of Truth would come,
the Ruah, the God-breath,
She would teach us
the complete Truth; (Jn.16.31)
In expectation we call:
Come, Spirit, lead us,
Come,, be our Reconciliation,
Come, and by your power
bridge what gaps there are
of intolerence and bias
within ourselves,
between individuals, between genders, social systems.
Comen snatch us from the lure of seeking power
and reconcile us with a yearning for generous service,
Come, Spirit, reconcile us by your power.
Deepen in us the power of your peace -
Expand in us the power of your justice -
Liberate in us the power of your feedom -
Console us by the power of your gentleness -
Nurture us by the power of your Mother-Fatherhood -
Guide us by the power of your constant presence -
By your power we want to bring about a world as you envisioned it
in your Wisdom and Love -
we desire to throw our share of wisdom and love into
your project,
we, women made to your image and likeness...
Come, Spirit, come,
with your power!

TENDER GOD TOUCH US.
BE TOUCHED BY US;
MAKE US LOVERS OF HUMANITY,
COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS OF CREATION.
GRACIOUS GOD, HEAR US INTO SPEECH;
SPEAK US INTO ACTING;
AND THROUGH US RECREATE THE WORLD.
AMEN.

ECOLOGY CRISIS INFORMATION SHEET

Meteorological research shows that climate change today much more extreme than cyclic shifts could produce

Higher sea temperatures in the Atlantic producing increasingly severe hurricanes cf Katrina/New Orleans 05. Ice caps and glaciers retreating fast. Weather becoming increasingly volatile.

Increased sea levels in the Indian ocean will soon make low lying islands uninhabitable. Corals and fish are dying off around S E Asia and Australia. London and other coastal cities could be under water by the end of the century if nothing drastic is done.

Drought in S. American tropical forests leading to many larger trees dying.
Many plant species becoming extinct, yet plants have much potential for new medicines.
Deafforestation releases CO2 into the air.
Beginning of 20thc 70% of Philippines covered by forest - now only 2.5% - leading to mud avalanches destroying towns etc.
rapid desertification in North China etc etc etc

Coping with the crisis

Building sustainable homes - China is doing this with building a sustainable Olympic city for the next games. GLA official buildings in London now have to be sustainable. There is a Norwegian prototype of a rig successfully pumping CO2 into substratum under the sea.

individual action eg turning down thermostats, minimisimg car transport, offsetting flying emissions by funding sustainable energy and reafforestation projects (see www.climatecare.org): converting homes to lessen emissions/produce energy eg by solar panels or efficient boilers. (if you are not on the internet to access such information you probably have a friend who is)

Spreading information on the gravity of the ecological situation - . Bombarding MPs and government ministers on aspects of the subject. Involving your parish not just in Fair Trade but in facing climate change. Joining Christian Ecology link www.christian-ecology.org.uk - they have useful leaflets and their campaign Operation Noah www.operationnoah.org is a good way of getting change started. They have just produced a new report "Faith and Power: the case for a low consumption, non-nuclear, energy strategy". Also new is Christian Aid's Report "The Climate of Poverty - facts, fears and hope" which is a good quarry for material to get discussion started: it can be downloaded from their site. Green Peace and Friends of the Earth also have useful material

public policy - alternative energy sources - wind and solar farms, biofuels, harnessing tides etc. A cheaper and safer alternative to new nuclear power stations is local generation - loses much less energy and costs less. Been successfully put into operation in Woking (more info on the internet through Google - Woking + trigeneration)

Higher taxation of gas guzzling cars. Compulsory water meters. Better public transport etc etc..

Information on this sheet has been taken from the TV documentary of David Attenborough "Can we Save Planet Earth", Sean McDonough's "The death of Life: The Horror of Extinction" and input from expert panel on climate change at a recent GLA meeting on the future of London and its needs.

The readings: Eucharist on a theme of Peace and Reconciliation June 07

The Letter of James

Remember this, everyone should be quick to listen but slow to speak and to human anger...You must do what the Word tells you and not just listen to it and deceive yourselves.....Anyone who is wise and understanding among you should from a good life give evidence of deeds done in the gentleness of wisdom... the wisdom that comes down from above is essentially something pure; it is also peaceable, kindly and considerate; it is full of mercy and shows itself by doing good; nor is there any trace of partiality or hypocrisy in it. The peace sown by the peacemakers brings a harvest of justice. James 1: 19, 22-25; 3:13, 17-18

Reading from Be Still and Know: meditations for peacemakers. Thich Nhat Hanh

Compassion for the person you dislike or despise most: Sit quietly and contemplate the image of the person who has caused you the most suffering. Regard the features you hate or despise the most or find the most repulsive. Try to examine what makes this person happy and what causes suffering in their daily life. Contemplate the person's perceptions: try to see what patterns of thought and responses this person follows. Examine what motivates this person's hopes and actions. Finally consider the person's consciousness. See whether their views need insight are open and free or not, and whether or not he has been influenced by any prejudices, narrow-mindedness, hatred or anger. See whether or not he/she is master of him/herself. Continue until you feel compassion rise in your heart like a well filling with fresh water and your anger and resentment disappear. Practice this exercise many times on the same person.

Version of the beatitudes Matthew 5 (Lala Winkley)

Blessed are you who are the lowly, the grassroots, powerless yet filled with a passion to grow and make good. You understand God's purpose.

Blessed are you many, now, who have found such depth of expression in your grief. you shall find comfort in what you have caused to change.

Blessed are you who understand that justice must be made present always. You shall see it happen in time.

Blessed are you who find compassion to those who repulse you. You shall compassion yourself.

Blessed are you who do not judge but see everyone with clear eyes. You see God in all creation.

Blessed are you who are peace makers. You are my own.

Blessed are you who are excluded, suffering abuse, ridicule and scorn for what you are doing for me. To you I give my deep unstinting love.

Be happy, my prophets, you are not the first, and most likely will not be the last, but I love you for what you are doing.

You are the salt of the earth, bringing integrity to my world.

You shine as a light on the world, O my People, illuminating cities, lands and continents exposing injustice.

Shine your light for all to see and understand who I am and what I ask of you, this day.

(Take some 5-7 minutes to read the above, then as discussion pointers you might like to consider the following: As individuals or groups how can we be effective peacemakers? How far is seeking justice also a search for peace? Does seeking action on the serious environment crisis be a form of preventative action against future conflict? what experience of effective reconciliation have you come across?)

ST JOANS INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE AGM DAY 1990

LITURGY OF JUSTICE AND FREEDOM

Opening Song Whatsoever You Do

Chorus:
Whatsoever you do to the least of my sisters, that you do unto me.

When I was hungry you gave me to eat.
When I was thirsty you gave me to drink.
Now enter into the home of my Abba.

Whatsoever you ..

When I was homeless you opened your door.
When I was naked you gave me your coat.
Now enter into the home of my Abba.

Whatsoever you ..

When in prison you came to my cell.
When on a sick bed you cared for my needs.
Now enter into the home of my Abba.

Whatsoever you ...

When I was aged you bothered to smile.
When I was restless you listened and cared.
Now enter into the home of my Abba.

Whatsoever ....

The candle is lit

"I Believe" (adapted from a prayer for the Anniversary of the coup in Argentina)

I believe in God, our loving Creator, who has given us the earth for our possession.

I believe in Jesus Christ who became one of us so that we might become like him, who came to give us courage, to free us from the powerful, to announce God's peace to everyone.

I believe in the Spirit of God, source of strength that revivifies the world, and works in all people of good will.

I believe that God will break the power of sin in us and in each person.

I believe that we will share in the life of God forever

I do not believe that might gives right, or in the language of guns, or in the power of the wealthy.

I believe in the right of the oppressed and openness to peace.

I believe that all women and men are equal.

I do not believe that I can protest against oppression in far off countries if I tolerate injustice in my own country.

I believe that the dignity of human beings must be respected even when they have broken the laws of society.

I believe that right should exist everywhere and that I am not free while there exists one single enslaved person.

I will never believe that the struggles of the oppressed for liberation are useless.

I will never believe that our dreams of justice must remain dreams.

I believe, I dare to believe, that despite everything a new creation will come forth.

I dare to believe that the new heaven and earth will come, where there will be justice and equality, where God will be all in all.

Readings and discussion

Dt 24:17-22
"You must not infringe on the rights of the foreigner or the orphan. You must not take a widow's clothes in pledge. Remember that you were once a slave in Egypt and that Yahweh your God may bless you in all your undertakings.

When you beat your olive tree, you must not go over the branches twice. The foreigner, the orphan and the widow shall have the rest. Remember you were once a slave in Egypt, that is why I am giving you this order."

Lk 18:1-8 The Unjust Judge
"Then he told them a parable about the need to pray continually and never lose heart. "there was a judge in a certain town who had neither fear of God nor respect for anyone. In the same town there was also a widow who kept coming to him and saying "I want justice from you against my enemy!" For a long time he refused, but at last he said to himself, "even though I have neither fear of God nor respect for any human person, I must give this widow her just rights since she keeps pestering me,lk or she will come and slap me in the face".

And the Lord said "You notice what the unjust judge has to say? Now will not God see justice to God's elect if they keep calling day and night even though God still delays to help them. I promise you, he will see justice done to them, and done speedily. But when the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

(talk in twos or threes about what these passages m,ean to you. Give each other time to talk eg three or four minutes each)

Penitential Litany

Loving Creator, you sent your anointed one to bring us to truth and freedom

Help us to hear your message

In liberating others we find wholeness in ourselves

Help us to hear your message

We are faced with the evils of society yet we walk on the other side

Help us ...

We express concern about oppression in the underdeveloped world, yet ignore the cries of the deprived in our own country

Help us ...

We are called on not to judge, yet we cast aside those who do not come up to our own standards

Help us ..

We are afraid of taking "God the disturber" seriously, in case we have to change

Help us ...

We have preferred the Law to the Spirit

Help us ...

We claim we are followers of Christ, yet do not follow the way he related to others

Help us.....

etc

Loving God, hear our cries. Send your spirit to endow us with the commitment , courage and strength to be active in building up your realm here on earth.

(Query O Lord hear our prayer Taize here)

Symbolic action A black shawl is passed round, each person wearing this for a short time, while remembering is silence the oppressed and invisible in society.

at the end rise up, holding hands and sing

Christ Has Died (Music in Songs of the Spirit 17)

Christ has died, Alleluia
Christ is risen Alleluia
Christ will come again
Alleluia, alleluia

Blessing of food and drink (taken from the agape prayers of the Didache)

Leader Blessed are you, O Lord our God, creator of this food and drink that we share together as a sign of your kingdom, which is to come in glory, and yet is already here now in so far as you live among us in the love we have for one another.
(wine is poured out)

All We give thanks to you, our creator, for this wine, remembering Israel your people, brought like a vine out of Egypt, and planted in the promised land (wine is passed round)
(the bread is broken and passed round and all say)
All As we break the bread we thank you O creator for the life and knowledge of yourself which you gave us through Jesus Christ. To you be glory for ever.

As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let your children, Lord, be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever. (all eat)

Further blessing of food brought for lunch

Final Song We shall go out - (Londonderry air)

We shall go out with hope of resurrection,
We shall go out, from strength to strength go on,
We shall go out and tell our stories boldly,
Tales of a living love that will not let us go.
We'll sing our songs of wrongs that can be righted
We'll dream our dreams of hurts that can be healed,
We'll weave a cloth of all the world united
Within the vision of a Christ who sets us free.

We'll give a voice to those who have not spoken,
We'll find the words for those whose lips are sealed,
We'll make the tunes for those who sing no longer,
Vibrating with a love alive in every heart.
We'll shout for joy when all around are weeping,
Chant hymns of strength when hearts are sinking down,
We'll leap and dance the resurrection story
Including all within the circles of our love.

June Tillman

Southwark Cathedral Feminist Theology Group meeting 1st June 2010-
Finding God in nature and creation

Reading from Meditations with Hildegard of Bingen (Uhlein)
(read antiphonally A and B)

A God's Word is in all creation,
visible and invisible.
The Word
is living,
being,
spirit,
all verdant greening,
all creativity.
All creation
is awakened,
called,
by the resounding melody,
God's invocation of the Word.
This Word manifests in every creature.

B I am the one whose praise
echoes on high.
I adorn all the earth.
I am the breeze
that nurtures all things
green.
I encourage blossoms to flourish with ripening fruits.
I am led by the spirit to feed
the purest streams.

A I am the rain
coming from the dew
that causes the grasses to laugh
with the joy of life.
Invisible life that sustains all,
I awaken to life everything
in every waft of air.
The air is life,
greening and blossoming.
The waters flow with life.
The sun is lit with life.

B The moon, when waning, is again
rekindled by the sun,
waxing with life once more.
The stars shine,
radiating with life-light.
All creation is gifted with the
ecstasy of God's light.

All There is
no creation
that does not have a radiance
be it greenness or seed,
blossom or beauty.
It could not be creation without it.

Hildegard of Bingen[30]

Canticle of brother Sun (tape from Earth Mass, Winter) All sing the refrain)

All praise be yours through Brother Sun,
All praise be yours through Sister Moon,
By Mother Earth my Lord be praised,
By Brother Mountain, Sister Sea,
Through Brother Wind and Brother Air,
Through Sister Water, Brother Fire,
The Stars above give thanks to Thee,
All praise to those who live in peace.
All praise be yours through Brother Wolf,
All praise be yours through Sister Whale,
By Nature's song my Lord be praised,
By Brother Eagle, Sister Loon,
Through Brother Tiger, Sister Seal,
Through Sister Flower, Brother Tree,
Let Creatures all give thanks to Thee,
All praise to those who live in peace.

Ask of the Beasts, and they shall teach thee
the beauty of the Earth.
Ask of the Trees, and they shall teach thee
the beauty of the Earth.
Ask of the Flowers, and they shall teach thee
the beauty of the Earth.
Ask of the Winds, and they shall teach thee
the beauty of the Earth.

Brother Sun, Sister Moon.

ALL SING:

For the Beauty of the Earth Sing, Oh Sing Today,
Of the Sky and at our birth, Sing, Oh Sing Always,
Nature, Human and Divine, all around us lies,
Lord of All to Thee we raise grateful hymns of praise.

Discussion (in twos or threes)

What place does nature have in your spirituality?

What is our responsibility for maintaining the health of God's cosmos in the face of the environment crisis.

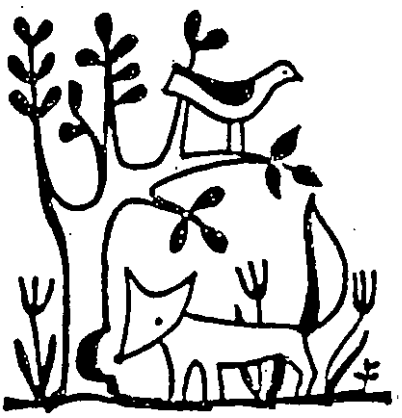
Making a flowery mead wander round the garden and chose a flower or leaf. Come back to the table and place this in one of the bowls of earth, speaking a thought or intercession (or silently)

Benedicite Omnia Opera (Janet Morley's version) each verse said antiphonally, all join in "praise and glorify her for ever.

A All you works of God, bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

B Let the wide earth bless the creator;
let the arching heavens bless the creator;
let the whole body of God bless the creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

You returning daylight, bless your creator;
twilight and shadows, bless your creator;
embracing darkness, bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.



Mountains of God, massive and ancient rocks,
bless your creator;
valleys and pastures, moorland and rivers,
bless your creator;
ocean depths and lonely abyss,
bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Storm and mighty wind, bless your creator;
bitter cold and scorching sun, bless your creator;
mist and cloud and tender rain,
bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Seed and sapling, tree and vivid flower,
bless your creator;
greenness and flourishing,
withering and bareness, bless your creator;
harvest and springtime and deadness of the year,
bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

You creatures of God, bless your creator;
swift and cunning, violent and graceful,
bless your creator;
all who creep and soar and dance across the earth,
bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

You newborn babies, bless your creator;
young and old, mature and aging,
bless your creator;
all you dying, bless your creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

In pain and desolation, let us bless our creator;
in the place of delight, let us bless our creator;
in time of waiting, let us bless our creator;
praise her and glorify her for ever.

All Let all who live and grow and breathe
bless our creator,
praise her and glorify her for ever.

Southwark Cathedral Feminist Theology Group meeting 1st June 2010-

Finding God in nature and creation

Reading from Meditations with Hildegard of Bingen (Uhlein) (read antiphonally A and

Name Selves
Gildee-Stone

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[illegible]ible life that sustains all,
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Nature, Human and Divine, all around us lies,
Lord of All to Thee we raise grateful hymns of praise.

Short Silence

Agape of summer fruits

(All) O Loving Creator, bless these fruits, symbol of the abundance with which you have endowed us, and strengthen in us the fruitfulness of the way in which we live our lives

(pass the fruit around, saying to the person next to you "fruit for your sustenance" or some other phrase)

Prayer (**by Nikki Slee, in the "Easter Garden)**

All: God of all our growing,
burst our tight buds open
in the ripe spring season
of our transformation.

Nurture the resurrection life in us,
in the blazing colour of the garden,
in the dazzling delight of sight and sound,
the glorious celebration of the world's redemption.

Send your Spirit where the glad season rejoices
and fulfil in us the promise of summer.

Gaelic final blessing (All)
(adapted)

May the road rise up to meet us
May the wind be always at our backs
May the sun shine warm upon our faces
May the rains fall softly upon our fields
Until we meet again
May God hold us in the hollow of her hand.



Doing December Differently

This collection of experiences and ideas has been put together by Nicola Slee, the Anglican poet/theologian, following on listening to many people expressing their ambivalence about this annual secular and religious event. Two or three years ago she ran a November workshop on this theme, and consequently asked for contributions from a wide number of people. I have here copies of the sheet she distributed on that occasion.

It was evident that some enjoyed Christmas and the surrounding time but found it exhausting and the prevalent consumerism alienating, and others found not being in a happy family milieu made the Christmas period the more stressful. Many find getting together with relations with whom one does not get on a far from harmonious time of peace and goodwill.

The first part of the book gives personal stories and reflections. Starting with a chapter on people's experiences of family Christmases, both good and bad, the collection goes on to alternative community Christmases, including being with neighbours, going away with others to spend an alternative Christmas together or going to a religious house. Then the collection goes on to solitary Christmases, which could be satisfying if that is what some people would prefer (One of my friends longs for a peaceful Christmas alone, but her offspring would feel guilty if they allowed this-so their needs override hers!).

Many find being in prison or hospital at this time particularly stressful. Other Christmases described were located in prison, or hospital – The book includes a funny account of the hospital staff in one ward dressing up as mickey mouse, goofy and a fairy being faced with an emergency and having to steam ahead still dressed up). I contributed an experience some years back.....

The people who often feel out of it, unless they are in satisfying relationships, are gay, lesbian and transgendered people -This chapter among other items included poems by a mother of son recently diagnosed with HIV and beibng among strangers to be near her son's hospital,, and the story from a gay vicar taking carols into a cabaret of the local gay club which was widely experienced as a moving event.

The chapter on global christmases looked at experiences of people far away from their families but balancing homesickness with the insights and satisfactions of experiencing an old feast in a new way. There is also

a chapter dealing with how Muslims and Jews deal with living in a Christian country at this time, which are very varied according to the individuals concerned.

The second part deals with suggestions of celebrating in a different matter, particularly emphasising the need to get away from the commercial aspect of Christmas, and a final section giving liturgical and ritual resources, which if we cannot introduce into our churches we can at least bring people together to celebrate in our homes and groups.

One satiric comment in the collection reads: (p137)

++

Outline of the meeting

Introduction

Buzz chart – first negative then positive

Talk in twos or threes on what Advent and Christmas means to us

General discussion – how might we like it to be different

Final Liturgy

lent denies all knowledge of diversion of arms trade fund

agan admits Iran polic

n admitted time that his ms for hos- mistake for sponsibility, ns and those on. But he ceding that rying to cre- g to Iran had

response to report from on, Mr Rea- rd reported, egic opening n implemen- rms for hos- unter to my ministration

From Peter Pringle
in Washington

policy, and to the original strategy we had in mind. There are reasons why it happened, but no excuses. It was a mistake."

Mr Reagan said it was clear from the board's report that he let "my personal concern for the hostages spill over into the geopolitical strategy of reaching out to Iran".

He said: "I asked so many questions about the hostages' welfare that I didn't ask enough about the specifics of the total Iran plan."

As he has done before, Mr Reagan said he did not know about any diversion of funds from the profits of the Iran arms deal to the Contra rebels in Nicaragua. "But, as president, I cannot escape responsibility."

In an effort to erase doubts about his credibility and his capacity to govern and also to restore the confidence of the American people in his presidency, Mr Reagan repeatedly said that he was accountable for the activities of those who had executed the arms for hostages policy.

"As angry I may be about activities undertaken without my knowledge, as disappointed as I may be in some who serve me, I am still the one who must answer to the American people for this behaviour," he said in his 12-minute nationwide television speech. "As personally distasteful as I find secret bank accounts and diverted funds, as the Navy would say, this happened on my watch."

In admitting that he had misled the American people by saying he had not traded arms for hostages, the President said: "My heart and my best intentions still tell me that it's true, the facts and the evidence tell me it is not."

Turning to the Tower Commission's report on his detached management style, Mr Reagan said it was a style which had worked successfully for him during eight years as Governor of California and for most of his presidency. "The way I work is to identify the problem, find the right people to do the job, and then let them go to it," he said. "I have found this invariably brings out the best in people. They seem to rise to their full capability, and in the long run you get more done."

But the President said that this style of management came adrift when applied to his staff on the National Security Council. "Let's face it," he said, "my style didn't match its previous track record."

Mr Reagan said that he had already started to change guidelines for the NSC staff. "I told them that I wanted a policy that was as justifiable and understandable in

T 5 Mar 87

tcher ducks
v over pay
EDC talks

and Cabinet avoided a unions and rnment poli- employment argaining. r chaired the the National nent Council tailed report ion of British nds, and an- fficials on un- aised doubts olicy. e TUC gen- ter the meet- had embar- "demolished approach on meeting had rnment to re- added. of the CBI's *in the 1980s*, of poor per- re reforming e account of es and the workers and tedly no ref- overnment's national pay roducing re- ntials. The warning was to leave pay nds of those omplexities.

By Steve Levinson
Economics Correspondent

The NEDO report on unemployment said it was no longer possible to believe that unemployment would be corrected naturally by market forces, or that workers could be priced back into jobs. It proposed more spending on labour-intensive infrastructure projects, subsidies to encourage employers to take on the long-term unemployed and a campaign to persuade firms to give the unemployed higher priority.

None of these ideas received support from Mrs Thatcher or the seven ministers with her. John Cassels, the director general of NEDO, who presented the report, said the Government's response was disappointing, but he would approach the CBI directly for help.

Mrs Thatcher's approach to the meeting, the first council she has attended for five years, appears to have been to avoid a major row. She told the council, which was celebrating its 25th anniversary, that she wanted to "accentuate the positive". Her uncontroversial remarks concentrated on the need for better profitability, competitiveness, harnessing new technology and creating a better trained workforce.

CBI report, page 17

JEREMY NICHOLL



Sign of opposition: A nun is arrested after daubing a Pax Christi symbol on the MoD yesterday.

ase

Christian

Mining boss attacks

CWO LITURGY AGM SAT. 18TH. MAY

1. OPENING: Prayers calling on God's strengthening Spirit on our community gathered ....

2. NAMING: Everyone say their name and where they are from, as they hold the stone from the shores of the Sea of Galilee brought back by Ianthe last week.

3. We are in the season of Ascension and Pentecost. The Ascension was when we were shown very clearly that Christ in person was handing on responsibility to us to continue the work he had started, and Pentecost was the time of God's encouragement by offering us the guidance and wisdom of God's Spirit, if we could accept it. So we speak our CWO prayer, to intercede for us all, to make good of this day together.

Cwo prayer

Moved by a compulsion of the Holy Spirit
we cannot remain ignorant
of this injustice in our midst.

We long for all humanity
to be acknowledged as equal, particularly
among your community of the church,
so we pray grieving for the lost gifts
of so many women.

We ask you, God of all peoples,
to bring insight and humility
to all those in positions of dominance,
and an understanding that
the ascended Lord called us all to act
doing Christ's work here and now.

We ask this of you, God our Creator
Jesus our Redeemer
Spirit our Sustainer.

4. BEFORE LUNCH

Sister Marie Therese Coleman, our wise woman joins us. (Her story). We are honouring the wisdom of age present in Marie Therese, and we pray it is passed on to us.

Reading: Ecclesiasticus
There is a season for everything, a time for every action under heaven
for everything that happens on this earth happens at the time God chooses.
The times of a birth
and the times we will die,

the times we have set down roots
and the times we have felt we must move on.

These are times when we have been hurt
yet also times when we have experienced deep healing

times when we have known we must rid ourselves of layers of pretence
to leave time for the building up of honesty and integrity.

We have known times and yet will have many more times, of sorrow
but also of such fun and joy.

We will mourn one day
but dance another.

there are times of being close
and times when it is prudent to withdraw on our own.

times when we store and nest
and times to rid ourselves of our props.

times when it is wise to be silent
and times as maybe now
when it is imperative we make known what it is we are experiencing.

As we age our different gifts are needed at those different times.
we see those who have used each portion of their time well,

and we say this is the time
to honour our wise one

she who has encouraged our action
to be appropriate to this time, this hour.

Prayer for Int'l Nonviolence Day

By *John Dear SJ*
Created *Aug 11, 2009*

The United Nations has designated Oct. 2, Gandhi's birthday, as International Nonviolence Day. To help people of faith promote and mark the day, the Commission on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation for the Union of Superiors General in Rome commissioned the following prayer service. It is being translated and distributed to religious orders around the world. I want to offer it to everyone who would like to host a prayer service for nonviolence. Anyone who wishes can copy it and distribute it -- and pray with it.

****

Welcome/Introduction

(Leader) In the name of the God of peace, the nonviolent Jesus, and the Holy Spirit of love.

Welcome to this prayer service for International Nonviolence Day. Let's begin by taking a moment and turning to those around us and introducing ourselves.....

I invite you to take a deep breath and relax, to notice how you are feeling today, and to enter into the presence of the God of peace who loves you infinitely, unconditionally. I invite you to welcome the risen, nonviolent Jesus into our community of peace and into our hearts, and to breathe in his Holy Spirit of peace and nonviolence.

Let's take a minute in silence to give thanks for all the blessings of love and peace that we have received throughout our lives by the God of love and peace, and let's ask God to forgive us for all the ways we have rejected those blessings of love and peace, all the ways we have chosen violence instead of nonviolence, all the ways we have hurt others and supported the culture of violence and war. Let's repent of our violence and ask for the grace to become people of Gospel nonviolence. (Silence)

Please respond, "God of Peace, have mercy on us."

Jesus, you renounced violence, loved everyone, practiced nonviolence, embodied peace, resisted injustice, and gave your life in perfect nonviolent love for humanity. God of peace, have mercy on us.

"God of peace, have mercy on us."
Jesus, you call us to renounce violence, love everyone, practice nonviolence, oppose war, dismantle nuclear weapons, resist injustice, embody peace and love our enemies, God of peace, have mercy on us.

"God of peace, have mercy on us."
Jesus, you are our Lord and Savior, our Brother and friend, our life, our hope, our peace, God of peace, have mercy on us.

"God of peace, have mercy on us."
Opening Prayer (All Recite)

God of peace, be with us now as we repent of our violence and hear your word of peace. Help us to become your holy people of Gospel nonviolence, that we might follow the nonviolent Jesus, love one another, love our enemies, reconcile with everyone, resist injustice and pursue a new world without war, poverty, nuclear weapons, global warming or violence, your reign of nonviolence in our midst. We ask this in the name of the nonviolent Jesus, our brother and our peace.

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First Reading: Isaiah 2:2-5.

Psalm Response
(Leader) Our Responsorial Psalm is from Psalm 46. Please respond: "God puts an end to wars."

"God puts an end to wars."
God is our refuge and our strength,
An ever present help when we are in trouble;
So we shall not be afraid though the earth be in turmoil,
Though mountains tumble into the depths of the sea,
and its waters roar and seethe, and the mountains quake.
The God of hosts is with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob.

"God puts an end to wars."
There is a river whose streams bring joy to God's city.
It sanctifies the dwelling of the Most High.
God is in the city, it cannot fall.
At break of day, God comes to the rescue.
Nations are in an uproar, kingdoms are tumbling,
And when God raises God's voice, the earth crumbles.
The God of hosts is with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob.

"God puts an end to wars."
Come, consider the wonders of the God of peace,
The astounding deeds God has done on the earth.
God puts an end to wars over the whole wide world.
God breaks the bow, God snaps the spear,
God burns the shields in the fire.

"God puts an end to wars."
"Be still and know that I am God, supreme over the nations,
Supreme over the world."
The God of hosts is with us; our stronghold is the God of Jacob.

"God puts an end to wars."
Second Reading: from the words of Mahatma Gandhi.

"Nonviolence is the greatest force at the disposal of humanity. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of humanity. Nonviolence is not passivity in any shape or form. It is the most active force in the world. Nonviolence is the supreme law. Just as one must learn the art of killing in the training for violence, so one must learn the art of dying in the training for nonviolence. One person who can express nonviolence in life exercises a force superior to all the forces of brutality. We are constantly being astonished these days at the amazing discoveries in the field of violence, but I maintain that far more undreamt of and seemingly impossible discoveries will be made in the field of nonviolence. My optimism rests on my belief in the infinite possibilities of the individual to develop nonviolence. The more you develop it in your own being, the more infectious it becomes till it overwhelms your surroundings and by and by might oversweep the world. We have to make truth and nonviolence not matters for mere individual practice, but for practice by groups and communities and nations. That, at any rate, is my dream. When the practice of nonviolence becomes universal, God will reign on earth as God reigns in heaven."

- [From *Mohandas Gandhi: Essential Writings*," edited by John Dear, Orbis Books, New York, 2002.]

Third Reading: Luke 6:27-26

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Silent Reflection After the Readings

Intercessory Prayers for Nonviolence

(Leader) Please respond, "God of Peace, hear our prayer."

* That we might become people of Gospel nonviolence, who allow God to disarm our hearts of the violence within us, that we might be nonviolent to ourselves and to every person we meet for the rest of our lives, we pray:

"God of Peace, hear our prayer."
* That we might practice nonviolence as Jesus did, come to understand his creative nonviolence, and obey his commandments of nonviolence: "put down our sword," "be as compassionate as God," and "love your enemies," we pray:

"God of Peace, hear our prayer."
* That we might come to know and worship God as a God of peace and nonviolence, who "makes the sun rise on the good and the bad, and causes the rain to fall on the just and the unjust," that we might become peacemakers who help end war and create a culture of nonviolence, and so, fulfill our vocations to be the beloved sons and daughters of the God of peace, we pray:

"God of Peace, hear our prayer."
* For the church, that it might be a global community of Gospel nonviolence, that it might never bless violence or justify war again, that it might support and bless nonviolent campaigns for justice and peace, and that it might always teach, practice and model the nonviolence of Jesus, we pray:

"God of Peace, hear our prayer."
* For an end to war, poverty, starvation, racism, sexism, executions, torture, abortion, nuclear weapons, global warming and violence of every kind, we pray:

"God of Peace, hear our prayer."
* For the coming of a new generation of peacemakers, for new teachers, prophets, apostles, champions and saints of Gospel nonviolence, who will help the world turn from violence to nonviolence, who will lead us to reject war and nuclear weapons, reconcile with one another and create new culture of peace and nonviolence, we pray:

"God of Peace, hear our prayer."
* Please add your own petitions [either in silence, or out loud, depending on the group].

(Leader) God of peace, thank you for hearing our prayers, all the prayers in our hearts and all the prayers of the whole human race, and we offer them in the name of the nonviolent Jesus. AMEN.

The Lord's Prayer

(Leader) Before we recite the Lord's Prayer together, and ask for the coming of God's reign of nonviolence on earth and for God's forgiveness, let's take a moment of silence to recall everyone whoever hurt us, and let's forgive them all, so that we will be ready to ask God to forgive us "as we forgive those who trespass against us."(Silence)

All recite the Lord's prayer together out loud.

A Pledge of nonviolence

(Leader) I invite all those who are ready to recite together this pledge of nonviolence, that we will try to practice and live the nonviolence of Jesus for the rest of our lives:

In the name of the God of peace and nonviolent Jesus,
I pledge today to live, practice and teach the nonviolence of Jesus,

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- to renounce violence and to non-cooperate with the world's violence;
- to love every one as my sister and brother;
- to respond with love and not to retaliate with violence;
- to forgive those who have hurt me and reconcile with everyone;
- to accept suffering as I work for justice, rather than inflict further suffering;
- to live more simply, at one with all creation;
- to work with others for the abolition of war, poverty, nuclear weapons, global warming and all violence;
- to follow the nonviolent Jesus on the way of the cross into the new life of resurrection, knowing that my life is in God's hands, that life, love and peace are stronger than death, hatred and war;
- to seek God's reign of nonviolence for the rest of my life;
- and to promote and teach the Gospel message of nonviolence.

May the God of peace give me the grace and strength to fulfill this pledge and make me an instrument of God's peace. Amen.

Closing prayer

(Leader) Let us pray....God of peace, thank you for calling us to follow the nonviolent Jesus on the road to peace. Help us to become your holy people of Gospel nonviolence. Disarm our hearts that we might be instruments of your disarming love. Make our church a community of Gospel nonviolence, that rejects war and radiates your love and peace. Bless us to love one another and our enemies, to reconcile with everyone, to resist injustice and spread the practice of nonviolence. Give us a new world without war, poverty, nuclear weapons, global warming or violence. Give us your reign of nonviolence, here and now. We ask this in the name of the nonviolent Jesus, our brother and our peace.

Closing blessing

(Leader) May the God of peace who loves you infinitely bless you abundantly, the Creator of peace, the Christ of peace, and the Holy Spirit of peace.

AMEN.

After a closing song of peace, all are invited to offer each other a sign of peace.

****

[Editor's note: Fr. John Dear will be taking an end of summer break after today. His weekly column will return on Tuesday, Sept. 8. For information on his books and speaking schedule, or to invite him to speak at your church or school, see: **www.johndear.org** [1].]

- On the Road to Peace

Source URL: http://ncronline.org/blogs/road-peace/prayer-intl-nonviolence-day

Links:
[1] http://www.johndear.org

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Feel for the people we most avoid,
strange or bereaved or never employed;
feel for the women, and feel for the men
Who fear that their living is all in vain

To the lost Christ shows his face;

Feel for the parents who've lost their child,
Feel for the women whom men have defiled,
Feel for the baby for whom there's no breast,
And feel for the weary who find no rest.

To the lost Christ shows his face;

Feel for the lives by life confused,
Riddled with doubt, in loving abused;
Feel for the lonely heart, conscious of sin,
Which longs to be pure but fears to begin.

To the lost Christ shows his face;

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Call us Lord Jesus to seek your way of peace and proclaim it to the nations. A peace that seeks security through love, justice, cooperation and respect. A peace that has as its ultimate security our trust in and love of God.

We now walk to our second prayer point
singing the chant, Ubi Caritas

Ubi caritas, et amour.
Ubi caritas, Deus ibi est
(Where charity and love are, God is there).

Loving God, inspired by your Holy Spirit, we go to the Ministry of Defence to worship, vigil, fast and pray. In undertaking this witness, we commit ourselves to act in a spirit of love and nonviolence, in the name of Christ. Amen.

IMPORTANT
We will walk in ***silence*** *to Horseguards Avenue, stopping twice for prayer and reflection* ***Please take care*** *- crossing the road.*

Station 1. Old War Office

Waiting and Betrayal

Then Jesus went with the disciples to a place called Gethsemane: and he said to them,
"Sit here while I go to pray."

A: He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them,
"I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me."

A: And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed,
"My father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not my will but your will be done."

A: And then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter,
"Could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you do not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak."

A: Again he went away form the second time and prayed,
"My father if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done."

Our liturgy is intended to ask: "what exactly is the Trident missile system going to deter?". We are here to proclaim a Christian alternative to nuclear deterrence, and to put our trust in God.

B. The government is now backing a replacement system for Trident, in contradiction of our obligations to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and there is every possibility that our nation's intolerable reliance on weapons of mass destruction will increase over the coming years. We protest against this idolatry by being here to worship God, who sent his Son as a sign of peace. We offer worship here, in the presence of those who are required to carry out the bidding of the government to maintain the Trident missile system. We pray to God, undeterred by the indifference of our political leaders, and convinced by the power of God to bring life out of death, and to help restore a maddened world to its rightful mind.

Prayers of Penitence

A. Within weeks of the bombing of Coventry Cathedral in 1940, a wooden cross of charred timbers was set up, and in chalk on the wall was written 'Father, forgive'. Before we go to mark another place with that same call to repentance, let us recognise our own sinfulness and ask our God to forgive us of all that separates us from his divinity and from one another.

Together:

We confess that in our lives
we do not always choose the way
of peace;
we spread gossip which fans the
flame of hatred;
we are ready to make any sacrifices
when Caesar demands,
but few when God invites.
We worship the false god of security
and nationalism;
we hold out our hand in friendship

From the desire for power...
from the conspiracy of silence...
from the negation of life...
from the worship of weapons...
from the politics of terror...
from the plundering of the earth's resources...
from the dispossession of the poor...
from the despair of this age...
from world suicide...

As the sprinkling continues we sing:

Look around you, can you see?
Times are troubled, people grieve
See the violence, feel the hardness,
All my people, weep with me

Chorus
Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison,
Kyrie eleison

Walk among them, I'll go with you
Reach out to them with my hands
Suffer with me, and together
we will serve them, help them stand
Chorus

Forgive us Father, hear our prayer.
We'll walk with you, anywhere.
Through your suffering, with forgivenness
Take your life into the world.

Chorus
(Jodi Page Clark)

C: Sometimes we may feel that we are living in a culture of death. Human life, human worth is diminished at every stage of its journey. Technology, financial and human resources, social policies are used to serve death rather than life. The scripture tells us to listen so that our hearts will not harden. Listen to the poor, the homeless, the vulnerable, the victims of abuse and violence. Merton urges us to - - listen follow our conscience and withdraw our consent.

Call us Lord Jesus to repent, to turn away from the culture of death and choose a culture of life. Give us the courage to speak and act against the logic of violence and militarism; the nuclear weapons policies and the false peace they offer our world.

A sheet of sack-cloth is place in from on the MoD building. The word ***REPENT*** will be marked out at the steps of the MoD. Once the outline is marked, those who wish may come forward and add to the outline with blessed ash **or sprinkle ash** onto the cloth as our community symbol of repentance.

While the marking takes place, we say this prayer

A. Let us pray to Jesus Christ, the Lord of Life, that we may be set free from the chains of violence and the threat of nuclear war. Lord Jesus, by your cross and Resurrection...

Response: **Deliver us**

by your suffering and forgiveness...
by your nonviolence and love...
by your witness to the truth...
by your passion and death...
by your victory over the grave...

but keep a weapon in the other
behind our back.
We have divided your body of people
into those we trust and those
we do not.
Huge problems challenge us in
the world - but our greed, fear
and selfishness prevent us from
uniting to solve them.
Lord, we pray for your help, your
forgiveness, and your reconciling
power in our lives. *Pax Christi*

Blessing ash & charcoal

Those who have prepared to mark the building come forward with charcoal. Others bring ash. The ash and charcoal are blessed with holy water and we will mark ourselves before going to mark the Ministry of Defence

A. Dear friends in Christ, let us ask God to bless this charcoal and ash, which we will use as a mark of our repentance.

Holy and immortal God, you do not desire the death of sinners, but rather that we should repent of our sins and live. Bless this charcoal and ash, that it may be for us a sign of repentance, and a mark of your salvation through Christ, who died for us and rose from the ashes of death to bring us eternal life. Amen

Act of Penitence

Representatives of the sponsoring groups use the ash to mark each of us with a cross on our forehead

A: From the dust of the earth were we created.
To the dust we shall return

B: Through our sins, we have destroyed and squandered the resources of the earth.

May our repentance gather us into a new community, which cherishes the earth and all her people

A: Direct our hearts to better things, O God. Heal us from sin and ignorance, as we turn again to you, to repent and believe the gospel.

Those who wish to be marked with the cross come forward. Those marking us with ash say:

Repent, and believe the Gospel. ***Response: Amen***

During the ashing we sing

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer, when I call, answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer, come and listen to me.

Commissioning

Our merciful God gave his son to die for us upon the cross. We who have been marked with the cross bear witness to salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A: Do not put your trust in princes, but trust in God alone

Dismissal

As members of the body of Christ, we will witness together to the peace of Christ at the Ministry of Defence.

B. We pray that our peaceful intentions may be clearly expressed in our worship, our symbolic acts of witness, and in the way that we relate to those we meet this day and throughout Lent - particularly any who may not understand the Christian basis for our action.
Let us pray...

Station 2: the Ministry of Defence

I set before you, life and death - choose life!

A: See, today, I set before you life and prosperity, death and disaster. If you obey the commandments of Yahweh your god that I enjoin on you today, if you love Yahweh your God and follow his ways, if you keep his commandments, his laws, his customs, you will live and increase and Yahweh your God will bless you in the land which you are entering to make your own. But if your heart strays, if you refuse to listen , if you let yourself be drawn into worshipping other gods and serving them, I tell you today, you will most certainly perish; you will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today: I set before you life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life then so that you and your descendants may live, in the love of Yahweh your God, obeying his voice, clinging to him; for in this your life consists, and on this depends your long stay in the land which Yahweh swore to your fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob he would give them. *(Dt 30:15-20)*

B: "The free choice of global self-destruction, made in desperation by the world's leaders and ratified by the consent and co-operation of their citizens would be a moral evil second only to the crucifixion. The fact that such a choice might be made with the highest motives and the most urgent purpose would do nothing whatever to mitigate it. The fact that it might be made on a gamble, in the hope that some might escape, would never excuse it. After all the purposes of Caiaphas were in his own eyes, perfectly noble. He thought it was necessary to let "one man die for the people". The most urgent necessity of our time is therefore not merely to prevent the destruction of the human race by nuclear war. Even if it should happen to be no longer possible to prevent the disaster (which God forbid) there is still a greater evil that can and must be prevented. It must be possible for every free {man} person to refuse consent and deny co-operation to this greatest of crimes."
(Christian Choice essay, Peace in a Post Christian Era, Thomas Merton)

A "sermon" for Easter Day focussed on disability and stories of people finding healing and wholeness through dance, a resurrection experience. There is further reflection on Easter bringing liberation, and that "we can never "celebrate" Easter in isolation from the cries of our world". If we ignore these we would make a mockery of Christ and reduce the message of Easter "and in that process we domesticate Jesus so that he becomes some powerless household idol"

The "Beyond Easter" section deals with "the place of the gospel is the world" and rarely to be found in a church. Kathy Galloway, well known Iona leader and writer, speaks from her experience of women being called to "the ministry of proclamation and her encounter of "a dynamic and committed ecumenical faith and its expression in worship" among women working together "in a way that leaves many of its male counterparts standing" as they defend an authority which appears to derive "more from power to control than from the powerlessness of the cross". A poem by Kate McIlhagga, another leading prayer-poem writer, reads "touch, Thomas, the gaping wounds of my world....reach out your hands... and place them at the side of the poor". A further reflection " the cross of victory" points out that it is we who are to be "the victory sign....in our ransomed and renewed lives". There are further reflections for Ascension and a useful list of resources.

This collection is redolent with the spirit of Iona – reflection leading to action. It is a fruitful call to a balanced life style for the followers of Christ. It is inclusive not merely in its use of language but in its call to make our own the concerns of all the world and how we inter-relate with each other and God.

The Easter Day experience, in the article above, was expressed in terms of dance. This is an often neglected aspect of worship but can be very effective, both in the working out of the movements and in the performance.

Last Summer a Week on "The Sixth Sense" was organised by "Catholic People's Weeks" (which is more ecumenical than it sounds – most years there are participants from different church traditions, even once an aboriginal Pentecostalist). This explored the approach to understanding God through music, art and dance. The work ws both theoretical and practical, in that we had sessions of making music and creating art. One of the music sessions was people talking about and playing CDs of music that had special meaning to them. I wanted to play Joan Baez singing ""we shall overcome", which so powerfully moved us several decades ago not only in the American civil rights movement but over here when we were trying to work for a renewed and more just church. The largest store had 10 different collections of her music, not a single one with We shall overcome. I got the group to sing it instead · which they did lustily and it made a welcome break in presentation.

The practical dance session worked out movement to a song of praise to be danced at the end of one of the Eucharists. There were fourteen people in the group, only four of whom were fully active, o two lots of movement were planned. The active core could swoop and dive and kneel, the rest stood in a circle outside, swaying and bowing and flinging arms into the air. The eldest was 92 and this dance was an excellent example of being inclusive of disability. It was much appreciated by the non-dancers.

(IP)

6. Discussion in twos or threes: What kind of destructive elements in self, church, or society to we need to get rid of?

7. Making of the Cross write down on the slips of paper with the word of something negative - these are put down on the floor to form a cross shape.

8. Poem, The sharing Edwina Gately. All say together

We told our stories--
That's all.
We sat and listened to
Each other
And heard the journeys
Of each soul.
We sat in silence
Entering each one's pain and
Sharing each one's joy.
We heard love's longing
And the lonely reachings-out
For love and affirmation.
We heard of dreams
Shattered
And visions fled.
Of hopes and laughter
Turned stale and dark.
We felt the pain of
Isolation and
The bitterness
Of death.

But in each brave and
Lonely story
God's gentle life
Broke through
And we heard music in
The darkness
And smelt flowers in
The void.

We felt the budding
Of creation
In the searchings of
Each soul
And discerned the beauty
Of God's hand in
Each muddy, twisted path.

And God's voice sang
In each story
His life sprang from
Each death.
Our sharing became
One story
Of a simple lonely search
For life and hope and
Oneness
In a world which sobs
For love.
And we knew that in
Our sharing
God's voice with
Mighty breath
Was saying
Love each other and
Take each other's hand.

9. Making the Tree blossom Write some vision of hope on the leaves and stick on the branches with a prayer, or silently if you wish.

10. Sharing of food: we share this symbolic hot cross bun today as a sign that we are all one in the body of Christ. Just as many grains came together into the one loaf, so we are all one in Christ Jesus. Help us to reflect the life giving love of the Creator, Redeemer and Spirit in all our relationships and actions.

The food is shared, saying "bread for the journey" or some other saying as it passes from one to the other.

11. Circle Dance

Open our hearts to understand the intimate relationship
that you have with all creation.
May we give hope to tomorrow's children

(from Psalm of the Cosmos" in www.webofcreation.org)

Bidding prayers spend five minutes walking round the garden, pick a flower or leaf, then return place these in a bowl of earth while you say a prayer, or silently.

Song

The global Our Father

A Our God who is in heaven
holy is your name in peoples across the world,
of different race, colour and religion,
in families and religious communities,
in places of work, centres of study,
hospitals and places of refuge.

B Your reign come more and more
in the hearts of those who work in your name,
of those who know you least and those who have no hope.

A Your will be done on earth,
in the hearts of saints and sinners
and those who have abundance from which to give the hungry,
the sick, the untaught, the homeless and unemployed.

B Give us this day our daily bread
to the poor at home and the poor across the world,
the bread of truth to this disturbed generation.

A And forgive us our sins, our coldness,
our constant failure to reach out
to those who are in need,
as we forgive those who sin against us.

B And lead us not into temptation;
Give us the grace to resist temptation to judge,
the temptation to count the cost, the temptation to fear failure,
the temptation to selfishness, to a closed mind.

All But deliver us from the evil of injustice,
of war and of violence,
the evil of failing in affection, respect and support for those
who live and work with us,
deliver us from the evil of turning away from you.

Bidding prayers - spend five minutes wandering round the garden;. flowers, leaves etc to be placed in a bowl of water while you say your prayer, or silently if you prefer.

Eucharistic Prayer (either the "People of God" (one page missing- waiting for this to come) or eucharist of the future.

Global Our Father (said antiphonally all saying the last verse)

The Peace (all hold hands)

Shalom My friends, shalom my friends shalom shalom x3
the peace of Christ I give you today, shalom, shalom

Communion song Unless a grain of wheat (Farrell)

Words from the celebrant leading into the Laying on of hands on JBT

(See suggested form at end of this draft)

All say the final blessing

Ever loving God,
may we, the people of the bread,
live for a world in which no one hungers;
may we, the people of the vine,
live for a world in which no one is excluded;
and may all who have shared in
the body and blood of your Son
love our sisters and brothers
rejoicing to know that you loved us first, (Christian Aid)

Final Song Love (JBT) to tune of tell out my soul

Query form of laying on of hands.

(This could be placed elsewhere in the liturgy, but seems appropriate in the sending forth part of the eucharist. What do you think?)

Seat June on chair in middle of the circle, Robert and Ianthe place their hands on her head or shoulders,(if everyone tried to, wouldn't it be rather tortuous?) the rest hold out their hands towards her, holding the sheet with relevant prayer in one hand.

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Blessings

Blessing of Loving-Kindness | Blessing Prayer for Seeds | Blessin Crops

Blessing of Loving-Kindness

May every creature abound in well-being and peace.
May every living being, weak or strong, the long and the sr
The short and the medium-sized, the mean and the great
May every living being, seen or unseen, those dwelling far
Those near by, those already born, those waiting to be bor
May all attain inward peace

Let no one deceive another
Let no one despise another in any situation
Let no one, from antipathy or hatred, wish evil to anyone a

Just as a mother, with her own life, protects her only child
So within yourself foster a limitless concern for every living
Display a heart of boundless love for all the world
In all its height and depth and broad extent
Love unrestrained, without hate or enmity.
Then as you stand or walk, sit or lie, until overcome by dro
Devote your mind entirely to this, it is known as living here

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Blessing Prayer for Seeds

God, Source of all life,
who did hide your seeds in all that lives,
be present here
as we greet these tiny seeds
with their gifts of life.

Seeds of Life, so small,
and yet, in the mystery of death and burial,
you will produce life tenfold and more.

We sprinkle you with water,
sacred sign of life,

asking that you may be
embraced by our mother the earth,
fed by rain
and kissed gently by the sun.

In caring for you
we shall experience
the most ancient profession of the human family,
the primal vocation
of being workers in the garden.

Soon you will be our pride and joy.
Soon you will be our food
as we give up your life
that we may live.

Seeds,
pregnant with life,
teach us the Easter Secret of Life,
as we ask God to bless you.

Amen.

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Blessing of Fields and Crops

Loving Creator God,
We acknowledge you as the only source of growth and abu
You provide us with food for body and spirit.

With your help we plant our crops and by your power they
In your kindness and love, make our work fruitful.
Bless our fields and the crops we plant; let them yield a ric
Grant favorable weather to make these fields productive.

Guide the work of our hands, for in you we live and move a
Help us bring you glory by using well and sharing the good

We ask this through Jesus, the Christ. Amen

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addresses and access to e-virus. (Did you make a wish?) If you don't make a wish, it won't come true. This is your last chance to make a wish.

St. Theresa's Prayer:

May today there be peace within.

May you trust God that you are exactly where you are meant to be.

May you not forget the infinite possibilities that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the love that has been given to you.

May you be content knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle into our bones, and allow your soul the freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.

It is there for each and every one of you.

Now, send this to 7 people within the next 5 minutes and your wish will come true. And remember to send this back...I count as 1...you will see why

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Yahoo! FareChase - Search multiple travel sites in one click.

Yahoo! FareChase - Search multiple travel sites in one click.

16. I believe in the equality of all,
rich and poor.
I believe in liberty.
I believe in humanity through which
we can create unity.
I believe in the love within each of us,
and in the home, happy and healthy.
I believe in the forgiveness of our sins.
I believe that with divine help
we will have the strength to establish
equality in society.
I believe in unity, the only way to
achieve peace, and I believe that
together we can obtain justice.

Young people of Ayacucho, Peru

17. God, help us to change.
To change ourselves
and to change our world.
To know the need for it.
To deal with the pain of it.
To feel the joy of it.
To undertake the journey without understanding the
destination.
The art of gentle revolution.

Leuing, Australia

Song: Choose Life, Choose Love
(to the tune All people that on earth do dwell)

Choose life, choose love - the hour is late!
Say 'yes' to Christ and 'no' to fate.
Join hands with people who have faith
reach out in hope to all who live.

In seeking peace and life for each
we need to practise what we preach.
to turn into creative deeds
the inner urges of our creeds.

With Christ-the-Least, renouncing power,
we face the challenge of this hour,
we rise against the death of earth,
the end of life, the end of birth

The hour is late! Choose life, choose love.
with Christ into God's future move;
life to the full, the earth a feast,
through making, speaking, being peace.
(Fred Kaan)

Let us offer one another a **sign of peace**

Reflection on two ways

Now there are two ways to walk:
Towards the radiance of the transfigured Christ or the radiance of the Bomb.
Towards the radiance that descends to touch, to heal, to restore.
Or towards the radiance that descends to touch, to heal, to restore.
Or towards the radiance that descends to defence to murder to destroy.
Towards the radiance that glorifies, or the radiance that vaporises.
This day I set before you life and death, a blessing and a curse: Choose this day the one you will serve.

Prayer of hope and love

L: Out of love comes hope
All: And God's kingdom is among us
L: Where peace is the means of making us one
All: Where truth does not stumble and justice is done.
L: Out of change comes possibility
All: And god's new creation is begun.
L: Out of freedom comes responsibility
All: And God calls us to discipleship.
L: In our compassion, making love know
All: In our conviction God's power is shown.

And we share together the prayer that Jesus taught us... Our Father..

Final Song: For the Healing of the Nations

For the healing of the nations,
Lord, we pray with one accord,
For a just and equal sharing
Of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love in action
Help us rise and pledge our word.
Lead us, Father, into freedom,

Lead us, Father, into freedom,
From despair your world release:
That, redeemed from war and hatred,
We may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness
Fear will die and hope increase.

You, Creator God, have written
Your great name on humankind:
For our growing in your likeness;
Bring the life of Christ in mind:
That by our response and service,
Earth its destiny may find.

Pax Christi, St Joseph's Watford Way, Hendon, London NW4 4TY
phone: 020 8203 4884 *info@paxchristi.org.uk* *www.paxchristi.org.uk*

CREATION (read passages in turn, omitting the words in brackets)

"God blessed them(Adam and Eve) saying to them "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth ... God saw all he had made and indeed it was very good" (Gen 1.28 & 31 - other translations have "subdue" the earth or " have dominion over" in place of "conquer")

(The Rainbow after the flood) "Here is the sign of the Covenant I make between myself and you and every lving creature with you for all generations. I set my bow in the clouds and it shall be a sign of the Covenant between me and the earth"(Gen 9 12-13)

"He is the beginning, the first born from the dead, so that he should be supreme in every way; because God wanted all fullness to be found in him and through him to reconcile all things to him, everything in heaven and everything on earth, by making peace through his death on the cross".(Col 1 18-20)

The Pacific Women's Creed
We believe that Creation is a gift from
God, an expression of our Creator's goodness.

We believe that the resources of our lands and waters and air are precious gifts from our creator, to be used and looked after with loving care.

We believe that there is a rhythm to God's creation, like a drum beat.
When we lose the rhythm, or the drum is damaged, the music is out of tune.

We believe that as Christians, we are called to be peacemakers, in order that our world and our communities, and each person, may experience the true peace which God promises.

We believe this may sometimes mean "disturbing the peace", as Jesus did, for a purpose-to restore the purpose of God.

We believe that our Pacific ways are also a gift from God,
We are invited to use the values of our Pacific cultures to build societies of justice and peace.

"No one can live in an isolated, privatized religion or world any longer. Interdependence is too much a reality of every nation today ..Privatized salvations sin against the cosmos itself. They blind us to the levels of ecological justice as well as human justice that we must be about. Hildegard of Bingen wasrned us 8 centuries ago .."all of creation God gives to humankind to use. If this privilege is misused, God's justice permits creation to punish humanity" Matthew Fox,"Original Blessing."

Discussion Pointers:

1. What strikes you personally about the readings above?
2. What are the moral implications of the environmental crisis?.
3. How far are we co-creators with God?
4. Many religions have a strong sense of the immanence of God in all things. Much of christian thinking in past centuries has been distorted by a dualistic approach of splitting spirit/matter, soul/body etc. How can we develop a more holistic approach to God's world?

LITURGY OF MARY OF THE MAGNIFICAT
(St Joan's International Alliance AGM Liturgy 1988)

Song Where are you bound, Mary (Celebration Hymnbook,356)

Reading: The Visitation Lk.1 36-45

Reading from "Mary and Women" Catherina Halkes. "When Mary visits Elizabeth ...her magnificat is a prelude in radical subversive language to Luke's Sermon on the Plain ....the last shall be first and those who rule must, on their way to the kingdom, join the ranks of the poor, whose ... example is Mary"

(p70, para 2 Concilium, 168 "Mary in the Churches")

Short silence

Magnificat of Now (from Miriam of Nazareth, Johnson)

Readings based on *Introducing Liberation Theology* by Leonardo and Clodovis Boff.

Reader A

Mary is the prophetic and liberating Woman of the people. "All the theological greatness of Mary is based on the lowliness of her historical tradition. She is Mary of Nazareth, a woman of the people, who observed the usual customs of her day, visited her relatives, took part in wedding celebrations and worried about her son, following him even to the foot of the cross, as any mother would do. "Because of this ordinariness and not in spite of it" God did "great things" for her.

All O loving and sustaining God, help us to challenge the powerful and work to empower all so that they may use their gifts in building up your realm.

Reader B

Mary is the perfect example of faith responding to God. She did not understand the full extent of the mystery to be brought about through her but she trusted in God and concerned herself with others - her cousin Elizabeth, her son lost on pilgrimage, the guests with no wine "Persons can be liberators only if they free themselves from their own preoccupations and place their lives at the service of others".

All Help us, O loving and sustaining Creator, to be as responsive to your word as Mary was, and to identify ourselves with the needs of others, particularly women who have suffered so much by the distortion of your word.

Reader C Thirdly, she is the prophetess of the Magnificat "anticipating the liberating proclamation of her son she shows herself attentive to the fate of the humiliated and debased, and invokes divine revolution in the relationship between oppressors and oppressed"

All O loving and Sustaining Redeemer, help us to live out the Magnificat in our attitudes and actions.

Reader D Finally in Latin-American popular religion Mary is seen as the champion of the poor. The masses bring their troubles to the centres of Marian pilgrimage where they are filled with renewed strength and hope to carry on struggling and surviving.

All O loving and sustaining Spirit, inspire us to free the image of Mary, Mother of God, from the pious distortions of the ages, and find in her a model of challenge and hope.

Poem "a Blessed Embarrassment" from *Beginning with Mary* by T Carlyle, (the American Protestant scripture scholar)

Photolanguage reflections (large photographs of women in many lands and situations are handed round. Reflections are invited from the participants)

Poem "Did the Woman Say" (Frances Croake Frank, in *Celebrating Women*)

Silence

Song: The Bakerwoman (Celebration Hymnal 299)

Concluding prayer

All move round table, link hands and sing a blessing of the food.

(This liturgy has been slightly modified as some of the music used was not yet available in published form.)

BRING MANY NAMES

Bring many names, beautiful and good,
celebrate, in parable and story,
holiness in glory,
living, loving God.
Hail and Hosannah!
bring many names!

Strong mother God, working night and day,
planning all the wonders of creation,
setting each equation,
genius at play:
Hail and Hosanna,
strong mother God!

Warm father God, hugging every child,
feeling all the strains of human living,
caring and forgiving
till we're reconciled:
Hail and Hosanna,
warm father God!

Old, aching God, grey with endless care,
calmly piercing evil's new disguises
glad of good surprises
wiser than despair:
Hail and Hosanna,
old, aching God!

Young, growing God, eager, on the move,
seeing all, and fretting at our blindness,
crying out for justice
giving all you have:
Hail and Hosanna,
young, growing God!

Great, living God, never fully known,
joyful darkness far beyond our seeing,
closer yet than breathing,
everlasting home:ail and Hosanna,
great, living God!

Brian Wren

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A WOMAN IN HER GRIEF



1 A woman in her grief
Within a garden cried,
Lost in a sense or deep bereavement
For the man she loved had died.

2 She wandered through the paths
To search out where he lay,
In devotion bringing spices
Her great debt to him to pay

3 A man in working clothes
Was also in that place
But her loss was overwhelming
And she did not know his face.

4 He gently said one word;
He called her by her name.
It was just the sound she longed for
And her heart was set aflame.

5 She recognized her lord
who told her not to stay;
So she left her contemplation
For the world of everyday.

6 At times, God, you seem close
But help us not to cling.
May such ecstacy be harnessed
For the world's transfiguring.

Words and Music by June Tillman

JESUS CHRIST IS WAITING (Tune Noel Nouvelet,
Now the Green Blade riseth)

Jesus Christ is waiting,
Waiting in the streets;
No one is his neighbour
All alone he eats.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I am lonely too.
Make me, friend or stranger,
Fit to wait on you.

Jesus Christ is raging,
Raging in the streets
Where injustice spirals
And real hope retreats.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I am angry too.
In the kingdom's causes
Let me rage with you.

Jesus Christ is healing,
Healing in the streets
Curing those who suffer,
Touching those he greets.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I have pity too.
Let my care be active,
Healing just like you.

Jesus Christ is dancing,
Dancing in the streets;
Where each sign of hatred
His strong love defeats.
Listen, Lord Jesus,
I feel triumph too.
On suspicion's graveyard
Let me dance with you.

Jesus Christ is calling,
Calling in the streets,
"Come and walk faith's tightrope,
I will guide your feet."
Listen, Lord Jesus,
Let my fears be few.
Walk one step before me,
I will follow you.

The Iona Community

Eucharistic prayer of Light
(from missionary sources)

Loving God, we praise you and bless you
because you do not hide from us,
but reveal yourself clearly in creation.

All your works proclaim
your love and concern for us.
We thank you for these gifts.

For being the Source of Light
and sharing your brilliance with us,
we give you thanks.

You created us in your image
you called us to walk in light,
but we sinned.
Confused and often lost,
we preferred to walk in darkness.

We thank you, Loving Creator
that we cannot hide from you,
that you seek us out and find us
even in our darkness.
So we join with all creation
that basks in your love,
in proclaiming your glory as we sing(say)

Holy, holy, holy Lord ...

We thank you, God of Light,
for appointing Jesus
as a covenant for the people,
a Light for all nations.
He has come to open the eyes of the blind,
to free captives from prison
and to bring into the Light
all who dwell in darkness.

Your Light, Jesus Christ,
has penetrated our darkness
and shown us the way
from selfishness to love
from isolation to community
from death to life.
We give thanks that Jesus is our Light
and has called us to be lights of the world.
We thank you for his life and example.

But most of all we thank you, Loving Creator
for the wonderful way Jesus strengthens us.
Let your Spirit come upon these
gifts that they may become
for us the body and blood of Jesus Christ.
On the night before he died,
Jesus gathered his friends together.
He reminded them where they came from
and what they were to become.
He strengthened them for their mission
through a meal.

While they were at supper he took some bread,
blessed you, Loving God, and gave it to them,
saying:
Take this all of you and eat it;
this is my body which will be given up for you.

Then he took the cup, filled with wine. Again he
gave thanks and gave it to them, saying:

Take this and drink it, all of you:
this is the cup of my blood
poured out for you and for all so that sins may be
forgiven.
Do this in memory of me.

God of Love, we thank you for Jesus' life among
us,
a life of light and love.
We remember in Jesus' suffering and death
the cost of being a light for another.
We constantly call to mind
the hope of a new and fuller life
where darkness is dispelled forever.

Let us proclaim our paschal faith

Christ has died, Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

Send us the Spirit Jesus promised us,
the Spirit who gives direction to our weary feet
and light to our pilgrim path.
Help us to discover the places where you dwell.
Open our eyes to your presence in us,
and in our World,

We pray that through this meal
we may be strengthened in our resolve
to become more of what you want us to be
your community of love,
a source of your light for the world.

All of this we ask through Christ, our Light.
Through him,
with him,
in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honour is yours,
for ever and ever.



The Peace

Shalom my friends, shalom my friends,
shalom, shalom
The peace of Christ I give you today
shalom, shalom (x3)

CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT (Bernadette Farrell)

REFRAIN

Christ be our light, shine in our hearts,
Shine through the darkness.
Christ be our light, shine in your church
gathered today

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness
Longing for truth we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
Light for the world to see
Christ be our light.....

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.
Christ be our light...

3 Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed
Christ be our light .....

Open your ears, O Christian people
open your ears and hear Good news
open your hearts O royal priesthood
God has come to you
chorus: God has spoken to the people
Alleluia
And the words are words of wisdom
Alleluia

Israel comes to greet the Saviour
Judah is glad to see the day
From East and West the peoples travel,
he will show the way
chorus God has spoken to the people.....

They who have ears to hear the message
" " " " then let them hear
" " would learn the way of wisdom
let them hear God's words

chorus God has spoken to the people ..

Simeon's Song

1. 'Take, Lord, and fold my life away;
its purpose is fulfilled.
I clasp, expressed in mortal clay,
all that your love has willed:
this babe reveals your costly grace
to Israel and the human race.'

2. May we, like Simeon, receive
this new reality;
and, living by it, now believe
Christ came to set folk free,
till kingdoms of the earth appear
marked by God's rule and presence here.

LOVE tune: Tell out my Soul

We sing a love that sets all people free,
That blows like wind, that burns like scorching flame,
Enfolds like earth, springs up like water clear.
Come, living love, live in our hearts today.

We sing a love that seeks another's good,
That longs to serve and not to count the cost,
A love that, yielding, finds itself made new.
Come, caring love, live in our hearts today.

We sing a love, unflinching, unafraid
To be itself, despite another's wrath,
A love that stands alone and undismayed.
Come, strength'ning love, live in our hearts today.

We sing a love that, wand'ring, will not rest
Until it finds its way, its home, its source,
Through joy and sadness pressing on refreshed.
Come, pilgrim love, live in our hearts today.

We sing a burning, fiery, Holy Ghost
That seeks out shades of ancient bitterness.
Transfig'ring these, as Christ in ev'ry heart.
Come joyful love, live in our hearts today.

Shalom ✝
Christ is my light
is on back of
Eucharistic Prayer Shee

Simeon's Song

MUSIC: 'Happit Awa' (JLB)

with dignity



words: Ian Fraser © Stainer and Bell, reproduced by permission;
music © 1992 Iona Community / Wild Goose Publications, Govan, Glasgow, Scotland.

1. 'Take, Lord, and fold my life away;
its purpose is fulfilled.
I clasp, expressed in mortal clay,
all that your love has willed:
this babe reveals your costly grace
to Israel and the human race.'

2. May we, like Simeon, receive
this new reality;
and, living by it, now believe
Christ came to set folk free,
till kingdoms of the earth appear
marked by God's rule and presence here.

This song derives from the *Nunc Dimittis* of Simeon, as contained in Luke Ch.2. v 29 – 32. It is a fitting anthem or vesper to a service of worship in the weeks following Christmas.

Winter eucharist 05 Spreading the Light (epiphany/presentation)

Song: Open your ears O Christian People

Introduce ourselves round the room using the Galilee stone

The giving of the stole to the celebrant

Opening words

Penitential litany (based on the epiphany

Reader: The magi journeyed far to find you, Redeemer and Saviour, we too must search for you all our lives

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: The Magi brought precious gifts to you. Our treasure must be the gift of building up your kingdom here and now

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: The coming of the strangers from the East, marked the showing forth of Christ to the whole world. As Christians we are called to show forth Christ's love in our everyday lives.

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: You were in the world but they did not know you. You came to your own and they did not receive you. There was no room for you at the inn. Is there any room for you in our hearts?

All: Help us to respond to you

Reader: The magi were prepared to leave their homes to search for the new king whose sign was a star in the east. We too must be prepared to search and become a pilgrim people

All: Give us the strength to put false security behind us and live as if we were on a journey

Reader: God has called us out of darkness into the light. May we experience his kindness and blessing and be strong in faith, hope and love.

All: Because we are followers of Christ, who came as a light shining in the darkness, may we show the light of God to the people we find around us.

reading on the truths of myths

Myths the scholars say-
These hallowed stories never took place
But how powerful are the messages
That are contained in myth and symbol!
Epiphanies more illuminating than facts
Bringing light to our shadows.
Let us come out of the dark and welcome
Our inheritance.

Reading on the Presentation Luke 2:22,24-32

Taped Song of Simeon (Iona) join in when tune picked up

Discussion in groups: in what way can we be the light of Christ in our own context?

Creed

Voice 1 I believe in God: creator and farmer, lover and friend, challenger and enabler; wellspring and womb of purposeful living.

All **We believe in God.**

Voice 2 I believe in Jesus Christ: compassionate and wounded healer, wise-one and fool; liberator from oppression.

All **We believe in Jesus Christ.**

Voice 3 I believe in the Spirit; go-between and negotiator, inspirer and encourager; barrier-breaker, community-maker.

All **We believe in the Spirit.**

Voice 4 I believe in the community of faith:
alive in the aliveness of Christ.

prophetic in its solidarity with all who suffer,
celebratory in its hope, its work, its witness.

All **We believe in the community of faith.**

Voice 5 I believe in God's kingdom: beckoning and burgeoning, dynamic and harmonious, present and future; in which we glimpse
- the satisfaction of our deepest longings
- the healing of our painful rifts
- the forging of justice, peace and integrity.

Kate Compston

All **We believe in God's Kingdom.**

Prayers of intercession - light tea lights round central candle

Eucharistic Prayer on a theme of light

Global Lord's Prayer

Our God who is in heaven
holy is your name in peoples across the world,
of different race, colour and religion,
in families and religious communities,
in places of work, centres of study,
hospitals and places of refuge.

Your reign come more and more
in the hearts of those who work in your name,
of those who know you least and those who have no hope.

Your will be done on earth,
in the hearts of saints and sinners
and those who have abundance from which to give the hungry,
the sick, the untaught, the homeless and unemployed.

Give us this day our daily bread
to the poor at home and the poor across the world,
the bread of truth to this disturbed generation.

And forgive us our sins, our coldness,
our constant failure to reach out
to those who are in need,
as we forgive those who sin against us.

And lead us not into temptation;
Give us the grace to resist temptation to judge,
the temptation to count the cost, the temptation to fear failure,
the temptation to selfishness, to a closed mind.

But deliver us from the evil of injustice,
of war and of violence,
the evil of failing in affection, respect and support for those
who live and work with us,
deliver us from the evil of turning away from you.

The peace,. sung holding hands round the room (shalom my friends)

Post Communion song: Christ is my light (Bernadette Farrell)

final words from the celebrant

Final Song "We Sing a love (Tune Tell out my soul) JBT

Eucharistic prayer of Light
(from missionary sources)

Loving God, we praise you and bless you
because you do not hide from us,
but reveal yourself clearly in creation.

All your works proclaim
your love and concern for us.
We thank you for these gifts.

For being the Source of Light
and sharing your brilliance with us,
we give you thanks.

You created us in your image
you called us to walk in light,
but we sinned.
Confused and often lost,
we preferred to walk in darkness.

We thank you, Loving Creator
that we cannot hide from you,
that you seek us out and find us
even in our darkness.
So we join with all creation
that basks in your love,
in proclaiming your glory as we sing(say)

Holy, holy, holy Lord ...

We thank you, God of Light,
for appointing Jesus
as a covenant for the people,
a Light for all nations.
He has come to open the eyes of the blind,
to free captives from prison
and to bring into the Light
all who dwell in darkness.

Your Light, Jesus Christ,
has penetrated our darkness
and shown us the way
from selfishness to love
from isolation to community
from death to life.
We give thanks that Jesus is our Light
and has called us to be lights of the world.
We thank you for his life and example.

But most of all we thank you, Loving Creator
for the wonderful way Jesus strengthens us.
Let your Spirit come upon these
gifts that they may become
for us the body and blood of Jesus Christ.
On the night before he died,
Jesus gathered his friends together.
He reminded them where they came from
and what they were to become.
He strengthened them for their mission
through a meal.

While they were at supper he took some bread,
blessed you, Loving God, and gave it to them,
saying:
Take this all of you and eat it;
this is my body which will be given up for you.

Then he took the cup, filled with wine. Again he
gave thanks and gave it to them, saying:

Take this and drink it, all of you:
this is the cup of my blood
poured out for you and for all so that sins may be
forgiven.
Do this in memory of me.

God of Love, we thank you for Jesus' life among
us,
a life of light and love.
We remember in Jesus' suffering and death
the cost of being a light for another.
We constantly call to mind
the hope of a new and fuller life
where darkness is dispelled forever.

Let us proclaim our paschal faith

Christ has died, Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

Send us the Spirit Jesus promised us,
the Spirit who gives direction to our weary feet
and light to our pilgrim path.
Help us to discover the places where you dwell.
Open our eyes to your presence in us,
and in our World,

We pray that through this meal
we may be strengthened in our resolve
to become more of what you want us to be
your community of love,
a source of your light for the world.

All of this we ask through Christ, our Light.
Through him,
with him,
in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honour is yours,
for ever and ever.



The Peace

Shalom my friends, shalom my friends,
shalom, shalom
The peace of Christ I give you today
shalom, shalom (x3)

CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT (Bernadette Farrell)

REFRAIN

Christ be our light, shine in our hearts,
Shine through the darkness.
Christ be our light, shine in your church
gathered today

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness
Longing for truth we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
Light for the world to see
Christ be our light.....

2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.
Christ be our light...

3 Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed
Christ be our light .....

Open your ears, O Christian people
open your ears and hear Good news
open your hearts O royal priesthood
God has come to you
chorus: God has spoken to the people
Alleluia
And the words are words of wisdom
Alleluia

Israel comes to greet the Saviour
Judah is glad to see the day
From East and West the peoples travel,
he will show the way
chorus God has spoken to the people.....

They who have ears to hear the message
" " " " then let them hear
" " would learn the way of wisdom
let them hear God's words

chorus God has spoken to the people ..

Simeon's Song

1. 'Take, Lord, and fold my life away;
its purpose is fulfilled.
I clasp, expressed in mortal clay,
all that your love has willed:
this babe reveals your costly grace
to Israel and the human race.'

2. May we, like Simeon, receive
this new reality;
and, living by it, now believe
Christ came to set folk free,
till kingdoms of the earth appear
marked by God's rule and presence here.

LOVE tune: Tell out my Soul

We sing a love that sets all people free,
That blows like wind, that burns like scorching flame,
Enfolds like earth, springs up like water clear.
Come, living love, live in our hearts today.

We sing a love that seeks another's good,
That longs to serve and not to count the cost,
A love that, yielding, finds itself made new.
Come, caring love, live in our hearts today.

We sing a love, unflinching, unafraid
To be itself, despite another's wrath,
A love that stands alone and undismayed.
Come, strength'ning love, live in our hearts today.

We sing a love that, wand'ring, will not rest
Until it finds its way, its home, its source,
Through joy and sadness pressing on refreshed.
Come, pilgrim love, live in our hearts today.

We sing a burning, fiery, Holy Ghost
That seeks out shades of ancient bitterness.
Transfig'ring these, as Christ in ev'ry heart.
Come joyful love, live in our hearts today.

Shalom &
Christ is my light
is on back of
Eucharistic Prayer Shee

Winter eucharist 05 Spreading the Light (epiphany/presentation)

Song: Open your ears O Christian People

Introduce ourselves round the room using the Galilee stone

The giving of the stole to the celebrant

Opening words

Penitential litany (based on the epiphany

Reader: The magi journeyed far to find you, Redeemer and Saviour, we too must search for you all our lives

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: The Magi brought precious gifts to you. Our treasure must be the gift of building up your kingdom here and now

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: The coming of the strangers from the East, marked the showing forth of Christ to the whole world. As Christians we are called to show forth Christ's love in our everyday lives.

All: Help us to find you, Lord

Reader: You were in the world but they did not know you. You came to your own and they did not receive you. There was no room for you at the inn. Is there any room for you in our hearts?

All: Help us to respond to you

Reader: The magi were prepared to leave their homes to search for the new king whose sign was a star in the east. We too must be prepared to search and become a pilgrim people

All: Give us the strength to put false security behind us and live as if we were on a journey

Reader: God has called us out of darkness into the light. May we experience his kindness and blessing and be strong in faith, hope and love.

All: Because we are followers of Christ, who came as a light shining in the darkness, may we show the light of God to the people we find around us.

reading on the truths of myths

Myths the scholars say-
These hallowed stories never took place
But how powerful are the messages
That are contained in myth and symbol!
Epiphanies more illuminating than facts
Bringing light to our shadows.
Let us come out of the dark and welcome
Our inheritance.

Reading on the Presentation Luke 2:22,24-32

Taped Song of Simeon (Iona) join in when tune picked up

Discussion in groups: in what way can we be the light of Christ in our own context?

Creed

Voice 1 I believe in God: creator and farmer, lover and friend, challenger and enabler; wellspring and womb of purposeful living.

All **We believe in God.**

Voice 2 I believe in Jesus Christ: compassionate and wounded healer, wise-one and fool; liberator from oppression.

All **We believe in Jesus Christ.**

Voice 3 I believe in the Spirit; go-between and negotiator, inspirer and encourager; barrier-breaker, community-maker.

All **We believe in the Spirit.**

Voice 4 I believe in the community of faith:
alive in the aliveness of Christ.

prophetic in its solidarity with all who suffer,
celebratory in its hope, its work, its witness.

All **We believe in the community of faith.**

Voice 5 I believe in God's kingdom: beckoning and burgeoning, dynamic and harmonious, present and future; in which we glimpse
– the satisfaction of our deepest longings
– the healing of our painful rifts
– the forging of justice, peace and integrity.

Kate Compston

All **We believe in God's Kingdom.**

Prayers of intercession - light tea lights round central candle

Eucharistic Prayer on a theme of light

Global Lord's Prayer

Our God who is in heaven
holy is your name in peoples across the world,
of different race, colour and religion,
in families and religious communities,
in places of work, centres of study,
hospitals and places of refuge.

Your reign come more and more
in the hearts of those who work in your name,
of those who know you least and those who have no hope.

Your will be done on earth,
in the hearts of saints and sinners
and those who have abundance from which to give the hungry,
the sick, the untaught, the homeless and unemployed.

Give us this day our daily bread
to the poor at home and the poor across the world,
the bread of truth to this disturbed generation.

And forgive us our sins, our coldness,
our constant failure to reach out
to those who are in need,
as we forgive those who sin against us.

And lead us not into temptation;
Give us the grace to resist temptation to judge,
the temptation to count the cost, the temptation to fear failure,
the temptation to selfishness, to a closed mind.

But deliver us from the evil of injustice,
of war and of violence,
the evil of failing in affection, respect and support for those
who live and work with us,
deliver us from the evil of turning away from you.

The peace,. sung holding hands round the room (shalom my friends)

Post Communion song: Christ is my light (Bernadette Farrell)

final words from the celebrant

Final Song "We Sing a love (Tune Tell out my soul) JBT

Eucharistic prayer of Light
(from missionary sources)

Loving God, we praise you and bless you
because you do not hide from us,
but reveal yourself clearly in creation.

All your works proclaim
your love and concern for us.
We thank you for these gifts.

For being the Source of Light
and sharing your brilliance with us,
we give you thanks.

You created us in your image
you called us to walk in light,
but we sinned.
Confused and often lost,
we preferred to walk in darkness.

We thank you, Loving Creator
that we cannot hide from you,
that you seek us out and find us
even in our darkness.
So we join with all creation
that basks in your love,
in proclaiming your glory as we sing(say)

Holy, holy, holy Lord ...

We thank you, God of Light,
for appointing Jesus
as a covenant for the people,
a Light for all nations.
He has come to open the eyes of the blind,
to free captives from prison
and to bring into the Light
all who dwell in darkness.

Your Light, Jesus Christ,
has penetrated our darkness
and shown us the way
from selfishness to love
from isolation to community
from death to life.
We give thanks that Jesus is our Light
and has called us to be lights of the world.
We thank you for his life and example.

But most of all we thank you, Loving Creator
for the wonderful way Jesus strengthens us.
Let your Spirit come upon these
gifts that they may become
for us the body and blood of Jesus Christ.
On the night before he died,
Jesus gathered his friends together.
He reminded them where they came from
and what they were to become.
He strengthened them for their mission
through a meal.

While they were at supper he took some bread,
blessed you, Loving God, and gave it to them,
saying:
Take this all of you and eat it;
this is my body which will be given up for you.

Then he took the cup, filled with wine. Again he
gave thanks and gave it to them, saying:

Take this and drink it, all of you:
this is the cup of my blood
poured out for you and for all so that sins may be
forgiven.
Do this in memory of me.

God of Love, we thank you for Jesus' life among
us,
a life of light and love.
We remember in Jesus' suffering and death
the cost of being a light for another.
We constantly call to mind
the hope of a new and fuller life
where darkness is dispelled forever.

Let us proclaim our paschal faith

Christ has died, Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

Send us the Spirit Jesus promised us,
the Spirit who gives direction to our weary feet
and light to our pilgrim path.
Help us to discover the places where you dwell.
Open our eyes to your presence in us,
and in our World,

We pray that through this meal
we may be strengthened in our resolve
to become more of what you want us to be
your community of love,
a source of your light for the world.

All of this we ask through Christ, our Light.
Through him,
with him,
in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honour is yours,
for ever and ever.



The Peace

Shalom my friends, shalom my friends,
shalom, shalom
The peace of Christ I give you today
shalom, shalom (x3)

CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT (Bernadette Farrell)

REFRAIN

Christ be our light, shine in our hearts,
Shine through the darkness.
Christ be our light, shine in your church
gathered today

1. Longing for light, we wait in darkness
Longing for truth we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
Light for the world to see
Christ be our light.....
2. Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice.
Christ be our light...
3 Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed
Christ be our light .....

Open your ears, O Christian people
open your ears and hear Good news
open your hearts O royal priesthood
God has come to you
chorus: God has spoken to the people
Alleluia
And the words are words of wisdom
Alleluia

Israel comes to greet the Saviour
Judah is glad to see the day
From East and West the peoples travel,
he will show the way
chorus God has spoken to the people.....

They who have ears to hear the message
" " " " then let them hear
" " would learn the way of wisdom
let them hear God's words

chorus God has spoken to the people ..

Simeon's Song

1. 'Take, Lord, and fold my life away;
its purpose is fulfilled.
I clasp, expressed in mortal clay,
all that your love has willed:
this babe reveals your costly grace
to Israel and the human race.'

2. May we, like Simeon, receive
this new reality;
and, living by it, now believe
Christ came to set folk free,
till kingdoms of the earth appear
marked by God's rule and presence here.

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Shalom ✗
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