

Common Worship

Services and Prayers for the Church of England

*Material to help with the introduction
of Common Worship at the local level*

Getting to Know Common Worship

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Church House Publishing

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In this document, page numbers given as ‘CW’ refer to the *Common Worship* main volume (to be published in November 2000).

For the services of Holy Communion, two sets of page numbers are given, where appropriate. These relate to the *Common Worship* main volume (CW) and to the Holy Communion Sample Book (SB) – often referred to as the ‘little black book’ – which was issued in April 2000.

Note that the text in the Sample Book was circulated at the stage before final proof reading had been done. Some minor changes have been made since then. The main *Common Worship* volume contains the definitive text.

Introduction:

Who and what is this material for?

Aim

The aim of this material is to help people to become familiar with parts of *Common Worship*, to understand it more and, thereby, to use it better, that God may be glorified and others drawn to worship with us.

Who is it for?

The material has been sent in the first place to clergy, but much of it is designed to be used by lay people, either individually or in groups. Please photocopy the pages you require, or download them from the Internet (www.cofe.anglican.org/commonworship). Alternatively, further copies of the whole booklet can be ordered from Church House Bookshop (for contact details see p. 44).

What is in it?

The first main section provides ideas and resources for launching *Common Worship* at the local level. Not all churches will want to make a big thing out of the arrival of these new services, but in some churches their use (and the use of new books or service booklets) will be an occasion to reflect on what worship is all about, to give thanks for the worshipping life of the community thus far, and to begin to focus on how to develop worship in the future.

Next, there are some study materials, designed to be used by small groups or as the basis of a short course (perhaps an Advent or Lent course). The aim here is to make connections in people's minds between the public liturgy of the Church and the rest of their Christian lives, by drawing on their own experiences of life and worship, and putting that alongside the *Common Worship* services. The result ought to be a better understanding of worship itself and also an engagement with the texts of *Common Worship* and the thinking behind them.

This material has to be useful across a huge variety of different churches and situations, so inevitably some of it may seem too simplistic in your situation, other parts too technical. If it won't work for your situation, consider adapting it so that it will.

The section on 'Reaching out with *Common Worship*' is designed to highlight the different ways that *Common Worship* lends itself to being part of the mission strategy of a congregation. Liturgical resources alone cannot hope to do the work of mission, but *Common Worship* has been designed to play its part.

'Praying with *Common Worship*' is intended to highlight ways in which members of the congregation can make connections between the liturgy and their prayer lives outside church, both as individuals and in families and other small groups. This may facilitate the use of the *Common Worship* volumes as resources for private prayer as well as public liturgy. Making connections between the two should strengthen and deepen both.

Finally, 'Where else to look for help' points beyond this small booklet to other resources that may help.

Launching *Common Worship* at the local level

¶ *Worship ideas*

There is no attempt here to provide one service for the launch of *Common Worship* in your church or community. Each situation will be different.

- ¶ Some will want to mark the transition from the ASB to CW with the minimum of fuss.
- ¶ Others will want to mark its significance during the normal act of worship the first time the new services are used fully.
- ¶ Some may want to devise a special service with worship as its main theme.

It will be worth finding out if there is to be a central launch of *Common Worship* in your diocese, and making sure that your local decisions fit in with what is planned there.

The decision about when to use this material (if at all) will depend on how and when *Common Worship* is being introduced in your situation. It could be any of the following:

- ¶ the First Sunday of Advent (the day on which major parts of *Common Worship* first become authorized for use);
- ¶ another Sunday in Advent;
- ¶ the first Sunday of the New Year (by which time the ASB will no longer be generally authorized for use) – this will be 7 January, The Baptism of Christ (First Sunday of Epiphany);
- ¶ some other Sunday on which *Common Worship* is first used in your church, if (for some particular reason) you have needed to delay its introduction beyond the New Year.

What is presented here is a selection of resources, some or all of which could form part of a locally devised special service, or be included in a ‘normal’ Sunday service.

It may be appropriate to allow for some expression of thanks for the ASB and what it represented for people, without making that the focus.

You may want to dedicate new books or orders of service, but it should be clear that *Common Worship* is not about a new book but about a new era in Church of England worship.

In general, the propers for the day and season (e.g. Advent: CW pp. 300f; SB pp. 154f) are the natural place to start. Suggestions below are intended for situations where something else is required or desirable.

Penitence

Consider using the following to introduce the confession:

- ¶ CW Supplementary Texts for Holy Communion, second form of The Commandments, with New Testament ‘commentary’ provided for each Commandment (CW pp. 270f; SB pp. 124f). This works particularly well if two voices are used, one for the Old Testament Commandment, and the other for the New Testament passage. This would be particularly appropriate in Advent. This is then followed by a confession.

For the confession itself, consider using one of the following:

- ¶ the second form (CW p. 276; SB p. 130): ‘Almighty God, our heavenly Father ...’;
- ¶ the forms in the main Order One service;
- ¶ the form for Trinity and Mission: ‘O King enthroned on high ...’ (CW p. 125, or *Patterns for Worship* p. 42).

Bible readings

The readings set for the day in the lectionary would normally be used if the service is the Principal Service of the day. However, *Common Worship* gives scope for other provision to be used for some parts of the year, particularly if the service is not a service of Holy Communion (see the Notes to A Service of the Word and the Lectionary). In this case, some or all of the following could be used in place of the lectionary readings:

- ¶ Amos 5.21-27: the importance of putting public worship in the larger context of God's concerns for justice and right living (especially in the context of the coming Day of the Lord);
- ¶ Psalm 96: a song of encouragement to God's people to praise him, in the context of the praise offered by the whole creation;
- ¶ Romans 12.1-8: worship as the offering of the whole of our lives to be lived for God as a living sacrifice;
- ¶ John 4.7-24: Jesus reveals the ultimate criteria for worship which pleases God – that which is offered in spirit and truth.

Sermon

Use one or more of the readings above to suggest preaching ideas. You may find useful material in the Ideas for Sermons and Addresses section, page 11 below.

Intercessions

Topics for inclusion in the intercessions

You could include in the intercessions some or all of the following:

- ¶ Those who must worship in secret for fear of imprisonment or other punishment.
- ¶ Those who glorify God by working in his name for justice.
- ¶ Those who share in the leading of public worship in your church.
- ¶ The leaders of other worshipping communities in your area – including other Christian churches and the worship places of any other faiths represented in your locality. Don't forget prisons, hospitals, schools and colleges, and groups such as deaf people.
- ¶ Those who devise and authorize worship material for the wider Church – including the Church of England Liturgical Commission, the House of Bishops and the General Synod.
- ¶ Those who train and resource leaders of worship – including your local theological course and/or college, Reader trainers, OLM trainers (if applicable), Diocesan Liturgical Committee (or its equivalent), *Praxis*, etc.
- ¶ If you have ASBs (which are about to go out of use) given in memory of people, or given by members of the congregation, give thanks for those who gave the books and/or those in whose memory they were given.

Consider using the fifth form of intercession in the Supplementary texts for *Common Worship* Holy Communion (CW pp. 286f; SB pp. 140f) and conclude the prayers with either the first or sixth of the Collects and Other Endings for Intercession (CW pp. 288f; SB pp. 142f).

Alternatively, use the form given below:

*A form of intercession for the
launch of Common Worship*

Gathered in the name of Jesus, let us pray to the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

All Lord, receive our praise
and hear our prayer.

Father, you have made Jesus the high priest of a new covenant, and have called us to share his priestly ministry in your world. We pray for those who bring praise to your name by their actions in the world; for peacemakers and those who work for justice; for aid workers and those who risk their lives for others; for mission partners and those who leave familiar surroundings to serve in your name ...

All Lord, receive our praise
and hear our prayer.

Father, your prophets declared the temple to be a house of prayer for all. By your grace you have made us into a living temple, a dwelling for your Holy Spirit. We pray for those who find public prayer difficult: for those who feel excluded or ignored, for those who do not understand the Church's ways, for those brought up with no knowledge of your love. Help us to make our worship open and welcoming to all ...

All Lord, receive our praise
and hear our prayer.

Father, your Son laid down his life to pave the way to glory, and calls us to follow him in the way of the cross. Help us to lay down our lives for the sake of others, that both our lives and our liturgy may be a living sacrifice, pleasing in your sight. Strengthen those who take decisions about the Church's worship on our behalf, those who lead our services and preach the gospel ...

All Lord, receive our praise
and hear our prayer.

Father, the Scriptures urge us to seek the prayers of your people when we are in need and suffering. Hear our prayers for those who need your strength or your healing touch today... Especially we pray for those who are prevented from worshipping with us ...

All Lord, receive our praise
and hear our prayer.

Father, round your throne the whole company of heaven falls down and worships, and the prayers of your people rise up before you like incense. We thank you for the faithful who have worshipped you in this place. Make us ready for that day when we take our place with them and with all your saints and angels.

All Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

Thanking God for the past

If it is appropriate, give the opportunity for one or two people from the congregation to speak about the ASB and the positive impact it has had on them and their worship. For instance, there may be someone who found the introduction of the Peace at Communion a positive experience (especially if they found it strange at first), or someone who came to faith since 1980 and has only known the services of the ASB. Someone might be willing to speak about their favourite prayer from the ASB.

It may be appropriate to combine this with some thanksgiving for *The Book of Common Prayer* as well, but it will be important to distinguish between the two, as it is only the ASB which is replaced by *Common Worship* – the Prayer Book remains available for use.

If appropriate, use this or a similar prayer to sum up the thanks of the congregation for the ASB and all that it represents:

God of countless generations,
for whom a thousand years are like a passing day:
your love is constant in a changing world.
We thank you for the privilege and joy of worship;
for the generations of those who have worshipped you
 [in this place];
for the timeless treasures of our faith
and for the words and actions which express that faith, in time
 and place.
[We give thanks for these books,
 and for the worship which has been led from them.]
Help us always to fix our eyes on Jesus,
and make us ready for that day when we shall see you face
 to face
and worship you for ever.
Through him who is the Spirit and the Truth of all our worship,
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Extended Preface

If seasonal propers are not being used, the Extended Preface (but not any of the other material) for a Saint's Day (suitably amended at the sixth line) would be a good alternative (CW p. 329; SB p. 183). The Extended Prefaces are for use with Eucharistic Prayers A, B and E in Order One.

Dedication of new books or service booklets

If you are using new worship materials (whether books, booklets or locally produced orders of service), it may be appropriate to dedicate them to God for use in public worship.

This could take place at the beginning of the service, after the sermon, or before the intercessions.

A representative book could be placed on the holy table, or the prayer might be said at the place where books are stored, or the congregation might hold copies in their hands.

The following, or some other suitable form, could be used:

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

Gracious God,
you have made us in your image,
with restless hearts that long to find their peace in you.
Make our worship worthy to join the praises in heaven,
and bless us as we use these books/booklets/orders of service,
which we dedicate to your service,
that through them we may express with our lips
the praise of our hearts and lives.
We ask in the name of him through whom our praises rise to you,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

¶ Ideas for sermons and addresses

Here are four possible outlines on the subject of worship in general and *Common Worship* in particular. Some of these ideas will be more appropriate for a sermon, others for an address in some other context. These ideas may be useful in the period before and/or after the introduction of *Common Worship* as well as at a service specifically to launch the new services. Use and adapt as required.

This material is available on the Church of England web site: www.cofe.anglican.org/commonworship so you may want to adapt it from there to form the basis of a handout, notes for the notice sheet or an article in the church magazine.

Outline 1

Seeing the bigger picture

Key text: Romans 12.1-2 ‘... present your bodies as a living sacrifice ... this is your spiritual worship.’

1 **Worship is corporate**

In the passage, ‘bodies’ is plural, but ‘sacrifice’ is singular. Much of our thinking about worship focuses on the individual’s experience of God and therefore tends to get caught up with our own needs and preferences. In *Common Worship*, the sense of ‘gathering’ as a congregation is seen as vital.

2 **Worship is more than church**

Paul could have written, ‘present your souls as a living sacrifice’. Worship certainly includes body, mind and spirit, but the offering of our whole selves (symbolized here by ‘bodies’) encompasses our daily lives. *Common Worship* services don’t simply end, they send us out to live our worship.

3 **Worship is sacrifice**

Personal sacrifice is not a popular model for worship today. We take for granted that the Christian life involves putting others first and serving them – but in church worship we often revert to seeking our own preferences.

Common Worship will make no long-term difference unless our hearts are changed to become truly sacrificial in worship – considering the needs of others (including visitors) as well as our own, for the good of all. Worship will never be truly ‘common’ if it is based on defending our particular preferences, rather than sharing our insights.

This is important because it is in worship that we model publicly and symbolically what the Christian life is about.

Outline 2

What do we think we are doing?

Use the four main sections of Holy Communion Order One as a fourfold structure for a sermon (or series of sermons or addresses) on Holy Communion:

- ¶ The Gathering of the People of God
- ¶ The Liturgy of the Word
- ¶ The Liturgy of the Sacrament
- ¶ The Dismissal.

Within this structure the middle two sections represent our engagement with God and transformation by God. The Gathering moves us from being a collective group of individuals to being the body of Christ, worshipping corporately. The final section is brief but essential, sending us out to live what we have said, done and sung.

See also the introduction to the Sample Book (SB p. 6) and the page showing the structure of Holy Communion Orders One and Two (CW pp. 166 and 228; SB pp. 17 and 81), and look at the resources available in ‘Where else to look for help’ on pages 41–3.

A feature of *Common Worship* which is already arousing a good deal of interest is the new translation of parts of the Nicene Creed. Christmas and Epiphany would be good times to focus a sermon on this particular change. It can be used as an opportunity to preach on the importance of the incarnation and the ways that Christians have tried to express this truth over the centuries.

Outline 3

The principles behind Common Worship

1 The importance of structure and shape

Worship is primarily an event, with a shape and structure. The words are important, but secondary. For instance, in the ASB, Holy Communion Rites A and B differed in their language. *Common Worship* Order 1 and Order 2 differ in their shape.

2 Culture

The new services try to engage with contemporary culture in various ways:

- ¶ choice and flexibility;
- ¶ use of inclusive language for texts referring to people;
- ¶ use of richer and deeper language, more pictorial and evocative;
- ¶ a holding together of the traditional and the contemporary (the so-called 'postmodern' approach).

3 Connections

Common Worship tries to make connections at different levels:

- ¶ with our heritage, by giving a valued place to services and prayers from the Prayer Book;
- ¶ across the Church of England 'family' by allowing local flexibility within a framework of clear structures and a core of familiar texts;
- ¶ with other Christians, by sharing structures and some texts in common.

4 Formation

Worship not only *expresses* our beliefs and assumptions about God, but *forms* them: it makes us what we are as Christians.

This means working hard to get our worship as 'right' as it can be, not just in the short term, but with an eye to the long-term implications and what this worship will 'do' to us over many years of use.

Outline 4

Worship and change

Key text: John 4.24 'God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.'

Key point: Determining what worship 'in spirit and truth' means is not necessarily straightforward. Every generation seeks to explore it, and *Common Worship* is one result of the Church of England trying to work out what it means today.

1 Putting change into perspective

- ¶ Liturgical change in the Church of England is not new – consider the changes in the sixteenth century, as the Reformers (and Queen Mary) tried to impose worship that they considered to be 'in spirit and truth'.
- ¶ Without change we would miss out on good things (plenty of general examples, but includes *The Book of Common Prayer* itself).

2 The change to *Common Worship*

- ¶ Give information about the new services: they replace the ASB; they are flexible; they are available in many formats.
- ¶ Outline the timetable and details of the changeover nationally and locally.

3 Why change?

- ¶ Why change ever? Because gradual change in worship is not unnatural but natural. Fixed uniform texts were made possible largely through the invention of printing. They have resulted in variety emerging in other areas of worship (e.g. music and ritual).
- ¶ Why make *this* change? Because the ASB was never intended to last for ever, and its weaknesses as well as its strengths have become apparent with use.

4 What does *Common Worship* mean for us?

- ¶ That depends largely on us. We have the responsibility for deciding which parts of *Common Worship* to use and how to adapt them for our situation – the local implications of 'spirit and truth'.
- ¶ It is important to see *Common Worship* as a launchpad for deeper thinking about our worship as a whole.

For more information, see the red booklet *Planning for Change: Suggestions and Ideas*, which was sent to clergy in April 2000.

Learning more about *Common Worship*: Material for study and discussion

These materials are designed to be used in small groups, such as:

- † home groups
- † Bible study groups
- † any other existing groups such as Mothers' Union, Youth groups, etc.

or as part of a course, for instance an Advent or Lent study course. In the latter case they might usefully be supplemented by resources such as *Praxis* training packs on Initiation Services, Holy Communion Services and 'Making the Change'. For details see 'Where else to look for help' on pages 41–3.

The aim is to increase familiarity with the *Common Worship* material and to deepen understanding of Christian worship generally. You probably won't want to use all the ideas, so be selective.

The material assumes easy access to the contents of the *Common Worship* main volume, either by having copies available or by photocopying relevant parts. If you are using this material before the publication of the *Common Worship* main volume, you can download and print the relevant pages from the Internet (www.cofe.anglican.org/commonworship).

Common Worship, of course, extends much further than this, taking in material such as Healing and Wholeness, Marriage and Funeral Services, all of which are found in *Common Worship: Pastoral Services*. The study material given here does not attempt to encompass these services, important though they are. For more study material on these services, see *Understanding Worship: A Praxis Study Guide* (details in 'Where else to look for help', page 42).

Each session ends with some worship ideas. A group meeting in the evening might naturally finish by using the service of Night Prayer (Compline), in either its contemporary or traditional language form (CW, pp. 81ff or 88ff). Other suggestions are given, which could replace or supplement this.

Discussion

I **Seeing the shape of the year**

Look at the seasons of the Christian Year (CW pp. 2–3):

- ¶ Which is your favourite season of the Christian Year? Can you explain why?

Scholars think that the keeping of Sunday as a special day ('the Lord's Day' – Revelation 1.10) was the first part of the Christian Year to develop, and that it came from the weekly celebration of the 'first day', the day of creation and of resurrection (Acts 20.7; I Corinthians 16.2). It was followed by Easter, which became the *annual* celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus, so that Easter was like a 'big Sunday', rather than Sunday being a 'mini-Easter'.

The sense of Sunday being special did not depend, for the early Christians, on its being a day of rest, as Sunday did not become a 'day off' until the fourth century.

- ¶ Does Sunday feel to you like a celebration of the day of resurrection?
- ¶ Can you think of any ways that your church could recapture a sense of the specialness of 'the Lord's Day' as a celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ, even in a situation where many worshippers have to work on Sundays?

The first Christians seem to have had a sense both of the specialness of 'the Lord's Day' and of the fact that ultimately all days are equally God-given. For example, the New Testament teaches that the observance of 'special' times is essentially a human invention, which can be helpful, but which should not become a burden – see for instance, Galatians 4.8-11, Colossians 2.16-17 and Jesus' teaching about the Sabbath in Mark 2.27.

- ¶ Do you think that the Church today (both the wider Church and your local church) gets the balance right?

2 My hero

The lists of 'holy days' (CW pp. 5ff) contain the names of Christians down the centuries who have been examples to other Christians and have inspired their own and later generations to want to follow Christ more closely.

- ¶ Who are your 'spiritual heroes'? Can you name one person from the past and one person in your own lifetime (known to you personally or not, famous or not) and say what it is about them that inspires or has helped you in your own Christian life?
- ¶ Look through the lists from January to December. Imagine that you were only allowed to keep five special people or days to celebrate in the year (apart from the major feasts such as Epiphany and Christmas). Which five people or days would you choose, and why?

3 Living with Ordinary Time

The *Common Worship* calendar and lectionary is split into 'Seasonal Time' and 'Ordinary Time'. Ordinary Time is the Sundays between the end of the Epiphany season and the beginning of Lent, and the Sundays between Pentecost and the beginning of Advent.

Most of the Sundays in Ordinary Time have no natural theme or focus – any theme that is developed will have to be determined locally, largely on the basis of the readings and the decisions about how the rest of the service and the sermon will relate to them (for instance, you may choose to preach primarily on the Gospel reading each week and to develop a theme for the service from that). A consequence of this is that during Ordinary Time the Collects rarely work as 'theme prayers' as the ASB ones did.

- ¶ Do you like a service to have a strong theme which is made clear from the start and maintained throughout, or do you prefer the service to leave room for you to make your own links between readings and with other aspects of the worship?

4 Worship and belief

Some of the parts of the New Testament which seem most concerned with right belief, seem also to reflect a poetic structure which suggests that they may have been used in the context of worship or prayer (for instance, 1 Corinthians 15.3-5 and Philipians 2.5-11).

The Declaration of Assent is made by clergy at their ordinations and whenever they take up a new appointment. Read the Preface to the Declaration of Assent (CW p. xi). It mentions three historic formularies of the Church of England:

- 1 *The Book of Common Prayer*
- 2 The Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons (that is, the ordination services)
- 3 The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion.

Significantly, the first two of these are liturgical texts. The Church of England has traditionally associated its doctrine very closely with its worship. The connection can work both ways: belief influencing worship and worship influencing belief.

¶ In your own life how has the two-way connection between worship and belief been expressed? Have you chosen to worship in your particular church because of certain beliefs? How have your beliefs been shaped and formed by the worship you have experienced?

¶ Can you think of non-verbal aspects of worship (symbolism, colour, movement, drama, music) which have strongly influenced how you think of God?

Common Worship is based on the principle of local flexibility in worship within clear frameworks and with a limited set of options for some parts of the service. The aim is a sense of 'family likeness' from one church to another, without rigid uniformity.

¶ Do you think that this is enough to preserve a sense of coherent doctrine across the Church? If not, what else do you think could or should be done at the national, diocesan and local levels?

Worship suggestions

Use a hymn or song which is appropriate for the season of the Christian Year or a recent saint's day, or use a hymn such as 'For all the saints, who from their labours rest'. If the group is too small to sing comfortably, then read it out.

Say or sing the canticle 'A Song of Praise' from Revelation 4 and 5 (CW p. 794).

Use a collect appropriate to the season, or use the Collect for the saint after whom the church is named, or the Collect for All Saints' Day (CW pp. 422 or 494).

¶ A Service of the Word

A Service of the Word is the *Common Worship* framework governing non-Eucharistic worship on Sundays and weekdays.

The modern language forms of Morning and Evening Prayer in the main *Common Worship* volume are intended for Sundays. However, the daily forms, eventually to be published in a *Common Worship* daily prayer volume, are likely to be of a similar shape, if somewhat simpler in form.

Discussion

1 Ready to begin

Read Note I for A Service of the Word (CW p. 26) and the first part of the paragraph about Preparation (CW p. 22).

- ¶ How do you prefer the atmosphere in church to be before the service starts? Noisy and lively? Quiet and reverent? Some other combination? And does it depend on what sort of service it is, what time of day, etc.?
- ¶ What most helps you to feel that the service is ‘properly starting’: an opening hymn or song; a ‘liturgical greeting’; an informal welcome?

2 Core content

Look at the outline of A Service of the Word (CW p. 24). This is designed to give a list of key elements in a non-Eucharistic service. Some are compulsory, and some are simply recommended. Some have a limited choice of texts (e.g. Prayers of Penitence) and others have a wide choice (e.g. Intercessions and Thanksgivings).

- ¶ If you were constructing a list of ‘must-have’ elements in a service like this, what things from this list would you omit, and are there any other things that you would add?
- ¶ Discuss the different priorities in worship revealed by this.

3 Duty or privilege?

The Introduction to Morning and Evening Prayer on Sunday (CW p. 29) says: 'These orders of service ... are intended to help Christians of our own day take their part in this privilege and duty which belongs to all God's priestly people.'

- ¶ Do you see the offering of praise and intercession as a 'privilege and duty'? How else would you describe it?

4 What are we here for?

Look at the opening prayer for Morning or Evening Prayer on Sunday (CW pp. 30 or 38), beginning, 'We have come together in the name of Christ ...'

- ¶ Thinking about your own non-Eucharistic services on a Sunday, can you note down how the different parts of the service match the things mentioned in the prayer?

5 Praying continually

The apostle Paul wrote to the Christians at Thessalonica that they should 'pray continually' (1 Thessalonians 5.17).

- ¶ What do you think he envisaged? How can we do it?

The daily cycle of prayer at various times of the day developed as one way in which Christians tried to fulfil that injunction.

- ¶ At which times of day do you find it easiest or hardest to pray? Why?

6 A perilous night

Look at An Evening Collect ('Lighten our darkness ...' CW pp.79 or 101).

- ¶ What do you consider to be the present-day 'perils and dangers' of the night? What would you put if you were re-writing this prayer?

Worship suggestions

Sing or read an appropriate hymn for the time of day (most hymn books give a selection of morning and evening hymns).

Read Nehemiah 8.5-10.

Use either the Nunc dimittis (CW pp. 799 or 813) or Magnificat (CW pp. 798 or 811) if the group is meeting in the evening, or the Benedictus (CW pp. 798 or 809) if it is meeting in the morning.


Alternatively, use material from the Thanksgiving for the Word (CW pp. 46f).

Conclude with the Lord's Prayer (modern or traditional form, e.g. CW p. 36) and, if desired, the Peace (using words on CW p. 37).


Discussion

I Approaching communion

Thomas Cranmer (responsible for writing or compiling most of the BCP) always intended that the people should receive communion weekly, but in the Church of England Holy Communion has sometimes been celebrated less frequently than that. These days it has become more common as a main Sunday service and, in some churches, is celebrated daily.




-  Do you think that there is a danger that ‘familiarity breeds contempt’? How can we avoid that danger?

Read I Corinthians 11.23-34.

-  What do you think Paul means by ‘failing to recognise the body of the Lord’ (v. 27)?

Read the short exhortation in Order Two (Contemporary) (CW p. 256; SB p. 110) and the Third Exhortation from the BCP (from a Prayer Book or CW p. 245; SB p. 99, shortened if necessary).

Some people feel hesitant about receiving communion if they feel ‘unworthy’ for some particular reason. On the other hand, many come to communion without giving it a second thought.

-  Do you think that people in the Church of England today have become too casual in their approach to communion?
-  Do you think that sometimes the sense of reverence surrounding communion discourages the very people who most need the reassurance of God’s love that it represents?
-  Can you think of ways of encouraging and helping people in your congregation to prepare for communion? (Take a look at A Form of Preparation – CW pp. 161ff; SB pp. 11ff.)

2 The note on ‘Ministries’

The note (CW pp. 158f ; SB pp. 8f) discusses the different ministries within a Holy Communion service and suggests traditional ways in which those ministries have been focused on different persons.

- ¶ Think about who does what in your Holy Communion services. Are those jobs assigned for primarily practical or symbolic reasons? Do you think there is any need for change?

3 The Collect

The Collect is meant to do what the name suggests: ‘collect up’ the prayers of the people. The rubric at the Collect says:

‘The president introduces a period of silent prayer with the words “Let us pray” or a more specific bidding. The Collect is said, and all respond “Amen”.’

- ¶ If you were leading the service, what would you say to give a more ‘specific bidding’ to introduce the silence before the Collect?
- ¶ Are there other points in the communion service at which you appreciate (or would appreciate) the use of silence? (Compare with the list at Note 8, CW p. 331.)

4 The Gospel reading

The *Common Worship* responses before and after the Gospel – ‘Glory to you, O Lord’ and ‘Praise to you, O Christ’ – like those in ASB Rite B, are addressed more directly to Christ, than those in ASB Rite A. The aim is to emphasize the presence of Christ in the midst of us, as the Gospel is proclaimed.

Some churches have processions and other ceremonial to symbolize the importance of the Gospel reading in the Holy Communion service, and Note I (CW p. 330; SB p. 184) says that, at the least, the people should stand.

A rubric before the Gospel reading in Order One, Order One (Traditional) and Order Two (Contemporary) also draws attention to the possibility of using an ‘Alleluia’ acclamation prior to the reading of the Gospel, and a selection is provided in the Supplementary Texts (CW pp. 280 and 300ff; SB pp. 134 and 154ff). These acclamations could be said or sung.

- ¶ Can you think of other ways to make the Gospel reading feel like a high point in the service?

5 The Creed

In Holy Communion Order One and Order Two (Contemporary) the Nicene Creed follows the original Greek text: 'We believe in one God ...' (CW p.173).

In Order Two and Order One (Traditional) it is in the form 'I believe in one God ...', following the later Latin translation (CW pp. 234 and 213).

¶ Which do you prefer, and why?

6 Eucharistic Prayers

The New Testament includes many passages that link Jesus with eating in different contexts:

- ¶ miraculous feedings (Mark 6.30-44 and parallels; Mark 8.2-9; John 6.30-59);
- ¶ eating with sinners (Mark 2.15-16 and parallels; Luke 7.36-39; Luke 19.1-10);
- ¶ the Last Supper and Passover (Mark 14.12-26 and parallels; John 13:1-5; I Corinthians 11.23-26);
- ¶ meals with his disciples after his resurrection (Luke 24.28-32 and 36-43; John 21.1-14);
- ¶ the heavenly banquet or wedding supper (Matthew 25.1-13; Luke 14.15-24 and parallel).

Give each member of the group one of the Order One Eucharistic Prayers (CW pp. 184ff; SB pp. 36ff) and the 'Giving of Communion' pages (CW pp. 180f; SB pp. 32f) and ask them to see which of the New Testament stories and images they can find echoed in the liturgy.

7 Humble Access

Order One and Order Two (Contemporary) give two forms of prayer which may be used before the distribution of communion (CW pp. 181 and 260; SB pp. 33 and 114), the first of which is usually known as the Prayer of Humble Access, and is based on a prayer found in *The Book of Common Prayer* (and also in Order Two, CW p. 240; SB p. 94). The second prayer is a modern composition.

The prayers say much the same thing, but use slightly different imagery.

¶ Which do you prefer, and why?

Worship suggestions

Sing or read a hymn or song about the death and resurrection of Christ.

Read Revelation 19.6-10.

Use the post communion prayer for Maundy Thursday (altered to read '...we thank you that in a wonderful sacrament ...', CW pp. 398 or 471).

Discussion

Further material, which may be useful background, can be found in the Introduction and Commentary in *Common Worship: Initiation Services*, CHP, 1998.

1 What is baptism about?

There are many ways of understanding baptism and salvation, described or hinted at in the New Testament (see the table on page 191 of *Common Worship: Initiation Services*). Among these, three principal models have dominated:

- 1 Baptism as dying and rising with Christ (Romans 6.1-11)
- 2 Baptism as new birth 'from above' or 'from the Spirit' (John 3.3-22; Titus 3.5)
- 3 Baptism as washing and forgiveness of sins (Acts 22.12-16; Titus 3.5; Hebrews 10.22).

All three (and more) are represented within the *Common Worship* baptismal material.

- ¶ Which of the three models do you tend to focus on when you think of baptism?
- ¶ Why do you think that is?

2 Deciding to follow Christ

Look at the Decision from the baptism service (CW p. 353). The second set of questions refers to 'turning', 'submitting' and 'coming' to Christ.

- ¶ Which of these words best sums up how you think of becoming a Christian?
- ¶ Do you have a sense of focusing on different aspects of this relationship to Christ at different times in your Christian life?

3 Praying for the baptized

Show people the post-baptismal prayer (CW p.357):

May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church,
pour upon you the *riches of his grace*.
that within the company of *Christ's pilgrim people*
you may daily be renewed by his *anointing Spirit*,
and come to the *inheritance of the saints in glory*.

All

Amen.

- ¶ Consider the four phrases in italics. How would you explain to a visitor to your church who is not a regular churchgoer what each of these phrases means? (With a larger group, split into two or four groups and distribute the phrases appropriately.)

4 Support on the journey

The *Common Worship* initiation services mention 'sponsors' for adult (or infant) candidates (e.g. at the presentation of the candidates, CW p. 352 and *Initiation Services* p. 21. See also *Initiation Services* Note 6, p. 17).

Sponsors support the candidates through the process of preparation for the service and encourage them in their ongoing growth as Christians. In the baptism service sponsors may present the candidate to the congregation, and at the signing with the cross they may sign the candidate after the president has done so.

- ¶ Try to form a 'job description' for sponsors that suggests what they might do to help and encourage candidates before and after the service itself.

5 Stages on the journey

The services of Confirmation, Affirmation of Baptismal Faith and Reception into the Communion of the Church of England all mark possible stages in the journey of faith of a Christian and all point back to the key event of baptism, which marks the public beginning of that journey.

- ¶ What other stages could there be in the life of a Christian which could be marked in public worship, or linked to worship, and what sort of service, words or symbolism would you use?

(Further material – found elsewhere in *Common Worship* or expected soon from the Liturgical Commission – offers resources for situations such as sickness and healing; sin and reconciliation; deliverance from addiction or spiritual oppression; and prayer near the time of death.)

Worship suggestions

Use the hymn 'Fight the good fight' (sung if possible or, failing that, said together or with different people reading each verse). The second verse ('Run the straight race') is particularly appropriate.

Consider splitting the hymn up and having prayer (led, open, or a combination of both) between the verses. The focus of prayers could be as follows:

- ¶ after verse 1 ('Fight the good fight'): prayer for strength to resist temptation and evil, in our own lives and in society;
- ¶ after verse 2 ('Run the straight race'): prayer for new Christians, or those who are finding the Christian way difficult;
- ¶ after verse 3 ('Cast care aside'): prayer for those in particular need within the group, the church and the wider community;
- ¶ after verse 4 ('Faint not nor fear'): say the Lord's Prayer together (making it clear beforehand whether you are using the traditional or a modern form).

Conclude the prayers by using this prayer from the baptism service (CW p. 350):

Heavenly Father,
by the power of your Holy Spirit
you give to your faithful people new life in the water of baptism.
Guide and strengthen us by the same Spirit,
that we who are born again may serve you in faith and love,
and grow into the full stature of your Son, Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

Reaching out with *Common Worship*: Making connections with mission

Flexibility

One of the main aims of the *Common Worship* services is to provide enough flexibility within a common framework for individual congregations to adapt the services to fit their own mission context. This is particularly clear with outline orders of service such as A Service of the Word (CW p. 24), A Service of the Word with Holy Communion (CW p. 25) and The Outline Order for Funerals (*Common Worship: Pastoral Services*, p. 257), but it is true of all *Common Worship* services.

Why not have a discussion at your PCC or Worship Committee about the culture and values of the parish or situation you are called to serve? Consider which *Common Worship* options will be most appropriate and at which points you may need to draw on or devise material even more appropriate to the local context.

Easing the way for visitors

I Following the services

Common Worship services are designed to be easy to follow:

- ¶ The page design is spacious and as uncluttered as possible.
- ¶ Where there is a choice of text for the congregation, two options are given in the main text (as well as further choices in supplementary material). For instance, two forms of confession and two forms of the Lord's Prayer are printed in the main text.
- ¶ Where there is a choice for the minister, this is indicated by rubric in the main text, but the options are all provided in supplementary material.
- ¶ The services are designed to be easy to follow through from start to finish without having to skip pages.

Do your printed materials achieve a balance between variety and simplicity? In the services themselves do you work for a balance between, on the one hand, letting the service flow without interruption and, on the other, making sensible announcements to ensure everyone knows where they are?

2 Presentation of the words

All of the *Common Worship* services are being published not only in book or booklet form, but also in electronic form, in order to make it easier for individual congregations to devise orders of service that fit their particular needs and context, and particularly the needs of visitors and those who worship less frequently.

If you are producing your own orders of service, is the structure of the service made clear, through section headings and layout?

Consider your own practice. How are your services presented? Books? Booklets? Locally produced service booklets or cards? Words projected on to a screen?

Who makes these decisions in your church, and for whose benefit are these decisions taken? If you have a mission or outreach committee, have they been involved in making decisions about worship?

3 Presentation of the act of worship

Common Worship encourages the use of music, symbol and action to accompany the liturgical text. What symbol, action and ritual is part of your regular worship? What does it communicate to those who have no background understanding? Is it giving the message intended, or is something quite different being communicated?

It is not easy to determine the answers to these sorts of questions. Can you think of any ways of finding out? Would it be possible gently to enquire of those who are fairly new to the church? Could a home group (or other small group) be given the task of trying to explore this?

Opening the Prayer Book to new worshippers

Visitors who attend services from *The Book of Common Prayer* may find the book itself a bit confusing, if they are not used to it. Most churches use it with ‘customary variations’ which are not in the text at all (or which involve omitting parts of the text), and the absence of headings makes it hard for the uninitiated to see the shape of the service.

By providing services based on Prayer Book Morning and Evening Prayer and Prayer Book Holy Communion (including the customary variations and providing the text in a spacious layout with clear headings and easily distinguished rubrics), *Common Worship* makes it easier for a new generation to engage with the riches of the Church of England’s Prayer Book worship.

Have you considered ways of making Prayer Book services more accessible for those not used to them?

Passing on Christian teaching

Some of the *Common Worship* Pastoral Services (such as Marriage, Funerals and Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child) include a ‘pastoral introduction’, which is printed before the service, intended for the congregation to read.

If you are producing your own orders of service for these pastoral services, consider printing the pastoral introduction in your own editions of the service. Even better, produce them cheaply and encourage members of the congregation at such services to take them home with them, rather than leaving them in church. It’s a small step, but it’s another way of getting a little bit of Christian teaching into people’s homes.

On the Way

The *Common Worship* services of initiation are largely based on key thinking that was presented in the report *On the Way: Towards an Integrated Approach to Christian Initiation*, CHP, 1995.

This report, the *Common Worship* initiation services and the Liturgical Commission's subsequently produced (and, as yet, unfinished work) *Rites on the Way* (GS Misc 530, 1998) all work towards the idea that the public liturgy of initiation and the actual patterns of evangelism and nurture in the local church should be connected and not seen as two separate things.

If you have not done so, consider using *On the Way* as the basis of a major discussion at your PCC about patterns of evangelism and nurture in your church, and how they may be integrated with your pattern of Baptism, Confirmation and Affirmation of Baptismal Faith – and with the preparation offered for these services.

Dismissal and mission

The post communion prayer ('Send us out in the power of your Spirit, to live and work to your praise and glory ...') and final dismissal ('Go in peace to love and serve the Lord') in Holy Communion Order One and Order One (Traditional) make clear that the primary worship of Christians takes place outside church, in the way our lives are lived. Yet often our services make few connections with our daily lives, our communities and our work.

Can you think of ways of increasing the sense of connection?
Are changes needed in the content or pattern of intercessions?
The *Common Worship* initiation services encourage the giving of testimony by candidates – are there ways, within regular Sunday worship, of encouraging and allowing people to 'tell the story' of their lives outside church, and of how they encounter and serve God there?

Praying with *Common Worship*: Making connections with spirituality

It is hoped that the main *Common Worship* volume will be used at home as well as in church.

This section includes some suggestions about how to use *Common Worship* services and prayers in personal devotions and household worship, thus forging connections between public liturgy and private prayer.

Collects

The Collect of the day could be used in household or private prayer on Sunday and during the rest of the week. Why not try to learn by heart the Collect for each week – or at least some of those for the major festivals?

Morning and Evening Prayer on Sunday

If you don't attend Morning Prayer on Sunday at your church, could you use elements of the service (CW pp. 30ff or pp. 62ff) at home first thing in the morning, or as part of family prayers on Sunday?

Night Prayer

The forms of Night Prayer (CW pp. 81ff or pp. 89ff) may be used by individuals or households at home. This might be especially commended as a discipline in Lent and/or Advent. Perhaps parts of the service could be reproduced in the church magazine or as a special booklet for people to take home.

Praying at home

The Prayers for Various Occasions section (CW pp. 101ff) contains lots of material that could be useful in personal or corporate prayer in the home, including collect-style prayers, litanies and forms of confession.

For structured ways of praying for others, see the Forms of Intercession (CW pp. 281ff; SB pp. 135ff).

Canticles




There is a large selection of canticles and other scriptural songs (CW pp. 776ff). A table suggests canticles that are especially suitable for different seasons of the Christian Year (CW p. 57). The appropriate canticle could be used as an act of praise before or after meals, or as a final act of worship before retiring to bed.

The Form of Preparation for Holy Communion

The Form of Preparation is a new feature for Church of England liturgy, printed before any of the Orders of Holy Communion (CW pp. 161ff; SB pp. 11ff).

Possible uses

It can be used by individuals, families or households as part of their devotional preparation for Holy Communion in a number of different ways:

-  at home, immediately before the service;
-  at home, on the night before the service;
-  as part of personal preparation at church before the service begins.

Facilitating its use

Here are some ideas for how to make the Form of Preparation available to worshippers (especially if copies of the main CW service book or booklets are not available):

- ¶ Print the material in the parish magazine for Lent.
- ¶ Print the material in the front of your order of service booklets for Holy Communion, or any seasonal orders of service for Lent or Advent.
- ¶ Print the material in a separate booklet for people to use at home.
- ¶ Other material (such as prayers, songs, hymns, readings or poems) could be added that are particularly appropriate for your church, or for the season of the Christian Year (e.g. Advent or Christmas).

A Thanksgiving for Holy Baptism

This short act of thanksgiving (CW pp. 48f) is designed to be used as part of Morning or Evening Prayer on Sunday. Why not use it, or parts of it, as a celebration of an individual's anniversary of baptism? If a candle was given at the baptism itself, it could be lit at the start of this short service, which might precede or follow a meal. Have some water ready to use where the service indicates using the font. The post-baptismal prayer at the bottom of page 357 could also be used.

Alternatively, the thanksgiving could be used at home on the Feast of the Baptism of Christ (the First Sunday of Epiphany).

A Thanksgiving for the Healing Ministry of the Church

This short thanksgiving (CW pp. 50f) is designed to be part of Morning or Evening Prayer on Sunday. It, or parts of it, could be used in the home to celebrate the recovery of a family member who has been ill. It also includes provision for the ministry of healing (pp. 52f) and this could be used in a family or other small group where a member is ill and wishes to receive prayer and possibly the laying on of hands or anointing.

Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child

Parents (and other family members) might consider using the prayer at the top of CW page 342 (adapted to insert the name of the child at the end of the second line) on the birthday of a child. It could be used after the singing of 'Happy Birthday' and before blowing out the candles on the cake.

Where else to look for help

The Church of England

The *Common Worship* services and a lot of other resource material can be found on the Church of England's web site:

www.cofe.anglican.org/commonworship

Praxis

Praxis publishes a range of training materials and other resources:

- † Lectionary Training Pack (£5)
- † Initiation Services Training Pack (£10)
- † Holy Communion Services Training Pack (£8)
- † Pastoral Services Training Pack (£7)
- † *Making the Change* – explaining the changeover from ASB to *Common Worship* (£5).

You can order them post free, or request further details, from *Praxis* Resources

Sarum College Bookshop

19 The Close

Salisbury

Wilts SP1 2EE

Fax: 01722 338508

Email: bookshop@sarum.ac.uk

Web: www.sarum.ac.uk/praxis/

See also the four books in the *Praxis/Church House Publishing Using Common Worship* series, published on 22 September 2000 and available from Christian bookshops:

- † Mark Beach, *Using Common Worship: Holy Communion* (£8.95, ISBN 0 7151 2003 4)
- † Gilly Myers, *Using Common Worship: Initiation* (£8.95, ISBN 0 7151 2006 9)
- † Anne Horton, *Using Common Worship: Funerals* (£9.95, ISBN 0 7151 2005 0)
- † Stephen Lake, *Using Common Worship: Marriage* (£8.95, ISBN 0 7151 2004 2).

A twelve-session study course for small groups on Christian worship is due to be published in February 2001: Mark Earey, Perran Gay and Anne Horton, *Understanding Worship: A Praxis Study Guide*, Mowbrays, 2001.

Printing extracts from services

For advice and help on producing your own orders of service, or extracts from services (which may be useful for some of the suggestions above), see Mark Earey, *Producing Your Own Orders of Service*, Praxis/Church House Publishing, 2000 (£7.95, ISBN 0 7151 2001 8).

Copyright information can be found in *A Brief Guide to Liturgical Copyright* (Church House Publishing, 2000, £1.50, ISBN 0 7151 8112 2). This is also available from the Church of England's web site: www.cofe.anglican.org/commonworship/downloads/litcopy.rtf

RSCM

The Royal School of Church Music will be publishing music resources to go with the *Common Worship* services in November 2000:

- †† *Music for Common Worship I: Music for Sunday Services* (£15.95)
- †† *Music for Common Worship II: Music for the President* (£15.95)
- †† *Music for Common Worship III: A Basic Guide* (£7.95).

There is a special price of £35.00 for all three volumes as a set. RSCM affiliates can obtain special reduced prices.

For full details see their web site: www.rscm.com
To order: ring 01306 872811
or fax 01306 887240.

RSCM also have a national network of music advisers who arrange regional training events in addition to their national training programme.

Other books about *Common Worship*

Some of these books are available already, some are due out shortly, or in the early part of 2001:

- ¶ Dana Delap and Gareth Lloyd, *A Simple Guide to Common Worship*, Canterbury Press, 2000 (£4.99)
- ¶ Mark Earey and Gilly Myers (eds), *Common Worship Today*, HarperCollins, early 2001 (produced by the Group for the Renewal of Worship)
- ¶ Paul Bradshaw (ed.), *A Companion to Common Worship*, SPCK, Spring 2001 (produced by the Alcuin Club)
- ¶ Michael Perham, *A New Handbook of Pastoral Liturgy*, SPCK, Autumn 2000
- ¶ Relevant booklets in the Grove Worship Series (£2.25 each), including No.158 (*Eucharistic Prayers of Order One*) and No.159 (*Common Worship Communion: The Shape of Orders One and Two*).
Details from
Grove Books Ltd
Ridley Hall Road
Cambridge CB3 9HU
Tel: 01223 464748
Fax: 01223 464849

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Getting to Know 'Common Worship' is the latest in a series of materials made available by the Liturgical Publishing Group of the Archbishops' Council. The aim is to help leaders and congregation members to become more familiar with *Common Worship*, to enable them to prepare further for its introduction, and ultimately to use it so that God may be glorified.

Much of the material is designed to be used by lay people, either individually or in groups, in a variety of settings. Please feel free to photocopy the pages you require, or download them from www.commonworship.com

Further copies of the booklet are available (in packs of 5) only from

Church House Bookshop
Telephone 020 7898 1300
Online catalogue www.chpublishing.co.uk

£6.00 (packs of 5)