

Reviews

CHURCH MUSIC IN A CHANGING WORLD by DR. LIONEL DAKERS.

Mowbray pb. 113 pp £1.95p

The writer of this book, modest in size, format, and price has for some ten years, during a period of unprecented change and upheaval in the Church, been Director of the Royal School of Church Music, a unique institution with world-wide influence. Though in its origins in the '30s, the School was concerned almost exclusively with the Anglican Church, it can now claim to be truly ecumenical, though naturally its interest and influence tend to be proportionate to the use and importance accorded to music by the various branches of the church.

Dr. Dakers is at pains to point out that though his training for and life-long practice of music in worship might make him to be thought of as a too deeply involved professional, he has in fact written his book on the basis of his experience as a member of the congregation in his many visits to churches of all denominations. His keen insight and observation of the church-music scene is allied to a shrewd, highly intelligent, common-sense attitude, and his dedication to the cause of making music relevant and practical in its power to enrich worship is never in doubt.

It follows that this little book is a 'must' for all ministers and church-musicians, especially those who wield some authority in their own churches, but equally for students hoping to enter the ministry, who seem to receive so little training and advice on making music fully relevant and a really vital part of worship. It will also interest all for whom church worship has any importance.

The book is divided into six sections:

1. SETTING THE SCENE.
2. WHAT ARE THE CHANGES AND WHY?
3. THE MUSICAL CONSIDERATIONS.
4. THE PARSON AND THE ORGANIST - A JOINT MINISTRY?
5. SOME IMPORTANT INCIDENTALS.
6. THE WAY AHEAD?

Inevitably much of the first three parts are devoted to the changing format of services in the Anglican Church and the challenge, for contemporary composers, of setting to music the more direct and informal language increasingly used in modern worship. New hymnaries are surveyed and various ways of choosing and using them are discussed.

The 'Contents', helpfully, has such intriguing sub-headings as
The singing and playing of hymns.
Who chooses the hymns?
How many hymns should there be in a service?
Introducing new hymns.
Anthems ('a veritable bonanza of material')
The voluntary as such.
The use of instruments other than the organ.
When there is no organ.

CHAPTER 4 - "THE PARSON AND THE ORGANIST" - A JOINT MINISTRY?"

is probably the core of the book. Dr. Dakers hammers away at the need for a partnership between clergy and musicians, and suggests that 'director of music' or 'minister of music' may be a more accurate job description than organist .

A few typical complaints from ministers about organists and vice versa are discussed and prefaced with a most apt quotation: "Lord, help us to disagree, but without being disagreeable". The author seeks diligently to produce answers to sincerely held disagreements, some of which would be difficult to implement except where an organist has no other full-time job: "The preparatory work of each (minister and organist) is done in private, yet sees its fulfilment in public worship. How important it is to have a weekly staff-meeting for all who are in any way concerned with the preparation and presentation of Sunday worship".

Dr. Dakers pulls no punches in his insistence on partnership:
"I would go so far as to say that where the ordering of public worship is concerned, clergy/organist relationships are probably more crucial than any other single factor." He warns ministers that "one of the biggest crosses any organist has to bear is the parson who THINKS he knows all about music and is opinionated on the subject. It is surely not asking too much to suggest that a balance be aimed at." He counsels that "the organist should always have in mind that music is the handmaid of religion. He should never subscribe towards encouraging or allowing anything savouring of a liturgical concert. Leading on from this, I believe that every organist and choir director should have a basic knowledge of liturgy. Some knowledge of theology can be of equal value in helping a musician to understand better the nature and purpose of worship. An awareness of the historical growth of hymnody, not least the words, will make a church musician the better informed in a major aspect of his work."

"It follows that to be a complete church musician one must be a practising Christian." "The choir and organist can through their support and friendship be of immense help and encouragement to the minister, who in his turn is the more likely to reciprocate."

Such an idealistic philosophy may well prove impossible to realise on a wide scale, but all of us church musicians will find much of Dr Daker's advice helpful, not to say inspiring. The more of it we can implement, the more success we may have in attracting others into dedicating the practice of the art of music to the glory of God and the enhancement of public worship among our fellow Christians.

WILFRED NORRIS, BA., B.Mus., FRCO ,
Organist,
Bearsden South.

In our next issue, Mr Norris will offer "Some Reflections on Dr Daker's book by a Practising Organist in Scotland".

EDITOR.

Number One in a new series of Pittsburgh Theological Monographs,
"CLOUDED WITNESS Initiation in the Church of England in the Mid-
Victorian Period 1850 - 1875".

(Pickwick Publications, Pennsylvania, 1982, paperback, pp 223), is written by the Revd. PETER J. JAGGER, since 1977 Warden and Chief Librarian at St. Deiniol's, Hawarden. It is a carefully researched and plainly presented study. In the author's own summing-up, it is a demonstration that the Church of England today is 'simply taking a new look at old and unresolved problems which have exercised the minds of ... churchmen for over one hundred and twentyfive years'. In your reviewer's distorted judgement, it is also a demonstration that the Church of Jesus Christ cannot be reduced to the functions of a Society for the Implementation of the Book of Common Prayer.

Distorted, yes, for it is not only the ecumenical dimension that was lacking in the controversies of this period over the application of baptism and confirmation ('Could Dissenters baptise, even considered as lay ministrants?'), but also the social (vast increase and movement of the population) and the educational. The established Church in England had its own problems to worry about, within its own historical context. Perhaps it could have triumphed in its comprehensiveness, A.M.D.G.

But it did not. Baptism became (as now, as with us in Scotland) to many unimportant, to others a form of registration or guarantee of burial and salvation; Confirmation a last visit to the church - at least, for any sacramental occasion (the statistics, such as the author can show, are devastating). What controversy did occupy the great minds of the day? The theological. The question of the High and Low views upon baptismal regeneration. In many ways, a static question to all parties, which to your reviewer (as already confessed) remains a stumbling-block to the Gospel until it is put into its dynamic mode: What does baptism demand of a believer, child, adult, church? What does it signify to and effect upon the society and world? What is it that Christ does in common humanity with personal salvation?

The book will be of great value in evidencing the state of mind of the English Church at the moment when most of today's problems really began; that is, before the later Victorian 'glories' appeared to win the day.

The larger masses of the people were not won; the theological issues were still unrelated to the Kingdom of Christ.

(Which, by the way and not by accident, urges the reader and reviewer to think more about F.D. Maurice, who alone seems to have been awake. Is he now awakening others?)

A.W. MORRISON,
BRAID CHURCH, EDINBURGH

HOLY WEEK SERVICES (REVISED AND EXPANDED EDITION) Joint Liturgical Group
1983 SPCK Full Edition £4.50 Shorter Edition 95p

This work is largely the material offered in the Group's 1971 "Holy Week Services" booklet. Three simple improvements, however, have rendered these services significantly more helpful for the Church of Scotland parish:

- 1) The presentation is vastly improved. The 1971 edition was a stapled booklet of poor paper and small print. The full revised edition is an attractive paperback, stoutly bound with a good 'feel' and with clear filmset print.
- 2) The original contained only skeleton orders, whereas the new edition sets out the full text of services, including scripture portions and psalms.

It is thus now a service book and not merely a resource book. The full edition is accompanied by a shorter edition which omits the introductory essay and the text of the lections, and which is intended as a people's service book so that there may be maximum congregational participation.

3) The Group has responded to criticism of the 1971 edition that only thematic services (Penitence, Obedience, Service) were offered for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. In the revised edition there are now alternative services for these days following the 'historical' progression of the Days of Cleansing, Teaching and Waiting.

Apart from the new services just mentioned, the changes are cosmetic, but important enough to put into our hands for the first time a set of services readily useable. The general pattern of Word and Response to the Word is familiar to our best tradition and any Church of Scotland congregation accustomed to the BCO ('79) order could happily accept the services as an extension of its normal worship.

Reflection after twelve years has produced some extra detail. A tune is now identified for James Quinn's hymn "Ubi caritas". Dramatised readings for several voices of the Gospel passion narratives are printed for optional use. Gordon Wakefield's helpful essay is reproduced in the full edition and provides the necessary historical and liturgical background to the observance of Holy Week. A Methodist, he helps us to see the appropriateness of our participation in a liturgical rehearsal of the Passion for long thought only the province only of Roman and Anglo Catholicism.

It was the earnest desire of some members of our Society in its early days that services be offered on each day of Holy Week. John MacLeod of Govan in a table of services distributed to his congregation in April 1884 says, "The Services of the week have been arranged so as to help us remember our Lord in the events proper to each day. Through this Holy Week we thus 'follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth'." The services now offered to us in such a useable form and with such regard for the worshippers' participation would undoubtedly have received his imprimatur.

COLIN A WILLIAMSON
ST PAUL'S, LEITH

"PRAYING ROUND THE CLOCK" by Richard Harries (Mowbrays £1.95, 143pp.)

I can recommend this book. It links heaven and earth, it is theological and practical.

The book is divided into sections of teaching, reflection and prayer, each section (some short, some long) geared to a time of the day or night without being artificially stereotyped. The author reminds us that prayer is for all Christians, and for all times and places.

Richard Harries is a parish priest and broadcaster recently appointed Dean of Kings College, London. He is Anglo-Catholic, and nearly all the prayers reflect what is good in this tradition, although the style rightly varies. The book is aimed at the middle-class churchy market; work starts at 9am in the book, not 7.30 am, and problems touched on reflect the decision-makers rather than the unemployed (who don't buy books like this anyway). There is a brief explanation of the logic of Marian devotion.

Body language is taken into prayer. The sign of the cross is good because it focuses prayer on the Trinity. Prayer is linked to the daily movement of mind and body, like dressing, opening the diary, having a bath (no mention of George Muller who prayed while shaving - but then he didn't use set prayers). A balance is struck between world concerns and personal issues. There are even prayers which relate to animals.

Harries suggests we slow down eating to draw out its sacramental nature. Let the act of pouring out a drink for another be an act of beauty. Insight and advice like this is mixed in with specific prayers for many occasions, including the more intimate; the author's sense of humour extends to a Jewish prayer for action in the bathroom, but not to action in bed (which is where the Jewish and Presbyterian doctrine of creation have a different nuance from the Anglo-Catholic!).

There is a Gaelic prayer (in English) and even a prayer from the Book of Common Order (under the section "Lying awake at night !"). Overall, the book is a fine celebration of ordinary life as given us by God, and also a useful manual for reference.

JOCK STEIN

DUNDEE.

A COMMUNICANT'S MANUAL (with introduction and notes on The Order for Holy Communion Rite B in The Alternative Service Book 1980, and a short anthology of prayers for the week). Compiled by William Purcell. Mowbray, pb, 32 pp, £1.50.

A copy of this Manual has been received from the publishers. In his foreword, Dr Stuart Blanch, former Archbishop of York, writes that it "offers practical guidance to the believer in his or her own life of prayer and service and witness. What we are and what we receive at the Holy Communion in church will largely depend on the kind of people we are outside it. The virtue of this Manual is that it never allows us to forget that obvious fact." To what extent do Church of Scotland ministers base the instruction of first communicants upon Christian Worship and upon Holy Communion in particular, so that what happens in church on a Sunday is seen to be central to, and inseparable from, Christian faith and life? Here are the Anglicans, though not, of course, in a form which could be directly adopted in other traditions, trying to do just this. As resource material this Manual will be useful to anyone concerned with adult Christian education in the context of Worship.

A massive, 611 page volume has been published by UNIVERSITÄTSVERLAG FREIBURG SCHWEIZ, whose title, in English translation, is 'The Lord's Supper Liturgy in the churches of the Reformation in the 16th and 17th centuries.' It follows on from a 1968 work which studied earlier texts central to the Lord's Supper. Two further volumes are planned. The current volume "relates to the time of the Reformation. It contains all representative orders concerning the Lord's Supper; important texts depending on these liturgical orders are added in extracts. Not only prayers are reproduced but also other elements of divine service, e.g. exhortations to the congregation, songs and rubrics which regulate liturgical actions. The languages of the particular chapters vary among German, French and English....Texts in less current languages are also translated."

Of particular interest to our readers will be chapter 22, contributed by R Stuart Loudon and David H Tripp: THE LORD'S SUPPER ACCORDING TO THE SCOTTISH PRESBYTERIAN ORDERS, TOGETHER WITH THE SAVOY LITURGY. After a brief introduction, there are the following sections: (1) From John Knox's Forme of Prayers 1556 to the Book of Common Order 1564; (2) The Draft Liturgy 1618; (3) The Westminster Directory 1645; (4) The Savoy Liturgy 1661. Each of these is considered in an introduction, and then the Order is given in full.

The Editor has received from Dr Loudon an off-print of this chapter (pages 461-493). It is to be hoped that this massive and definitive work will become available through one or more of our Scottish theological libraries.