

REVIEW

"There's a Time and a Place". Jamie Wallace. Collins Liturgical Publications
1982 p.p. 142 + 16 Indexes £2.50

This is a rich book, full of imagination and insight. The author is a Baptist minister - and incidentally, a member of this Society - who has drawn on his wide experience in worship and religious drama ("Worship" he insists "is one of the performing arts.") to provide us with a helpful collection of "Prayers for the Christian Year."

The prayers belong to "one or more of the five movements which are discernible in modern free church worship". They arise out of specific passages of Scripture or they focus on particular hymns. (This sometimes gives them more of the character of meditations than prayers). They are for use on the occasions of the great festivals and seasons of the Church. All this might seem to put limits on their usefulness, but a splendid series of four indexes replete with cross-references makes the book flexible and abundantly useful to those preparing public worship. Mr. Wallace has an ear for rhythm and an eye for a catching phrase. "A grave gone wrong" expresses the astonishment and alarm of the women in the garden on the first Easter morning; and Low Sunday is given an immediate identity by the headings for the two sets of prayers for the day, "Looking in Looking out". The imagery throughout the book is vivid without being tiresome, and the air is fresh and invigorating. Occasionally there is a lapse, as in the heading for the 8th prayer for the Christmas season which reads, "Prayer by Those who are Merry for Those who Probably aren't". Any why has "Holy is his name" in the "Magnificat" been changed to "Worthy is his name"? On the whole, however, these minor infelicities do not diminish for this book the judgement of old Justice Swallow that "Good phrases are surely, and ever were, very commendable."

The whole book is "very commendable" with its sensitive illustrations and clear printing. And although it is but a paper-back, it is stoutly bound and will endure such wear and tear as might be expected of a much used resource book. For this book is to be used, not merely read, and to be used not just to "think my thoughts after me", but to provoke new prayers and new meditations of our own.

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