

## Liturgical Advisory Committee Report

**Proposer: Bishop Harold Miller**

The work of the Liturgical Advisory Committee continues to provide materials to enrich our worship life in the Church of Ireland. We are glad to record that the new blue edition of the *Book of Common Prayer* is now freely available, and indeed proving extremely popular. It has been published by Canterbury Press, and they have managed to keep the feel, the beauty and the iconic look of our core worship book, which has become part of our regular life and witness in the Church of Ireland. It has been enhanced with a beautiful navy blue cover, to make it clearly distinguishable from the earlier green editions.

The key difference in the new edition, apart from minor emendations made by this synod over the years, is the inclusion of *Morning and Evening Prayer for use on Sundays* at the end of the book. As you will remember, this new service passed through this synod last year. At that time, some questions were asked about the need for a more fulsome, creative and flexible Sunday version of Morning and Evening Prayer, but the new liturgy included gained wide support.

One of the promises made at that time was that there would be a *Seasonal Service Booklet* produced alongside the new edition of the BCP, and that is now available too. It also has been published by Canterbury Press. This booklet is entitled *Morning and Evening Prayer for use on Sundays: Seasonal services*. Within its 90 or so pages, you will find the order of service approved by last year's synod, with five worked out seasonal versions, based on materials agreed by the House of Bishops for experimental use. These are for: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent and the Season of Easter. So within these pages you will find material for the key seasons of the Christian year and for 'ordinary time'. Indeed, the material here provides services for every Sunday of the year. This booklet can be used alongside either the green prayer book or the new blue prayer book, and it is on sale this week at the synod with special offers and bulk rates.

Some of the key features of the services are:

- *Seasonal variation;*
- *focussed opening prayers blessing God based on Jewish-style benedictions:* (let me read one of the Easter prayers)
- *Responsive Confessions, as well as the ore usual style*
- *Collects of the word* (publishes for worship leaders in a separate booklet)
- *a responsive introduction to the Ministry of the word*
- *a question and answer Affirmation of Faith*
- *a range of responsive prayers appropriate to the seasons, and*
- *a fuller ending with a focus on thanksgiving and going out into the world.*

The structure of *Morning and Evening Prayer for use on Sundays* is more that of the *Service of the Word*: Preparation, Ministry of the Word, Response and Dismissal; indeed it is very similar to the structure of the Holy Communion service.

The LAC is very aware that some may find it valuable to have training sessions in how to best use this new material, and will seek to make these available, but quite honestly, these new services are simple to follow, and this little book provides you with everything you need to get going.

The seconder of this report, Dr Peter Thompson, has been doing a great deal of work on finding accessible ways to sing Canticles in church. As an introduction I would like to thank Peter Thompson for what he is doing. If you were listening to *Sunday Sequence* last Sunday, you heard Keith Getty say that one of his life-projects is to enable people to be singing the Psalms again in worship, and Peter has done a great deal of work on that as well. This is a really important area, because the Psalms and Canticles give us an opportunity to sing the very word of God itself, expressing things we could never put into words – a whole range of emotions, questions, moods etc. which are critical to our understand of who God is, who were are as his people, and his plan for the salvation of the world. I will leave Peter to say more.

I have great pleasure in proposing that the report of the LAC be taken into consideration.