



Liturgical Writings 2020

We are very grateful to those who have made available these liturgical texts. If we did not publish everything sent in, this was mainly due to a lack of time. We will revisit material not included here.

The Holy Week texts (A) were initially developed at, or inspired by, WATCH's Liturgical Writing Day, held at the Oxford Deanery on a sunny winter's day early February 2020 with participants gathering from far afield. The hand-out is included (C) describing those parts of the Communion service (CofE) which it is permitted rewrite. It was these sections which formed the basis for the day's explorations. Themes engaged were: the use of non-gendered language, the mixing up genders and imagery drawn from women's embodied experience. As Emma Percy suggested on the day, non-gendered approaches to rewriting liturgical texts have had an inadvertent effect of making women's embodied experiences less visible, thus rendering a diminished landscape for us all to be present to and responsive to the divine.

In our second section (B) John Schofield, responding to an invitation made at WATCH's 2019 AGM, has kindly shared his texts for Inclusive Language Liturgy. These were originally written for the Church of St Mark's, Broomhill, Sheffield. John has provided a brief introduction.

If you would like to:

- ❖ **be informed of future WATCH Liturgical Writing Days**
- ❖ **share your liturgical writings* giving WATCH permission to make these available on a non-commercial basis.**

Contact Claire Creese, secretary@womenandthechurch.org

**In so far as within WATCH's charitable aims.*



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A: Texts for Holy Week

Collect

(1)

Maundy Thursday

God our foot-washer,
Open us to your
Vulnerable presence,
Your tender love
And your eternal mercy
In the holy ground
Of our bodies
Created and sustained by you. Amen

Mary Kells

(2)

Good Friday

Broken God,
We bring our tears
For your brokenness
For our brokenness
And for the breaking we have done.
Help us
Like the women
At the foot of the cross
Not to look away
But to wait with you. Amen

Mary Kells



(3)

Compassionate God,
who of your tender mercies
gave Jesus, to be our saviour,
to labour on the cross
with blood, sweat and tears,
that we, and all God's children
may be born anew:
grant us grace to follow
the example of our mother Jesus
in loving and giving of ourselves
so that, in us and through us,
new creation may be brought to birth
by the grace of your spirit. Amen.

Emma Percy

(4)

Generous God,
who like a woman
with a jar of precious ointment
showers us with blessings,
help us to accept your grace
that in it we may find assurance of forgiveness
anointing for our calling
and balm for our suffering
through Christ our friend and saviour. Amen.

Emma Percy

(5)

Palm Sunday

Almighty and ever-living God,
Who in your love toward the human race
Conceived our Saviour Jesus in flesh:
Make us pregnant with
The possibilities of his human life
And death among us,
Through Jesus Christ
In whom divine flesh and human spirit
Are joined
In the unity of the one God.
Amen

Liz Shercliff



(6)

Almighty and ever-living God
Who in your love toward the human race
Became, and still becomes, flesh:
Grant us the abiding peace of your presence
When our bodies are overtaken by human frailty
And our spirits disturbed by human fears,
Through Jesus Christ the living Word
In the power of Sophia the mighty Spirit
In the communion of the Trinity
Amen

Liz Shercliff

(7)

Almighty and ever-living God
Who in your love toward the human race
Yielded your flesh to suffering:
Grant us your endurance in vulnerability
When our paths are blocked
Our dignity stolen and
we are no longer able to choose for ourselves.
In the name of him who suffered the pains of labour
In birthing a new world
Amen

Liz Shercliff

(8)

Almighty and ever-living God,
Who in your love toward the human race
Laboured to bring new life from shed blood and water:
Grant us clarity
To see when we blame without cause
And to absorb the responsibility that is ours
That we might not dismiss others but
Welcome them into your family.
In the name of him who suffered the pains of labour
In birthing a new world
Amen

Liz Shercliff



Confession

(1)

Holy God
We have squandered your gift of life,
Clinging to that which is passing,
Controlling that which should be free.

God have mercy
God have mercy

Vulnerable God
We have turned from the Cross,
We have shunned suffering
And sought our ease.

Christ have mercy
Christ have mercy

Sharing God
We have denied relationship
And closed down
When we could have opened.

God have mercy
God have mercy

Absolution

God of mercy and of love
Forgive us all we have
Squandered,
Set aside, and
Squashed.
Set us free
To live as your friends,
In the name of the one
Who lived on earth
As the friend of all. Amen

Mary Kells



(2)

Loving Jesus
raise us to new life

God have mercy
God have mercy

Compassionate Jesus
forgive us when we falter
and forget to be as you are

Christ have mercy
Christ have mercy

Caring Jesus
feed us with living bread
renew us with your Spirit

Holy Spirit have mercy
Holy Spirit have mercy

As Mary came to embrace
your divine presence
from birth to tomb to cross
enable us to walk in you footsteps

Creator God have mercy
Creator God have mercy

As the women who followed the Messiah
Even to the foot of the cross
Give us the courage to be like them

Loving Creator have mercy
Loving Creator have mercy

As Mary wept for you
as you demonstrated your you love
through sacrifice
let us not waste this gift

Mother have mercy
Mother have mercy

Giselle Rusted



(3)

Jesus Christ, Holy and divine
gracious and humble
We sit at the foot of the cross
aware of our own frailty
In the knowledge that it is only through
your mercy and love
demonstrated in your sacrifice
and your resurrection
that we will be redeemed.

Giselle Rusted

A Biblical Reflection

Pilate's wife

He was in a filthy mood tonight.

'Tough day at work' he said.

I bet.

Dinner was long cold,

He'd spent so long in the bathroom -

Blaming me that the soap didn't work,

Hands still filthy as he cut up his meat.

I wept.

Tears and fears poured out of my heart

For the innocent man condemned to die.

'Me too,' I whispered, 'me too.'

I'd done my best,

Tried to warn him:

'Listen to my dream!

Listen to me!

But old habits die hard,



And my dream was yet again washed away
Down the plughole of his ambition;
His dreams of power
Turning my dream into a nightmare.
And so what could I do?
I washed my face,
And washed my hands,
And vowed to buy some stronger soap.

Marie Calvert

Intercession

(1)

God of love,
Spirit of integrity,
Forgive our tendency
To massage truth to suit ourselves.
Wash away our lack of courage,
That we may hear your dream for the world.
Amen.

Marie Calvert

(2)

God in Christ
love poured out in flesh and blood,
risen to a new order
so that we may leave our concerns
at the foot of the cross:
fill your church with faith and hope,
for a new day has dawned
in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Giselle Rusted



Proper Preface

(1)

In this holy week of Easter
It is indeed right
To praise you, Creator God,
You who made the earth
And all your creatures,
You who bring to birth,
Creating and making new
Yesterday, today and forever.

God our maker

We praise your holy name

You gave us Jesus,
Born of a woman,
Friend of women,
Friend of the outcast,
Friend of us all,
Who showed us how to live,
Whom death could not contain.

God our friend

We praise your holy name

Holy God
You breathed your holy essence
Upon us
Within us
Between us
We are not alone.

God among us

We praise your holy name

And so we raise our voices
To join in the eternal song of Heaven
In gratitude and joy

Followed by the Sanctus

Mary Kells

(2)

Ever-giving, ever-loving God
To you, in all times and in all places,
It is right to give thanks and praise.
In Jesus your Son, our Saviour



You came among us
As one born of Mary,
Whose friendship with the outcasts,
Servant love and rigorous challenge
Has taught us how to live.
Open our hearts
To your mystery,
The mystery of your eternal presence,
And with all God's people
And with Heaven itself,
To sing your praise: (Sanctus)

Mary Kells

(3)

Enriching, enlivening God,
It is indeed right
To give you thanks and praise.
You birthed your people
In labour and in joy
And fed us from the
Breast of Christ
Who passed
Through blood and water
To bring us to the knowledge and love
Of your eternal presence.
And so we lift our hearts
With all the saints
To give you praise. (Sanctus)

Mary Kells

(4)

It is right to give you thanks and praise Holy God, mother of all.
In creation you birth all things into being.
Through Mary's body your beloved Christ was born
into our human likeness.
Through blood and water,
through travail and suffering on the cross,
Jesus birthed your people into a new creation
so we become children of heaven.
Now we join our songs with the saints and angels
forever more praising you and singing

Emma Percy



(5)

It is always good to thank you gracious God
for your love for us and for all the blessings of our life.
And now we remember your love shown in Jesus
who willingly went to the cross
to suffer pain and brokenness
so that we could be born anew.
Like a mother, he births us and feeds us
then sends us out into the world
to live life in all its fullness.
Rejoicing in this love and living this new life
we sing with all the angels.

Emma Percy

(6)

Pieta

This is the body of Christ.

Helpless,
Swaddled in love and wonder,
Held by his mother's gaze
And laid in a manger.
Silent night.

This is the body of Christ.

Helpless,
Swaddled in pain and death,
Held by his mother's gaze
And laid in a tomb.
Holy night.

We are the body of Christ.

Helpless,
Swaddled in grace and mercy,
Held by the mother's gaze
And laid in the arms of love.
Starry night.

Marie Calvert



Blessing

God of Peace
who raised from the dead
Jesus, our protector and guide,
through the blood of the eternal covenant:
Make us perfect in every good work
to fulfil God's will,
Working in us that which is
well pleasing in our Creator's eyes.

Giselle Rusted





B. Inclusive Language Liturgy - *John Schofield*

John writes: These are among the pieces which I have written for liturgical use at St Mark's, Broomhill, Sheffield. They are written to be inclusive rather than challenging. The Sursum Corda is the version now used as standard at St Mark's. The Eucharistic Prayer (which brings together ideas from existential and process theology) is used during the first part of ordinary time.

Affirmations of faith/trust

(1)

We trust in a God who never stops creating:

Moulding the broken pieces of the world, and offering hope.

We trust in the story of Jesus, giving forgiveness, healing and wisdom:

To shape our stories and reshape the story of the world.

We share the wounds of Jesus:

And in his name welcome all who are wounded.

We are friends of God,

Part of God's story for our lives and this place.

Amen. So be it.

(2)

Let us give voice to our convictions
and substance to our hopes.

We live by faith;

in the love of God, embodied in Jesus the Christ.

We live in hope;

which does not disappoint, but brings love to life.

We live in the power of the Spirit;

transforming our lives and the whole of creation.

Amen. So be it.

Sursum Corda

May God be with you:

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts



We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to our gracious God:

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Eucharistic Prayer

May God be with you:

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts

We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to our gracious God:

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Ground of Being, great I Am,
your breath sweeps through the universe,
bringing life to life;
we praise you for your energy
and your intention for all creation.

In Jesus you displayed your love.
made known your wisdom,
and called us to yourself.

You wait and weep and sorrow
as we prefer self-interest to all that is good
for us, for others and for our world.
Yet reaching out with open arms
you draw us to yourself,
revealing the strength of love
where we see only weakness.

And so with all who,
through time, in our time and for all time
rejoice in your being,
we join our voices in a song of endless praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of truth and love.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Blessed is Jesus, the Bread of Life:



on the night when he was betrayed he took a loaf of bread,
and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said,
This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.
In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying,
This cup is the new covenant in my blood.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Blessed is Jesus, the Bread of Life:

Dying you destroyed death;

Rising you restored life;

Come to us, Lord Jesus.

Be with us now,
and breathe your Spirit into this bread and wine.
May we take them into our lives,
grow in Christ,
and be the breath of love
in our being and becoming.

Calling us to be like you in Christlike living,
fulfil in us all that you intend,
as in our lives,
and in community with Christ,
we worship you,
source and ground and purpose of our being,
now and throughout all ages.

Amen.

Blessing

**May we be blessed by God in our loving and our hoping;
may we be blessed by God in our courage and our striving;
may we be blessed by God in our blessing one another.**

Amen.

*

The following Eucharistic Prayer has not been tried out in public worship. I wrote because I feel that Prayer H in Common Worship doesn't really work, but that we do need something that is both accessible and responsive.

May God be with you:

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts

We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to our gracious God:



It is right to give thanks and praise.

God, you are good:

We thank you.

God, you have made the world for us all to enjoy:

We thank you.

God you have called us to live together in one world:

We thank you.

God, you have created each one of us to know you and love you:

We thank you.

God, even when we have turned away from you and one another,

You do not turn away from us:

We thank you.

God, you have given us Jesus to show us how we should live:

We thank you;

So with all your people throughout time, we give you praise:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of truth and love.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Jesus showed us what it means to love:

He gave his life for us on the cross.

Jesus shares his life with us:

When we break bread together.

In the Upper Room Jesus took a loaf of bread:

He gave you thanks, broke it and shared it.

He said 'This is my body, given for you.'

We eat it, remembering him.

Then he took a cup of wine, and gave you thanks:

He passed it round and shared it.

He said 'This is the cup of the new relationship with God.'

We drink it, remembering him.

Blessed is Jesus, the Bread of Life:

Dying you destroyed death,

Rising you restored life,

Come to us, Lord Jesus.

Gracious God

send your Holy Spirit on these gifts of bread and wine:

As we receive them



unite us in the body of your son.

Gracious God,
send your Holy Spirit on your people:

Renew us with your love.

Help us to work every day for the coming of your kingdom.

And shape us every day

to grow like Jesus,

Who, with you, Creator, and you, Holy Spirit,

we worship and adore, true and living God,

for ever and ever,

Amen.





C. Hand Out - WATCH Liturgy Writing Day

Emma Percy - February 8, 2020, Christ Church Deanery, Oxford

In a communion service it is permissible to rewrite these sections:

Collects
Confession
Absolution
Intercessions
Proper Preface of the Eucharistic prayer
Post communion prayer
Blessing

Today we are thinking about how to make liturgy more inclusive of women.

1. Using non gendered language – is there a good alternative to Lord?
2. Mixing up the genders, using both male and female pronouns for God.
3. Drawing on feminine imagery from women's embodied experience, from the Bible, from history.

Reflecting on Holy Week

Where are the feminine ideas to be found?

The cross as a birthing? Water and Blood, the necessity of pain in bringing about new life.

The women in the stories. Watching from a distance, bearing witness. The woman with the perfume. Mary the mother of Jesus.

How does this resonate with women's lived experience.
Being silenced, watching at a distance, being passive in the face of power, having violence done to you, laying down one's life for one's child.

