

THE JOINT LITURGICAL GROUP

The Joint Liturgical Group of Great Britain, which celebrated its 40th anniversary¹ in 2003, continues as the UK forum for dialogue between the Churches and a provider of liturgical material for situations where Churches worship together. An example is the new *Order of Service for Remembrance Sunday*, used for the first time in 2005, in this case produced in consultation with the liturgical commissions of the Churches, with Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and with the Royal British Legion. Prior to this JLG had collaborated with CTBI and the British Legion again on *Beyond our Tears*, resources for times of remembrance.

JLG's principal current project is *Responding to public grief: a handbook for the Churches*. The publication is to discuss emerging patterns of response to disasters or national trauma, caused, say, by the death of a prominent public figure, and to explore what the Church can offer which might carry what are now becoming stock responses (piles of flowers, teddy bears, public silences, books of condolence etc.) into deeper focus. Given the increasingly mixed nature of our communities, and the directions from which disaster may come, there are guidelines on making such public worship occasions accessible to people of all faiths. Outline orders are offered, along with biblical, prayer and musical resources. An anthology of non-biblical readings is included, as is a discography.

JLG also hears from time to time from guests who are making a particular contribution in matters liturgical. The most recent was the Precentor of St. Paul's Cathedral, the Rev. Canon Lucy Winkett. She outlined the pattern of worship in St. Paul's, which consists of 29 services a week plus special services. These last, which range from the marking of significant events in the life of public bodies (e.g. UN, Christian Aid) to state occasions, lead the Church into the cross-over between the sacred and the secular, and between the Christian faith and other faiths. They raise questions as how to use this 'public sacred space'. This leads into consideration of provision for casual visitors (and the issue of entrance charges) but it also challenges the cathedral to be open to other kinds of celebration, as when the National Youth Theatre enacted '1400 years [of the history of London] in 14 minutes' in the nave. Here, liturgy and the space in which it is enacted comes into dialogue with other cultural spaces in society.

JLG also takes up matters which require representations being made. One such is the current reduction in time given to broadcast services and the decision taken by one broadcaster that sacraments should not be shown. Another is the effect of the Vatican Instruction from the Congregation for Divine Worship, *Liturgiam Authenticam*, on the current agreements about common texts. From time to time a national conference is held, the most recent being that in September 2005 in Durham on 'Space for Living Worship', at which there was a strong Scottish representation, two of whom had been invited to give papers.²

The current chair of JLG is Mgr Kevin McGinnell (Episcopal Vicar, RC Diocese of Northampton, and Dean of Luton). Planning of the work is overseen not by a formal committee but a triumvirate which includes the Very Rev. Dr. Gilleasbuig Macmillan. The Church of Scotland has also been represented by the Secretary of the Panel on Worship, now succeeded by the new associate secretary for worship and doctrine, the Rev. Nigel Robb.

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- 1 The anniversary lecture, given by Canon Donald Gray CBE, is published elsewhere in this issue of the *Record*.
 - 2 Papers given at this conference are to appear on the JLG's website, www.jlg.co.uk.