

RECENT LITURGICAL LITERATURE

The Sound of the Liturgy: How words work in worship, Cally Hammond, SPCK, £25.

The increasing number of volumes on the matter of leadership of worship, a matter of recent interest to the Society, suggests a shift from what we do in worship to who does it and what they do it with. Dr Hammond's starting point is in itself a challenge, that the elements of worship, including the words, have the character of signs, and that indeed the whole liturgy is a sign, a perspective which shakes positions which understand worship solely as consisting of texts which define truth and morality. Hammond helpfully suggests four 'structural supports' for an act of worship: repetition, rhythm, punctuation, posture – which guide the worshipper to a place of encounter with God. Such worship demands the highest human skills, not just in the leaders, for whom she wishes more understanding of how worship 'works', but for all worshippers 'in spirit and in truth'. The book is rich in accompanying themes: performance, spontaneity, sacrament, rhetoric, the use of the voice, memory – and glory.

Beyond Common Worship: Anglican identity and liturgical diversity, Mark Earey, SCM, £16.99.

Those who know the Church of England's *Common Worship* will know also that this has shifted more than slightly from Prayer Book laid down by law towards Directory, where incumbents can exercise choice and creativity within a tried format. The author, while at the Liturgical Commission, presided over part of the transition from prayer and service book to this more open approach, and has fielded many puzzled and anxious enquiries about what it is 'right' to do. In some ways this is a very Anglican matter but the central part of the book, where the author seeks to define 'Anglican worship' by concentrating on the centre rather than the boundaries, must be of equal interest to other traditions. In the process, many other issues of common interest arise: the formation of leaders, should a central body have responsibility to provide and decide, the resourcing – the 'liturgical formation' – of congregations.

Missional Worship, Worshipful Mission: Gathering God's people going out in God's name, Ruth A. Meyers, Eerdmans £17.99.

The importance of holding together worship and mission, and of the nourishment of classical sacramental worship, are central to Professor Meyer's new book. As chair of the US Episcopal Church's Standing Committee on Liturgy and Music, she unpacks these themes and others with full awareness

of the realities of local worship; indeed she finds in scholarship that which engages directly with the practice of the time, as when interrogating the Fresh Expressions movement with patristic insight. Ranging round themes such as places, people, time, texts, music and silence, she drives home the message that good worship is powerful to strengthen and to change.

The Study of Liturgy and Worship: An Alcuin guide, Juliette Day and Benjamin Gordon-Taylor, eds., SPCK, £25.

First published in 1978, *The Study of Liturgy* (revised 1992) has been a foundational text for those whose interest lies in ‘good liturgy’. Scholarship has moved on, with the Society’s sesquicentennial lecturer, Bryan Spinks, cited as one of the chief movers and shakers. Not only has the area of ‘sacrosanct’ origins been opened up but also dialogue with other disciplines, not to mention a greater awareness of Christian practice ‘on the ground’. In this volume, the contributors break open the heretofore well fenced area of scholars of and writers of liturgy, and have, with the editors, produced a volume worthy of the high aims of the Alcuin Club.

Christian Congregational Music: Performance, identity and experience, Monique Ingalls, Carolyn Landau, and Tom Wagner, eds., Ashgate, £60. The book treats the theme not theoretically but through case studies and particular pieces of research, ranging from close observation of particular music and worship contexts (an African-American congregation, the marketing of worship media in Christian music magazines in the USA) to general reflection on particular aspects of music-making, such as improvisation in jazz and congregational music in Hungary. In the bygoing, key themes and issues in church music today are explored. Intriguing is a proposal to assist in the grasping of the nature of the Trinity, that it is composer, performer, and listener – all aspects of one musical impulse, and all of which imply the others.

English Cathedral Music and Liturgy in the Twentieth Century, Martin Thomas, Ashgate, £65.

It is often ruefully noted that ‘real composers’ do not usually write for worship, and argued that the church should woo contemporary composers and improve the ‘reach’ of the church’s music. It may have been such an argument that led the editors of *Church Hymnary: Third Edition* to commission hymn tunes from virtually all active Scottish concert composers of the time. Those who value the role of music in worship would hail such an experiment, and rightly, but this author suggests that church music, in particular cathedral music,

has too narrowly interpreted the nature of sacred music and undervalued the common ground created by current composers (James MacMillan might be cited) who open themes relating to faith and spirituality to people who do not participate in liturgy. Thomas's (he himself has been a Canon Precentor) is a somewhat scathing critique about the conservatism of cathedral musicians and of bodies like the RSCM in recent history, yet those within this tradition might warmly defend the resulting quality of the cathedral tradition, as imitated in the parishes, in engendering and supporting music which has so often brought liturgy to life.

Eucharistic Epicleses, Ancient and Modern: Speaking of the Spirit in eucharistic prayer, Anne McGowan, SPCK, £19.99.

Scotland has always been proud of the persistence of the epiclesis in our tradition, save of course for the Knoxian prayer in the first order for Holy Communion in *Common Order* 1994. This book explores its emergence in the Western Churches and then specifically how it has been incorporated in eucharistic prayers in the latter part of the 20th century. The author also calls us to take more seriously the metaphors of the Spirit in the Bible and Christian spiritual writings.